A DISTRICT PLAN FOR JEFFERSONVILLE’S BIG FOUR BRIDGE LANDING

A RESEARCH PAPER

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Introduction

The Ohio River is a major body of water that has facilitated transportation and defined boundaries throughout history. The river’s slow flow is normally easy to travel and cross, but there is one location where traversing it is difficult: the Falls of the Ohio - the only natural obstruction in the entire course of the Ohio River (Kramer, 2007, p. 3). The rocky outcroppings, eddies, and islands provide a seasonal crossing that was used by animals and humans for millennia, but forced travelers and their goods to portage around the falls. The resulting crossroads of water and land transport made this site an ideal location for trading and industry. The earliest settlements in this area were tied to the Falls of the Ohio and these communities grew quickly as America’s expansion and the Industrial Revolution brought people and wealth down the Ohio River.

![Figure 1: Falls of the Ohio circa 1910 (Hunter, 2010)](image1)

Fort Steuben was established in 1787 near the current location of downtown Jeffersonville; today Jeffersonville is located in Clark County, Indiana, on the northern shore of the Ohio River and opposite downtown Louisville, Kentucky. Fort Steuben’s role was reduced as the scene of conflict moved west,
and by 1800 it was solely a hub for local militia (Kramer, 2007, p. 36). The Governor of the Northwest Territory, William Henry Harrison, named the surrounding settlement Jeffersonville after President Thomas Jefferson and used the President’s ideas for city planning to create an experimental plan (Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Plat of Jeffersonville that used Thomas Jefferson’s ideas (Nokes, 2002)](image)

The plan was drafted by an attorney from Louisville, and it reflects Jefferson’s vision of a healthy city that has plenty of open space – plentiful open space and parks mitigate the pollution of the concentrated waste of society. Unfortunately the plan’s street grid was not well conceived; many lots were landlocked and the street intersections were awkward. The trustees of the town were not convinced and they opted for a conventional street grid (Kramer, 2007, p. 42). Jeffersonville would have had a unique downtown if the trustees had retained any of Jefferson’s ideas.
Downtown Jeffersonville

The historic downtown of Jeffersonville is a small district near the Ohio River, with a traditional orthogonal street arrangement and well-established clusters of related land uses. A node of public facilities and local government offices occupies four blocks along Court Avenue. The section of Spring Street between Court Avenue and the river is primarily occupied restaurants, shops, and professional services; this area was the hub of entertainment and retail prior to suburbanization. The riverfront on Riverside Drive has the city’s most historic residences, including some multifamily structures. Lastly, a redeveloped industrial area is now a concentrated group of hospitality services. Architecturally significant churches and residences are scattered throughout the surrounding blocks.

Figure 3: Downtown Jeffersonville (39°North, 2012)
The Big Four Bridge

In 1888 construction began on Jeffersonville’s first railroad bridge over the Ohio River; it would become known as “The Big Four Bridge” - the title was taken from the railroad company and the four cities it served. The approach ramp and trestles towered above the streets of Jeffersonville and did not touch down until close to 10th Street, ten blocks from the riverfront. The bridge was completed in 1895 and reinforced in 1929.

Figure 4: Big Four Bridge Elevated Track in Jeffersonville (Renn, 2008)

The Big Four Bridge was adapted to provide transit service to the urbanized areas in southern Indiana. By the early 1900s a local interurban service began operations across the bridge and pedestrians could cross on a side path. Less than a century after it was built the bridge was abandoned as mergers of the railroad companies created redundant routes and bridges, and the Big Four was a victim of this as traffic
was routed to a preferred bridge downstream. The approach ramps were scrapped and the piers have remained isolated in the river since 1969.

![Image of the Big Four Bridge as seen from 1969 to 2012](image)

**Figure 5: The Big Four Bridge as seen from 1969 to 2012 (Broken Sidewalk, 2009)**

In the late 1980s a regional effort commenced to clean up the waterfront on both sides of the river. Louisville established the Waterfront Development Corporation in 1986 and a master plan was created by 1992 (Bartenstein, 2007). Three phases of development have been completed since, and now a 72-acre park sits between downtown Louisville and the Ohio River. The economic impact of the park was measured by the increase in employment and investment in private properties near the park; between 1986 and 2007 employment increased from 400 to over 5,000 and over $1 billion were invested in development (Bartenstein, 2007). Downtown Louisville now features a baseball stadium, multipurpose arena, and many new residences. The most recent phase of the project included an approach ramp to the southern end of the Big Four Bridge, but the Bridge will remain closed until the northern approach is
finished in 2013. Once completed this bridge will link the revitalized downtown of Louisville and Jeffersonville with a pedestrian and bicycle trail that is less than two miles long.

Figure 6: Rendering of the Big Four Bridge Landing in a Proposed Park (The Estopinal Group, 2012)

Creative Project Objectives

Revitalization of the Big Four Bridge could be the most significant development in downtown Jeffersonville since the construction of the interstate highways. The impact will be concentrated because users will have only two locations to access the bridge, and the ensuing development will likely be within the blocks that surround the landing. It is difficult to predict how many people will use this bridge, but it is reasonable to expect large crowds during annual festivals and foot races that already occur on both sides of the river. These crowds will likely attract new businesses that cater to the visitor’s needs, but I believe this bridge is an amenity that could regenerate this neighborhood by attracting new residents and the development to support them.
The structure of this creative project is similar to a district plan – sometimes called a neighborhood plan although this plan’s boundaries are not defined by the established neighborhoods. Instead the study area is centered on the landing of the bridge and the properties that are within short walking distance.

![Figure 7: Big Four Study Area (39°North, 2012)](image)

The first section of this project contains a summary of the plans, regulations, and projects that are applicable or relevant to the study area. The second section assesses the existing conditions and lists the strengths and weaknesses. The concluding section provides specific physical improvements and policy recommendations that are based on the findings.
Jeffersonville Planning & Zoning

Jeffersonville Comprehensive Plan 2030

The current comprehensive plan for Jeffersonville was written and adopted in 2007; the previous plan had not been revised since 1991. The plan envisions Jeffersonville in 2030, and the vision statement emphasizes a revitalized downtown and riverfront:

“We see a healthy, vibrant downtown with attractive streets and well-maintained sidewalks filled with people and activity. We see a diverse array of shopping, dining, working, and cultural amenities. Our downtown, the social and cultural center of the community, is the first place we want to take out-of-town visitors. At night, we see upper story apartment windows lit up throughout the downtown area.” (Jeffersonville Comprehensive Plan 2030, page 7)

The authors of this plan recognize the potential for downtown to be more active and attractive. Achieving this vision would require significant improvements to public facilities and much more private development. Mixed uses are not permitted by zoning on most of the properties in downtown, excluding one corridor of Spring Street.

Land Use Plan & Planning Districts

The Comprehensive Plan includes an analysis of existing development within the city’s boundaries and the additional Planning Area; most of the Planning Area was annexed into the city between 2008 and 2012. Presently the city does not have any extraterritorial planning jurisdiction. Land use in Jeffersonville has followed the national trend in suburban growth. Agricultural land on the fringe of the city is subdivided for low density residential uses; commercial and multifamily developments define significant traffic corridors, and industrial uses are mostly confined to established industrial parks where
infrastructure exists. While most of the growth has occurred on the expanding periphery of Jeffersonville, the downtown’s land use has changed little. Figure 8 is a section of the Current Land Use Map that is cropped to show just the downtown.

![Figure 8: Current Land Use Map (City of Jeffersonville, 2007)](image)

A clear feature on this map is the impact of the interstate highway (dark blue lines) on the downtown and a traditional neighborhood called Rose Hill. The white area on the left side of Figure 8 is in the jurisdiction of Clarksville, an adjacent community. First the Clark Memorial Bridge, then the Kennedy Interstate Bridge, brought a mass of cars into the neighborhood, but limited access forced cars to enter and exit Jeffersonville through a few intersections. Just a fraction of the housing in this neighborhood remains, and more will be removed when the second interstate bridge is built in the next decade – the footprint of this bridge is shown in Figure 8.

The current land use map classifies most property in the downtown under commercial, single-family residential, or multi-family residential. No properties are labeled as “Mixed-Use”, but about ten
properties along Spring Street presently house mixed uses and the Future Land Use Map (Figure 9) accurately portrays the mixed-use properties that exist today.

The Future Land Use map does not highlight specific parcels for dramatic changes. In addition to the mixed-use corridor along Spring Street the map defines areas for redevelopment (gray diagonal hatch), although the plan does not provide guidance for this redevelopment. The existing “Multi-family Residential” properties would remain, and future multi-family developments would be encouraged in the areas planned for “Mixed-Use” in the future land use map. The future land use map foresees mixed-use development in the downtown, but only along Spring Street.

Figure 9: Future Land Use Map (City of Jeffersonville, 2007)

The plan breaks up some of the land uses, but it gives special attention to the variety of commercial development, and provides some recommendations for the Downtown Commercial land use. First the plan recommends revising the zoning standards for this district, but it includes only a few vague suggestions: “limiting the size of certain uses; sign controls; realistic parking requirements; permitting
some uses only in a secondary location” (Page 131). The second recommendation is an appeal for more analysis and plans that focus on the downtown with specific attention on parking and capital improvements that will engender private development.

Considering a future land-use map at the parcel level seems inconsequential – it is unlikely that future politicians or planning board members will factor this into their decisions. It would seem far more appropriate to consider objectives and values for larger districts in the community. The writers of this plan consciously identified planning districts that have specific goals, objectives, and policy recommendations; the Downtown Historic District includes most of the study area for this project.

**Goals, Objectives, and Policy Recommendations**

The plan includes two specific goals for the Downtown Historic District along with multiple objectives, but there are no policy recommendations.

“Goal DHD-1: Create a downtown with a compact, walkable core and a lively and active pedestrian environment that fosters and increase the number of people walking on primary downtown sidewalks and ensures a more humane downtown environment.” (City of Jeffersonville, 2007, p. 88)

“Goal DHD-2: Develop downtown as a unique and active destination with a variety of land uses that attract and accommodate visitor, businesses, shoppers, and residents.” (City of Jeffersonville, 2007, p. 88)

The first goal provides an objective for infrastructure in the public space of downtown. This is focused on pedestrians and the facilities that make walking more enjoyable and accessible. An accommodating environment for pedestrian might only require minor additions like benches, trash cans, and street trees to existing sidewalks in good condition. Unfortunately many sidewalks in the downtown have not been
maintained. Curb cuts, driveways, and parking lots have been allowed to break sidewalks into uneven pieces that make the sidewalk less serviceable for pedestrians.

The second goal focuses on the development of property within the downtown district. Much of this property is privately owned and would be regulated by the Zoning Ordinance and the Historic Preservation Commission, but there is a significant amount of property that is owned by the city because of the preparations for the canal. Development on property owned by the city should still follow the ordinances, but it will be led by the Redevelopment Department and will be designed in a civic process.

**Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan**

The implementation matrix for the plan provides specific actions and timelines to achieve the goals set forth in the Comprehensive Plan. The actions are divided into six categories: Land Use, Public Ways, Public Places, Public Utilities, Economic Development, and Government. The suggested actions for policies that are relevant to this project repeatedly refer to the creation of a unified development ordinance (UDO) and capital improvement plan (CIP). Neither of these has been created since 2007 even though the timeline for the actions was one to three years. The plan recommended the UDO to simplify the zoning and subdivision regulations, and provide new design guidelines for the planning districts.

**Jeffersonville Zoning Ordinance**

The Zoning Code of Jeffersonville was adopted in 2001 and since has received minor amendments that tightened regulations on auto sales and large apartment complexes. It is similar to most other zoning ordinances in that it assigns each property to a zoning district, and every district has standards that are
scaled to the intensity of permitted uses. The ordinance regulates use, bulk, and intensity and provides flexibility through judicial decisions provided by the Plan Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. There are multiple types of residential, commercial, and industrial districts to provide an appropriate match for the various neighborhoods and grandfathered uses.

Most of the study area is classified under one of four zoning districts: Downtown Commercial (DC), Old City Residential (R3), Low Density Multifamily Residential (M1), and Neighborhood Commercial (NC). There are a few parcels that are zoned for Institutional Uses (IS), Medium Density Multifamily Residential (M2), and Parks and Recreation (PR). Figure 10 shows the zoning for each parcel in the downtown area. The orthogonal streets and alleys and narrow lots are typical of a historic neighborhood.

Figure 10: Zoning Map (City of Jeffersonville, 2012)
There are two overlay districts that control new development in the study area. The Historic District Overlay runs along Spring Street and Riverside Drive; the structures along these streets are the most significant and best preserved. This overlay requires a design review by the Historic Preservation Commission to determine conformance to additional form standards. The northern side of the study area is within the Commercial Corridor Overlay District (CC-OL) and new development must undergo plan review with the Plan Commission. Both districts have additional development standards, but only the CC-OL’s standards are contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

The CC-OL requires gabled roofs, pedestrian access, and architectural details that deliver diverse facades and walls. The Plan Commission has frequently granted waivers from the requirement for gabled roofs, but waivers for pedestrian access and façade variety are rarely granted.
Permitted Uses & Development Standards

The Downtown Commercial District (DC) applies to almost every parcel on Spring Street and Court Avenue in the study area. The intent of this district is to provide a general commercial district with development standards that complement the historic structures and is compatible with the neighboring single and multifamily districts. The DC district is the only zoning district that has development standards that resemble a form-based development code; this type of regulation focuses on the bulk and design of the buildings and puts less emphasis on the permitted uses. These standards were derived from the historic buildings that predate this ordinance and all past zoning codes. Traditional “Main Street” structures were built on the property line using a party wall and have two or three stories with mixed uses. The standards were written to allow by right a building with bulk similar to the existing buildings and this prevents conflicting designs while also permitting developers to maximize the interior area. A new building in the DC district could be an attractive mixed-use structure without needing any variances from the Zoning Ordinance.

In the DC district the ordinance permits residential units on the upper stories and requires a minimum average floor area per dwelling unit: 850 square feet. The district’s setbacks are all zero, but the side yard setback is a maximum instead of a minimum. The minimum height is two stories unless the neighboring structures are both one story; the maximum height is 40 feet and thus any building of four or more stories would require a variance. The standard for lot coverage is a minimum of 80 percent - all other districts use a maximum. If every vacant lot that is zoned DC were built to these standards the Spring Street corridor would resemble its former self.

The Neighborhood Commercial District (NC) is rarely applied in the entire city or the study area. The intent for this district is to spot zone neighborhood businesses that are family oriented and do not conflict with the surrounding residents. The permitted uses are similar to the DC district although there
are fewer permitted retail and professional uses. Dwellings are permitted on the upper stories. The significant difference from the DC district is the setback and lot coverage standards which were likely created to prevent commercial structures built up to the property line in a residential neighborhood.

The Old City Residential District (R3) includes all of the single-family residential properties in the study area. The intent of this district is to protect the character of the existing neighborhood by preventing encroachment by businesses. A few commercial uses are allowed through a special exception: bed and breakfast, two-family dwelling, and day care. The development standards for this district allow for a higher density of dwelling units than any other single-family zoning district. There are very few vacant lots that are zoned R3.

The Low Density Multifamily District (M1) is intended for properties with a single structure and multiple dwelling units. This district has been assigned to most of the apartments in the study area and most of these were grandfathered. The development standards require large setbacks, relatively low lot coverage, and a unit density that is lower than the suggested density of the R3 district. These standards seem more applicable to new multi-family development in suburban areas where apartments are typically buffered from single-family residences.

The landscaping standards are mostly uniform for each district and are demanding; variances are frequently requested and granted. The required minimum of trees and plantings is determined by the size of the building and length of the property’s perimeter. Properties in the DC district are relieved from the minimum plantings standard (LA-02) but are still required to install trees on the perimeter and screen any parking lots. Perimeter landscaping is encouraged to be integrated with the streetscape so not all of the required landscaping has to be on the property. Native species are incentivized by a 20 percent reduction in the minimum standard if 80 percent of the plantings are native.
The parking standards are independent of the zoning district and instead are determined by the use and intensity. Residential properties must provide two off-street spaces per dwelling unit plus a scaling number of visitor spaces for multifamily housing. The minimum number of parking spaces for commercial and institutional uses is determined from a table that specifically matches a use with a parking requirement. This accounts for employees, visitors, customers, patients, and considers that diverse types of retail need various amounts of parking. This standard has typically been applied only to new development which has not occurred recently in the study area. It does not factor parking in the right-of-way or in public parking lots, but it does allow shared parking and off-site parking if approved by the Plan Commission. This minimum standard is intended to prevent disputes over parking by requiring a supply of spaces that can meet the peak demand – the result is a parking lot that is larger than the building footprint.

**The Historic District**

The Jeffersonville Historic District Board of Review was formed in 1984 as suggested by the comprehensive plan that was adopted in the same year. The purpose of the board is to protect the historic structures that remain in the downtown; many buildings were lost to natural disasters and Urban Renewal development. The boundaries of the district are shown in the zoning map of Figure 10 – the district includes seven blocks of Riverside Drive and five blocks of Spring Street. The Board classified the structures into three general groups: contributing, non-contributing, and vacant/parking lots. A structure is considered to be contributing to the district if it was built during the district’s historic era and the structure has maintained its historical features. The district contains 79 contributing structures, 38 non-contributing structures, and 21 vacant lots.
The Board reviews all aspects of exterior rehabilitation and the design guidelines are thorough. Historical designs and materials are suggested for awnings, cornices, doors, roofing, siding, windows, and signs. Each project is considered at a public hearing and a Certificate of Appropriateness is issued if the board approves of the design. The Board encourages structures that contribute to the historic setting but do not imitate the existing designs. The Board has consistently required that materials match the quality of the existing, and that scale and proportion are considered. Figure 12 shows a structure that was built following the guidelines of the district and as a result it complements the historic structures without looking like an imitation. Figure 13 shows a multifamily residence that is only a half-block outside of the historic district where no design guidelines are enforced. This residence was manufactured at a different location and has no windows or doors that face the street.

![Figure 12: Recently Built Structure under the Standards of the Historic District](image-url)
Old Jeffersonville Historic Preservation Plan

The Federal Highway Administration endorsed the Ohio River Bridges Project in 2003 after decades of debate and studies. This project includes two new bridges and an overhauled exchange where Interstate Highways 65, 64, and 71 intersect in downtown Louisville. The path of Interstate 65 in Jeffersonville will be much larger once the six-lane bridge is constructed and the right-of-way doubles in width. A team of representatives from transportation and historic preservation departments in Kentucky and Indiana was responsible for creating a mitigation plan for this project. The Old Jeffersonville Historic Preservation Plan was finalized in 2009 and provides a thorough assessment of the existing downtown district, and a plan for adapting to the effects of the bridges project.

The boundaries of this plan were adopted from the Old Jeffersonville National Register Historic District. This district is designated by the Department of the Interior because it contains “a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or
aesthetically by plan or physical development” (National Park Service, n.d.). This is larger than the historic district that was locally established in 1984, but the city has not established any design standards or an enforcement process for this registered district. Figure 14 shows the border of the national and local historic districts.

![Historic Districts Map](image)

**Figure 14: Historic Districts Map (RATIO Architects, Inc., 2009)**

The majority of the recommendations in this plan are related to stipulations in a memorandum of agreement between the city and the State of Indiana that require context-sensitive design for the interstate infrastructure and the connections to Jeffersonville’s historic districts. Chapter Seven of the plan has urban design recommendations for the area outside of the interstates impact zone.
Recommendation 7.2b would see the boundary of the local historic district enlarged to include most of the National Register Historic District – this is shown in Figure 15: Proposed District Boundaries.

A Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) is also shown in Figure 15 and this is explained in recommendation 7.2c. A NCD is an alternative to the Historic District – the NCD would be a unique overlay with special design standards, but these standards would likely be less strict than the standards of the Historic District. The NCD area in Figure 15 has remained blighted since this plan was created in 2009 although the work completed on the Big 4 Landing has cleared around a dozen structures.
Old City Parking Study

Consultants were hired in 2005 to provide a study of parking in an area called the “Old City”. The study looked at existing conditions, forecasted future parking needs, and suggested alternative methods for meeting the demand for parking. The core and fringe of this study area includes 80 percent of the Big Four Study Area, plus additional properties along Court Avenue. Some of the issues identified with the downtown’s parking supply included poor signage of off-street spaces, vague striping of street parking, and lenient enforcement of metered spaces. The remaining issues were aesthetic: parking lots lacked landscaping and lighting.

Figure 16 highlights the location and quantity of parking spaces in the study area. The largest parking lots are close to the library, courthouse, and LifeSpring – a large employer and provider of mental care services. On-street parking is available except for a few blocks of Court Ave that are closest to the Interstate. These properties have adapted by providing plentiful off-street parking. Three of the parking lots along Spring Street are rented by the Urban Enterprise Association and made public, free, and unmetered.
Figure 16: Parking Spaces (Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates Inc., 2005)
The demand for parking spaces is shown in Figure 17. This analysis included the available public parking spaces which included 1,592 on-street spaces and 106 off-street spaces. Of the 41 blocks there are 12 that needed additional parking. The demand is concentrated around the county courthouse and the 100,300, and 400 blocks of Spring Street (Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates Inc., 2005).

Figure 17: Parking Spaces by Block (Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates Inc., 2005)
In addition to the parking analysis the recommendations of this study were supported by a survey of local property owners and workers. A significant number of responses showed that people prefer the convenience of on-street parking and they often ignored the 2-hour limit because it was rarely enforced. The Old City Parking Study specifically recommends encouraging the businesses to require their employees use off-street parking and that this could be pressed with expanded boundaries of the time-limited on-street parking and stronger enforcement. The study recommends that the businesses place signs in their private lots that clearly identify the ownership and purpose of the lot. Presently there is no enforcement of the time limits for on-street parking and there are no additional signs indicating restricted parking. Some businesses have resorted to installing illegal signs that associate the closest on-street spaces with their business. The city has installed private parking signs for on-street parking at select locations and these are enforced on an as-needed basis, but recently the Board of Public Works has rejected applications for these signs.

The plan recommends updating the parking standards in the zoning ordinance so that future development does not exacerbate the parking shortage. The first recommendation is an amendment to the standards requiring handicapped parking with signage. Although such a provision has not been added to the ordinance it is effectively enforced through plan review and inspection prior to certification of occupancy. The second suggested amendment would increase the minimum parking standard for government offices, service commercial uses, and libraries – this standard has not been updated although since 2005 there has been minimal development of these uses. Finally, the plan recommends strict enforcement of the parking standards when a new use is proposed and additional parking is required - even if the use is permitted by right in a grandfathered structure. It is suggested that the shared parking standard be expanded to help new businesses comply with the proposed strict enforcement. The planning department has not enforced the parking standards in this manner primarily because it is perceived as a disincentive for development.
Jeffersonville Housing Inventory Study

A thorough assessment of the residential structures on 131 blocks in downtown Jeffersonville was completed in the spring of 2009; this includes all of the blocks in the Big Four Study Area. A few features, such as sidewalks, graffiti, and lighting, were assessed at the block level. Within the Big Four Study Area there were found to be three blocks with partial sidewalks, four blocks with partial lighting, and one block with graffiti. There appears to be minimal correlation among these features: the 300 block of W. Riverside Drive had both partial lighting and graffiti.

Every residential structure was assessed in 15 categories of property age, material, and condition. An overall property condition score was derived from the total score. According to this scale 87 percent of the residential structures were in moderate, good, or excellent condition. Only 3 percent of the residential structures were in very poor condition and three properties are located in the Big Four Study Area. Two of the three structures have already been demolished.

This study was purely an inventory and thus did not provide any recommendations.

Clark County Transportation Plan

Jeffersonville is part of a regional metropolitan planning organization (MPO) that is known as the Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA). This organization coordinates transportation planning projects and financing. In 2012 KIPDA worked with consultants to create a transportation plan for Clark County (Bernardin, Lochmueller & Associates Inc., 2012). The majority of the road corridors that are targeted for improvement fall outside of the study area. This report includes a recent traffic count and a forecast of traffic counts in 2030. The forecast shows the lower daily traffic counts for the interstate, Court Avenue, and Market Street. The reasons for this low forecast are not
explained in this report but it is likely due to the inclusion of the East End Bridge which is now under construction. This new bridge will connect the beltway and divert traffic from the downtown interstate corridor although population growth would presumably make up the difference.

**Wheels and Heels Trail**

A previous municipal administration created a plan for a multi-modal trail that connected many neighborhoods, including the downtown, and converted an abandoned railway into a trail. The project was known as the Wheels and Heels trail and never materialized due to insufficient funding and some negative feedback from residents. The fourteen-mile trail would connect many subdivisions to some of the largest employers in the city and popular destinations like the Ohio River Greenway and Falls of the Ohio State Park. The recent success of other rails-to-trails projects has revived interest in this project.

**Ohio River Greenway**

The Ohio River greenway is a regional project to create a dedicated path along on the banks of the Ohio River in Indiana. It has been in the works for almost two decades and has a few completed sections including one within the study area. This section includes multiple sidewalks that allow users to travel at the top and bottom of the banks. The lower sidewalk is occasionally inundated. These sidewalks are in good condition although not wide enough to accommodate bicyclists and walkers. The sections to the west of Jeffersonville are trails in a state park or are on top of a levee. Eventually Jeffersonville will have a continuous connection to Clarksville and New Albany. The Big Four Bridge will provide access to Louisville where the “Louisville Loop” trail runs parallel to the greenway. There is an effort to open
another railroad bridge in New Albany called the K&I Bridge. If this bridge were to open it would encourage users to travel the entire greenway between Jeffersonville and New Albany.

![Figure 18: Ohio River Greenway Project Map (Ohio River Greenway Development Corporation)](image)

**Stormwater Master Plan**

The Stormwater Master Plan updates the list of projects that need to be targeted by the Drainage Board since they had completed all of the projects on their previous master plan. The Drainage Board is funded by a drainage fee that is part of every sewer bill. This plan was directed by a survey of residents and updated drainage mapping to figure out which flooding issues should be solved and it provides a priority list of structural and nonstructural recommendations to address the drainage problem areas. When the plan was started the canal was still being considered, but the new administration in 2012 was not pursuing the canal so the plan developed a different approach to solving drainage issues in the study area. The highest recommendation pertinent to the study area is the second structural recommendation: Green Infrastructure in the Downtown Area. This recommendation called for
improvements with an estimated cost that is far beyond the capabilities of the drainage board, but the authors emphasize that green infrastructure can be built piecemeal and this can be achieved over the long term and could be required from development on private property. The highest rated nonstructural recommendation included updated city-wide development and drainage standards that would require green infrastructure.

**Plans for the Big Four Station**

The Big Four Station is a public park that is designed around the Big Four Bridge Landing. This park will reshape two city blocks by converting what was mostly residential property into an open park that can support various events. This design provides the city with a gathering space that is visible to the users of the bridge, and amenities such as a restroom, playground, and pavilion.

![Conceptual Siteplan](Image)

*Figure 19: Conceptual Plan for the Big Four Station Park (The Estopinal Group, 2012)*
Existing Conditions Analysis

An updated assessment of the existing conditions in Jeffersonville’s historic downtown is essential for evaluating the progress made toward implementing past plans and for making any further recommendations.

The Big Four Study Area was chosen to allow thorough and rapid analysis of the existing conditions. A quarter-mile is a comfortable walking distance for most people and on level ground in an urban setting only the largest structures are visible from beyond a quarter-mile away. This area closest to the Big Four is most likely to be explored by tourists and attractive to developers. A circle with a quarter-mile radius that is centered on the landing of the bridge ramp (approximately the intersection of Pearl and Chestnut Streets) has an area of 125 acres.

Figure 20: Big Four Study Area (39°North, 2012)
Within this study area there are roughly 20 city blocks and most have the same rectangular dimensions: 350 feet by 430 feet. The right-of-way for streets and alleys occupies 30 percent of the study area – about 37 of the 125 acres. There are 469 parcels of land of which the City of Jeffersonville owns 55.

The following features were identified and are mapped separately:

- Land Use
- Building Condition
- Historic Structures
- Parks and Open Space
- Circulation and Transit
- Sidewalk & Crosswalk Condition
- Pedestrian Facilities
- Bicyclist Facilities
- Street Trees & Landscaping

All of the following maps were created using the web-based geographic information system (GIS) that is provided for Clark County Government by 39°North.
Land Use

The existing land use was surveyed in 2012 and all properties in the study area were inspected. A simple classification system was used to separate land uses into seven groups: residential, commercial, mixed-use, park, institutional, vacant building, and undeveloped land. The footprint of the building was used to identify the use that is associated with the property and the voids between buildings are parking lots or yards that are part of the property. Undeveloped land is shown by the entire parcel being marked black. The big four station park is identified with a black crosshatch because this area is currently being redeveloped.

Table 1: Land Use Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Structures or Properties in the Study Area</th>
<th>Percent of Total Properties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-Use</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vacant Building</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strengths

- The historic retail corridor on Spring Street is active with only a few vacancies.
- An established residential neighborhood on Market Street and Riverside Drive with a high occupancy rate.
- There is abundant park space once the Big Four Station is built.
- A longstanding neighborhood grocery store at the corner of Chestnut Street and Wall Street.

Weaknesses

- There are multifamily and group housing with poor reputation and appearance.
- Vacant buildings along Court Avenue are very conspicuous.
- Grandfathered car and boat service businesses have an industrial appearance.
- A pocket of single-family residences on Pearl Street has been isolated from the core of the neighborhood by the Big Four Station.
Figure 21: Land Use Map

Legend

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Institutional
- Public Park
- Vacant Building
- Undeveloped Lot
Building Condition & Historic Structures

The condition of each building in the study area was assessed on a qualitative scale with three levels of condition:

**Good Condition:** The building is obviously maintained and inhabited. Minor flaws could be easily fixed.

**Fair Condition:** Significant cosmetic work is needed. Historic features of the building are intact but disregarded and not maintained.

**Poor Condition:** The building is structurally questionable and the historic features are compromised.

Building condition is mapped in Figure 22. The designations of the local historic district are mapped in Figure 23.

**Strengths**

- A majority of the buildings are in good condition.
- Historically significant structures are in good or fair condition.

**Weaknesses**

- The buildings in poor condition are not attractive for renovation.
- The largest buildings are more often in fair condition.
- Maple Street does not have any block with a group of buildings in good condition.
- Buildings that will be demolished to make way for the Interstate are currently vacant and boarded up.
• The 400 block of Spring Street has multiple buildings facades in fair condition

Table 2: Building Condition Totals and Percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building Condition</th>
<th>Quantity in the Study Area</th>
<th>Percent of Total (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 22: Building Condition Map

Legend

- Green: Good Condition
- Yellow: Fair Condition
- Red: Poor Condition
Figure 23: Historic Structures

Legend

- **Outstanding**
- **Notable**
- **Contributing**
- **National Register Historic District**
- **Historic Preservation District**
Parks and Open Space

In the study area there are seven parks and public open spaces and they have the following amenities:

1. **Colston Memorial Park – 3.8 acres**
   - Softball diamond, playground equipment, basketball court, shelter, restrooms

2. **Grisamore Park - 0.06 acres**
   - Benches, flower garden

3. **Riverfront Park & River Stage – 5.5 acres**
   - Amphitheatre, stage, walking trail, Ohio River Greenway, historical markers, city skyline

4. **Warder Park – 1.3 acres**
   - Statue of Thomas Jefferson, war memorial, benches, gazebo, historical markers

5. **400 Block of Spring Street – 0.04 acres**
   - Benches, mural

6. **Preservation Park – 0.7 acres**
   - Walking path, Preservation Station (A small event space that is available by reservation)

7. **Corner of Market & Spring Streets – 0.7 acres**
   - Seasonal ice rink with food vendors

**Strengths**

- Just over 12 acres of open space in the study area – this is 10 percent of the total land.

**Weaknesses**

- Lacking a permanent public restroom that is capable of supporting the expected demand from users of the bridge.
Figure 24: Parks and Open Space
Circulation & Transit

Access to the interstate has determined the most active thoroughfares in the study area. Court Avenue is the first exit for northbound traffic from Louisville and provides access to the County Courthouse and the surrounding neighborhoods. Market Street serves as an important arterial to the eastern side of Jeffersonville which has major employers such as American Commercial Lines (ACL) and the industrial facilities in the Port of Indiana. The Town of Utica is a few miles upstream and its residents rely on Market Street to access downtown Louisville. Spring Street supports most of the study area’s retail and restaurants and thus received much of the north-south traffic. Some commuters use Pearl and Mulberry Streets as a shortcut between Court Avenue and Market Street.

Public transportation is provided by the Transit Authority of River City (TARC). Two bus routes run along Court Avenue and bus stops are marked on each block. There is a single shelter on Spring Street just to the north of the study area boundary. TARC’s community transportation provides service to any property within a quarter-mile of the regular routes; all of the study area is accessible for this service.

Strengths

- Good Connectivity within the study area and to neighborhoods to north and east.
- Every property in the study area is within four blocks of a bus stop.
- Most of the blocks (90 percent) have an alley.

Weaknesses

- Where traffic is uninhibited for two or more blocks there is noticeably faster traffic (For example: Market Street east of Spring Street and Mulberry Street between Maple and Market Streets).
- Bus stops often lack benches, shelters, and trash cans.
Figure 25: Circulation & Transit

Legend
- Bus Stop
- Bus Shelter
- 4-way Stop
- Traffic Light
- Collector Street
- Local Street
- Alley
Sidewalk Condition and Accessibility

The sidewalks in the study area were assessed using a qualitative scale and were judged to fall within one of four categories.

**Good Condition**: Smooth pavement with minimal cracks, lips, or weeds. No obstacles for accessibility.

**Fair Condition**: Repairs and replacement of sections could restore this sidewalk to good condition. Milling may be needed to remove obstacles.

**Poor Condition**: Reconstruction is necessary because the sidewalk is consistently damaged.

**No Sidewalk**: There is no sidewalk or other paved surface available for pedestrians to use.

The crosswalks were graded on a slightly different scale but the same colors are used on the following map.

**Good Crossing**: Curb ramps meet ADA accessibility standards and the crossing is evident because of painted lines or a different material such as bricks.

**Fair Crossing**: The crossing has paint or a difference material, but the curbs do not have the appropriate ramps or no ramps at all.

**Poor Crossing**: There are neither ramps nor markings on the street.

**Strengths**

- Spring Street has consistent sidewalks and crosswalks that are in good condition.

**Weaknesses**

- There are three sections where no sidewalks exist.
The paths between Market Street and Riverside Drive are not in good condition and have poor crosswalks. These are important paths for pedestrians moving between the bridge and the river.

Figure 26: Sidewalk in Good Condition

Figure 27: Sidewalk in Poor Condition
Figure 28: Sidewalk & Crosswalk Assessment

Legend

- Green: Good Condition
- Yellow: Fair Condition
- Red: Poor Condition
- No Sidewalk Built

46
Pedestrian Amenities

Safe, comfortable, and clean sidewalks are an integral part of a neighborhood that is trying to attract visitors and encouraging them to linger. Regularly placed and cleaned trash cans promote tidiness and benches allow for pedestrians to rest or wait for others. Lighting of public spaces can be implemented in various ways and serve multiple purposes. The presence of all three of these amenities creates an appealing setting for pedestrians.

Attractive lampposts are the most recognizable method of lighting the sidewalk and street. This type of lighting already exists on Spring Street, Riverside Drive, and two blocks of Market Street.

Larger streetlights are usually higher up and use a different bulb that casts a dimmer yellow light. These lights are best for energy efficiency and public safety but are not ideal for sidewalks and storefronts. Most of the study area has streetlights placed once or twice in a block.

Strengths

- Benches, lamppost, and trash cans are common on Spring Street and Riverside Drive. The benches are attractive, durable, and consistent in style.

Weaknesses

- Very few amenities are located within one block of the Big Four stairs or landing.
- Use of decorative street lighting is isolated to recently reconstructed streets.

Figure 29: Existing Lamppost, Clock, and Trashcan on Spring Street
Figure 30: Pedestrian Amenities

Legend

- Streetlight (Diameter is an estimate of illuminated area)
- Bench
- Trash Can
Bicyclist Amenities

Infrastructure and amenities for bicyclists are not common in the study area. There are no bike lanes or share-the-road signs. Bicyclists frequently cross the study area to ride the Ohio River Greenway to the west or Market Street eastward to Utica and Charlestown State Park. Most of the streets have low speed limits and frequent stop signs so riding in the lane is comfortable for confident riders – the exception would be Court Avenue.

There are seven (7) bike racks; six of the racks are installed on the sidewalk and one is built in a former street parking space. Two of the bike racks were installed incorrectly causing the locked bike to impede access to the sidewalk.

Strengths

- There is at least one bike rack on each block of Spring Street.
- The newest bike racks are quirky and creative.
- The bike rack built in the street-parking space was proposed by the adjacent business.
- Triathalon races already use Riverside Drive and Market Street for routes.

Weaknesses

- There are no dedicated or shared bike lanes.
- No signs promoting bicyclist awareness.
- Most bike racks are the work of the city and not the local businesses or property owners.

Figure 31: Existing Bike Rack on Riverside Drive
Figure 32: Bicyclist Amenities

Legend

- Bike Rack
- Preferred Route for Bicyclists and Triathlon Races
Trees and Landscaping

Trees and other landscaping can provide many benefits beyond their natural attractiveness. Trees can intercept stormwater slowing the water down and diverting it from the sewer to reduce localized flooding. Tree canopies shade buildings and pavement and thus keep public spaces and building facades cooler and more energy efficient. Mature trees contribute to property value and should not be overlooked or removed unnecessarily.

Strengths

- Trees are regularly placed on Spring Street and Riverside Drive
- Residential property on Riverside Drive has preserved large trees.
- Bioswales on Market Street are functioning well and are attractive.
- Flower plantings are maintained by “City Pride” – the volunteer beautification department.

Weaknesses

- Street trees on Spring Street are Bradford Pears and these are notorious for their deterioration.
- The existing street trees are not in boxes and have damaged the surrounding sidewalk.
- Mulberry Street and most of the western side of the study area are lacking trees.
- Large trees in the proposed footprint of the Big Four Station have not been protected from construction and are not included in the plans for the park.
Figure 33: Trees and Plantings

Legend

- Tree in street right-of-way or in a park
- Tree on private property with trunk at least 24” wide
- Bio-swale
- Flower Container
Recommended Actions

The purpose of this project was to examine past and ongoing plans, projects, and development that affect the neighborhood surrounding the Big Four Bridge. The recommendations are intended to attract visitors, businesses, developers, and residents while also protecting the history and livability that current residents cherish. The specific actions are categorized by three goals:

1. Improved Facilities for Pedestrians Crossing the Bridge
2. Develop Infrastructure for Bicyclists
3. Build Neighborhood Unity and Prevent Conflicts

The suggested actions for fulfilling these goals are separated into projects and policies. Projects, or capital improvements, are specifically described with a cost estimate. The pedestrians and bicyclists who cross the Big Four Bridge will encounter infrastructure and development of various quality and design - a patchwork that is very different from the tidy and cohesive park on the other side of the bridge. The projects can alter the appearance and function of the public right-of-way, but it is the policies that affect the rules for development. Lenient development regulation in the past is evident in the existing structures and their incompatible uses. Amended policies will help the city obtain development that contributes to qualities of this historic and traditional neighborhood.

Goal #1: Improved Facilities for Pedestrians Crossing the Bridge

The pedestrians who cross the Big Four Bridge will be drawn to the activity on Spring Street, Riverside Drive, and the Big Four Station Park once it is built. These users will also use the stairs located at the corner of Market and Mulberry Streets as a shortcut to the Ohio River Greenway and the restaurants on Riverside Drive. Unfortunately the sidewalks on these routes are not in good condition: some
percent of the sidewalks need to be replaced or repaired, and there are very few amenities. Within the study area there are a few locations where the sidewalks are accessible, enjoyable, and attractive. The two recently renovated blocks of Market Street are the best examples because there are wide sidewalks with integrated landscaping and attractive lighting. Pedestrian amenities such as benches, lighting, and trash receptacles are common on Spring Street and they collectively make the public space inviting, clean, and safe. The most direct routes that will appeal to the pedestrians are shown in Figure 34 and these have been targeted for improvements.

Figure 34: Projects for Fulfilling Goal #1
Project 1-A: Chestnut Street between Pearl Street and Spring Street

This block of Chestnut Street is the direct route between the Big Four and the commercial activity on Spring Street. There are large sections where the sidewalk is missing and the path is obstructed by parking bumpers and guardrails. This block is also lacking trees and other amenities. The crosswalks have minimal paint and the ramps are not accessible. The south side of the block has multiple historic structures.

Figure 35: Project 1-A
Table 3: Cost Estimate for Project 1-A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvements</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Sidewalk</td>
<td>$40/linear-foot</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>$7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repaired Sidewalk</td>
<td>$20/linear-foot</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>$6,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crosswalk ramp</td>
<td>$900</td>
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<td>$1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crosswalk paint</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>$300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bench</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetlight</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trashcan</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Total Cost</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$42,600</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project 1-B: Pearl Street between Chestnut and Riverside Drive

Pearl Street provides a straight path between the ramp landing and the riverfront. Pedestrians encounter multiple obstacles such as a four-way stop with deficient crosswalks and a one-way stop at Riverside Drive that is inconvenient. Additionally, the floodwall has narrow doorways that restrict visibility and make crossing the adjacent alleys hazardous.
Figure 36: Project 1-B

Table 4: Cost Estimate for Project 1-B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvements</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>New Sidewalk</td>
<td>$40/linear-foot</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>$9,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repaired Sidewalk</td>
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<td>460</td>
<td>$9,200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crosswalk ramp</td>
<td>$900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crosswalk paint</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bench</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetlight</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trashcan</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
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<td>$10,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stop Signs</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Total Cost</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visibility is limited when passing through the floodwall

All four crosswalks need improvements

One-way stop makes this intersection difficult to cross

Estimated Total Cost $91,500
Project 1-C: Market Street between Mulberry Street and Spring Street

The final project for Goal #1 would improve the connection between the stairway of the Big Four Bridge and Spring Street. The sidewalks along Market Street between Mulberry Street and Spring Street are drastically inferior to the improved streetscape of Market Street west of Mulberry Street. Pedestrian will always take the quickest route and the paths to the stairs will be used regardless of the condition.

Figure 37: Project 1-C
Goal #2: Develop Infrastructure for Bicyclists

The Big Four Bridge will be a popular route for bicyclists and downtown Jeffersonville is not ready to accommodate them. Certainly the bicycling enthusiasts from both sides of the river will ride the bridge and the roads beyond, but it is unlikely they will stop and linger in the neighborhood. Casual riding for recreation is not very common in Jeffersonville, but the residents might only need some convincing.

Studies in other communities have shown that many residents are potential riders and they are looking for the facilities that will make them feel safe and comfortable (Arvidson, Power to the Pedalers, 2012).

The following projects are intended to assist riders with navigating the neighborhood, storing their bicycles, and avoiding conflicts with drivers and pedestrians.

**Project 2-A: Additional Bike Racks**

Bike racks are sparsely scattered in the study area and only along the Spring Street corridor. Hopefully more racks will be installed as businesses recognize that some of their new customers arrive by bicycle but most of the existing business do not have property to spare and would resort to placing the racks in the public right-of-way. For design, location, and installation to be consistent and to the standards of

---

**Table 5: Cost Estimate for Project 1-C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvements</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Sidewalk</td>
<td>$40/linear-foot</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repaired Sidewalk</td>
<td>$20/linear-foot</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
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<td>Crosswalk ramp</td>
<td>$900</td>
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<td>Crosswalk paint</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bench</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Streetlight</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>$65,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trashcan</td>
<td>$300</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$1,200</td>
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<td>Trees</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimated Total Cost</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>$91,200</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the city it would be advantageous to install bike racks in bulk in an objective manner. Bike racks are most likely to be used by riders who plan to be away from the bike for an extended period. The most likely locations for such racks are the retail shops, restaurants, and personal services. Twenty additional bike racks are recommended. With a unit cost of $500 the total cost for this project is $10,000.

The city could encourage additional bike racks through development standards for new construction or a cost-sharing program. Some communities have experimented with temporary bike parking that is placed in parking spaces on the side of the street. A single parallel parking space can be modified to

Legend

- Existing Bike Rack
- Proposed Bike Rack

Figure 38: Project 2-A
accommodate up to ten bikes. This can be tested with temporary equipment such as movable bike racks and bumper blocks. If these parking space conversions are popular they are occasionally made permanent – as shown in Figure 39.

![Converted Parking Space](image)

**Figure 39: Converted Parking Space**

**Project 2-B: Street Markings and Signs for Bicycling Awareness**

Bicycle trails are the most popular route for casual riders, and this is part of the Big Four’s appeal, but they are also the most expensive method for attracting bicyclists. Because the study area already has the Ohio River Greenway, the Big Four Bridge, and plentiful right-of-way it is impractical to pursue a dedicated path through the study area. Recreational rental bikes are expected to be available near the bridge and these bicycles are often large and cumbersome because they seat multiple riders. Traffic is already slowed by frequent stops, short blocks, and on-street parking but the local drivers may be overwhelmed by the amount of cyclists. A sharrow is a standard symbol that is painted on the driving
lane and it signifies that bicyclists and cars should share the same lane. Street markings and signs would make drivers and bicyclists aware of the correct location for bicycles.

![Legend](image)

**Legend**

- Share the Road Sign

**Figure 40: Project 2-B**

**Table 6: Cost Estimate for Project 2-B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvements</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Painted Sharrows</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share The Road Signs</td>
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<td>$ 1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Total Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$ 8,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Project 2-C: Bicycle Boulevard on Chestnut Street

A bicycle boulevard is a route that is clearly marked and improved to achieve these goals. A single street should be targeted for improvements that make it an extension of the Big Four Bridge and a destination for local bicyclists. This street should attract bicyclists of all ages and promote safe riding techniques.

When planning a path for a boulevard it is worth considering that the route does not have to be the most direct route and that bicyclists will avoid a difficult left turn (Arvidson, Bike Facilities Are Safe and Desirable, 2012). Chestnut Street heading east from the landing has the greatest potential because it is located at the base of the landing, has low traffic volumes, and is continuous for two miles through multiple neighborhoods on the eastern side of the downtown.

Figure 41: Project 2-C
Table 7: Cost Estimate for Project 2-C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvements</th>
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<th>Quantity</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$391,600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Goal #3: Build Neighborhood Unity and Prevent Conflicts

The changing land uses and the influx of visitors brought by the bridge could strain the patience of residents that are accustomed to the neighborhood. The consequences of pedestrian activity and land development could be perceived as intrusive by the residents. The united response of the neighborhood associations could derail development because of a larger issue that has not been resolved. Some of these issues are predictable and many conflicts would be avoided if the following projects are implemented.

Project 3-A: Parking Management

Public parking on the street is occasionally congested on a few blocks of Spring Street in the study area. This problem can be blamed on poor enforcement of the time restrictions. The Old City Parking study identified enforcement and identification as two areas for improvement. The area closest to the Big Four Station had a surplus of parking when the study was written but this is unlikely to remain once the bridge is opened. In order to maximize the utility of the existing public parking the city should tackle the following projects first:

- Enforce parking restrictions to encourage long-term parking in off-street lots.
- Repaint lines for parallel parking and maximize quantity of spaces.
- Add directional signs for drivers looking for long-term parking near the Big Four Station.

The daily parking demand created by the Big Four and new development may outgrow the available supply in the study area. The development standards for parking will not resolve the demand from the bridge and commercial development in existing buildings so better management will be necessary. This will likely be unpopular with many of businesses and residents but the following options should be explored with their input before the problem occurs:

- An expanded area that has time limits and lower limits on congested blocks.
- Parking meters installed at the most desirable spaces near the Big Four Landing and Spring Street. New meters accept credit cards and some systems can adjust pricing based on demand.
- Annual parking passes for residents in the area with enforcement.

Infrastructure Benefit District: Jeffersonville’s downtown is small so some of the above-mentioned programs would probably fail to generate enough improvements or funds individually to make a significant difference. An alternative would be to combine all of the special permits, fees in-lieu, and fines into a single fund that is used to provide the physical improvements and services that are proposed by this project. All of the funds would be spent within a defined area and would be non-reverting; this would encourage support from the residents and business owners.

**Project 3-B: Improvements Targeting a Neighborhood Core**

Many communities have tried to create a new neighborhood around an anchor grocery store (Hinshaw & Vanneman, 2010). Fortunately downtown Jeffersonville already has an established grocery store,
various retail, and food service exists within the study area and not far outside there are multiple public facilities. The intersection of Maple Street and Wall Street is at the center of these neighborhood amenities. The immediate properties provide numerous services including groceries, restaurant, specialty retail, barbershop, and a religious institution. Within a few blocks, although not within the study area, there is also a library, post office, and bakery. The crosswalks are in fair condition and there are adequate bicycle facilities compared to the rest of the study area. This intersection should be improved to a level of service and quality that is comparable to Spring Street. Sidewalks and crosswalks should be in good condition and pedestrian amenities should be plentiful.

Figure 42: Project 3-B
Table 8: Cost Estimate for Project 3-B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Crosswalk paint</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bench</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streetlight</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trashcan</td>
<td>$500</td>
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<td>$2,000</td>
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</table>

Policy 3-C: Regulations for Compatible Development

The zoning ordinance can prevent incompatible development, but traditional zoning is not adequate to address fully the complexity of revitalization. Significant developments would likely be required to make requests at a public hearing that draw the impulsive reaction from the neighborhood. Project would be denied without thoughtful consideration of the development’s impact or the project would be altered to conform to the existing standards, but then not contribute fully to the city’s vision for the neighborhood. The regulations need to be altered for a specific area to allow development that is slightly more dense and diverse.

An additional overlay that affects the pocket of land between the Commercial Corridor and Historic District Overlays was suggested by the Old Jeffersonville Historic Plan. The plan recommended that this district have some design guidelines but not be as strict on renovations and modifications as the Historic Preservation Overlay District. This idea should be expanded to include a larger area of the neighborhood with the Big Four Station at its core, and Article Five of the Zoning Ordinance should be amended to include the overlay district described below.
The Big Four Overlay District

The new overlay district would contain all 20 blocks that are included in the study area of this project; this area is shown in the following figure. The official zoning map would need to be amended to show the boundaries of the district.

![Figure 43: The Big Four Overlay District Boundaries](image)

**District Intent**

The Big Four Overlay District is created in response to the construction of the Big Four Pedestrian Bridge and in fulfillment of the Comprehensive Plan’s vision for the downtown neighborhood. This overlay is intended to make the downtown more vibrant by allowing more commercial activity that capitalizes on
the increased number of pedestrians and by promoting development that increases the number of dwellings.

**Permitted Uses and Special Exceptions**

The overlay district makes few changes to the permitted uses of each base district. Allowing an additional dwelling unit in the residential districts would increase the potential number of units. Developers and property owners are recognizing that demographic trends are altering the housing demand. A growing number of households are multigenerational – elderly parents and adult-aged children are living with parents in more households than any time since the 1950’s (Sparks, 2012). Young professionals are another demographic that has shown a preference for urban living. Even though the study area is small and the demand for such units is probably minimal the demographic trends are a strong motive to encourage accessory dwelling units. By decreasing the average unit size and perhaps even permitting “microunits” – dwelling units under 500 square feet – the downtown will be more attractive to the innovative creative class (Corneil & Gamble, 2013).

The special exception uses are uses that may be appropriate but should be reviewed individually for compatibility. The residential zoning districts in the study area have very few uses that are allowed as a special exception. The overlay changes this by expanding the list of special exception uses to include all of the uses that are listed as permitted in the Downtown Commercial District. This will help properties without commercial zoning to be targeted for investment, but administrative power is still in the hands of the Board of Zoning Appeals.

**Development Standards**

The development standards of the base zoning districts are focused on preventing conflict when instead they should promote compatibility through the design of new structures. There are ample setbacks,
buffering, parking, landscaping, and density standards to effectively reduce conflict when land is plentiful. The Downtown Commercial and Old City Residential districts have some form-based regulations to ensure design that is compatible with the same district; for example the Downtown Commercial district requires a two story building unless both adjacent structures are only single story and in the Old City Residential District the front yard setback can be an average of adjoining properties. The overlay district overrules a few development standards to guide compatible development regardless of the base zoning district.

**Building Bulk and Area Standards**

The overlay district embraces the building setback standard of the Old City Residential District that is based on the average of adjacent properties and applies it to every property. Front, side, and rear setbacks are reduced to the average of buildings on the adjoining properties. This only takes affect when the result is smaller than the standard of the base zoning district. The maximum lot coverage is increased to 80 percent because this would allow residually zoned properties to become more developed.

**Landscaping Standards**

The existing landscaping standards require a large number of trees and plantings to buffer development and fill the open space, but variances are often granted to allow fewer plantings than the standard required. The overlay district provides the Board of Zoning Appeals with another option: require the developer to pay a fee-in-lieu for landscaping that is not installed. A fee-in-lieu option for trees that have to be removed or for minimum plantings required would collect funds that could be used for planting trees and maintaining trees on other properties or in the right-of-way (Templeton & Rouse, 2012). These funds would contribute to the construction and maintenance of landscaping and green infrastructure in the neighborhood. The existing regulations encourage green infrastructure but case
studies show that application of the best management practices (BMPs) piecemeal is not the best way to maximize performance or the impact of enhancements (Hara & Rouse, 2010). This arrangement will help ensure the quality of existing and future

**Off-Street Parking Requirements**

The parking standards in the zoning code require a minimum number of spaces that should be suitable for the use of the property. The required number spaces would be excessive and difficult for the ideal infill development in the study area. A variance from this development would be necessary and disputed. This problem could be improved by adjusting the development standards to include factors that decrease demand for parking (Litman, 2009). The study area already has transit service and with the completion of the Big Four this neighborhood will be even more attractive to walkers and bicyclists. If the parking standards were adjusted across the board the factors could be restricted to properties within a certain distances of a specific service or facility.

A different approach would not involve lower parking minimums but would offer incentives to encourage development that provides transportation options. A development could earn deductions for certain improvements that promote alternative forms of transportation. Bicycle racks and storage could be substituted for a certain maximum percentage or required parking. Close proximity to transit service could provide an additional deduction. The properties that are closest to the Big Four would conceivably be most dependent on the bridge traffic and therefore less parking would be necessary. The properties that are not adjacent to the landing but still suffer from the congestion would likely need better management of the public parking.

A third option would be to maintain the parking standards, discourage variances, and require a small fee in-lieu for each space that is not provided. These funds would contribute to the infrastructure benefit district.
Conclusion

Inspiration for this project came from envisioning an interstate pedestrian bridge landing in a neglected neighborhood that was once the nucleus of Jeffersonville. This neighborhood desperately needs investment in the vacant and undeveloped properties, but the neighborhood has not attracted much development in the past few decades. The Big Four Bridge is a unique infrastructure project that could bring thousands of pedestrians and bicyclists returning energy to downtown Jeffersonville that has slowly drained away over the past half century.

The survey of the existing conditions revealed the deficiencies of the study area that will become more noticeable once the Big Four Bridge is open. The recommended actions targeted the most critical deficiencies and the rationalization for these projects was based on the existing conditions and previous attempts to solve these same issues. The Big Four Bridge is a catalyst that is altering the landscape and the surrounding neighborhood needs this directed preparation. Downtown Jeffersonville has a new center of activity that is potentially a powerful stimulus for revitalization.

The city can expand upon this project by using the existing conditions to locate other projects. The boundaries of the study area could be expanded to find additional problems that need to be addressed. Ideally, positive development in the district will significantly change the setting and any new issues that emerge will be those that accompany a vibrant neighborhood.
Bibliography


