



SOUTHWEST JANESVILLE AREA PLAN

A PLANNING DOCUMENT FOR THE CITY OF JANESVILLE, WISCONSIN
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Vandewalle & Associates
Madison & Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Acknowledgements

Common Council:

Thomas Brien, President
Craig DeGarmo, Vice-President
Victoria Damron
Paul Murphy
Harry O'Leary
Russ Steeber
Paul Williams

Plan Commission:

Harry O'Leary, Chair
Bob Boldt, Secretary
Richard Mason
Paul Murphy
Anda O'Connell
Kathy Voskuil
John Wickhem

City Staff:

Brad Cantrell, Planning Director
Duane Cherek, Senior Planner
Richard Haviza, Senior Planner
Julie Esterl, Planning Assistant
Tera Barnett, Secretary

City of Janesville Planning Department
P.O. Box 5005
Janesville, WI 53547-5005
Phone (608) 755-3085
www.ci.janesville.wi.us

Consultant Staff:

Mark Roffers, AICP, Project Manager
Brian Munson, Lead Urban Designer
Michael Slavney, AICP Principal Planner
Rob Gottschalk, RLA, Principal Urban Designer
Aaron Brault, Cartographer
Joe Maschek, Associate Designer
Jeff Maloney, Associate Designer
Ellen Hall, Publications
Nicole Anderson, Administrative Assistant

VANDEWALLE & ASSOCIATES
120 East Lakeside Street
Madison, WI 53715
Phone: (608) 255-3988
www.vandewalle.com

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Executive Summary

In the Spring of 2000 the City Council directed the Janesville Planning Department to prepare a *Southwest Janesville Area Plan*. The purpose of the planning effort was to identify a land use and the transportation network in an area located on either side of the planned Highway 11 Bypass, starting approximately one mile north of Court Street and following the Bypass south and east across the Rock River to Beloit Avenue. The selected planning area encompasses over 2,100 acres and the Planning Department projects that approximately 5,000 people may reside in this area within the next 20 to 25 years. The City Council requested the preparation of the *Plan* primarily to address the concern that the opening of the Bypass would increase growth pressures and encourage development proposals without the benefit of adequate planning. The City Council wanted take a proactive approach and have an adopted plan in place in order to assist them in evaluating future development proposals in the area.

The Janesville Planning Department contracted with Vandewalle & Associates, a planning consulting firm, to assist with the preparation of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan*. The planning process included two public informational meetings through which area residents and property owners provided their opinions about the future planning and development of the area. In addition, the consultant and Planning Department conducted several meetings with major property owners and governmental jurisdictions including Rock and Janesville Townships, the Janesville School District, University of Wisconsin-Rock County, and officials from Rock County to gain further input. Through the public review process, many comments were received and the *Plan* was adjusted. In summary, the *resulting Southwest Janesville Area Plan*:

1. Identifies a neighborhood commercial development opportunity at the northeast corner of Highway 51 and the Bypass (Highway 351), which could transition into a business park area further to the east.
2. Identifies industrial development opportunities adjoining and north of the Rock County Airport and southwest of the Beloit Avenue and Bypass (Highway 351) intersection.
3. Encourages the redevelopment and infill of existing commercial land along West Court Street and Center Avenue and discourages the further “stripping” and scattering of commercial uses in other areas.
4. Encourages the preservation of agricultural land adjoining the Bypass west of the Rock River and suggests that premature development be prohibited there.
5. Identifies residential development opportunities on the west side of the River along Afton Road and on the east side of the River generally north of Avalon Road. Future residential development adjoining the Bypass should be buffered through a combination of larger setbacks, berming, and landscaping.

6. Provides an opportunity for the University of Wisconsin-Rock County to expand to the south and identifies an access point from South River Road to the campus.
7. Identifies preferred sites for future parks and recreation areas, schools, greenbelts and drainage areas. Mapped greenbelt areas provide connections between neighborhoods, parks, schools, and commercial areas. They also serve multiple stormwater and recreational functions.
8. Delineates an interconnected off-road bike trail system that will extend throughout the planning area along existing and planned trail alignments. Major extensions include a trail along the west side of the River linking Rockport Park with the bike trail along the Bypass and the residential area southwest of the Bypass and a second trail extending north from Rockport Park through a greenbelt system to Parker High School and other planned public facilities in the area.
9. Provides for the future extension of the Bypass north of West Court Street.
10. Delineates a planned local street network designed to provide multiple street connections to and through all new subdivisions, parks, and school sites.

The *Plan* should provide a solid foundation for decision makers to use to evaluate future development proposals on Janesville's southwest side. The *Plan*, however, should not be thought of as a rigid set of requirements for future development, but rather as a guide to be used in land use and transportation decision making. As socioeconomic conditions change, unforeseen development occurs, and actual site conditions become more evident, the *Plan* must be flexible enough to respond to these changing conditions. For example, the *Plan's* identified locations for streets, greenbelts, and drainage areas may need to be adjusted when more in depth engineering analyses are conducted for development proposals in those areas.

In addition, it should be emphasized that the *Plan* is not a zoning map. The identification of appropriate land use types does not imply that all areas are immediately appropriate to be rezoned. The rezoning process is on-going and must consider the availability of public utilities and streets; availability of similar types of vacant zoned land at a given point in time; and the impact of the rezoning decision on other City goals, objectives, and policies.

It is intended that this *Plan* be approved by the City of Janesville Plan Commission and the City Council as a component of the Janesville Comprehensive (Master) Plan.

I. Introduction

This *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* (also referred to as “*Plan*”) has been prepared as a component of the City’s master plan under Section 62.23, Wisconsin Statutes. The purpose of the *Plan* is to provide detailed recommendations for the arrangement of future land uses, development and subdivision layout, transportation, natural drainageways, greenbelts, parks, schools, and trails within the planning area.

This detailed plan will provide landowners, developers, and public decision-makers with an understanding of the City’s overall expectations for the future development of the planning area. The City recognizes the need to work with other governments to implement the *Plan*, including Rock County, Town of Rock, Town of Janesville, School District of Janesville, and the University of Wisconsin—Rock County.

The *Plan* has a 20 to 25-year time horizon. For purposes of simplicity, a 20-year planning period will be referenced throughout the remainder of this document. This does not mean that every square inch of land anticipated for development will, in fact, be developed over this period. The *Plan* cannot in any way force property owners to develop their land or annex to the City. Where development projects are proposed, however, they should be generally consistent with the *Plan*. The City should consider making improvements or modifications to this *Plan* as future private development proposals are brought forward, provided that the objectives of this *Plan* are met. Also, subsequent detailed engineering and environmental analyses may necessitate adjustments to the ultimate layout of land uses, greenbelts, and roads.

Several existing plans covering the planning area set the framework for the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan*. These include the City of Janesville-Town of Rock Cooperative Boundary Plan, the City of Janesville Comprehensive Plan and Growth Concept Plan, the Southwest Area Stormwater Management Plan, the City of Janesville Bike Trail Plan, pre-existing neighborhood development plans for small parts of the planning area, the Rock County Airport Master Plan, and land use plans for the Towns of Rock and Janesville. In instances where conflicts between the recommendations of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* and previous City-adopted plans occur, the recommendations of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* should take precedence in City decision making.

This *Plan* was guided by several efforts to involve the public and other stakeholders, including:

- Interviews with representatives from the affected local governments and public institutions.
- An open house held on May 15, 2001 to present and obtain public input on a concept plan map. Approximately 175 area property owners and residents attended that first open house.
- A second open house held on November 1, 2001 to present and obtain public input on draft detailed plan maps. Approximately 100 area property owners and residents attended that second open house.
- A formal public hearing in front of the City Plan Commission on April 1, 2002.

II. Existing Conditions

A. Location

The detailed planning area includes over 2,100 acres on the City's far west and south sides, including lands in the surrounding towns of Rock and Janesville. On the west side, the planning area is generally bounded by Parker High School and the Rock River on the east, the U.S. Highway 11 Bypass on the west and south, and the quarter-sections directly north of Mineral Point Road on the north. On the south side, the planning area generally includes all lands between the Rock County Regional Airport, Burbank Avenue, Beloit Avenue and the Rock River. Nearly all of this southern section of the planning area is within the Janesville Sewer Service Area, where the City anticipates that urban development may occur over the next 20 years. A significant portion of the western section of the planning area is also within the limits of the Sewer Service Area.

B. Natural Features

The planning area is relatively flat to gently undulating, with hills growing larger north of Court Street on the west side. There are few steep slopes, except near the Rock River (west of Afton Road and east of River Road) and other creeks. There are few wooded areas, which makes their continued preservation important to the character of the area. Bedrock is found near the ground surface in the western part of the planning area, primarily south of West Court Street.

The Rock River and its tributaries are perhaps the most significant natural features in the planning area. Tributaries include Fisher Creek and Markham Creek extending from the west side of the River, and a major drainageway extending from the east side of the River north of the Airport. There are large areas of floodplain and some wetlands associated with the River and its tributaries. These form the foundation for future additions to the City's "greenbelt" system. Greenbelts provide natural stormwater management, wildlife habitat, recreational open space and trails, and attractive views. Their preservation as open space also prevents private property damage and provides an amenity for nearby development.

Of cultural significance, the Heider Farm, home of "Miracle" the white buffalo, is located east of River Road and north of Avalon Road. Given the presence of the Rock River in



Creek corridors will form a west side greenbelt system.

particular, there may also be Native American archeological sites within the area.

C. Existing Land Use Pattern

The planning area is marked by a transition between the City's urban land use pattern and a rural land use pattern. The western part of the planning area is almost completely undeveloped, with most of this land in crop production. Widely spaced rural homes also dot this landscape.

The southern part of the planning area, east of the Rock River, contains a more diverse existing land use pattern. There are strips of existing rural residences on Avalon Road and River Road, the new Keeneland Estates city subdivision, some commercial strip development along Center Avenue (Highway 51), and contractor and distribution shops between Highway 51, Avalon Road, Oakhill Avenue, and the Airport. The extension of sanitary sewer and water services to this area in the mid-1990s has spurred additional development interest.

Two major public facilities are also located in the southern part of the planning area. The Rock County Regional Airport is located at its southern edge. The Airport is capable of handling larger jet aircraft. Predominant air traffic is from corporate users and freight shipping. The Airport has two main runways, with runway protection zones and noise areas extending off the ends of both runways into the planning area. Residential uses are not recommended for these areas. Rock County also maintains height restrictions within three miles of the Airport.



Rock County Regional Airport with planning area to north (Courtesy of State Bureau of Aeronautics).

The University of Wisconsin—Rock County is located at the intersection of River Road and Kellogg Avenue. The UW—Rock County is a freshman-sophomore campus with an enrollment of approximately 800 students. The curriculum consists of liberal arts and pre-professional courses. Set on 50 rolling acres adjacent to the Rock River, the campus includes three major buildings.

D. Existing Transportation Facilities

With completion of the Highway 11 Bypass in 2002, the planning area has superior transportation access. This includes highway, rail, air, bike, and even water access.

The Highway 11 Bypass was a major impetus for the preparation of this *Southwest Janesville Area Plan*, due both to the access improvements and potential negative impacts (e.g., noise, premature development). The Bypass extends from West Court Street on the far west side, crosses the Rock River north of the Loch Lomond subdivision area and Avalon Road, and links with Avalon Road/Highway 351 at its intersection with Highway 51. The Bypass connects with Interstate 90 about 1½ miles east of Beloit Avenue. The Bypass is a four-lane divided highway between Afton Road and the Interstate. There are interchanges at Afton Road, River Road, and Oakhill Avenue, and a signalized intersection at Highway 51. West and north of Afton Road, the Bypass narrows to two lanes, with the intersecting Janesville-Hanover Road serving as the only access between Afton Road and Court Street. The State only acquired enough right-of-way west of Afton Road for two lanes. Future developments adjoining the bypass will likely require right-of-way reservations and dedications.

Highway 51 (Center Avenue) connects the cities of Janesville and Beloit through the south part of the planning area. The planning area also includes several historic farm roads. These include Mineral Point Road, Rockport Road, Austin Road, Janesville-Hanover Road, Avalon Road, Oakhill Avenue, and two scenic “river” roads—Afton Road and River Road. Afton Road, west of the river, connects Janesville to the historic rural community of Afton, which is south of the planning area. River Road, east of the River, hugs the riverbank and is predominantly in the floodplain. These farm and river roads form the basis for a future collector road network within the planning area.

The Rock County Regional Airport has already been discussed. There is also a major rail yard roughly ½ mile east of Beloit Avenue, crossing the Highway 11 Bypass. Two other rail lines (Wisconsin & Southern and I&M Rail Line) cross the western part of the planning area. The Wisconsin & Southern runs



The rail line in the western part of planning area effectively divides this area in two pieces.

between Hanover and Rockport Roads and the I&M parallels the west side of the Rock River. The Wisconsin & Southern effectively divides the western part of the planning area into two pieces, thereby limiting new crossing opportunities. The Janesville Transit System provides bus service to UW—Rock County along Kellogg Avenue and to Waveland Road near the western part of the planning area.

E. Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities

Rockport Park, located south of Rockport Road and west of Crosby Avenue, is the largest and most diverse park in the planning area. This regional park contains a swimming pool, playground, picnic pavilion with restrooms and many miles of skiing and hiking trails. Western parts of Rockport Park contain areas of relatively steep slopes.

The southern part of the planning area contains the undeveloped Prairie Knoll Community Park (40 acres) along Oakhill Avenue and an unnamed park/open space (50 acres) between Jackson Elementary School and an industrial area west of Beloit Avenue that includes the new Deere and Company distribution facility.

There is an emerging bike and pedestrian system in the planning area. The Rock Trail is an improved off-street bike path in the former rail right-of-way between Afton Road and the Rock River. There is a parking area along this trail where Fisher Creek enters the River. A second off-street paved path, to be constructed in 2002, runs along the north side of the Bypass from Afton Road east across the Rock River to Oakhill Avenue. The Rockport Park connector, also to be constructed in 2002, is an off-street path between Rockport Park and the Crosby-Willard bridge. There are also on-street bike lanes in Afton Road. Lightly traveled rural roads provide appropriate routes for more experienced cyclists.

F. Existing Utilities

The City's Wastewater Treatment Plant is located along the Rock River, east of Afton Road and south of the Highway 11 Bypass. The plant has adequate capacity to meet the needs of anticipated City growth over the next 20 years. Sanitary sewer service is available through major sanitary sewer interceptors, including the Airport interceptor, the Markham Creek interceptor, and the Fisher Creek interceptor. Through the 1995 *City of Janesville-Town of Rock Cooperative Boundary Plan*, City sewer and water services are available to owners of developed and undeveloped properties in the southern part of the planning area (east of the River), if they agree to come into the City in the future.

The City is also implementing a stormwater management master plan in the southern part of the planning area, east of the River. This plan includes one dry detention basin in Prairie Knoll Park, another in an area south of Kellogg Avenue and east of Center Avenue, and a third in the new industrial area west of Beloit Avenue. The stormwater management plan also focuses on preserving natural drainageways in the form of greenbelts between those basins.

There is an existing north-south high voltage power line running through the western part of the planning area. Its location affects land use planning under and around the line.

III. Plan Objectives

The goal of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* is to achieve logical, sequential, and attractive future growth of the City's south and west sides in accordance with proven neighborhood design principles and in cooperation with other local governments and property owners. More specific objectives of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* are listed below.

A. Growth Management and Community Development

1. Work cooperatively with surrounding town and county governments on agricultural preservation, municipal boundaries, stormwater management, road maintenance, and land dedication for schools and parks.
2. Prevent intensive non-farm development (e.g., rural subdivisions, and commercial development) within areas planned for long-range agricultural use.
3. Discourage premature rural development within the Janesville Sewer Service Area and other areas identified in this *Plan* for future urban (public sewer and water) development.
4. Plan for future development where sanitary sewer lines can be logically and cost-effectively extended.
5. Maintain an overall mix of land use in future residential areas that is compatible with the existing mix of residential land use in the City (i.e., 90% of residential land planned for single and two-family units and 10% of residential land planned for multiple-family units).
6. Work with Rock County to plan for compatible uses in Airport-impacted areas.
7. Work with the UW-Rock County to provide expansion opportunities if desired.
8. Identify appropriate areas for future public school sites in accordance with projections for school-age children and existing school capacities in the general area.
9. Treat the eastern edge of the planning area, near the Airport and Beloit Avenue, as part of a major economic development zone for the City and region.
10. Concentrate higher intensity, mixed-use development including new shopping near the intersection of the Highway 11 Bypass and Highway 51.
11. Prioritize the redevelopment of aging commercial properties on Center Avenue and West Court Street.

B. Community Design and Identity

1. Relate neighboring land uses to each other through integrated neighborhood and site planning; attractive landscaping; lighting and signage control; and interconnections for walking, biking, and driving.
2. Facilitate new growth that is in harmony with adjacent development forms, densities, uses, and arrangements.
3. Recognize the Highway 11 Bypass as the gateway to the City's south side.

4. Encourage commercial development design that reflects desired architectural treatments and the scale of surrounding uses.
5. Avoid the southerly extension of an unbroken commercial strip along Center Avenue to preserve community image, control signage, manage access and traffic, protect and enhance existing commercial areas, and ensure land use compatibility for residential areas.
6. Manage the impacts of the Highway 11 Bypass on community character and quality-of-life through proper use separation and landscape buffering; signage and development design controls; and appropriate cross-access points for cars, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
7. Orient new development to adjoining parks and greenbelts by ensuring public access and views are maintained.

Residential developments can be oriented to open spaces without blocking them.



8. Within planned residential areas, promote:
 - A mix of housing types, lot sizes, and densities.
 - Development of neighborhood focal points, such as parks and schools.
 - An interconnected network of streets sized to correspond to traffic volumes.
 - Orientation to the pedestrian through sidewalks, paths, and inter-connections.
 - Clustered development layouts where projects are adjacent to greenbelts.
 - Use of natural stormwater management to control water quality and quantity.
 - Restoration of degraded environmental features, like wetlands and stream banks.
 - Modest front yard setbacks and avoidance of “garage-scape” street appearance.
 - Off-street, public green space links to schools, parks, and public facilities.

C. Transportation

1. Provide safe, convenient transportation connections for motorists, non-motorists, children, and adults.
2. Enhance accessibility through the Highway 11 Bypass and other road projects, but work to assure that such projects do not dominate the area.

3. Provide multiple road connections to all new subdivisions and other large developments.
4. Control access to arterial and collector streets such as Highway 51, West Court Street, and Afton Road.
5. Provide bike and pedestrian paths through greenbelts in accordance with the City's *Bike Trail Plan*, and connect these paths to safe routes on neighborhood streets.
6. Use traffic control features to control speeds and increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

D. Open Space and Recreation

1. Map a greenbelt system over environmentally sensitive areas, parks, wetlands, and stormwater management areas.
2. Use the greenbelt system to define the edges of development groupings; serve multiple natural, stormwater management, and recreational functions; connect neighborhoods, parks and schools; and enhance the value of nearby property.
3. Provide adequate park space within planned neighborhoods, following the principles of both providing active park space within ½ mile of all residences and avoiding the creation of multiple small parks.
4. Work with the School District to provide joint recreational facilities with school sites.
5. Reserve low-lying areas for stormwater management basins, encouraging regional stormwater basins wherever possible.
6. Provide linear spaces to link neighborhood trails to the regional/county trail system.

IV. General Plan Recommendations

A. Overview

The *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* includes three separate but interrelated plan maps, presented later in this report. These plan maps depict a recommended future pattern of private and public land uses, roads, parks, greenbelts, and trails. Property owners making requests to the City or other local governments will drive actual development of most of these areas. The City will evaluate such development requests against the objectives and recommendations of this *Plan*. While the planning period is 20 to 25 years, all planned land use areas shown on the three maps may not be developed within that period.

The maps depict several distinct planned land use groupings characterized by different land use mixes and densities. All future development in all the groupings depicted on these maps should be provided with municipal sewer and water services. The planned road network is designed to provide appropriate connections to the rest of the City and region. Specific development proposals and detailed traffic engineering may justify adjustments to the road plan. The *Plan* maps also show a connected network of greenbelts, parks, and schools tied together via paths. Again, the exact boundaries of these areas will be determined through more detailed analyses in the future. Overall, the planned natural and recreational areas will help define the planning area as it develops in the future.

Parks will form gathering and focal points within neighborhoods and stops along the greenbelt system.



The Highway 11 Bypass presents both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities include improved access to the Interstate and the City's northeast side shopping area. Challenges include potential noise, traffic, and visual impacts on existing and future neighborhoods. This *Plan* proposes that the City try to address these impacts by:

- Working with the Town of Rock to restrict billboard placement along the Bypass west of Highway 51.

- Recommending uses adjacent to the highway that are not as sensitive to noise as single family residences.
- Where single and two-family residences are close to the highway, providing a “landscape bufferyard” between house lots and the highway right-of-way.

Along the Bypass, residential subdividers should provide a residential lot depth of roughly 150 feet with a landscape bufferyard depth of up to an additional 50 feet directly adjacent to the Bypass right-of-way. Within that bufferyard, the City should require that the subdivider install landscape plantings and/or berming.

Recommended landscape schemes may take one of two forms. The first would be a natural “woods” landscape, including non-invasive species native or easily adaptable to the region. The second scheme would be a more formal landscaping treatment, with a mix of canopy, deciduous, and ornamental trees and shrubs. Berms and even decorative fencing may also be an appropriate component of this second landscaping scheme. Berm heights should not exceed six feet and berm alignments should be undulating. For each of the three planned neighborhoods shown on the attached maps, the City should select only one of these two landscape schemes to preserve a common theme along that section of the highway.



Example of a formal landscape bufferyard treatment.

B. Planned Land Use Categories

The three *Plan* maps divide planned land use into several categories, arranged to achieve the desired future land use pattern. The following is a description of the planned land use categories, including recommended design standards in each category and appropriate future City zoning.

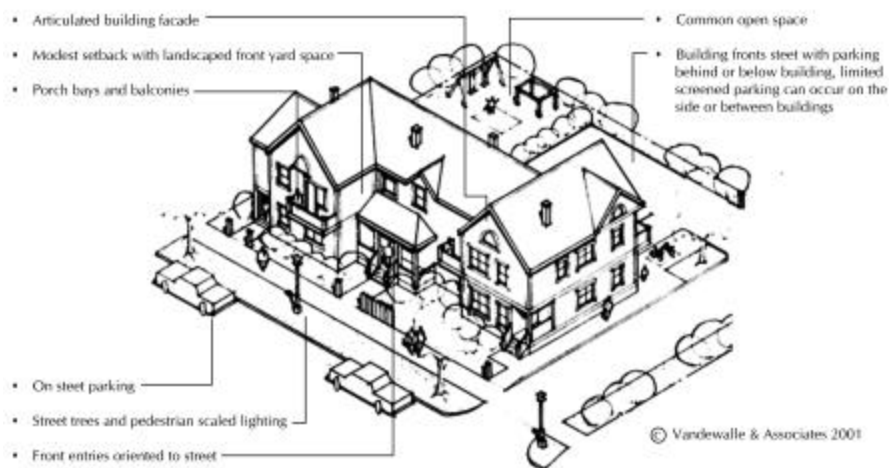
1. *Single Family Residential*: Areas mapped within this category are recommended for single family detached houses. The City may consider limited areas for duplex development by conditional use permit. Single family residential areas should be planned as interconnected neighborhoods using the design objectives in Section III(B). The R-1 Single-Family and Two-Family Residence District is the most appropriate City zoning district to map over these areas before development occurs.
2. *Single and Two Family Residential*: Areas mapped within this category are recommended for either single family detached houses or duplexes. At the City’s discretion, larger areas mapped in this category may also be appropriate for owner-

occupied condominium development in buildings up to four units each. Regardless of housing type, densities should not exceed eight housing units per acre. The R-1D Two-Family Residence District is the most appropriate zoning district for these areas, although R3M zoning may be considered for condominium projects where allowed.

3. *Medium Density Residential*: Areas mapped within this category are appropriate for multiple family residences, including townhouses, garden apartments, and condominium-style projects. Densities should not exceed 13 housing units per acre and building size should not exceed eight units each. The R3M Medium Density Residence District is the most appropriate zoning district for these areas.

Care should be taken to assure that housing in mapped *Medium Density Residential* areas is creatively integrated into the neighborhood. The design of sites, landscaping, and buildings should be aesthetically pleasing. The following design guidelines should be applied within the planned *Medium Density Residential* areas shown on the map:

- Encourage layouts where buildings appear as a grouping of smaller residences.
- Incorporate architectural design that fits the context of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Promote use of brick and other natural materials on building facades.
- Avoid monotonous facades and box-like buildings. Incorporate balconies, porches, garden walls, varied building and facade setbacks, varied roof designs, and bay windows.
- Orient buildings to the street with modest front yard setbacks, bringing street-oriented entries close to the street and including private walkway connections.
- Locate dumpsters and other unattractive uses behind buildings and/or screen them.



One example of a desirable “Medium Density Residential” design.

- For parking lots and garages, (a) locate garage doors and parking lots so they are not the dominant visual element; (b) screen parking areas from public view; (c) break up large parking lots with landscaped islands and similar features; (d) provide direct links to building entrances by pedestrian walkways separated from vehicular movement areas; (e) large parking garages are undesirable, but where necessary, break up facades with foundation landscaping, varied facade setbacks, and recessed garage doors.
 - Provide generous landscaping of sufficient size at time of planting. Emphasize landscaping (a) along all public and private street frontages; (b) along the perimeter of all paved areas and in islands in larger parking lots; (c) along all building foundations; (d) along yards separating land uses which differ in intensity, density or character; (e) around all outdoor storage areas such as trash receptacles and recycling bins, where screening walls should also be provided; (f) around all utility structures or mechanical structures visible from public streets or less intensive land uses.
 - Provide on-site recreational and open space areas to serve the needs of residents.
4. *Neighborhood Commercial:* Areas mapped within this category are recommended for neighborhood-scale business, office, and personal service uses primarily designed to serve surrounding neighborhoods. Appropriate future uses may include restaurants, offices, clinics, retail shops, convenience stores, and grocery stores. The City's B-1 Neighborhood Convenience District is the most appropriate zoning district for these areas.

Future uses in these areas should be compatible with the existing or planned residential character of surrounding areas in terms of scale, site layout, building design, landscaping, and signage. The following design guidelines should be applied in the development of planned *Neighborhood Commercial* areas:

- Signage that is high quality, not excessive in height or total square footage, and includes materials matching the building. Monument signs are the preferred type of ground signs.
- High quality landscaping treatment of bufferyards, street frontages, paved areas and foundations.
- Intensive activity areas such as building



Monument signs and architectural features that reflect nearby residential areas are preferred.

entrances, service and loading areas, parking lots, and trash receptacle storage areas oriented away from less intensive land uses.

- Parking lots heavily landscaped with perimeter landscaping and/or landscaped islands, along with screening to block views from streets and residential uses.
- Parking to the sides and rear of buildings, rather than having all parking in the front.
- Location of loading docks, dumpsters, mechanical equipment, and outdoor storage areas behind buildings and away from less intensive land uses.
- Complete screening of loading docks, dumpsters, and mechanical equipment. Outdoor storage areas should not be allowed.
- Limited number of access drives along arterial and collector streets.
- Safe, convenient, and separated pedestrian and bicycle access to the site from the parking areas to the buildings, to adjacent commercial developments, and to nearby residential neighborhoods.

Separated pedestrian walkway in a commercial parking lot recognizes that all shoppers are pedestrians at some point.



- Illumination from lighting kept on site through use of cut-off fixtures.
- High quality building materials, such as brick, wood, stone, and split-faced block.
- Low reflectance, solid earthtone, and neutral building colors.
- Canopies, awnings, trellises, bays, windows and other architectural details to add visual interest to facades.
- Variations in building height and roof line, including parapets, multi-planed, and pitched roofs and staggered building facades (variations in wall depth and/or direction).
- Materials on all building façades of similar quality as the front building façade.



Example of commercial building with architectural interest.

5. *Business Park:* Areas mapped within this category are intended as a comprehensively planned and developed business park setting, housing predominantly office, research, and some associated light manufacturing uses. It is not intended to accommodate heavier industrial, warehouse, and distribution uses or uses requiring a large volume of truck traffic.

This mapped area, located east of Center Avenue and north of the Bypass, should be developed as a unified business park campus. The campus should be generously landscaped and present an attractive face on road frontages. Building heights and massing should be controlled. Parking areas should be well landscaped. Campus, driveway, and building entrances should be inviting and well marked.

The City's M-1 Light Industrial District allows too many intensive industrial uses to carry out the recommendations of the *Business Park* category, unless private deed restrictions limiting the range of permitted uses and increasing design standards are recorded against the land. The City should, therefore, consider creating a new Business Park zoning district.

6. *Industrial:* Areas mapped in this category include both large and small-scale manufacturing, assembly, distribution, warehousing, and contractor uses with attractive landscaping, high quality building design, and progressive stormwater management. Special care should be taken to the design of buildings and location of potentially unattractive uses, such as outdoor storage, near residential areas and along the Highway 11 Bypass. The City's M-1 Light Industrial District, augmented with deed restrictions as necessary, is the most appropriate zoning district for areas in the *Industrial* planned land use category.
7. *Institutional:* Areas mapped in this category are appropriate for continued or future use as schools, municipal facilities and utilities, the Rock County Regional Airport, and UW-Rock County. Small institutional uses, such as churches, may also be appropriate in areas mapped under other land use categories. Several City zoning districts are appropriate for these areas.

8. *Office*: Areas mapped in this category are appropriate for high-quality professional office and office-support land uses with generous landscaping and limited signage. The City's O-3 Neighborhood Office District is the most appropriate zoning district for these areas.
9. *Greenbelt*: Areas mapped as *Greenbelt* should be preserved in open space or public recreational uses. They were mapped to include the following natural features:
 - FEMA mapped floodplains.
 - WisDNR mapped wetlands.
 - The Rock River, streams, and drainage channels with a minimum 75-foot wide buffer on either side of the channel.
 - Steep slopes, generally greater than 20%.
 - Existing and recommended locations for regional stormwater management basins.
 - Existing and recommended locations for parks.
 - Recommended landscape bufferyards, such as along the Highway 11 Bypass.
 - Certain soils with severe or very severe limitations for development, per the Rock County Soil Survey. In general, these are areas with hydric soils.

Greenbelts are appropriate locations for parks, bike and pedestrian trails, underground utility lines, stormwater management facilities, continued farming, and wildlife habitat. New homes and other buildings should be discouraged in these areas. Development types on adjacent lands should be limited to those which will not impair the resource, and should ideally be set back from the edges. Conservancy zoning is appropriate for this category. *Greenbelts* have been mapped in this *Plan* from generalized sources; actual conditions may vary. Boundaries of *Greenbelts* should be refined as development projects are proposed, with refinements based on actual site conditions. Lands shown in *Greenbelts* may be considered for more intensive uses if:

- Detailed studies—such as a floodplain analysis, drainage system analysis, detailed site survey, and/or soil testing—reveal that the characteristic(s) which resulted in their designation as a *Greenbelt* is not actually present,
- Approvals from appropriate agencies are granted to alter a property so that the characteristic which resulted in its designation will no longer exist, or
- A mapping error has been identified.

V. Detailed Neighborhood Development Plan Maps

The three detailed neighborhood development plan maps that form the backbone of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* are included and described on the following pages.

A. Detailed Area 1: Parker High Neighborhood

The Parker High Neighborhood is located on the City's west side, covering largely undeveloped tracts of land around Janesville Parker High School. As depicted in the neighborhood development plan map for Detailed Area 1, it contains roughly 800 acres. Prominent neighborhood boundaries include the rail line on the south and the Highway 11 Bypass and possible future Highway 11-14 connector on the west. That Highway 11-14 connector is intended as a future limited access roadway with a minimum right-of-way width of 165 feet, consistent with right-of-way width south of West Court Street. Mineral Point Road, West Court Street, Rockport Road, Austin Road, and Waveland Road form a fairly well-developed collector road network.

As planned, the future land uses in the Parker High Neighborhood would be predominantly single family residences, with limited duplex, multiple family residential, and office uses grouped near major intersections. The neighborhood could ultimately be the home of roughly 2,000 housing units.

The gently rolling topography and greenbelt system associated with Fisher Creek and its tributary drainageways drive the layout of the Parker High Neighborhood. Greenbelts are proposed to be wide enough to serve many functions. These include natural area preservation, regional stormwater management basins and overland flow corridors, neighborhood parks within walking distance ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius) of all proposed homes, and a proposed bike and pedestrian trail with neighborhood path and local street connectors. Greenbelts will also enhance the value of adjacent private lots.

Other green spaces on the Detailed Area 1 plan map are in and around roadways. These include a recommended boulevard section of a future north-south neighborhood collector street west of Austin Road. A boulevard would enhance the neighborhood, slow traffic, and connect parks and greenbelt crossings. A second recommended traffic control/open space feature is a traffic circle at the proposed southern end of Austin Road. This circle will help control traffic at this difficult future intersection, signal to drivers at the intersection of Austin Road and Court Street that Austin Road is no longer a main street, and provide an attractive neighborhood entrance feature.

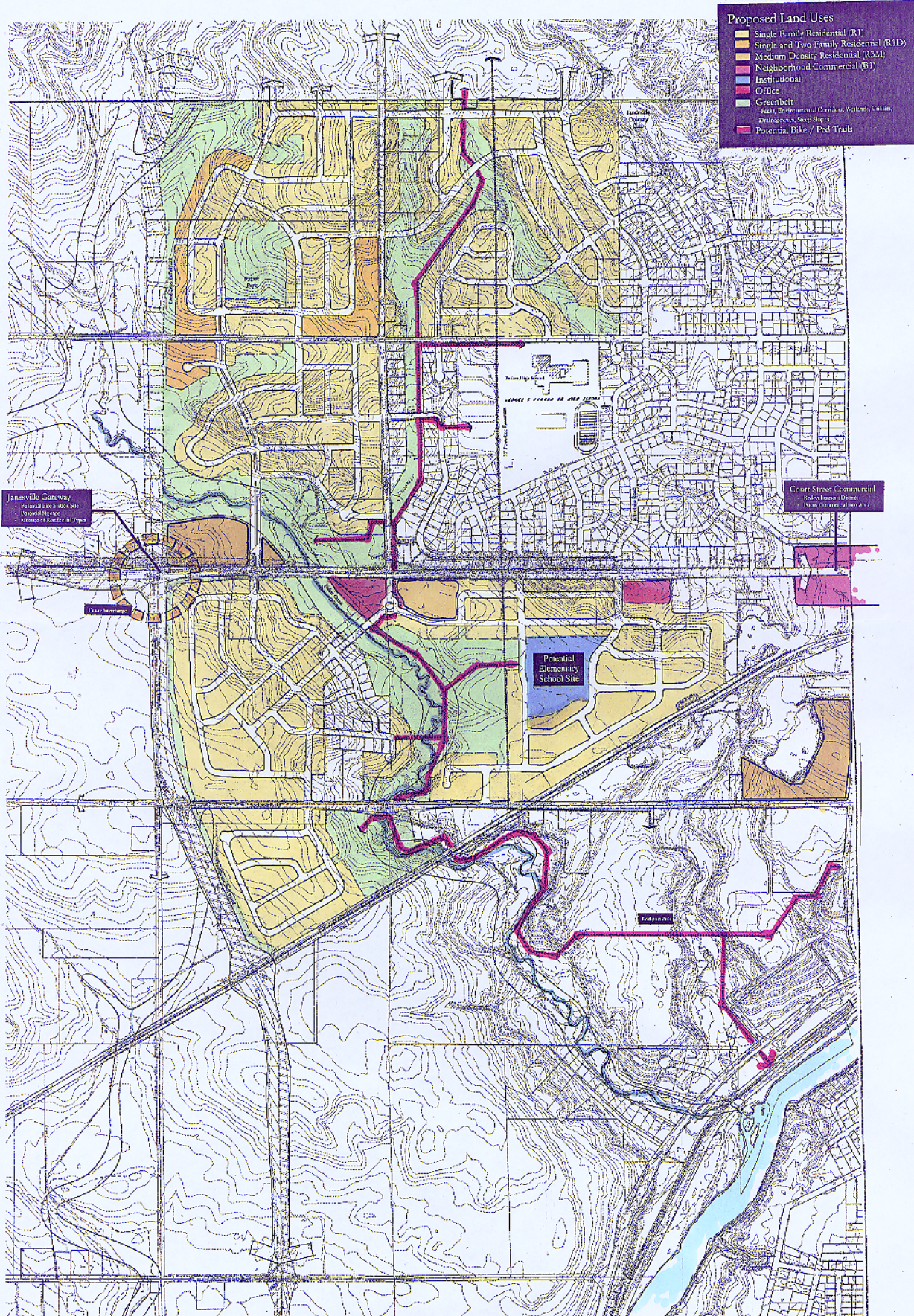


Example of a traffic circle in a residential neighborhood.

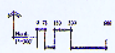
Detailed Area 1: Parker High Neighborhood

SOUTH WEST JANESVILLE AREA PLAN

Janesville, Wisconsin



DETAILED AREA 1 PARKER HIGH NEIGHBORHOOD



The Parker High Neighborhood is an important gateway into the City from the west, particularly along West Court Street beginning where the Highway 11 Bypass diverges. As land develops in that area, the City should plan for a major entrance feature including monument signage and landscaping. The existing “Welcome to Janesville” sign at the corner of South Crosby and West Court Street should be relocated there. Along Court Street, this gateway function should be emphasized through a generous and consistent (across different developments) landscape bufferyard treatment along adjoining residential subdivisions. New office development and multiple-family housing development should have generous landscaping and neighborhood-scale building design (e.g., pitched roofs), signage (e.g., monuments), and lighting.

The Detailed Area 1 plan map also emphasizes the commercial redevelopment of existing developed properties along West Court Street. This is one reason why additional commercial development is not being proposed in the Parker High Neighborhood. Redevelopment of underused, unattractive, or vacant commercial parcels on West Court Street would become increasingly difficult if cheaper “greenfield” sites to the west were readily available for new commercial development. In the long-term, the City should consider preparing a detailed master plan for the redevelopment of the West Court Street commercial area. In the short-term, the City should make sure that new commercial projects in this area meet the design guidelines for *Neighborhood Commercial* areas included in this *Plan*.

After consultation with Janesville Public School representatives, an elementary school site is proposed within the Parker High Neighborhood. The proposed site is located between West Court Street and Rockport Road. The advantages of this site include a location within an existing and planned residential area, close to but not directly on main streets, and adjacent to a major greenbelt along the Fisher Creek. The school site should be connected to the greenbelt through a path.

B. Detailed Area 2: Rockport Park Neighborhood

The Rockport Park Neighborhood is located on the City’s southwest side, extending along the west side of Afton Road between Rockport Park and the Loch Lomond/ Falling Creek Village area. The Rock River provides an attractive, though not always visible, eastern edge to the neighborhood. As depicted in the neighborhood development plan map for Detailed Area 2, it contains roughly 350 acres of future development areas. The

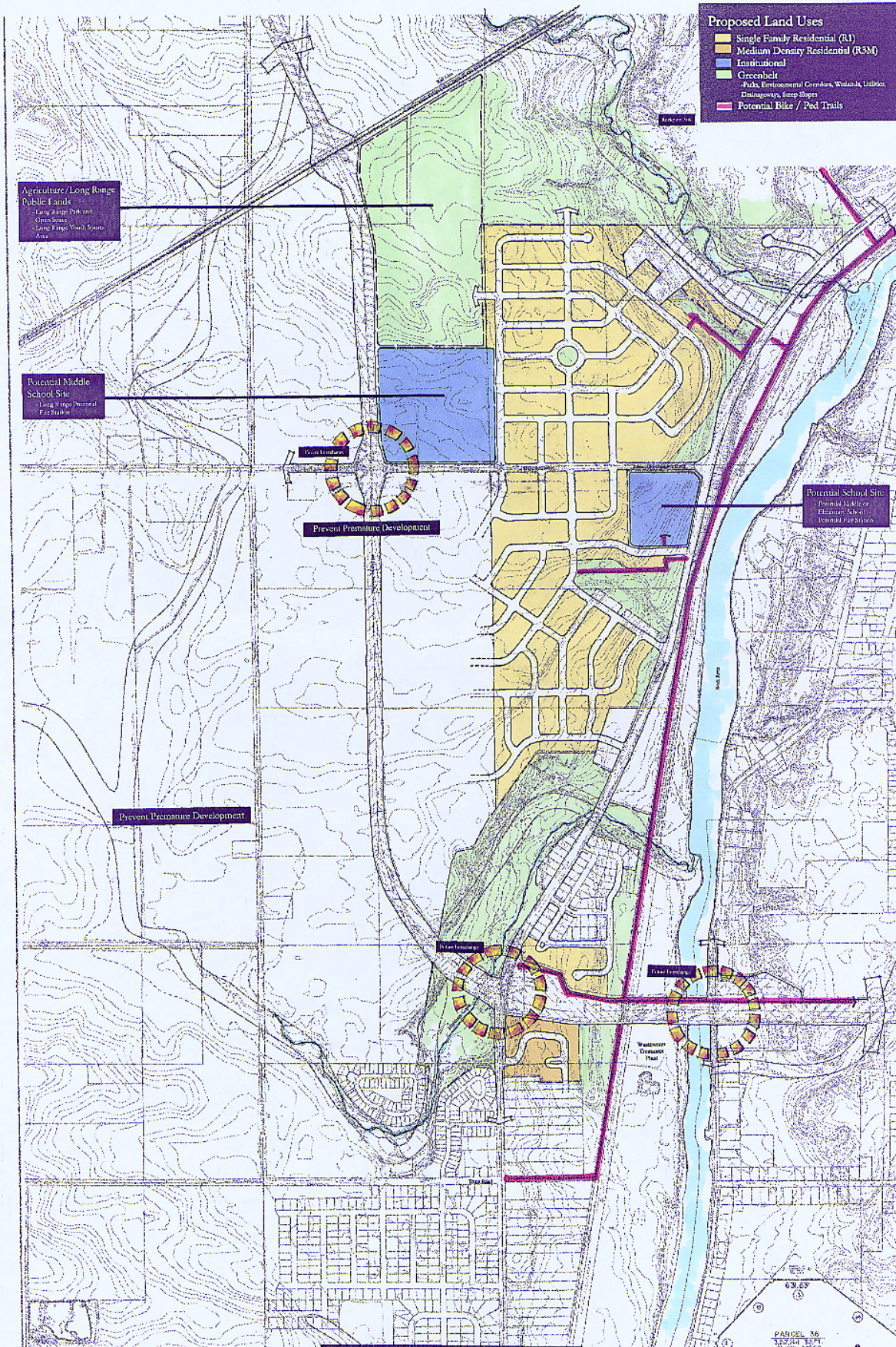


The majority of the Rockport Park Neighborhood is currently relatively flat cropland.

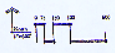
Detailed Area 2: Rockport Park Neighborhood

SOUTH WEST JANESVILLE AREA PLAN

Janesville, Wisconsin



**DETAILED AREA 2
ROCKPORT PARK
NEIGHBORHOOD**



Plan does not advise the extension of development all the way west to the Highway 11 Bypass during the 20-year planning period because of sanitary sewer limitations and the commitment to farming in this area. Bedrock near the surface also may challenge future basement and utility installation. Afton Road and Janesville-Hanover Road provide the start of a future collector road network. There is an at-grade Bypass intersection (long-term interchange) at Janesville-Hanover Road and an interchange at Afton Road.

As planned, the future land uses in the Rockport Park Neighborhood will be mainly single family residences, with up to 700 homes at build-out. Some prominent recreational, school, and institutional uses are also suggested, including:

- An approximately 20-acre elementary school site for the southwest corner of Afton Road and Janesville-Hanover Road. The planned number of homes and the lack of an existing school near this neighborhood support the proposed placement of a future school in this area. The recommended school location, in conjunction with some steeply sloped land to the south recommended as *Greenbelt*, could also serve the future park needs of this neighborhood.
- An approximately 30 to 40-acre future middle school site, northeast of the intersection of the Highway 11 Bypass and Janesville-Hanover Road. While a new middle school may not be needed in the next 20 years, it will be important to reserve an accessible site to serve future needs created by future housing development on the City's southwest side.
- A potential site for a future west side youth sports area with outdoor athletic fields. The existing Rockport Park boundaries may not contain enough flat ground for a youth sports area near the scale of the City's current east side facility. Recreational development of this site may not be necessary until late in the 20-year planning period or beyond. In the nearer-term, this area should be preserved in agriculture.
- Two potential sites for a future southwest side fire station, near one of the two recommended school sites.

The City does not expect to extend public utilities to the area around the intersection of the Highway 11 Bypass and Janesville-Hanover Road during the 20-year planning period. Still, this area may be subject to premature development pressure for some relatively low-value uses (e.g., contractor shops) within that period. This *Plan* advises that the City work closely with the Town of Rock and Rock County to prevent the premature rural development of this intersection area.

C. Detailed Area 3: Rivereast Neighborhood

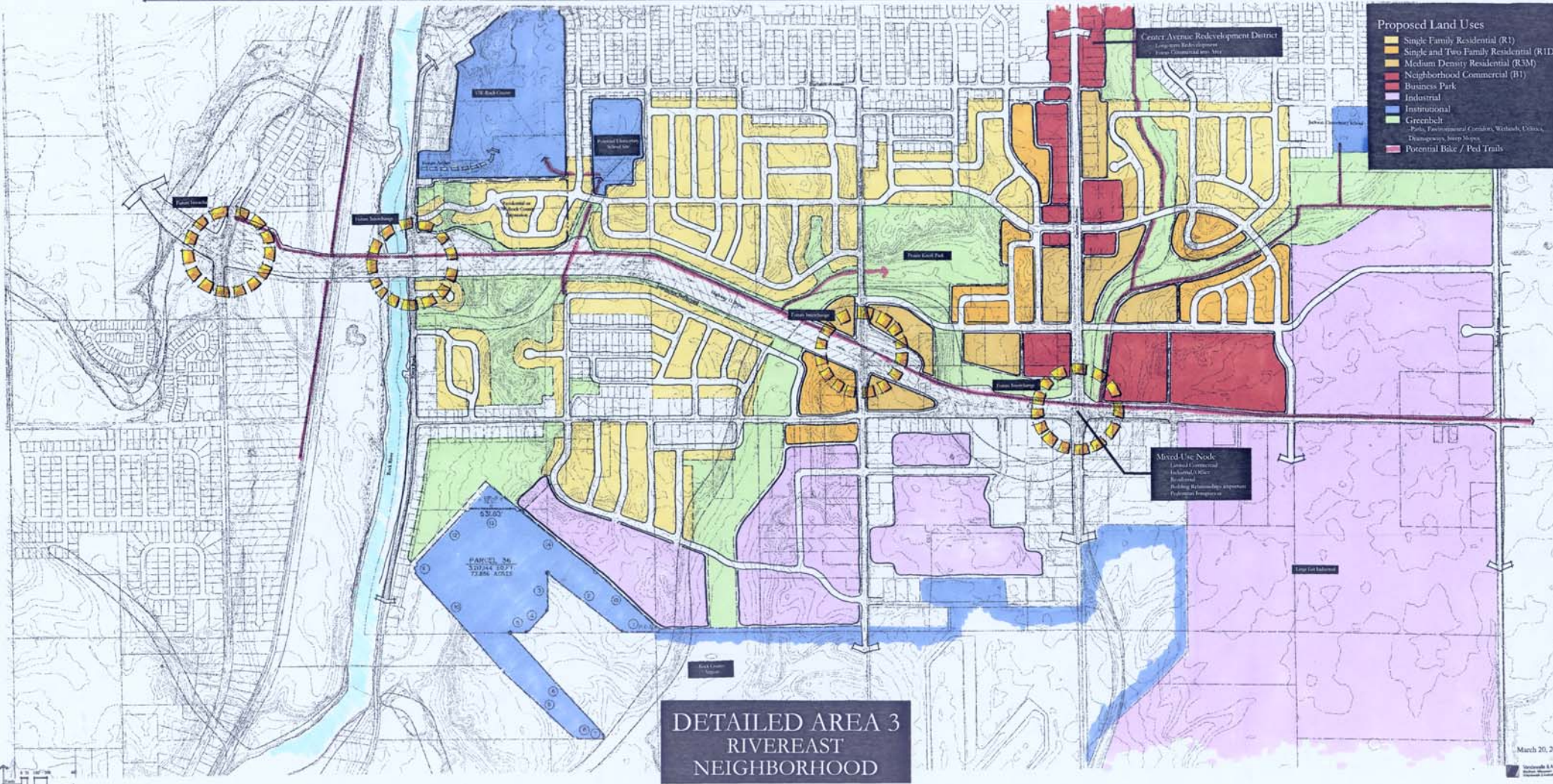
The Rivereast Neighborhood is located on the City's south side, between the Rock River, Beloit Avenue, Burbank Avenue, and the Rock County Airport. As depicted in the neighborhood development plan map for Detailed Area 3, it contains roughly 1,000 acres. The Highway 11 Bypass bisects the neighborhood. Center Avenue (Highway 51), Oakhill Avenue, River Road, and Avalon Road are major roads serving the neighborhood.

The neighborhood already contains a mix of uses, including cropland, residences, UW-Rock County, the Rock County Regional Airport, small industries near the airport, and commercial development along Center Avenue. Future land uses in the Rivereast

Detailed Area 3: Rivereast Neighborhood

SOUTH WEST JANESVILLE AREA PLAN

Janesville, Wisconsin



The “Large Lot Industrial” area to the east of the Airport is planned as a location for future large industries in Janesville. This area has superior transportation access via the nearby Interstate, Airport, rail, and the existing street system back to the City. It also contains flat and easily serviced sites. John Deere and Company will be opening a new distribution facility at the northwest corner of the Bypass and Beloit Avenue. There are several spin-off opportunities to build off the Deere facility, the Airport, other nearby industries such as GM and Seneca Foods, and the nearby UW-Rock County and Blackhawk Technical College. Industries focused on emerging agricultural technologies may be one opportunity. The City should work with Forward Janesville, Rock County, and property owners to further explore these opportunities and actively market this area. State and federal programs such as Governor McCallum’s Technology Zone Program or the federal Foreign Trade Zone program may provide incentives beyond Tax Increment Financing to achieve the highest and best long-term uses.

The Rivereast Neighborhood Plan map recognizes that UW-Rock County may have expansion interest over the 20-year planning period or beyond. Future expansion plans may include securing a new, more direct access from the Bypass along River Road. Looking further out, this *Plan* recognizes that Rock County, in conjunction with the University, may wish to acquire additional land south of the present campus. If such an acquisition does not move forward, this area may instead be developed with residential uses.

The Rivereast Neighborhood Plan map also suggests this *Plan*’s strong support for the redevelopment of Center Avenue north of Burbank Avenue as the south side’s primary commercial district. While there has been some reinvestment in recent years, other sections of Center Avenue are in need of redevelopment and aesthetic improvements. A 2001 Planning Department analysis of Center Avenue suggested that, of the 100 acres of commercially zoned land along Center Avenue, 30 acres are either vacant or developed with non-conforming residential uses. There were also five vacant commercial buildings, and the average age of commercial buildings along Center Avenue is 38 years, which is older than in the Milton Avenue or West Court Street commercial areas.

Center Avenue is scheduled to be reconstructed in 2006, with design work likely to begin in 2003. This *Plan* recommends that, in conjunction with the design of that roadway project, the City undertake a redevelopment plan for the Center Avenue corridor. That redevelopment plan and its implementation should include:

- An Opportunity Analysis that would suggest an overall district theme, economic future, desired land use changes, streetscape design (e.g., boulevards, landscaping), connections to surrounding neighborhoods, and redevelopment concepts for specific sites.
- A statutory Redevelopment Plan that would carefully identify “blighted” properties and suggest potential public and/or private sector projects to revitalize the area. Such a plan would enable the Community Development Authority to participate in revitalization activities.
- A redevelopment Tax Increment Financing District to enable the City or Community Development Authority to undertake projects with funding obtained from tax increases associated with future redevelopment projects.

Not to be overlooked in the future development of the Rivereast Neighborhood are its residential components. The neighborhood could ultimately contain roughly 1,500 housing units, with perhaps 2/3 being single family residences. All multiple family developments should meet the design guidelines contained in Section IV(B) of this *Plan* and all other requirements applicable within the R3M zoning district. Residential components of this overall neighborhood will be connected by a street system building off existing south side streets and by a planned greenbelt/trail network.

Future recreational needs north of the Bypass will be served via Prairie Knoll Park, Jackson Elementary School and adjacent open space, and a potential elementary school site near the UW-Rock County campus. Recreational needs south of the Bypass may be more difficult to accommodate. It will be important to provide trail connections linking the planned residential area south of the bypass to the parks and public facilities in order to accommodate their recreational needs. The large *Greenbelt* areas near the intersection of River and Avalon Roads are mapped as a result of steep slopes, floodplains, and runway protection zones. As in the west side neighborhoods, the City should require landscape bufferyards along the Bypass right-of-way when new development occurs in these areas, meeting the standards described in Section IV(A) of this *Plan*.

VI. Implementation

A. Overview

This final section of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* provides a roadmap for specific actions necessary to fully implement the *Plan's* recommendations. Implementation of this *Plan* will occur incrementally as different private and public development proposals move forward. However, this *Plan* also advises specific actions the City should undertake over the planning period. This section summarizes and prioritizes these actions.

B. Plan Adoption

On April 1, 2002, the City of Janesville Plan Commission adopted the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* as a component of the City's master plan under Section 62.23, Wisconsin Statutes. It was then forwarded on to the City Council for its adoption, which occurred on April 8, 2002.

While the *Plan* is a perfectly valid guide to decision making until the year 2010, it was not adopted as a "Smart Growth" comprehensive plan under Section 66.1001, Wisconsin Statutes. When preparing its required comprehensive plan before the year 2010, the City should incorporate the recommendations of the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan*. When doing so, the City should carefully evaluate the desirability of including the level of detail for planned roads shown on the attached maps, as all land use decisions after 2010 will have to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

The City should encourage the Towns of Rock and Janesville to incorporate or recognize the *Southwest Janesville Area Plan* as amendments to their existing land use plans. In addition, the City should forward this plan to Rock County for incorporation in the County Development Plan/Comprehensive Plan.

C. Implementation Recommendations

The following table provides a detailed list and general prioritization of the major actions that the City should complete to implement the *Plan*. Often, such actions will require substantial cooperation with others, including Town and County government and property owners. Further, other City government priorities, time constraints, and budget constraints may affect the completion of the recommended actions.

Action	Description	Priority
Work with Towns and County to Prevent Premature Development	This <i>Plan</i> anticipates urban (i.e., public sewer and water) development in certain areas and little to no development in other areas over the 20-year planning period. The City should work with the Towns and Rock County to prevent premature rural development in these areas. In general, new rural development in these areas should be limited to agricultural-related uses and homes not exceeding a density of one house per 35 acres. The City may use its extraterritorial land division review authority to prevent premature development.	High
Prepare Landscape Bufferyard Planting Standards	This <i>Plan</i> advises the reservation and planting of bufferyards where residential subdivisions abut the Bypass. A unified set of standards for width, plantings, and berming in bufferyards would ensure high-quality planting plans across all affected properties. Standards could be adopted as part of the subdivision ordinance or as separate guidelines.	High
Revise City and Town Sign Regulations	Bypass traffic will attract billboards. This would conflict with the residential and rural character west of Center Avenue. The City should restrict billboards along the Bypass west of Center Avenue, and assist the Town of Rock in adopting similar restrictions.	High
Prepare a Center Avenue Redevelopment Strategy	This <i>Plan</i> emphasizes the commercial redevelopment of aging commercial areas along Center Avenue and West Court Street instead of creating large new areas for commercial uses. Of these two areas, Center Avenue is the priority. The City should complete an Opportunity Analysis, Redevelopment Plan, and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) project plan to foster the redevelopment of Center Avenue in conjunction with its pending reconstruction.	High

Action	Description	Priority
Work with Rock County on Airport Land Use Plan	Rock County intends to prepare a detailed land use plan for Airport lands not directly required for aviation activities. The City Planning Department should work closely with the Rock County Planning, Economic and Community Development Agency on the preparation of such a plan, and adopt a mutually agreeable Airport use plan as a component of the City's master plan.	High
Pursue Grants for Path System	The City should continue to pursue state and federal grants to complete bike and pedestrian paths planned for the area. These paths should be placed in the Transportation Improvement Program and adopted in the City's 5-year Park and Open Space Plan to assure their grant eligibility.	High
Work with WisDOT to secure Highway Access Points	This <i>Plan</i> calls for <u>very limited</u> future access to Highway 51 north of the Highway 11 Bypass and to the Highway 11 Bypass east of Highway 51. The City should work with WisDOT to allow such access points as part of an overall neighborhood development strategy that will reduce local traffic burdens on those highways. Specifically, the City should work to secure a full access intersection to the Bypass (Highway 351) between Highway 51 and Beloit Avenue.	Medium
Pursue Economic Development Strategy for Beloit Avenue/Bypass Industrial Area	This <i>Plan</i> calls for large-lot industrial uses west of Beloit Avenue and south of the Bypass. The positioning of this area relative to existing industries, the surrounding agricultural base, transportation facilities, and utilities suggests the opportunity for an innovative economic development approach, including an exploration of state and federal program assistance.	Medium

Action	Description	Priority
Work with School District and UW-Rock County to Reserve School Sites	This <i>Plan</i> suggests potential public school sites for future acquisition. It also recognizes that UW-Rock County may have a future interest in expanding its campus to the south. The City, School District, and UW-Rock County should work together to assure that these or similar sites are acquired or reserved in a timely manner, even though actual school construction or expansion may be years away.	Medium
Require Detailed Environmental Mapping	Given the planning area's size, environmental resource mapping was necessarily general. This mapping, in turn, was used to delineate <i>Greenbelts</i> . When development is proposed in ANY part of the planning area, the City should work with the developer on more detailed mapping of <i>Greenbelts</i> and features that led to their delineation (e.g., wetlands, floodplains, slopes). The City should also require research and protection of archeological and historic sites (e.g., Native American).	Medium
Update or Amend Janesville Sanitary Sewer Service Area	The existing Sewer Service Area would have to be expanded to accommodate planned future development in parts of the planning area. The City should work with WisDNR to secure expansions when justified and when specific development proposals are imminent. A comprehensive review and update of the plan should be completed every 5 years to reflect the change in community needs.	Low
Work with the Town of Janesville and WisDOT to Establish a North Roadway Corridor from West Court Street to Highway 14	The <i>Plan</i> identifies a potential corridor for the extension of a highway connector between West Court Street and Highway 14. It would extend from the intersection of the Highway 11 Bypass to the north. The City should work with the Town and WisDOT to further analyze the delineation of this corridor.	Low
Adopt New "Business Park" Zoning District	Absent deed restrictions, the City's M-1 zoning district allows too many intensive manufacturing and distribution uses to be used in the planned <i>Business Park</i> area northeast of the intersection of Highway 51 and the Bypass. The City's Office zoning districts are too restrictive. A new zoning district would allow the City to accommodate a controlled range of uses with specific performance standards (e.g., appearance, storage).	Low

Action	Description	Priority
Prepare Master Plans for Future Park Development	The City should prepare detailed master plans for Prairie Knoll Park, the possible west side youth sports area, and other larger planned parks. These park master plans can be used as a guide for capital improvements planning, budgeting, detailed engineering work, and actual park development.	Low
Determine Amount of Parkland to be Acquired Through Dedication	The City should determine the amount of park acreage to be dedicated when land is subdivided, and identify the shortfall of public open space that may need to be purchased by the City.	Low