
CHAPTER 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

This chapter of the Plan contains goals, objectives, policies, and recommended programs to retain, grow and expand the economic base in Janesville. An economic development strategy enables effective development through local and regionally driven economic development and planning processes. This chapter is meant to help guide, and direct engagement of, public officials, private sector leaders, employers, community organizations, and community members in creating a pathway to achieve ongoing growth and development.

Since this plan was first written, the City of Janesville weathered a Great Recession, an economic shock caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, the shuttering of the City's largest employer, causing the loss of approximately four million square feet of manufacturing space, hundreds of jobs, and several related supply businesses. As we look to the future in this plan, we are reassured that Janesville has a resilient community and economy. The City has added new industrial space equivalent to what was lost in 2009 and has filled that space with a variety of industrial sector employers. The City has regained all the lost jobs and surpassed the levels of employment that existed prior to 2008. Janesville is positioned to be a hot spot for industrial development in the State of Wisconsin and is expected to see continued job growth for the foreseeable future.

To continue the momentum, Janesville must leverage the successes and work towards sustaining economic prosperity. Every community has unique assets that can be used to attract employers and investment. Building on Janesville's assets is the best way to further stimulate our economy.

THE PRINCIPLES IN THIS *COMPREHENSIVE PLAN* CHAPTER REGARDING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROMOTE:

- ◆ Reinvention of the City's economy through promoting economic diversification, while still building from the City's industrial heritage and unique place-based assets.
- ◆ Provision of the compelling places and overall quality of life that will enable the City to attract and retain a talented workforce, ranging from young professionals, to skilled trades workers, to the workforce approaching retirement age.
- ◆ Acknowledging economic connections between the City and the broader region as a strength that must be leveraged in order to compete more broadly with other regions.
- ◆ Recognition that a sustainable economy can be achieved through a strategic combination of retaining, attracting, and growing businesses from within.
- ◆ Encouraging redevelopment of City "gateways" and underutilized corridors into mixed-use neighborhood activity centers.
- ◆ Workforce development efforts that meet the needs of current employers and position the City for long-term economic growth.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, AND PROGRAMS

Economic Development Goals:

1. Ensure Janesville’s business environment supports growth, innovation, and success across industries and businesses of all sizes.
2. Grow Janesville’s highly skilled workforce with ongoing access to diverse educational and vocational training opportunities, including emerging skills and fields, providing a foundation for long-term economic success.
3. Maintain a City practice of community and economic development centered around sustainability, equity, and community well-being.

Goal 1:

Ensure Janesville’s business environment supports growth, innovation, and success across industries and businesses of all sizes.

Objective 1:

Attract and retain businesses within the Janesville Area.

Policies and Programs:

1. Encourage economic growth and employment opportunities that build upon the diversity of the city’s economy through strengthening the city’s foundation in manufacturing, food production, healthcare, technology, logistics and warehousing.
2. Ensure availability of adequate sites for business attraction, expansion, and relocation of businesses within the community through continuing to acquire land and facilitate development of public infrastructure, to ensure opportunities for ongoing industrial development and commercial redevelopment, and through aligning the Future Land Use map with community growth opportunities.
3. Work collaboratively with the State, Rock County, and other stakeholders to ensure that manufacturing opportunities remain in the City.
4. Consider acquisition of properties that would benefit from redevelopment and lead to an increase in property tax base and the creation of high wage jobs.
5. Promote city-owned land in the industrial and business parks and redevelopment sites for new businesses moving to the area.
6. Continue to use Tax Increment Financing, and other programs, to support economic development activities.



Woodman’s Food Market started in Janesville back to 1919 and has been an essential grocer and employer for Janesville, and Wisconsin ever since. This photo is of the original Woodman’s store on Milton Ave in 1930.

7. Consider using a third-party “certified shovel-ready sites” program to develop a land bank of certified sites to speed up pipeline for business ideas to development.
8. Consider strategic investments in new road infrastructure to open up land for development.
9. Seek to improve how Janesville’s assets are marketed to brokers, site selectors, and targeted industry sectors including information about the available and skilled workforce, educational institutions, availability of land, infrastructure like water, power, and access to major interstates, rail corridors, and incentives programs. Consider establishing stronger relationships with Blackhawk Tech, UW-Whitewater at Rock County, and others to add value to business development pitches.
10. Continue to promote Janesville as a great place to live, work, play, and raise a family, building on the existing reputation of high-quality parks, good schools, ample recreation options, good paying jobs, and a rich retail shopping environment.
11. Prepare a detailed Community and Economic Development Strategy that engages the public, the private sector, and civil society groups to further the recommendations of this plan.

Objective 2:

Support the growth and expansion of area businesses.

Policies and Programs:

1. Promote and support meaningful, effective business outreach alongside community partners such as Forward Janesville, Rock County Development Alliance, Rock County Planning, Economic & Community Development, and others.
2. Work with local development organizations in the creation of a formal Business Retention, and Expansion (BRE) program to serve as the first contact and initiator for BRE activities.
3. Develop, manage, and promote relevant business and development assistance/incentive programs.
4. Support efforts to deliver high-quality broadband coverage to underserved areas of Rock County.
5. Support business’s full life cycle through promoting resources to assist with succession planning and transition to new ownership.
6. Continue to engage with area employers to identify any future expansion needs and barriers to growth.
7. Promote and support the local food system (see Chapter 4 – Agricultural Resources for more details).
8. Develop and expand industry clusters around bio-based products and food production and processing (see Chapter 4 – Agricultural Resources for more details).



Blain's Farm & Fleet has proudly served the American farmer for over 60 years.



Founded in 1955 in Janesville, Blain's Farm & Fleet is a discount farm supply store that has been an anchor employer and a shining beacon reflecting Janesville's entrepreneurial spirit.

Objective 3:

Support and encourage local participation in Regional Economic Development Initiatives.

Policies and Programs:

1. Consider supporting a new County-wide economic development plan to spur further collaboration, work to combine resources, and maximize local funds.
2. Coordinate economic development planning efforts with community organizations, and other Rock County communities, including but not limited to Rock County Development Alliance, Forward Janesville, ARISE, DJI, BID, JIC, MadREP, WEDC, Workforce Board, Blackhawk Tech, UW-Whitewater at Rock County, Janesville School District and others that currently work in the economic development or related sectors.
3. Leverage the City's connections and proximity to Madison as a research center to bolster opportunities to commercialize research and development within Janesville.
4. Actively participate in development, and implementation, of the Madison Region Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
5. Promote Transportation Policy at local and State level that serves to improve connectivity and economic vitality of the region including freight, passenger rail, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and roadway improvement projects.
6. Continue to promote and encourage improvement of Forward Janesville's Community Dashboard which tracks community development metrics.
7. Consider developing a community economic resilience plan for recovery from future economic disruptions such as pandemics, natural disasters, climate change, etc.
8. Continue to participate in National, State, and Regional economic development organizations to:
 - a. Stay up to date with emerging knowledge, initiatives, and trends.
 - b. Strengthen network connections that help Janesville remain agile and competitive in regional economic development.

Objective 4:

Diversify and strengthen industries clustered in Janesville.

Policies and Programs:

1. Explore opportunities to further diversify and strengthen the industry base through:
 - a. Leveraging current technology-based industries to develop a tech-based industry cluster.
 - b. Promoting and supporting diversification of industrial and manufacturing employment.
 - c. Continuing to support and work collaboratively with regional health care facilities to maintain a strong presence in the community and facilitate on projects of mutual benefit to the City and the health care community.
 - d. Engaging with partners to support expansion of high growth potential industries such as Information Technology, Healthcare/Medical, and Advanced Manufacturing.
 - e. Considering the development of certified sites and shovel-ready sites to facilitate new business development.
 - f. Forming a strong value statement for business development pitches that builds on the available and skilled workforce, local educational institutions, available land and infrastructure like water and power, and access to major interstates, rail corridors, and incentives programs.
 - g. Considering a more detailed analysis of live/work dynamics in Janesville as well as the marketplace for retail draw.
2. Encourage future industrial expansion to the south of the City, as illustrated on the Future Land Use Map.
3. Accommodate light industrial development in several areas in the City under the “Community Commercial or Light Industrial” Future Land Use category to ensure flexibility and options for high quality industrial development, based on the recommendations of the Plan Commission.



Janesville is home to two regional Hospitals and is a healthcare destination for Rock County, Southern WI, and Northern IL.

Objective 5:

Support entrepreneurship and startup businesses.

Policies and Programs:

1. Strengthen the entrepreneurial infrastructure and resources needed to grow strong, resilient business ventures – from training, research, and business planning to capital resources, real estate solutions, and networking opportunities.

2. Promote the Janesville Innovation Center as an approachable and affordable incubator facility for startups focused on technology, industrial, and manufacturing businesses needing wrap around services that will help companies launch in Janesville.
3. Expand the network of support services designed to facilitate new business creation through encouraging and supporting the creation of local think tanks, co-working spaces, and facility assets that assist business start-ups. Ensure that local economic development organizations are well situated to connect interested individuals with available resources.
4. Consider ways to develop a robust local source of capital such as enterprise funds or a revolving loan fund for areas across the City. Look to other states for examples.
5. Work with community partners on improving funding options available to local entrepreneurs including but not limited to Angel Funds, grants, sponsored start-up competitions, Gener8tor, and other options.
6. Continue to grow the Downtown Revolving Loan Fund and support strategic programming of funds.
7. Work with local and regional education providers to seek out and support local entrepreneurs, providing training on how to create successful new businesses including UW-Whitewater, UW-Whitewater at Rock County, Blackhawk Technical College, Genr8tor, and others.

Objective 6:

Strengthen small businesses.

Policies and Programs:

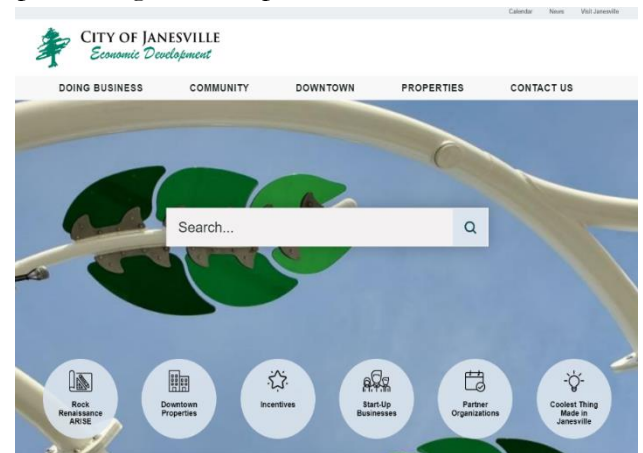
1. Develop programs to support small businesses throughout Janesville, particularly neighborhood-serving businesses located in neighborhood activity centers.
2. Continue to support community events that promote Downtown Janesville and small businesses.
3. Continue to support community partners who advocate for and promote small businesses including but not limited to BID, DJI, ARISE Now, and Forward Janesville.
4. Continue to implement the ARISE Plan and promote mixed-use development Downtown and throughout Janesville.
5. Explore ways to improve the regulatory environment for home-based businesses as part of the zoning and subdivision code update.
6. Consider creating programs to support the development of local food options like FEED Madison and other food incubator programs.
7. Continue to support pre-development work that helps to connect small businesses and entrepreneurs with property owners that have available space and land.

Objective 7:

Efficient, effective, whole-team development review and process.

Policies and Programs:

1. Promote high-quality design for new commercial and industrial development.
2. Explore opportunities to streamline the planning and permitting approval process for developers.
3. Continue to require pre-development meetings to ensure developers are aware of the process and regulations required for development in Janesville and to provide insight and guidance for developers in bringing their plans to fruition.
4. Update the zoning and subdivision ordinances to embrace flexibility, increase the range of development concepts allowed by right, and reduce reliance on the PUD form of development review where appropriate.
 - a. Ensure that zoning and subdivision ordinance updates align with expectations and vision of this plan's Future Land Use Map, including categories of Mixed-Use and Planned Neighborhoods.
 - b. As part of zoning and subdivision ordinance updates, consider strategic rezoning's to facilitate mixed-use development on sites such as Centennial Industrial Park and other areas of the City.
 - c. Review parking standards to ensure optimal land use efficiency.
 - d. Consider establishing requirements for electric vehicle charging stations for all new commercial and industrial buildings.
 - e. Enforce reasonable standards for home occupations.
 - f. Make the code easier to use through restructuring the code, eliminating redundancies, and emphasizing the code being more readable.
 - g. Work to increase the amount of taxable value delivered through the development process. This generally includes allowing more density of developments, exploring alternative parking requirement standards, creating more flexibility in the code, simplifying allowable uses through regulating specific undesired uses, promoting desirable businesses, creating right sized industrial districts, and lowering the code's overall burden on developers.
5. Maintain a website with information for developers including incentives, permitting, the approval process, available properties, and other beneficial information for the private development community.



The growjanesville.com website provides an easy-to-use interface for accessing information about economic development opportunities in Janesville.

Goal 2:

Grow Janesville’s highly skilled workforce with ongoing access to diverse educational and vocational training opportunities, including emerging skills and fields, providing a foundation for long-term economic success.

Objective 1:

Support high-quality and accessible education and workforce development opportunities.

Policies and Programs:

1. Encourage the community to engage in vision activities that identify future industries to target for recruitment and to tailor workforce development and educational system to work towards these targeted industries. Designing specific programs to encourage development of advanced skills in computer science, marketing, analytics, and other skills to meet the workforce needs of the technology industry.
2. Support Early Childhood Education and Childcare through working with partners to develop solutions to improve the availability and quality of childcare and early childhood education options.
3. Encourage and support efforts to create pre-K programs.
4. Explore ways to engage area K-12 school systems and higher-education organizations to retain, expand, and create training and development programs that align with current employment needs and future growth industries in the region.
5. Encourage local K-12 systems, and local industries, to develop outreach, engagement, and apprenticeship opportunities for skilled trades and to advocate for post-secondary technical education as well as traditional 4-year educations.
6. Support County level externship/internship program for local K-12 administrators, educators, and community advocates.
7. Encourage local businesses to improve communication on the skills needed for employment with a goal of improving recruitment and retention of workers.
8. Work with Colleges and Universities to develop, fund, and improve programs that meet the needs of local employers.
9. Support Workforce Development Programs that provide training and re-training for workers re-entering the workforce, shifting fields, and those who experienced layoffs or other disruptions to their employment.
10. Consider ways to study and engage youth in developing more nuanced expectations about workforce opportunities while highlighting opportunities that exist among the trades.
11. Consider ways to better utilize existing workforce development programs through strengthened relationships with area schools among other ideas.
12. Consider developing a regional strategy to reduce the “brain drain” of young, educated people leaving for educational opportunities and not returning.



Blackhawk Technical College is a vital component of Janesville and Rock County’s skilled worker pipeline.

13. Continue to support community development initiatives that focus on improving amenities for young people.
14. Support efforts at the federal, state, county, and local level to provide support programs to households including through childcare, housing, food access, transportation, and other programs.

Objective 2:

Sustain and grow the employment base.

Policies and Programs:

1. Explore creating a campaign to recruit workforce needed to fill current and future employer needs including the need for technically trained workers.
2. Create diversified employment base within and across industries in Janesville.
3. Explore strategies to increase high-skilled jobs including but not limited to
 - a. workforce development activities to increase number of high-skilled workers.
 - b. targeted business recruitment, retention, and expansion.
 - c. leveraging and partnering with current employers that have high-skill employees.
4. Continue to require “living wages” for employment-driven development incentives and explore ways to increase the number of living wage or higher wage jobs.
5. Support a diverse workforce through maintaining a high quality of life for residents. (See recommendations in Cultural Resources Chapter and Housing and Neighborhood Development Chapter).
6. Consider a study of Janesville’s current and future workforce needs with an emphasis on identifying barriers to recruiting workforce to the region, accessing employers within the region, and opportunities to grow, educate, and retain workforce locally.



The Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center provides a range of workforce development activities to the community.

Goal 3:

Maintain a City practice of community and economic development centered around sustainability, equity, and community well-being.

Objective 1:

Moving the City’s brand forward.

Policies and Programs:

1. Explore ways to enhance Janesville’s current reputation and brand while developing new ways to promote the City.
2. Continue to use social media to create an engaging and inclusive social media community that promotes the City’s high quality of life, community events, resources, and development opportunities.
3. Manage an engaging and inclusive website for the City of Janesville, Janesville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Janesville Performing Arts Center, and Grow Janesville.
4. Continue to work with the Janesville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Janesville Performing Arts Center, and others, to promote Janesville as a destination for tourism, conferences, and conventions.
5. Continue to work with the Janesville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Janesville Performing Arts Center, and others, to promote cultural programming that centers on Janesville’s history, heritage, and the arts.
6. Continue to improve the City’s overall aesthetic quality with emphasis on green infrastructure like street trees and green belts, high-quality building standards, public art, and community led efforts to beautify the community.

Objective 2:

Sustain Downtown Redevelopment and Revitalization.

Policies and Programs:

1. Continue to lead implementation of the ARISE Now Plan.
2. Continue to promote and grow Downtown as an employment center for professional services and government.
3. Review potential for expanding existing Business Improvement District (BID).
4. Support opportunities for continued residential development in Downtown on underutilized property and key redevelopment sites.
5. Promote Downtown as a destination for tourism, community events, and as an employment center that has high-quality riverfront access.



The Cobblestone Hotel & Suites opened in 2019, bringing a hotel to Downtown Janesville for the first time in decades.

6. Support efforts by Downtown Janesville Inc., Downtown Janesville BID, Janesville Convention and Visitors Bureau, Janesville Performing Arts Center, and others to bring cultural, and other events to Downtown Janesville.
7. Work with the Janesville Convention and Visitors Bureau to market Janesville’s natural and cultural assets as a destination for conferences, events, and tourists.
8. Grow the downtown business improvement programs, pursue funding opportunities for façade improvements and streetscape improvements city-wide.
9. Continue to develop additional funds for façade grant and loan programs to improve the exterior facades of businesses.
10. Continue to review the effectiveness of the Revolving Loan Fund program to ensure the program meets the needs of businesses.

Objective 3:

Improve the gateways to Janesville, invest in and redevelop underutilized commercial corridors.

Policies and Programs:

1. Strengthen and improve aesthetics and economic vitality of major gateways into the City as well as other commercial and retail corridors throughout the City.
2. Create a gateway sponsorship program – Corporate sponsors for signage, flowers, way-finding signs, etc.
3. Create a gateway wayfinding plan to encourage visitors who enter Janesville from the interstate and other major entryways to explore the City further.
4. Encourage job-creating economic investments in key areas along major gateways and underutilized commercial corridors.
5. Proactively spur and guide redevelopment using a public/private collaboration model like effort successfully employed in other locations in Janesville, such as Downtown.
6. Encourage the creation of neighborhood organizations/associations to help catalyze support for redevelopment, maintain efforts to redevelop underutilized corridors, and activate spaces around City through special and community events.
7. Encourage the development of, or strengthening of, Business Improvement Districts for areas across the City.
8. Identify sites that can serve as catalysts for redevelopment and consider public investment in making these sites “shovel-ready” and assembling sites for larger redevelopment efforts.
9. Emphasize the creation of neighborhood activity centers that encourage people to visit, linger, and socialize versus serving predominately drive-through establishments.
10. Ensure that updates to the zoning code promote use of food carts, food trucks, and other semi-permanent food operations and create opportunities for entrepreneurship and expansion in the local food scene.
11. Consider BID/TIF/TID policy that focuses on redeveloping Commercial/Retail areas into mixed-use neighborhood activity centers that provide additional residential development in the community.

12. Support efforts to create detailed plans, or update existing, where necessary to guide re-development of “gateways” to the city along with area plans for underutilized commercial corridors.

Objective 4:

Provide diverse and rich historic and cultural resources.

Policies and Programs:

1. Support projects spotlighting the history and cultural heritage of Janesville.
2. Bolster Janesville’s role in developing new, innovative cultural resources.
3. Support mental and social well-being through social infrastructure and third places.
4. Promote the diversity of recreation and lifestyle opportunities that Janesville has to offer.
5. Work with community partners and businesses on a quality-of-life campaign to attract and retain workers to the City.
6. Continue to support the Art Infusion event, and other placemaking efforts in Downtown Janesville.
7. Explore placemaking efforts elsewhere in Janesville including but not limited to the Milton Avenue area, South and West sides of Janesville.

Also see Chapter 5 – Historic and Cultural Resources.

Objective 5:

Continue to develop Janesville into a climate forward community.

Policies and Programs:

1. Promote and support renewable energy generation.
2. Explore ways to encourage clean energy transition and how cost savings can help spur additional community and economic development initiatives.
3. Encourage increased development of alternative energy markets and businesses that lead the way in transition to reduce carbon output.
4. Ensure zoning and building codes allow for siting of renewable energy sources, as appropriate.
5. Promote sustainable development, energy conservation, and green building techniques, as well as the use of Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing.



The Lincoln-Tallman House Museum is a place that provides educational opportunities about Rock County and organizes innovative cultural events that bring people into the heart of Janesville.

Objective 6:

Continue to develop Complete Neighborhoods that are walkable, bikeable, and accessible by public transit.

Policies and Programs:

1. Encourage development of complete neighborhoods throughout Janesville with access to everyday community destinations and transportation options.
2. Promote a mixture of housing types, building sizes, lot dimensions, and price points throughout Janesville.
3. Prioritize efforts to increase the amount of housing available to rent and own.
4. Encourage the provision of affordable housing options throughout the City.
5. Support housing options that provide on-site, or accessible, social services.
6. Support rehabilitation of the existing housing stock including restoration of historic resources.
7. Encourage the development of Mixed-Use Neighborhood Centers in new neighborhoods and in existing commercial areas that provide residential, commercial, office, and other uses to residents.
8. Update the zoning and subdivision code to encourage the development of additional housing, to allow mixed-use development through the community, and to support the development of more complete neighborhoods.
9. Explore ways to build generational wealth for traditionally underserved, marginalized communities through home ownership.

Also see Chapter 8 – Housing and Neighborhood Development.

10. Continue to develop on-street and off-street bicycle facilities, as recommended in the Janesville Area MPO Long Range Transportation Plan.
11. Continue to increase the number of streets with sidewalks through implementing the Pedestrian Transportation Corridor Plan.
12. Prioritize the safety of all users in transportation network planning, design, construction, and operations.
13. Increase Downtown Waterfront accessibility, connectivity, and walkability with continued construction, maintenance, and connections of the Riverwalk along the Rock River.
14. Promote the Riverwalk as destination entertainment area and increase business opportunities and amenities along the riverfront.
15. Promote and leverage regional assets related to sports and outdoor recreation activities such as boating, fishing, biking, and hiking.

Also see Chapter 3 – Natural Resources, Chapter 5 – Cultural and Historic Resources, and Chapter 6 – Transportation.



The Janesville Transfer Center is the central hub of public transit in Janesville and is located in Downtown.

Objective 7:

Support the mobility needs of Janesville’s workforce. Maintain existing transit services and improve upon mobility options for workers within Rock County’s labor pool.

Policies and Programs:

1. Maintain and improve upon Janesville Transit System’s Fixed Route Transit system.
2. Maintain transit service to major employment centers, vital community destinations such as grocery stores, healthcare facilities, civic facilities, and childcare facilities as well as high transit potential areas in the City, including the Downtown.
3. Explore partnerships with employers to provide transit service to major employment centers, including areas not currently served by transit, and to encourage workers to ride transit.
4. Explore the potential for micro-transit options, such as ride-hailing shuttle service, to improve workforce accessibility to employment areas during off-peak hours and to areas not served well by transit, including communities outside of the City.
5. Advance passenger rail in the region through coordinated planning efforts with SLATS MPO, Rock County, and other stakeholders. Consider passenger rail service between Janesville-Rockford-Chicago and Janesville-Madison.
6. Work with WisDOT, and other stakeholders, to support Vanpool, Carpool, and other commuter options that provide alternatives to driving alone. Encourage the use of current van pool programs and explore creating a Park & Ride facility near the I-39/90, STH 26, and USH 14 area on the northwest side of the City.

Also See Chapter 6 – Transportation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Continue efforts to expand and grow the industrial sector in Janesville.

Since 2010, the City has experienced substantial investment and growth in the industrial and manufacturing sector. Tax increment financing has been used on 47 projects, totaling over \$70 million in public investment and over \$244 million in private investment. In projects receiving TIF support, nearly 6 million square feet of building space has been constructed or re-developed yielding a guarantee of 2,100 jobs and around \$321 million in assessed value. Growth and development in this sector are not slowing down and Janesville can expect to continue to add more employment, businesses, and property tax base from industrial and manufacturing



GEA is a global food service company that sought out Janesville to break ground on a new manufacturing facility in 2022.

facilities. The City should explore creating a long-term industrial growth plan to help maintain the momentum built over the past decade and plan for future expansion of the City’s corporate limits.

Janesville is a great location for industrial and manufacturing development.

Some of what makes Janesville such a desirable place for investment is the City’s proximity to Class 1 and 2 freight rail lines, Interstate – 39/90, and the Southwest Regional Airport. Janesville has ample water, developable land, and a strong workforce. Janesville’s location in the heart of the Great Lakes region, and likely to experience less severe impacts from Climate Change, provides a long-term opportunity for growth. As the industrial sector grows, the need for additional development will require annexation of property primarily on the Southeast side of the City. Many of these areas identified for future Industrial development are productive agricultural land and the City supports preservation of these areas until demand for urbanized development occurs and property owners are willing to sell to accommodate this growth, see Chapter 4 – Agricultural Resources and Chapter 10 – Intergovernmental Cooperation for more details. Areas on the Future Land Use map that are most likely develop in the next ten to twenty years are colored gray and located between USH 11, USH 51 and CTH G/Beloit Avenue. Other areas will be evaluated for development as opportunities arise.

Park Place Industrial Park continues to grow.

At the corner of USH 11 and CTH G/Beloit Avenue stands a shining beacon of Janesville’s industrial growth. As of 2023, the Park Place Industrial Park is home to several new large industrial buildings that house technology, manufacturing, and production facilities along with a major regional distribution center. The park has received nearly \$17 million in public investment, nearly \$60 million in private investment, and added approximately 2 million square feet of new buildings which provides more than 800 jobs. Continuing growth and development at the Park Place Industrial Park has created a need to expand southward to accommodate projected growth in the industrial sector. Efforts should be made to support the success of areas like this through continued strategic land acquisition, provision of utilities and infrastructure, and use of TIF.



The Dollar General Distribution Center was opened in 2016 and is an anchor employer for Park Place.

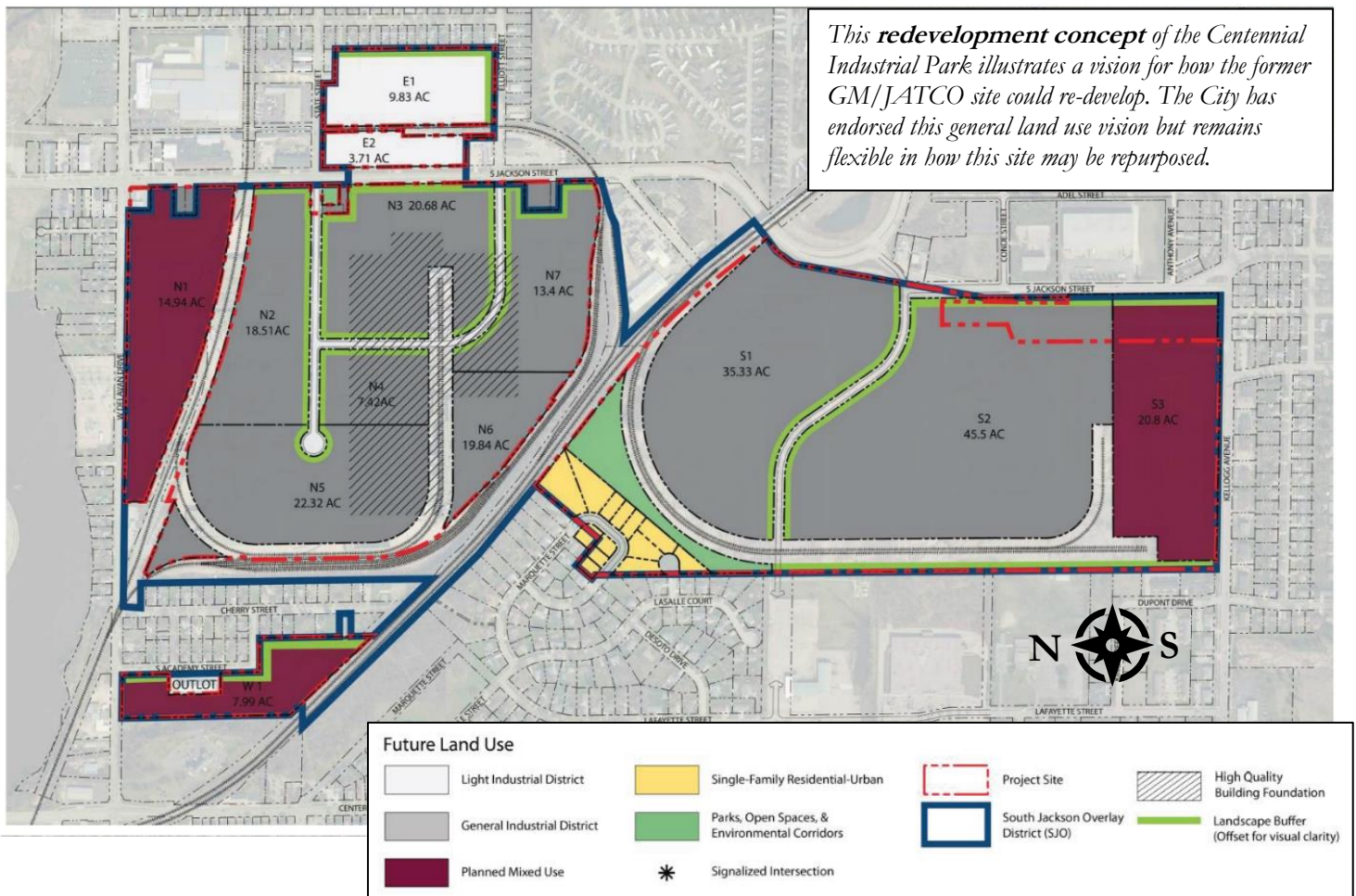
Former GM/JATCO Site primed for a re-birth.

In 2009, the former General Motors Assembly plant closed its doors after nearly 100 years in operation. This major shift in the local economy created opportunities to expand and diversify the economy while creating an opportunity for re-development on the former GM/JATCO Site.

In 2019, Janesville’s Plan Commission approved a general land use plan for the Centennial Industrial Park which sets forth a vision for redeveloping the ~230-acre former GM/JATCO site into a modern industrial park. Access to Class 1/2 freight rail lines, interstate 39/90, and a 50-megawatt power substation with capacity to expand are prime assets for the site. The plan shows the heart of the site being subdivided into smaller parcels and developed in phases for industrial use. Mixed-use development along the northern and southern borders of the site would provide a transition the site and the surrounding neighborhoods. The Centennial Industrial Park Plan provides a general vision for the site that has been endorsed by the City. There remains a great deal of flexibility in how the site can be redeveloped. Given the central location of this site within the City, the large footprint of the site, and the excellent assets available, the City should capitalize on this unique opportunity to ensure that high-quality redevelopment occurs on the site.



Created in 2019, the Centennial Industrial Park Plan considers redevelopment opportunities at the former GM site.



Strengthen the entrepreneurial infrastructure and resources needed to grow strong, resilient business ventures.

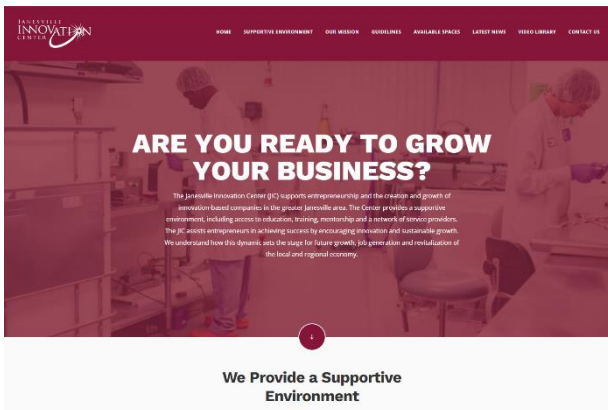
Opened in 2013, the Janesville Innovation Center (JIC) is a small business incubator operated by the non-profit Janesville Innovation, Inc. (JII). The initial funding for the center was provided through a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration, a financial match from the City of Janesville Tax Increment Finance program, and assistance from MSA Professional Services. The JIC partners with the U.S. Department of Commerce – Economic Development Administration, City of Janesville, Rock County, Janesville Foundation, Alliant Energy, The Janesville Art League, and the George Parker Foundation.



The Janesville Innovation Center is a business incubator that supports Janesville's pipeline for homegrown businesses.

Startup businesses launching from JIC Office and Manufacturing Suites are provided with a turn-key space with water, sewer, heating, lighting, electric, fiber internet, and phone systems to simplify the business planning process and allow the startup to focus on their innovative activities. The JIC provides approachable and affordable office and manufacturing space alongside a suite of wrap around services that include access to education, training, mentors, business assessments and planning, networking, and access to working capital. Entrepreneurs seeking to start up their businesses in manufacturing, technology, healthcare, and consumer goods have all found success at the JIC.

In addition to the services provided directly at JIC, entrepreneurs can access consulting, business education, referrals, sophisticated tools, and resources through Wisconsin's Small Business Development Center (SBDC). These resources are available to individuals that are just getting started or looking for ways to improve their businesses. After three to five years of successful incubation, the JIC encourages startups to move into other spaces in Janesville that are typically larger, more permanent, and capable of supporting business expansion. The JIC is only the first step in the pipeline for developing homegrown companies in Janesville.



The City could also support the startup and entrepreneurial environment by working with local, regional, and state-level partners on additional funding and business coaching opportunities. Encouraging the community's educational partners to connect students with JIC and other programming that will create a

supportive environment for aspiring entrepreneurs. The City could further support the startup and entrepreneurial environment in Janesville by recognizing the need for medium-sized (10,000-30,000 square feet) commercial spaces that startups can graduate into after establishing a healthy business. The City has been experiencing considerable growth in the construction of new, large-footprint buildings that are 100,000+ square feet in size; however, encouraging

construction of “middle” size commercial spaces is important for increasing the City’s ability to nurture and retain Janesville’s successful startups.

Continue to pursue investment and redevelopment of City “Gateways” and underutilized commercial corridors.

Decade of success with infill and refill development.

Over the past decade Janesville has experienced investment and redevelopment along the City’s “Gateways” and major commercial corridors. This included development of new apartment buildings, retail spaces, and social service spaces. The fallout from long-term decline, along with the effect 2008 financial crisis, left many retail and commercial buildings vacant and precipitated the need for reinvention and revitalization. Private sector reinvestment has brought significant new life to the Cities regional commercial hub near the intersection of Humes Road and Milton Avenue. The



Diamond Ridge opened in 2021 on former City-owned land and provides 115 rental units.

former K-mart store was demolished to make way for Festival Foods accompanied by several smaller mixed retail and office spaces which created a thriving commercial district. HyVee grocery renovated the former Shopko building to create a high-end grocery experience in Janesville. Both developments have helped to create substantial options for residents accessing food and groceries, and have generated new tax base, new jobs, and provided a suite of amenities for residents. Elsewhere near the Milton Avenue Corridor, Diamond Ridge Apartments was

constructed at the former Janesville Boys Baseball Facility, providing badly needed housing options. While this corridor possesses other locations that are primed for reinvestment, the success in recovering from the blighting influence of prior vacant buildings along Milton Avenue is something to celebrate and to leverage for future development.

Other corridors in Janesville have also experienced reinvention. Along Center Avenue the closing of a grocery store provided an opportunity for Rock County to consolidate many of their social services and offices into the Dr. Daniel Hale Williams Rock County Resource Center. Further south on Center Avenue, Oak Terrace Apartment brought several new 3-bedroom apartments to a formerly vacant and underutilized commercial property. On the westside of Janesville, Lloyd’s True Value was recently constructed to add vibrancy commercial area that also includes a grocery store, restaurants, auto service facilities, and fitness facilities.



Opened in 2023, the HyVee grocery replaced a long vacant former Shopko center.



Janesville is poised to capitalize on the successes of the past decade and continue to move forward in reinventing and revitalizing the Cities “gateways” and underutilized commercial corridors.

Redevelopment vision in the making

At a focus group meeting that occurred on August 3rd, 2023, around 25 members of the public, business community, education community, City Council, and others met to discuss economic development in Janesville. This meeting was facilitated by City Staff and Forward Janesville. Participants were invited to sit in small groups to discuss a variety of topics that included how to sustain the economic growth experienced over the past decade and spur new types of growth, orienting the local workforce development pipeline to align with the community’s vision for the economy, and what community and economic development focus areas the City should embrace coming out of this plan update. The discussions and feedback provided informed the adaption of previously stated Goals, Objectives, Policies/Programs, and Recommendations into this updated format.

During the event, many of the comments echoed the themes of this plan update. This included topics such as creating more complete neighborhoods, creating safer and more complete streets for all users, improving commercial corridors through creating a strong sense of place in neighborhood activity centers outside of Downtown, improving access to healthy food, and ensuring that the City’s land use regulations are modernized to deliver higher and better-quality urban places.

As this plan moves to implementation, those corridors and sub-areas that receive attention for more detailed planning can take guidance from the comments shared at the focus group meeting and reflected throughout the plan. In general, this means that corridor planning should seek to address:

- *Creating a sense of place* – through well-designed buildings, site plans, reforms to parking standards, improved greenspaces and streetscapes, well-situated outdoor spaces, distinct food, and retail options, and activating the areas with special events these areas can transition away from being car dominated spaces to people centered places.
- *Addressing housing supply and affordability* – through seeking to include residential units as a core component of redevelopment. Specifically targeting efforts to provide a mixture of dwelling units affordable to households at the area median income as well as subsidized affordable units for those earning less than the area median income. These units may be in buildings with commercial, retail uses, or they may be including on the same site as other uses.
- *Adding residential density to support sustainable “neighborhood-serving” districts* – through including buildings with a moderate density of residential units as well as buildings with mixed residential and commercial/office spaces. In general, the commercial/office uses



Buildings that include street-level retail, outdoor spaces, and include residential units help to create a sense of place that is not car-centered and more urban. Forge and Flare Apartments in Oak, Creek, WI

are encouraged to replace existing square footage and increase available square footage with the addition of new residential units within the area. Efforts should be made to include spaces that are of different sizes, including opportunities for a small-medium scale grocery store in areas with limited access to groceries.

- *Creating more walkable, bikeable, and transit supporting places* – through providing safe and comfortable walking and bicycling pathways to and from these places while prioritizing efforts to make the corridor streetscape safer and more comfortable for vulnerable users. With an increase of moderate density housing in these areas, there will be greater opportunities for households to regularly, and efficiently, travel by lower carbon emitting means than driving, such as walking, biking, and riding public transit.
- *Improving the Quality of Life for neighborhoods, residents, and workers* – through redesigning these areas with the intention of creating spaces that can become third places, or places for people to linger, socialize, and connect that isn't home or work, nearby residents will experience increased access to amenities that support community health and well-being. Through creating more vibrant “neighborhood-serving” commercial districts there will be stronger support for local businesses, opportunities to address issues of food access, and more opportunity for the workers who help operate these places to have satisfying community-serving employment.
- *Supporting the creation of complete neighborhoods* – through creating neighborhood mixed use activity centers, Janesville can substantially increase the quality and completeness of neighborhoods across many areas of the City.

What is Planned Mixed Use?

In Appendix X, general future land use plans exist for all of Janesville’s major “gateways” and corridors. The sub area plans are designed to suggest specific opportunities and implementation strategies that should be pursued within designated areas of the City to help determine whether proposed developments are consistent with this plan and make recommendations for how to

catalyze higher and better uses unique to a particular area or corridor. The sub area plans expand upon the future land use categories, found in Chapter 2, which each contain a set of policies that guide their implementation.

While some future land use categories, such as General Commercial, identify only a single type, or category, of future land use, several areas along Janesville’s commercial corridors fall under the “Planned Mixed Use” future land use designation. So, what does this mean? In general, this future land use designation allows for a mixture of retail, commercial, office, and residential options to be developed on the same site or within the same building. This mixing can occur horizontally, where several buildings are located on a site each with different uses, or vertically, where



The Lamphouse building in Waunakee, WI has helped to add character, residents, and retail space to their Downtown while improving walkability, bike ability, and the completeness of surrounding neighborhoods.

multiple uses occur in a single building such as when a building contains first-floor retail with residential options above. When residential buildings are mixed with retail, commercial, and office uses they create the opportunity to become part of the fabric of a neighborhood.

The planned mixed-use designation applies to areas of existing development with the potential for redevelopment into better, higher uses along with areas targeted for new development on greenfield sites. In general, this designation is included on older commercial corridors that have been underutilized and have opportunity for reinvestment, reinvention, and revitalization.

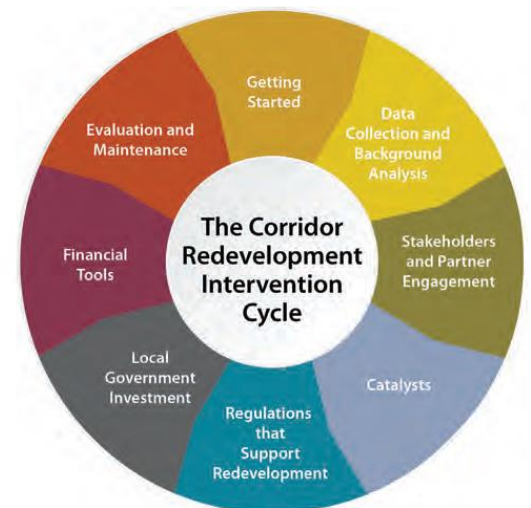
Opportunity now for long-term redevelopment and reinvention.

Given the successes of the past decade, the present provides an opportunity to help setup the long-term commitment that is needed to truly reinvent a commercial corridor. What cannot be understated is that corridor reinvention takes “short-term momentum and long-term patience”³⁰ this type of process takes many years to implement and requires commitment from the public sector, private sector, and civil society to craft a vision and be patient in seeking to deliver on its promises. While these types of processes involve a great many steps and actions, a few key steps are identified below.

A 2021 report from the American Planning Association titled “Corridor Redevelopment Strategies” describes a corridor redevelopment intervention cycle. This kind of holistic approach to corridor redevelopment provides a comprehensive suite of actions and strategies that are vital to delivering timely and appropriate interventions. Below is adapted from that publication.

The planning process for this sort of effort generally includes:

- *Data collection and background analysis* – to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to redevelopment of a targeted corridor or redevelopment area.
- *Stakeholder and partner engagement* – to help create consensus, building an authentic vision, and activate essential players who will help to sustain efforts throughout the life of the cycle.
- *Catalysts* – identifying catalyst sites, projects, and actions provides ways to help jump-start interventions, establish proof of concept, conduct market assessments, and help to draw in new investments.
- *Regulations that support redevelopment* – land use regulations that provides the right allowed uses, dimensions, and other elements will ensure that concepts developers want to pursue and developments that deliver the goal outcomes are possible and financially feasible.



The Corridor Redevelopment Intervention Cycle created by Luis Nunez in PAS 258 “Commercial Corridor Redevelopment Strategies”.

³⁰ PAS 258

- *Local government involvement* – Aggressively pursuing implementation through techniques like the adoption of a statutory redevelopment plan; establishment of a redevelopment tax increment financing district; possible brownfield remediation; possible site acquisition, consolidation, and demolition; and developer recruitment.
- *Private sector involvement* – supporting the creation of, and participating in, public-private partnerships, making investments in the redevelopment area, and championing redevelopment efforts.
- *Financial tools* – using the full suite of financial tools available to the City and the private sector will help to optimize public-private partnerships and investment. These investments might include utility upgrades, street upgrades, the use of TIF funds, etc.
- *Evaluation and maintenance* – tracking and analyzing outcomes is essential to fine-tuning strategies, being able to celebrate successes, and ensure key stakeholders and partners remains focused and committed over the long-term.

Where brownfields are identified in the redevelopment planning process, the following list of special steps is advised for successful brownfield remediation and reuse.

- ◆ *Resource Procurement* - To ensure the successful redevelopment of these sites, considerable capital must also be raised for remediation and redevelopment. Funding assistance from state, federal, and other public agencies, as well as from non-profit and foundation sources should be sought.
- ◆ *Environmental Assessment* - Successful redevelopment of brownfields is not possible without a thorough understanding of the environmental conditions present on the site. The first step is to conduct a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), which entails an analysis of potential environmental concerns at the site. Following a Phase I ESA is a Phase II ESA which includes soil and groundwater sampling to determine the existence and extent of the perceived potential contamination.
- ◆ *Site Control* - Successful brownfield assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment hinges on access to the site. This can be achieved either through a cooperative relationship with the property owner, or through purchase of the property by the municipality. Consequently, working with property owners to negotiate property access or acquisition and to determine a relocation strategy, when necessary, is critical.
- ◆ *Developer Recruitment and Enrollment in the State's Voluntary Cleanup Program* - It is important to seek out developers whose skills and portfolios best meet the end use and site-specific requirements of each brownfield redevelopment project. A determination of a developer's desire of a No Further Action (NFA) letter from Wisconsin DNR Voluntary Cleanup Program should be made early in the discussions, and enrollment in the program should occur early to facilitate WisDNR buy-in to the project, if an NFA letter is required by the developer.
- ◆ *Environmental Remediation and Construction* - Once issues of site control have been adequately dealt with, environmental remediation, if necessary, should occur. Remedial actions are often developed most efficiently when a developer has been secured for the site, so that new construction can be used as a remedial method.

Apply Design Standards for Commercial and Industrial Development

To ensure the development of projects that complement the character and enhances the image of Janesville the City should adopt and administer high-quality design standards. Such standards should apply to all new development and redevelopment projects in the City. Enforcement of these standards will be particularly important along key corridors such as Milton Avenue, West Court Street, Delavan Drive, East Milwaukee Street, Center Avenue, and at major entryways to the community such as Racine Street or the Avalon Road interchange.

Janesville addresses some of the following design standards in its zoning ordinance. The City should review its ordinance and consider including the following standards for future commercial, mixed use, and office developments. All industrial projects should incorporate standards “a through m” below, and industrial projects that are clearly visible from adjacent streets and highways should also incorporate standards “n through o” below.

- a. Common private driveways serving more than one use, wherever possible.
- b. High quality landscaping treatment of buffer yards, street frontages, paved areas, and building foundations.
- c. Street trees along all public street frontages.
- d. Intensive activity areas such as building entrances, service and loading areas, parking lots, and trash receptacle storage areas oriented away from less intensive land uses.
- e. Parking lots landscaped with perimeter landscaping and/or landscaped islands, along with screening to block views from streets and residential uses, with shared parking where appropriate.
- f. Parking oriented to the sides and rear of buildings, where appropriate, rather than having all parking in the front.
- g. Signage that is high quality and not excessive in height or total square footage.
- h. Location of loading docks, dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and outdoor storage areas behind buildings and away from less intensive land uses.
- i. Complete screening of loading docks, dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and outdoor storage areas through use of landscaping, walls, and architectural features.
- j. Safe, convenient, and separated pedestrian and bicycle access to the site from the parking areas to the buildings and to adjacent commercial developments.
- k. Site design features that allow pedestrians to walk parallel to moving cars.
- l. Illumination from lighting kept on site through use of cut-off fixtures.
- m. Use of high-quality building materials, such as brick, wood, stone, tinted masonry, and architectural metal and tilt-up panels.
- n. Canopies, awnings, trellises, bays, and windows to add visual interest to facades.
- o. Variations in building height and roof lines, including parapets, multi-planed and pitched roofs, and staggered building facades (variations in wall-depth or direction).
- p. All building facades containing architectural details and of similar quality as the front building façade.
- q. Central features that add to community character, such as patios and benches.

- r. Avoidance of linear, “strip commercial” development patterns within multi-occupant development projects. Arrange and group buildings so that their orientation complements adjacent, existing development; frames adjacent street intersections and parking lots; features pedestrian and/or vehicle access ways and spaces; and properly consider the arrangement of parking lots, gathering spaces, and other site amenities.
- s. Design parking and circulation areas so that vehicles can move from one area of the site to another (and from one site to the adjacent site) without re-entering a street.

Apart from ordinance standards, Figures 9.2, 9.3, and 9.4 on the following pages include general design guidance for three types of commercial development projects: indoor retail, service, and community facilities (small to moderate scale); indoor retail, service, and community facilities (large scale); and neighborhood commercial, community facilities, and mixed use.

Figure 9.1: Indoor Retail, Service, and Community Facility Development Layout (Small to Moderate Scale)

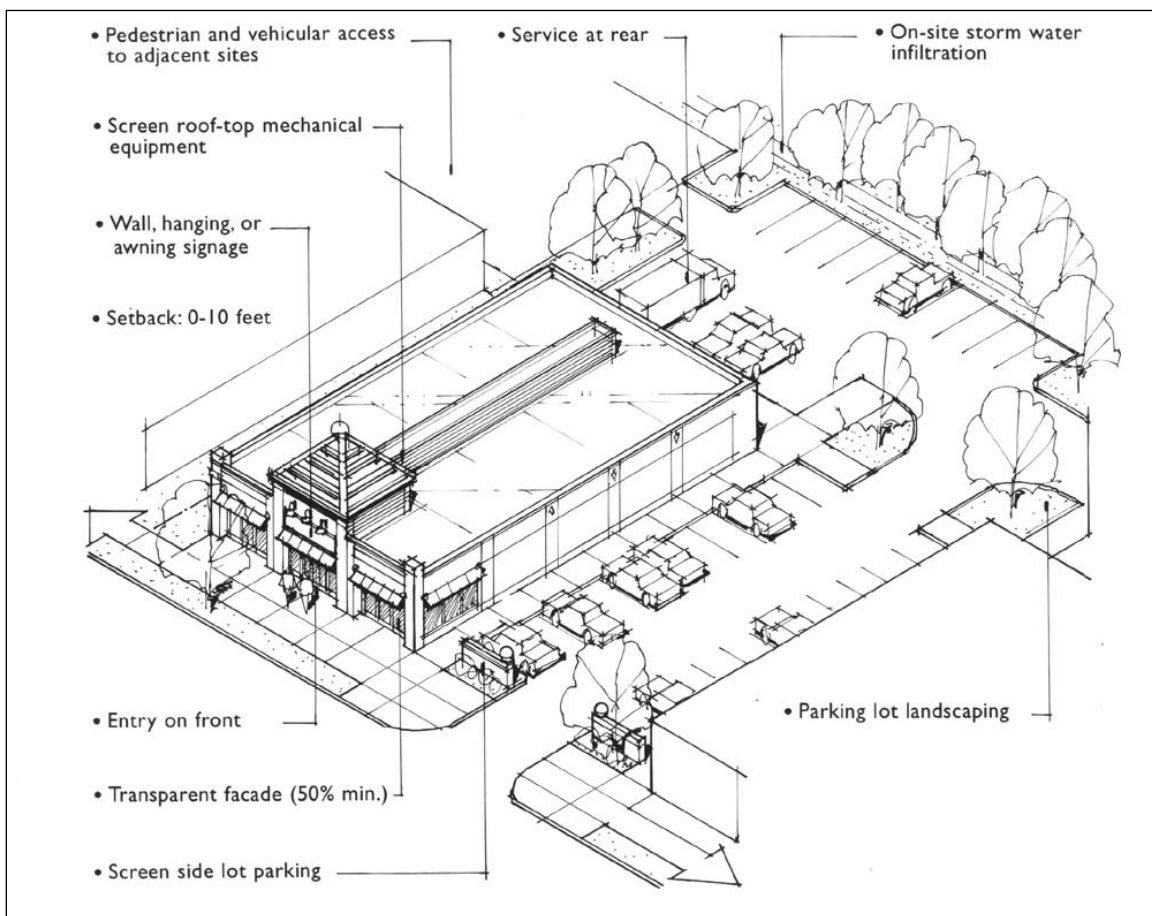


Figure 9.2: Large Indoor Retail and Service Development Layout

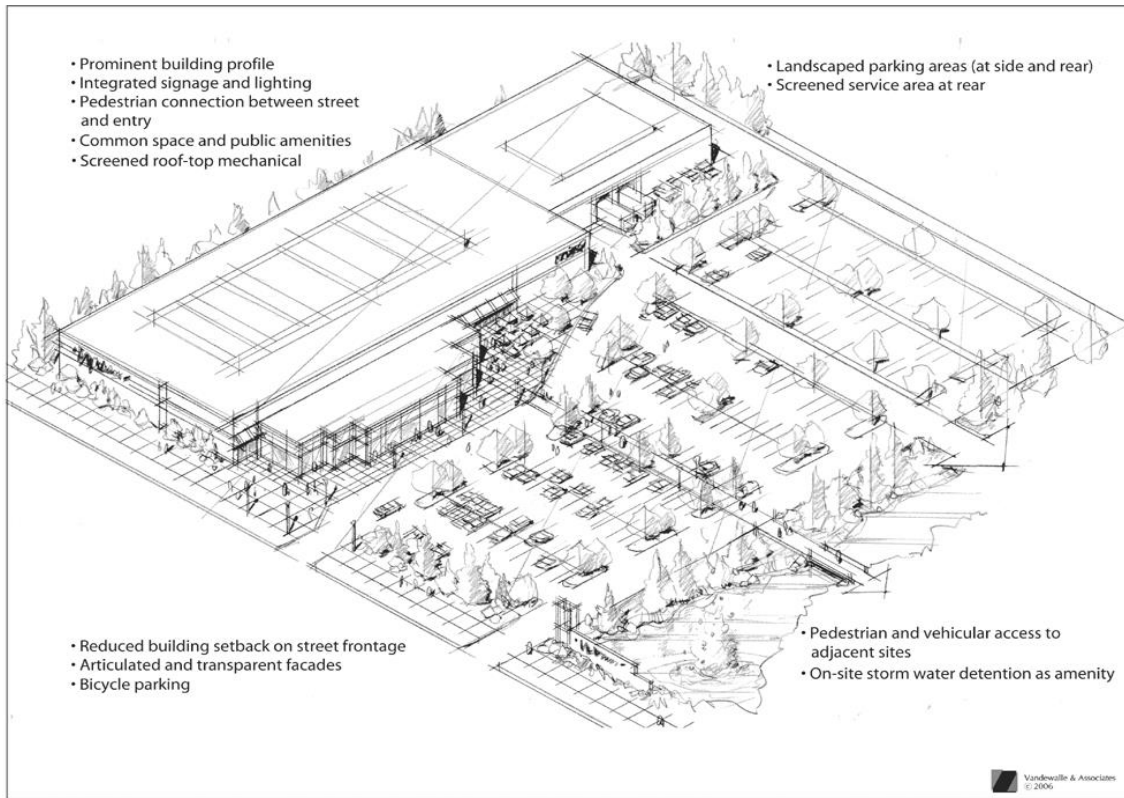
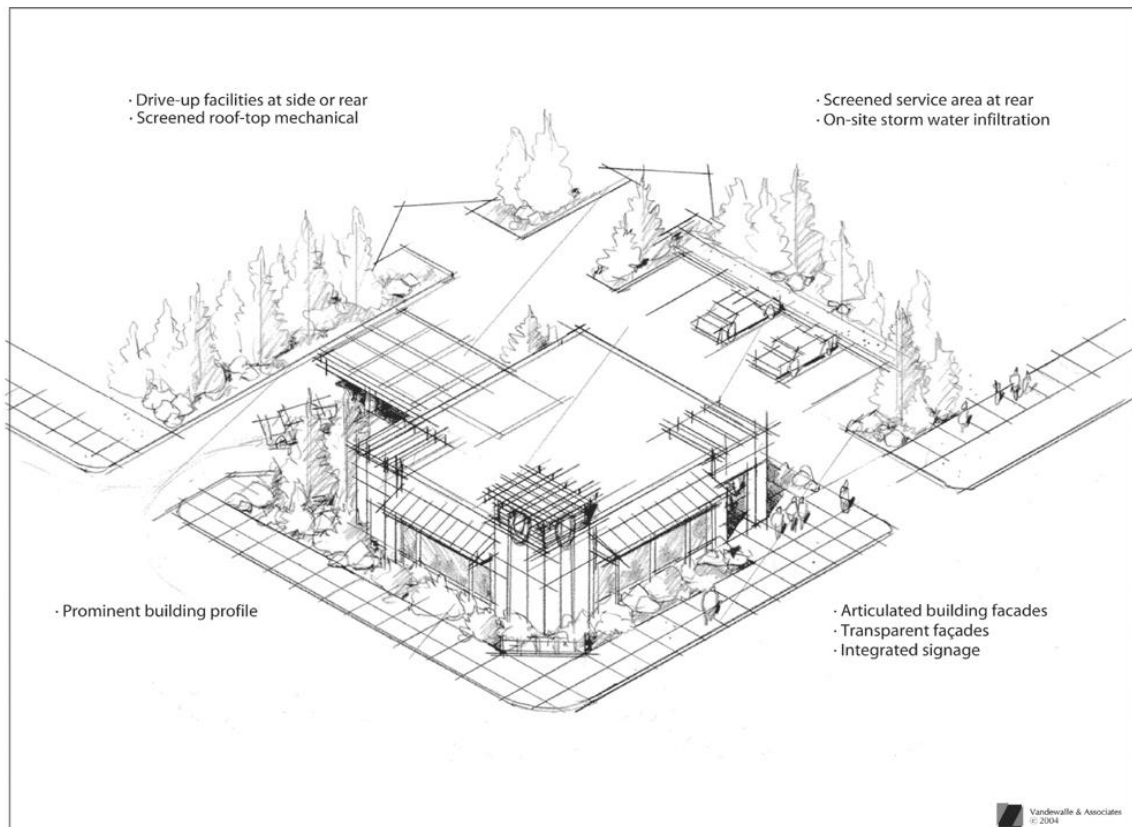


Figure 9.3: Neighborhood Business, Community Facilities, Mixed-Use



Explore creating a formal Business Retention and Expansion Program in partnership with community partners.

Economic Development Organizations commonly form Business and Retention and Expansion (BRE) teams as a less costly and time intensive strategy to improve the local business climate, compared to recruiting new businesses. Some important elements of an effective BRE program are outlined below.

Establishing a Business Retention and Expansion Team:

- The BRE team coordinates responses to issues that individual businesses are concerned about, or warning flags, and creates strategies to improve or maintain the health of local businesses.
- The size of the team can vary, but establishing strong rapport with the local business community, educational institutions, and community stakeholders are essential to a BRE programs success.
- Economic Development professionals typically join BRE teams because their role includes connecting businesses to state and local programs and acting as a liaison between business and government departments. This can be a recruitment tool as well as a development tool.
- A City of Janesville BRE Program could work in tandem with community partners to collaborate across sectors to improve the success and viability of businesses.

Identifying Warning Flags:

- Individual businesses that have specific identifiable issues or concerns can reveal early warning flags that are useful to be aware of before the problem becomes worse.
- BRE Programs typically involve a standardized business survey that asks local business owners questions that can be useful to uncover any early warning flags present. As the BRE team grows in familiarity with the individual business owners, the business survey can take on a looser and more conversational format that dynamically adapts to that business.
- An effective BRE Program might incorporate determining the degree of urgency of a warning flag and identify the organization or person responsible for follow up.
- Business survey responses as well as dynamic conversations between the BRE team and the business are to be held strictly in confidence to prevent speculation from occurring or rumors from circulating amongst the business community.

Offer Assistance to Individual Business:

- BRE team members, tailoring specifically to the discovered concerns, may provide market analysis data to the business owner, and then help them to apply the information to their operations.
- Identify funding sources that may be available that suit the needs of the business and educate the local business owner so that a pathway is clear for addressing the warning flag.
- The BRE team members may offer input on redesigning their marketing plan or provide insight on adapting to business and marketing trends.
- The BRE Program is not the sole provider of assistance to businesses, and outreach to the Small Business Development Center counselors, Main Street program business specialists, SCORE business counselors are all critical parts of the assistance effort.

Develop Strategies for Business Retention and Expansion:

- Strategies may take a simple form, such as hosting group workshops to meet community training needs. Others may be more sophisticated, such as forming cooperative purchasing alliances or launching group advertising initiatives.
- Align efforts with other local organizations that have common goals for the business community.
- The BRE team will develop a system to keep track of when BRE visits with businesses occur, the findings of the visits, the appropriate follow through, and who is responsible for the different actionable items.
- When local businesses receive state level assistance, the BRE team might check in with those recipients over time and gauge how helpful it was to their business.

An example of a business survey utilized during a BRE visit is outlined below:

1. Regarding your business, what keeps you up at night?
2. What are your existing products/services, and are there new products/services envisioned down the road?
3. In production of your products/services, are there opportunities for automation, new equipment, or expansion?
4. What are your biggest challenges for growth?
5. In your experience, what are some of the keys to success in our community?
6. How can we help?

[Page Left Intentionally Blank]