

# Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan

REVISED  
DRAFT



Prepared for:

**City of Covington, Kentucky**



Prepared by:

**The Corradino Group, Inc.  
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April 2005



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# Executive Summary

The City of Covington Madison Avenue Redevelopment Plan (Redevelopment Plan) is a document to be adopted by the City Commission after approval from the Economic Development Department. This Redevelopment Plan will serve as a basis for rehabilitation and new infill in the Corridor, possible changes in traffic circulation and patterns, and installation of site improvements and designation of uses permitted in the Corridor. Authority for the recommended actions is provided by Chapter 99 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes.

This Redevelopment Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) Chapter 99. Sections .330 et seq. of Chapter 99 list the legislative finding and policy, definitions, prerequisites for adoption, and other provisions for urban renewal and development.

Redevelopment, as defined by KRS 99.330, et seq., may include acquisition or assemblage of real property, demolition and clearance of structures and/or improvements, rehabilitation of structures, redevelopment/adaptive reuse of properties, new construction of properties, historic presentation, and installation of public improvements.

## Community Participation

Public participation is an important component of the planning project and the KRS 99 process. Three public meetings were held during the development of the plan – October, November, and January. The meetings were advertised in the newspaper, by distributing flyers and posters, and on the Internet. The meetings were well attended and all were held at the Holmes High School Cafeteria on the high school campus. These meetings involved the review of draft alternative plan concepts, allowed for public participants to make comments and suggestions, and provided participants an opportunity to make design recommendations. The October meeting served to introduce the project and allowed the consultant to “hear first hand” the thoughts and feelings of the neighbors. Of note, during the November meeting, the consultant hosted a bus tour of the corridor. The Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky provided a bus and driver to take people on a tour of the corridor. This bus tour allowed for the consultant team and City staff to get another perspective on the project listening to residents talk about their neighborhood. At the final meeting, the consultant team presented the preferred development alternative based on the input from the public process.

## The Physical Environment

The study area boundaries for the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan are from 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Avenue to the north and along the east and west sides of Madison Avenue to the State Route 16/17 Split.

The corridor generally functions as a transition area from the dense urban character of downtown Covington to mostly residential and suburban south Covington. There can be found along the corridor a number of churches, businesses, and factories that are important not only in terms of their physical presence but also in terms of their functionality in the community. The churches, the most prominent of which is the Cathedral, give prominence to the corridor both because of their structures and the fact that they draw people to and provide services for the adjoining neighborhood. Figure 2-2 shows the land use in the corridor.

The Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption serves to anchor the north end of the district. It is also located on 12<sup>th</sup> Street, which is being widened. Moving south from the Cathedral, the next prominent building is the Durobag Manufacturing Facility. Durobag employs more than 200 people and is an important employer in the neighborhood. The Durobag facility dates to the late 1800's. Conversations with Durobag indicate that they do not plan to move in the near future, although constrictions of its docks because of the upcoming reconstruction of 12<sup>th</sup> Street may necessitate a move.

The next property of note is the Kroger's grocery store, which also is on the west side of Madison Avenue. The building is of the suburban mode popular 15 to 20 years ago. The front of the store opens on a large parking lot, which fronts Madison Avenue. Grocery stores in urban areas are being designed today with a different look, often building such that part of the store is built near the street and having the parking more internal or behind the site. There is also a trend to co-locating generally smaller stores and "shoppes" to create an urban village concept. During the public meeting process, a number of people commented that they prefer to go to Latonia to shop where the Kroger is "nicer". Discussions with Kroger revealed no immediate plans to either rebuild or move the store.

The remaining uses in the corridor are a mix of commercial, industrial and residential. As a whole, residents in census tracts through which Madison Avenue passes exhibit characteristics of a lower income area, including lower than average household income, a higher percentage of renters, and more households without an available auto.

From an urban planning perspective, the above information leads to the following thoughts. Given the proximity of the corridor to downtown Cincinnati and the number of rental units in the area, increasing home ownership by attracting people interested in living in an urban setting with proximity to a major metropolitan area is an important strategy. Attracting these types of residents will increase the property values, create a broader base of wealth in the immediate area to support retail development, and increase the stature of Madison Avenue.

## Traffic and Transportation Issues

An integral component of improving and enhancing the Madison Avenue corridor is transportation. There are a number of traffic and transportation issues that are dealt with in this plan. An in depth discussion of traffic and transportation and the plan recommendations is presented in Chapter 4. But, the key issues considered are as follows.

The dominant issue that came up during the planning process has to do with redirecting traffic from KY 16/17 on Scott and Greenup Streets to Madison Avenue and reverting the existing one-way pair to function more as neighborhood streets. The second issue that arose was ensuring that parking was available, particularly to residents who already feel parking constraints.

There are also geometric issues that arose during the plan development. These include sometimes confusing transition from lane to lane, inadequate pedestrian markings, and lack of connectivity with side streets. Despite all transportation challenges, a flexible transportation plan was developed to accommodate multiple future scenarios and to maximize the goals identified for the Madison Avenue corridor.

## Building and Structural Conditions

The City of Covington conducted a structured conditions inventory in the Madison Avenue Corridor. As part of the study process, the City's building inspectors inspected all the parcels along Madison Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to 26<sup>th</sup> Street. The analysis in Table ES-1 shows the results. As can be seen, there are a significant number of properties with multiple violations.

**Table ES-1**  
**Property Conditions Evaluation**

Category	Number of Properties	% of Total
Adequate	71	36%
Minor Violation	18	9%
Major Violation	66	34%
No Information	40	21%
Total	195	100%

Source: The Corradino Group (assessment of information provided by the City of Covington. The results of the inspection were mapped on a GIS file of the corridor which has more properties (195 versus 167) than are listed in Appendix B.

## A Vision for the Area

Through the interaction with the Steering Committee and the community residents during the public involvement meetings it was clear there are both short- and long-term goals and desires.

This redevelopment plan proposes to build on the strengths of the corridor and feature a mix of uses. The public participation process produced a strong consensus that a mixed-use corridor, with functional and complementary uses, was desirable. The corridor lies within a heavily residential series of neighborhoods: Austinburg, Wallace Woods, the East Side, Peaselburg and Seminary Square. These provide the density that could support a vital, thriving street and place. The corridor is within minutes of downtown Cincinnati. Many communities are looking to develop neighborhoods and streets such as Madison Avenue in a way to attract professionals seeking to live near work and enjoy the positive amenities of urban experience. The corridor has a major attractor in the Basilica Cathedral that brings in approximately 100,000 people per year and a variety of other uses and a steady volume of traffic passing through it. What the corridor lacks are the types of businesses, restaurants, shops, etc. that draw people as well as a theme and cohesiveness that could make the corridor a destination.

It is recommended and encouraged that Covington adopts and applies the following planning and development guidelines:

- Buildings should be located close to the street;
- Sidewalks and streetscape elements should be consistent with Covington's adopted streetscape plan. Ideally, sidewalks would be nine feet wide. Specialty paving would be applied in targeted locations to add visual interest;
- Parking should be ensured for all residents and visitors through use of on-street parking where viable and scattered "green" parking areas along the corridor;
- Distinctive and consistent building-to-street architectural elements such as street furniture, trash receptacles, and landscaping should be coordinated to provide a pleasing and pedestrian (and auto) safe experience;
- All developments should take into account the relationship of the design to the public transit service;
- Mixed-use development patterns with retail/commercial uses on the ground floor and office and/or residential uses above;
- Parking should be oriented behind or to the side of buildings where possible; and
- Public parks, squares, buildings, and religious places should be seen as cultural gathering places and maintained and kept clean.

Achieving the above can be done by: developing and adopting detailed design guidelines and by creating a mechanism, such as an overlay district to ensure the guidelines are respected in new development.

Several alternative planning concepts were developed for the public planning process. The concepts, which can be seen on Page 14 through 17 in the main body of the report, are:

- Concept A: Maximized Commercial
- Concept B: West Side Commercial
- Concept C: Urban to Residential Transition
- Concept D: Integrated Commercial Districts

The preferred development concept that emerged during the planning process was Concept D. Concept D (Figure ES-1) calls for building on the strengths of the corridor to attract people and new development to Madison Avenue. An important concept presented in the plan is the creation of a Cathedral, Arts and Entertainment District surrounding the Cathedral at 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets. Several options were explored during the planning process for creating a “grand plaza” allowing residents and visitors an opportunity to view and enjoy the façade of the cathedral. Concept D also includes the development of a transit Super Stop in the northern end of the corridor. This would be a pedestrian friendly, technologically advanced, sheltered transit station that would serve as an easy connection for residents and visitors to the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) bus service and shuttles to downtown Covington and Cincinnati.

## Detailed Development Plan

This section presents the Detailed Development Plan proposed for the Madison Avenue Corridor. The plan is divided into distinct segments: traffic, sidewalks and streetscape, and property acquisition and redevelopment.

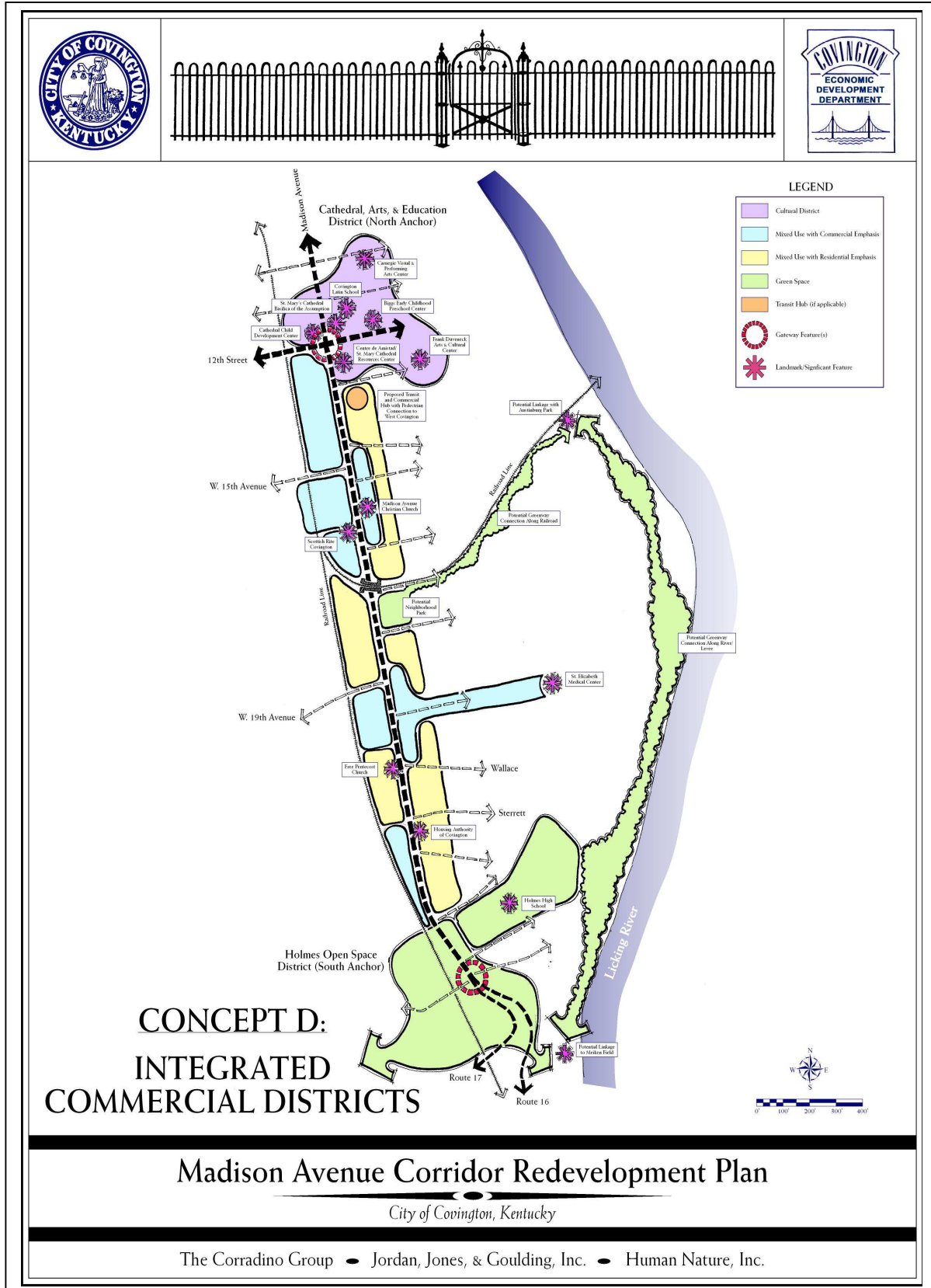
## Traffic, Sidewalks and Streetscape

The following recommendations for Madison Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the KY 16/17 Split are proposed:

- Retiming of the traffic signal at 12<sup>th</sup> Street (this should be done before the reconstruction of 12<sup>th</sup> Street – (Priority A)
- Study of the removal of a traffic signal at 15<sup>th</sup> Street – (Priority A)
- Study of the removal of a traffic signal at 16<sup>th</sup> Street – (Priority A)
- Actuation of the left-turn phases at the signals on 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 20<sup>th</sup> Street
- Update of roadway lane markings – (Priority A)
- Observation of crosswalk markings at intersections – (Priority A)
- Study of the realignment of 15<sup>th</sup> Street from Madison Avenue to Scott Street –(Priority B)
- Study of the realignment of 19<sup>th</sup> Street from Madison Avenue to Scott Street – (Priority B)
- Implementation of a three-lane cross section on Madison Avenue – (Priority A)

In summary, these recommendations will allow the City to maximize the efficiency of traffic flow on Madison Avenue, increase east-west connectivity and thus “better connect” adjacent neighborhoods to the street, and allow for the possible diversion of KY 16/17 through traffic to Madison Avenue.

In terms of implementation, the recommendations have been subjectively prioritized by their relative cost and their impact on the possibilities of the redevelopment plan. With the exception of the implementation of the three-lane cross section on Madison, the Priority A options are relatively low cost. The proposed street realignments, which would include fairly significant property acquisition, are not considered as Priority A options relative to this plan and would need further study.



The City can greatly improve the chance to cause a long-lasting revitalization of the Madison Avenue corridor by implementing a consistent approach to sidewalks and streetscape. This should include pedestrian friendly design at intersections, widths of nine feet where possible, use of pavers at certain locations, use of a standard palette of street furnishings and materials, minimizing clutter with overhead utilities (and removal of such utilities when possible in the future) and establishing a stronger sense of place via enhanced signage and way finding design.

The City has adopted a master downtown book of standards that apply to light fixtures, trash cans, brick paves, etc. These general standards are expected to be applied to other areas of the city and include addressing the following issues:

- Create more vibrant streets and promote economic development through context responsive street design standards;
- Maximize pedestrian convenience;
- Establish a standard palette of street furnishings and materials as appropriate to respective districts;
- Establish on-street pedestrian spaces that support outdoor dining, entertainment, and cultural activities;
- Improve access and orientation to on-street and remote parking;
- Minimize clutter associated with overhead utilities; and
- Establish stronger “Sense of Place” via enhanced signing and “way finding” design.

Implementation of the signage/streetscape program should occur generally beginning in the cathedral district and expanding south as projects develop. This would be consistent with the overall theme of the redevelopment plan to begin by creating an environment that attracts people to destinations and uses in the corridor and then circles back by having other uses enter the corridor to serve those initially attracted.

Preliminary cost estimates for the transportation and streetscape improvements are \$3,810,000 for improvements from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Sterrett Avenue and \$1,260,000 for Sterrett to the KY 16/17 Split.

## Property Acquisition and Project Development

To achieve the goals of this redevelopment plan, the City should use its power of eminent domain (if necessary) to immediately acquire certain properties at the outset of the plan. However, as the plan is implemented both public and private investment is anticipated. These would be targeted for uses that complement presented in the vision for the area. These properties are: 1515 Madison, 1725-27 Madison, and 2545 Madison. As the plan is implemented, additional property identified for acquisition are: 1234 Madison, 1428 Madison, 1901-09 Madison, 1918, 1922, 1924-2412, 1926 and 1928-1932 Madison, 1 Wallace Avenue, 2214 Madison, 2541, 2537 and 2533 Madison.

Table ES-2 presents the planned acquisitions and cost estimates identified for the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan.

## East Side Licking River Greenway

The development of a greenway along or within the easement of the Licking River Greenway is seen as a project that will draw more people to invest in the neighborhoods adjacent to Madison Avenue. These people will be part of the residential influx that will support the types of businesses and uses that are generated on the street. The greenway as envisioned would extend from the Holmes Campus near the KY SR 16/17 Split on the South to the Austinburg Park near the CSX rail line. From the park sidewalks and new connections would be used to follow the rail line back to Madison Avenue. Future phases may see the greenway extended on north to bicycle/pedestrian trail interfaces at the Ohio River. Depending on whether the final alignment followed the levy or the floodplain, the length of the trail between the end of the Holmes Campus and the CSX line would be approximately 1 mile. The linkage between the CSX Line and Madison would be approximately 1/3 mile. Table ES-3 presents an initial estimate of what such a facility may cost.

Table ES-2  
Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan  
Property Acquisition and Redevelopment Cost Estimates

Address	Existing Bldg SF	Cost			Possible Future Use	New Project Cost <sup>3</sup>
		Acquisition <sup>1</sup>	Demolition	Total		
1234 Madison	na	\$150,000	\$15,000	\$165,000	Mixed Use Residential	\$900,000
1428 Madison	2,268	\$137,500	\$22,680	\$160,180	Mixed Use Residential	\$680,400
1515 Madison	13,140	\$319,000	\$131,400	\$450,400	Commercial/Retail	\$1,314,000
1725-27 Madison	14,103	\$169,500	\$141,030	\$310,530	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
1901-09 Madison	1,292	\$170,000	\$12,920	\$182,920	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
1918 Madison	7,809	\$100,000	\$78,090	\$178,090	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$780,900
1922 Madison	na	\$1,890	\$1,000	\$2,890	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$300,000
1924-24 1/2 Madison	5,164	\$22,400	\$51,640	\$74,040	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$516,400
1926 Madison	5,164	\$5,625	\$51,640	\$57,265	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$516,400
1928-1932 Madison	5,164	\$119,500	\$51,640	\$171,140	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$516,400
1 Wallace Avenue	3,610	\$80,000	\$36,100	\$116,100	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
2214 Madison	2,424	\$50,000	\$24,420	\$74,420	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
2533 Madison	2,057	\$34,000	\$20,570	\$54,570	Park	\$25,000
2537 Madison	na	\$8,000	\$1,000	\$9,000	Park	\$25,000
2541 Madison	2,574	\$42,000	\$25,740	\$67,740	Park	\$25,000
2545 Madison	4,389	\$75,000	\$43,890	\$118,890	Park	\$25,000
Subtotal	69,158	1,484,415	\$708,760	\$2,193,175	na	\$5,824,500
Contingency (12%)	na	\$178,130	\$85,051	\$263,181	na	\$698,940
TOTAL		\$1,662,545	\$793,811	\$2,456,356	na	\$6,523,440
GRAND TOTAL <sup>4</sup>						\$8,979,796

<sup>1</sup>Acquisition costs for properties were based on PVA estimates if available.

<sup>2</sup>Demolition/property reclamation costs are estimated at \$6 per square foot.

<sup>3</sup>Conceptual new project costs will vary widely depending on the final development proposed for a site.

<sup>4</sup>Sites with existing single story structures are assumed to be 3-story in future development.

<sup>5</sup>Assumes public and/or private investments

Table ES-3  
 Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan  
 East Side Licking River Greenway – Initial Conceptual Cost Estimate

Planned Improvements	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
Property Acquisition	na	Na	Na	Na
Construct pathway (10' Asphalt with 2' shoulder)	lf	5,280	\$46	\$242,880
Use sidewalks and connectors from CSX to Madison	lf	1,760	\$23	\$40,480
Parking at Holmes Entrance (5 spaces)	sy. yd.	225	\$40	\$9,000
Rest and river-viewing benches	Unit	5	\$300	\$1,500
Trail entrance and directional signage	na	na	na	\$10,000
Contingency (20%)				\$52,676
Total				\$356,536

## Anchor Districts

The Cathedral District is highlighted in the Concept D as the north anchor to Madison Avenue and as the gateway to downtown Covington. This area holds potential to be the most important stimulus to the revitalization of the corridor. The key concepts involve initially creation of a more advantageous viewing area for the Cathedral façade. While further study is necessary, one concept involves using special pavers and treatment on Madison Avenue to identify the location as a special place and possibly relocating the Cathedral Child Development Center on the property and creating a plaza on the west side of Madison that celebrates the Cathedral.

The Holmes High School Campus is identified as the south anchor. The plan focuses on using Holmes as an important link between a proposed southwest side park across Madison from the school campus and the proposed East Licking River Greenway and also as a gateway experience to people entering and leaving the corridor.

## Recommendations

This plan differs from a redevelopment plan such as that done for 12<sup>th</sup> Street, where State action is precipitating the plan. As noted earlier, the City needs to champion this plan. The following actions are recommended for the first five years.

### 2005/2006

- Adopt plan
- Develop design guidelines and create a design overlay zone for the corridor
- Initiate initial property acquisition and assembly
- Conduct detailed planning study of the Cathedral District redesign project
- Ky 16/17 and Holmes Campus Gateway Study

### 2006

- Create infill parking opportunities on west side of Madison with acquired properties
- Implement traffic recommendations
- Have all new development projects approved by overlay district

- Conduct detailed planning study for Licking River Greenway
- Issue first Request for Proposal's for infill development
- Acquire additional designated properties as feasible

**2007**

- Design and construct Licking River Greenway
- Prepare plan for park across from Holmes High School Campus
- Issue second round of RFP's for development

**2008**

- Monitor progress of ongoing projects
- Construct south west Madison Avenue park across from Holme's High School

**2009**

- Continue design review activities
- Evaluate progress on Madison Avenue revitalization

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# 1. Introduction

The City of Covington Madison Avenue Redevelopment Plan (Redevelopment Plan) is a document to be adopted by the City Commission after approval from the Economic Development Department. This Redevelopment Plan will serve as a basis for rehabilitation and new infill in the Corridor, possible changes in traffic circulation and patterns, and installation of site improvements and designation of uses permitted in the Corridor. Authority for the recommended actions is provided by Chapter 99 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes.

Blight and deterioration are clearly evident in the corridor. This blight and deterioration is exemplified by vacant and/or buildings in poor repair, lack of any visual streetscape amenities, in cohesive land use, and locations where sidewalks and lighting are poor.

The purpose of the Redevelopment Plan is to:

- Improve economic conditions in the corridor by making the corridor more attractive for business and to create an environment that is “user friendly” to development and developers;
- Improve residential opportunities in the corridor to attract people to an urban environment who will then support new businesses in the corridor;
- Build upon the natural strengths of the Cathedral, churches, and historic housing stock;
- Provide transportation improvements to Madison Avenue to increase safety, improve pedestrian connectivity, and provide a greater focus on public transportation; and
- Allow for continued public participation in the development of the corridor.

This Redevelopment Plan documents the existing conditions in the corridor, the planning process that resulted in the preferred development plan, and an implementation and funding strategy to achieve the goals of the plan. The Redevelopment Plan was prepared with consideration given to the City of Covington 12<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan,<sup>1</sup> the Covington Streetscape Plan, the Area-wide Comprehensive Plan as it relates to the City of Covington, and discussions with major property owners and facility managers in the Madison Avenue corridor.

## Compliance with KRS 99

This Redevelopment Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS) Chapter 99. Sections .330 et seq. of Chapter 99 list the legislative finding and policy, definitions, prerequisites for adoption, and other provisions for urban renewal and development.

Redevelopment, as defined by KRS 99.330, et seq., may include acquisition or assemblage of real property, demolition and clearance of structures and/or improvements, rehabilitation of structures,

<sup>1</sup> 12<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan, prepared for the City of Covington, Kentucky, prepared by H.W.

redevelopment/adaptive reuse of properties, new construction of properties, historic presentation, and installation of public improvements.

For the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan, acquisition of real property may be required for the following reasons:

- Assemble real property of sufficient size to implement major redevelopment projects in the corridor;
- Permit removal of buildings that are structurally substandard;
- Remove blighting influences on the development area;
- Improve defective or inadequate street layout; and
- Reverse deterioration of site improvements.

## Community Participation

Public participation is an important component of the planning project and the KRS 99 process. Three public meetings were held during the development of the plan – October, November, and January. The meetings were advertised in the newspaper, by distributing flyers and posters, and on the Internet. The meetings were well attended and all were held at the Holmes High School Cafeteria on the high school campus. These meetings involved the review of draft alternative plan concepts, allowed for public participants to make comments and suggestions, and provided participants an opportunity to make design recommendations. The October meeting served to introduce the project and allowed the consultant to “hear first hand” the thoughts and feelings of the neighbors. Of note, during the November meeting, the consultant hosted a bus tour of the corridor. The Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky provided a bus and driver to take people on a tour of the corridor. This bus tour allowed for the consultant team and City staff to get another perspective on the project listening to residents talk about their neighborhood. At the final meeting, the consultant team presented the preferred development alternative based on the input from the public process.

In addition to the public meetings, the consultant engaged a Steering Committee in the planning process. The members are listed in the credits to this document. It also met three times during the four-month planning process and provided input to the planning concepts.

## 2. Existing Conditions

### The Physical Environment

The study area boundaries for the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan are from 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Avenue to the north and along the east and west sides of Madison Avenue to the State Route 16/17 Split.

The corridor generally functions as a transition area from the dense urban character of downtown Covington to mostly residential and suburban south Covington. There can be found along the corridor a number of churches, businesses, and factories that are important not only in terms of their physical presence but also in terms of their functionality in the community. The churches, the most prominent of which is the Cathedral, give prominence to the corridor both because of their structures and the fact that they draw people to and provide services for the adjoining neighborhood. Figure 2-2 shows the land use in the corridor.

The Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption serves to anchor the north end of the district. It is also located on 12<sup>th</sup> Street, which is being widened. Moving south from the Cathedral, the next prominent building is the Durobag Manufacturing Facility. Durobag employs more than 200 people and is an important employer in the neighborhood. The Durobag facility dates to the late 1800's. Conversations with Durobag indicate that they do not plan to move in the near future, although constrictions of its docks because of the upcoming reconstruction of 12<sup>th</sup> Street may necessitate a move.

The next property of note is the Kroger's grocery store, which also is on the west side of Madison Avenue. The building is of the suburban mode popular 15 to 20 years ago. The front of the store opens on a large parking lot which fronts Madison Avenue. Grocery stores in urban areas are being designed today with a different look, often building such that part of the store is built near the street and having the parking more internal or behind the site. There is also a trend to co-locating generally smaller stores and "shoppes" to create an urban village concept. During the public meeting process, a number of people commented that they prefer to go to Latonia to shop where the Kroger is "nicer". Discussions with Kroger revealed no immediate plans to either rebuild or move the store.

### Area Demographics

The Madison Avenue corridor passes through and/or is adjacent to a number of Covington neighborhoods including:

- Austinburg
- Eastside
- Peaselburg
- Wallace Woods
- Seminary Square
- Historic 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Levassor Park

Figure 2-1  
Corridor Boundaries





Appendix A presents information on the demographic makeup of the study area. Three census tracts surround the immediate study area (Figure 2-3). These are tracts 609, 611, and 671. In the City of Covington, there are 43,348 people as of the 2000 census. The census tracts identified have 6,537 people. About 24 percent of the population in the study area is under age 18 and about nine percent is over age 65. As a percentage of the population, the percent elderly in the study area tracts is less than that of the City or the State but greater than the County. The study area has a higher rate of unemployment (9.5 percent) than the City, County, or State and also has a higher percentage of lower income households than the other jurisdictions. There is about a 15 percent vacancy rate in housing units in the study area, which is greater than the City, County or State rates by five or more percent, and there is a much higher rate of rental occupancy (62 percent rental in the study area). The housing stock in the study area census tracts was built earlier on average than in the City, County, or State and there are far more households with no vehicles available than the other jurisdictions.

Reviewing these data leads to several conclusions:

- The area has a higher percentage of low income residents;
- There is a higher percentage of rental properties, which indicates there may be potential for the City to create home ownership opportunities which would lead to more stable neighborhoods which should contribute to improving the Madison Avenue corridor;
- The larger percentage of households without automobiles is indicative of a need to maximize the pedestrian-friendliness of the neighborhood.

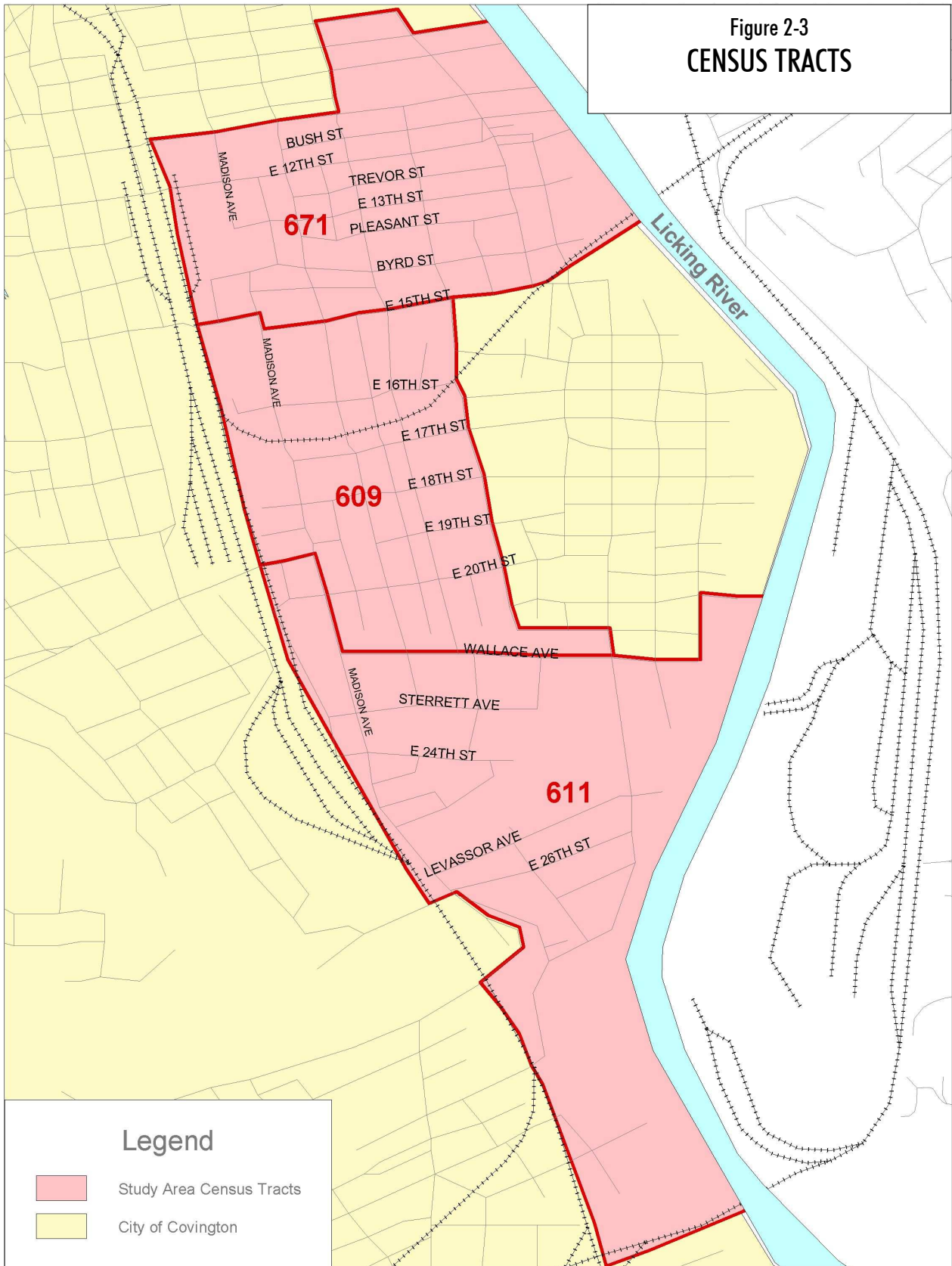
From an urban planning perspective, the above information leads to the following thoughts. Given the proximity of the corridor to downtown Cincinnati and the number of rental units in the area, increasing home ownership by attracting people interested in living in an urban setting with proximity to a major metropolitan area is an important strategy. Attracting these types of residents will increase the property values, create a broader base of wealth in the immediate area to support retail development, and increase the stature of Madison Avenue.

## Traffic and Transportation Issues

An integral component of improving and enhancing the Madison Avenue corridor is transportation. There are a number of traffic and transportation issues that are dealt with in this plan. An in depth discussion of traffic and transportation and the plan recommendations is presented in Chapter 4. But, the key issues considered are as follows.

The dominant issue that came up during the planning process has to do with redirecting traffic from KY 16/17 on Scott and Greenup Streets to Madison Avenue and reverting the existing one-way pair to function more as neighborhood streets. The second issue that arose was ensuring that parking was available, particularly to residents who already feel parking constraints.

Figure 2-3  
CENSUS TRACTS



There are also geometric issues that arose during the plan development. These include sometimes confusing transition from lane to lane, inadequate pedestrian markings, and lack of connectivity with side streets. Despite all transportation challenges, a flexible transportation plan was developed to accommodate multiple future scenarios and to maximize the goals identified for the Madison Avenue corridor.

## Building and Structural Conditions

Table 2-1, Figure 2-4 and Appendix B present the results of a structural conditions inventory conducted by the City of Covington in the Madison Avenue Corridor. As part of the study process, the City's building inspectors inspected all the parcels along Madison Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to 26<sup>th</sup> Street. The analysis in Figure 2-4 shows the results. As can be seen, there are a significant number of properties with multiple violations.

**Table 2-1**  
**Property Conditions Evaluation**

Category	Number of Properties	% of Total
Adequate	71	36%
Minor Violation	18	9%
Major Violation	66	34%
No Information	40	21%
Total	195	100%

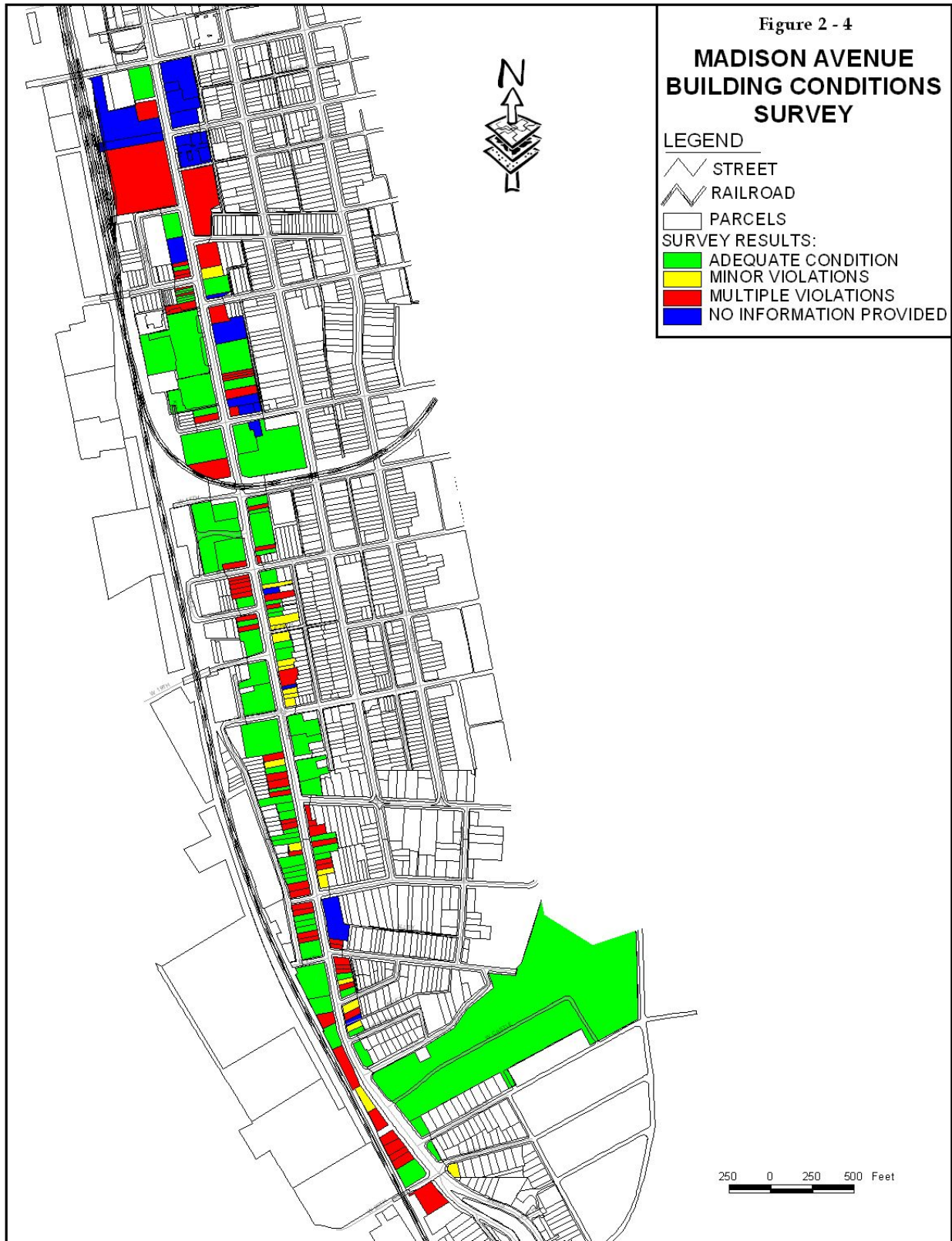
Source: The Corradino Group (assessment of information provided by the City of Covington. The results of the inspection were mapped on a GIS file of the corridor which has more properties (195 versus 167) than are listed in Appendix B.

## A Vision for the Area

Through the interaction with the Steering Committee and the community residents during the public involvement meetings it was clear there are both short- and long-term goals and desires. The following "Vision" and "Goals" statement summarizes the key issues.

### Vision Statement

**To celebrate South Madison as the primary transportation corridor into Covington and as a vibrant, historic, mixed use gateway corridor that is an asset to the City and adjacent neighborhoods**



## Goals

- Integrate/coordinate with other proximate planning/design initiatives
- Preserve/celebrate historic character of area
- Maximize existing landmarks as centers of energy
- Maintain commercial emphasis of corridor
- Create new destinations/amenities to attract residents and customers
- Improve vehicular and pedestrian circulation
- Provide adequate and accessible parking for businesses, institutions and residents
- Highlight new development opportunities and guidelines to insure that they fit the character and scale of the area
- Provide incentives/support to new and existing businesses
- Implement streetscape components such as lighting, paving, furnishings, plantings, and wayfinding that is consistent with the proposed North Madison improvements, but also has a special flair that is unique to this area of the City

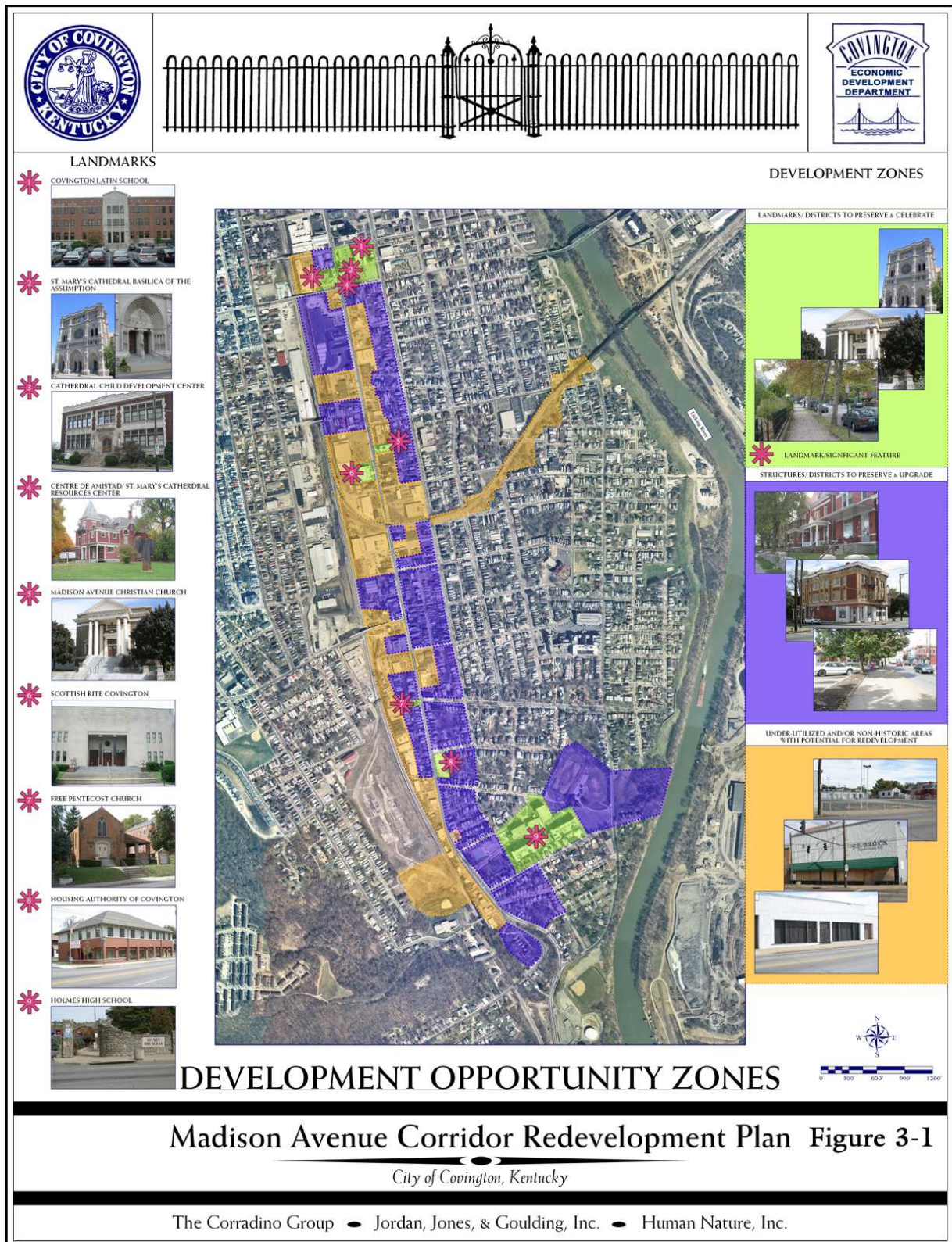
### 3. Redevelopment Concepts

Madison Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the KY 16/17 Split is generally characterized by a transition from a fairly intense urban environment to a less dense, suburban strip type development. There is a mixture of uses – institutional, commercial, and residential along the corridor. There are landmarks in the corridor and there are vacant and underutilized buildings and spaces. Figure 3-1 provides an illustration of “areas of opportunity for development” in the Madison Avenue corridor.

The west side of the street is predominantly commercial and industrial while the east side of the street has more residential mixed in with the other uses. The corridor has two prominent anchors on each end – the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption at 12<sup>th</sup> Street and the Holmes High School campus at 25<sup>th</sup> Street. Between these two, the most prominent locations are Durobag, an old large factory complex at 12<sup>th</sup> Street on the west side of the corridor and a Kroger at 15<sup>th</sup> Street, which is the largest grocery within this area of the city and which serves residents from along the corridor and the nearby neighborhoods. Some of the residential structures along Madison Avenue are in good condition but many are not. The former Robke site (a former car dealership) on the east side of the corridor is vacant and considered a prime location for redevelopment opportunities. Overall, blight and deterioration are clearly evident in the corridor, resulting from years of lack of investment, vacant and underused buildings and parking lots, and lack of any significant aesthetic features or amenities at the corridor level.

This redevelopment plan proposes to build on the strengths of the corridor and feature a mix of uses. The public participation process produced a strong consensus that a mixed-use corridor, with functional and complementary uses, was desirable. The corridor lies within a heavily residential series of neighborhoods: Austinburg, Wallace Woods, the East Side, Peaselburg and Seminary Square and Historic 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Levassor Park. These provide the density that could support a vital, thriving street and place. The corridor is within minutes of downtown Cincinnati. Many communities are looking to develop neighborhoods and streets such as Madison Avenue in a way to attract professionals seeking to live near work and enjoy the positive amenities of urban experience. The corridor has a major attractor in the Basilica Cathedral that brings in approximately 100,000 people per year and a variety of other uses and a steady volume of traffic passing through it. What the corridor lacks are the types of businesses, restaurants, shops, etc. that draw people as well as a theme and cohesiveness that could make the corridor a destination.

To achieve the creation of an economically thriving, bright and attractive, pedestrian friendly and transportation functional street and corridor will require a vision, public and private investment, and over time, participation by the people in the neighborhoods in the area in the businesses in the area.



As projects proceed, they should be consistent with guidelines and specifications in plans such as the Covington Streetscape Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, and complement development concepts and activities associated with the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor Redevelopment Plan.

It is recommended and encouraged that Covington adopts and applies the following planning and development guidelines:

- Buildings should be located close to the street;
- Sidewalks and streetscape elements should be consistent with Covington's adopted streetscape plan. Ideally, sidewalks would be nine feet wide. Specialty paving would be applied in targeted locations to add visual interest;
- Parking should be ensured for all residents and visitors through use of on-street parking where viable and scattered "green" parking areas along the corridor;
- Distinctive and consistent building-to-street architectural elements such as street furniture, trash receptacles, and landscaping should be coordinated to provide a pleasing and pedestrian (and auto) safe experience;
- All developments should take into account the relationship of the design to the public transit service;
- Mixed-use development patterns with retail / commercial uses on the ground floor and office and/or residential uses above;
- Parking should be oriented behind or to the side of buildings where possible; and
- Public parks, squares, buildings, and religious places should be seen as cultural gathering places and maintained and kept clean.

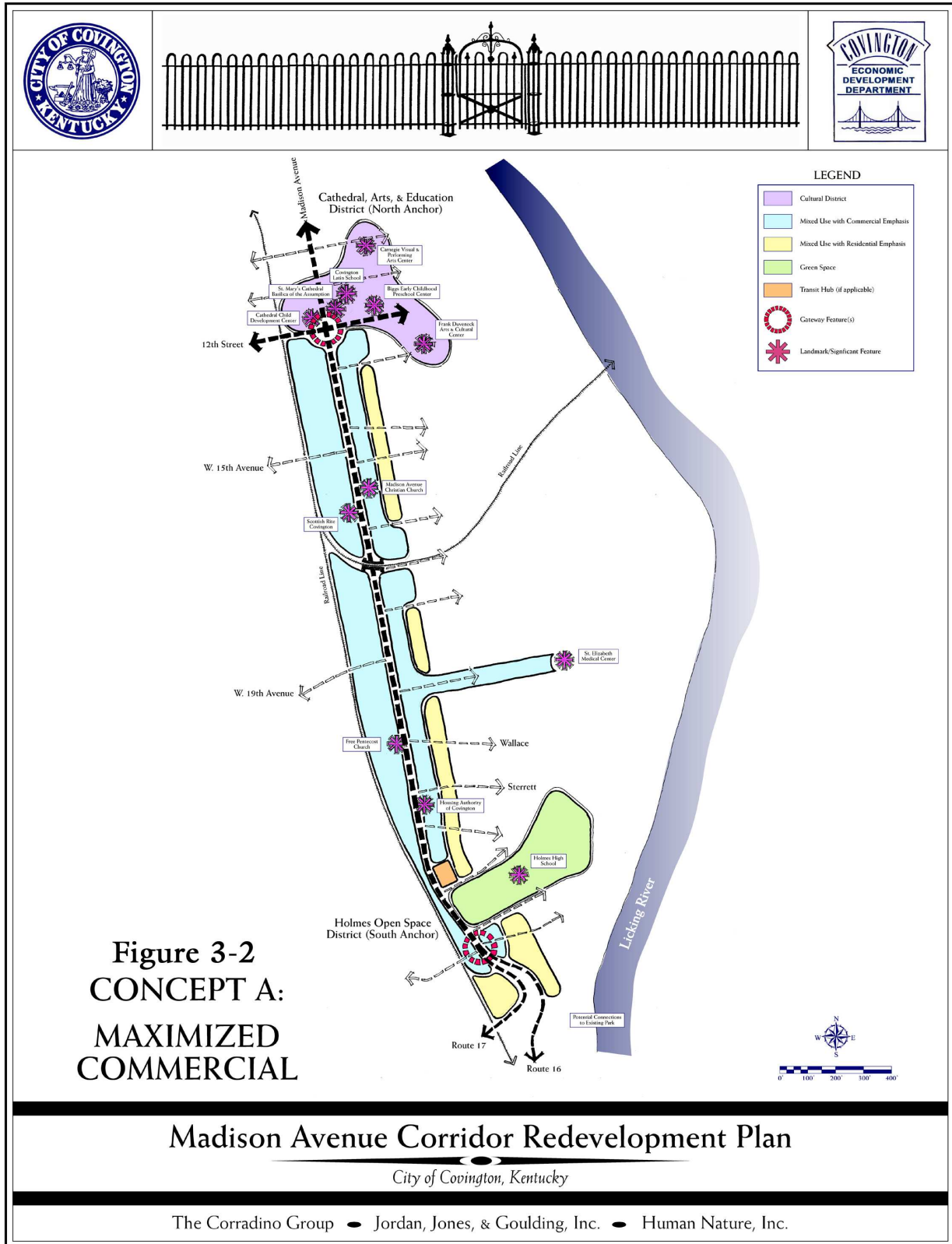
Achieving the above can be done by: developing and adopting detailed design guidelines and by creating a mechanism, such as an overlay district, to ensure the guidelines are respected in new development.

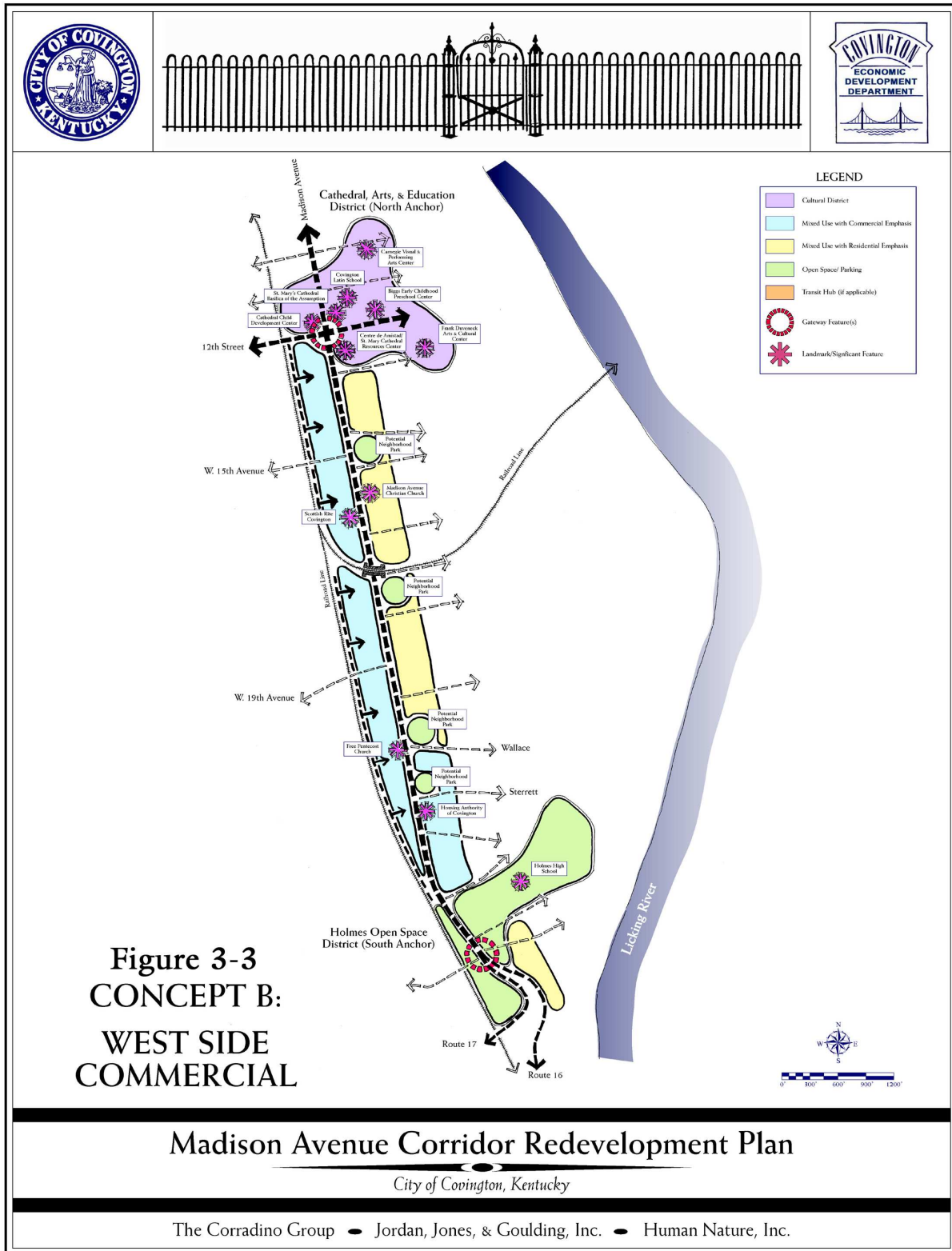
Figures 3-2 through 3-5 present alternative planning concepts developed for the public planning process. The concepts are:

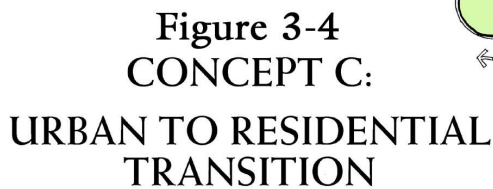
- Concept A: Maximized Commercial
- Concept B: West Side Commercial
- Concept C: Urban to Residential Transition
- Concept D: Integrated Commercial Districts

Concept A calls for almost exclusive commercial development along the corridor. This development would include some areas of residential emphasis but primarily be oriented to commercial. The existing industrial uses would be maintained and encouraged.

Concept B maintains an exclusive commercial focus on the west side of Madison Avenue but emphasizes residential development almost exclusively on the east side of Madison. The extension of the Holmes High School campus across Madison is included in this alternative.

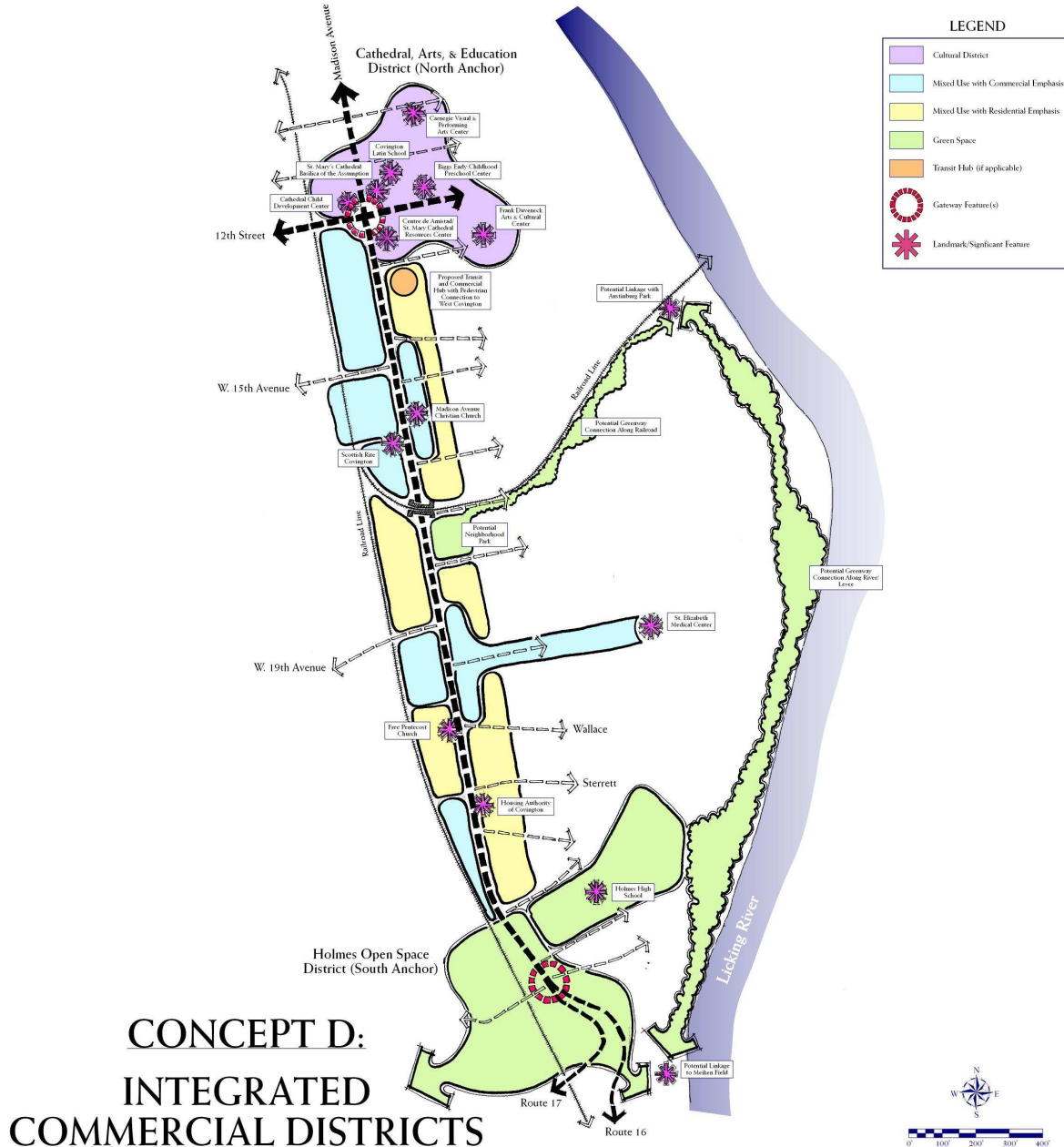






## City of Covington, Kentucky

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## Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan

City of Covington, Kentucky

The Corradino Group • Jordan, Jones, & Goulding, Inc. • Human Nature, Inc.

Concept C presents an urban to residential transition, with the northern section of the corridor remaining predominantly commercial on both sides of the street and the southern stretch of the corridor being residential focused. Concept C introduces a greenway stretching from Holmes High School to the CSX rail corridor and linking back to Madison Avenue.

Concept D calls for building on the strengths of the corridor to attract people and new development to Madison Avenue. An important concept presented in the plan is the creation of a Cathedral, Arts and Entertainment District surrounding the Cathedral at 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets. Several options were explored during the planning process for creating a “grand plaza” allowing residents and visitors an opportunity to view and enjoy the façade of the cathedral. Concept D also includes the development of a transit Super Stop in the northern end of the corridor. This would be a pedestrian friendly, technologically advanced, sheltered transit station that would serve as an easy connection for residents and visitors to the Transit Authority of Northern Kentucky (TANK) bus service and shuttles to downtown Covington and Cincinnati.

The planning concept shown in Figure 3-5 (Concept D) was supported by the public and the project steering committee. It is shown in detail in Figure 5-2 (see Chapter 5) and serves as the basis of the development plan proposals and recommendations of the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan.

## 4. Transportation Concepts

This section presents the analysis conducted for the transportation component of the redevelopment plan. As noted earlier, during the public process it was made clear by residents that this element needed to be conducted not just as a stand-alone study but within context of other transportation issues and projects, particularly the issue of reverting the Scott/Greenup one-way pair to neighborhood traffic.

### Madison Avenue

The analysis of Madison Avenue consisted of the following tasks:

- Maintenance check of downtown signal system
  - Data Collection
  - Collect Historical Traffic Data
  - Collect Daily Traffic Counts on Selected Links
  - Collect Crash Data
  - Collect Turning Movements at Selected Intersections
  - Conduct Travel Time Studies
- Traffic Analysis of the Existing System
  - Capacity Analysis
  - Safety Analysis
  - Limited License Plate Survey
  - Create Operational Improvement Plan
- Analysis of Signal Timing
  - Determine If New Timing Plans Are Needed
  - Recommend Course of Action For City Maintained Signals
- Diversion of Through Traffic
  - Examine Short and Long Range Options
  - Examine Improved East/West Connectivity
- Traffic Analysis of Planned Redevelopment
  - Trip Generation
  - Trip Distribution
  - Traffic Impacts

### Downtown Signal System Maintenance Check

The consultant team met with traffic signal technicians from the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) to ensure that the eight-year old Covington signal system was performing according to original specifications. The Covington signal system is a combination of state and city owned traffic signals connected by communication lines. These communication lines enable two master controllers to coordinate 68 traffic signals in Covington.

The entire group of city owned traffic signals on Madison Avenue were checked and found to be in good working order.

## Data Collection

### Traffic History

A historical analysis of traffic volumes through Covington on major routes reveals that traffic levels have changed very little over the past 20 years. Based on this research, it is probable that there has been minimal change in traffic volume on Madison Avenue. This information is presented in Table 4-1. Average daily traffic volumes are presented in Figure 4-1.

**Table 4-1**  
**Historical Traffic Data**

Route	Between	Count Year											Annual Percent Change*			
		1984	1985	Break	1991	Break	1994	1995	1996	Break	2001	2002		2003		
Madison Ave. (KY 17)	26th to Sterrett Ave.		18,600		20,400									19,600		0.31%
Greenup St. (KY 17N)	Sterrett Ave. to 12th St.	7,000							7,510					6,150		-0.72%
	12th St. to 11th St.		9,480		10,100										9,790	0.18%
	11th St. to 5th St.		11,300		12,600										9,820	-0.78%
	5th St. to 4th St.		10,400		10,700						9,310		9,260			-0.72%
KY 17	On the Roebling Bridge		21,800		26,800						17,000			10,900	10,100	-4.18%
Scott St. (KY 17S)	4th to 5th Street															
	5th St. to 11th St.	10,700	10,800		10,400			9,490					10,800			0.05%
	11th St. to 12th St.		9,840		10,100									6,640		-2.29%
	12th St. to Wallace St.	7,650					7,510			7,330			-0.25%			

\*Annual Percent Change is calculated from first count year available to last. The amount of traffic reduction across the Roebling Bridge is likely due to the significant revisions to the Cincinnati Riverfront over the past several years. Should not be taken at face value.

Existing turning movement volumes for the AM and PM peak periods were collected in October 2004 at the following locations along Madison Avenue:

- 12th Street
- 19th Street
- Wallace Avenue
- Sterrett Avenue
- 26th Street (KY 16/17 Split)

Additional traffic data for the intersections of Madison Avenue at 15th, 16th, 20th and 25th Streets was factored based upon the data collected from the adjacent intersections. Diagrams of this information are presented in Figures 4-2 and 4-3 for the AM and PM peak hours respectively.

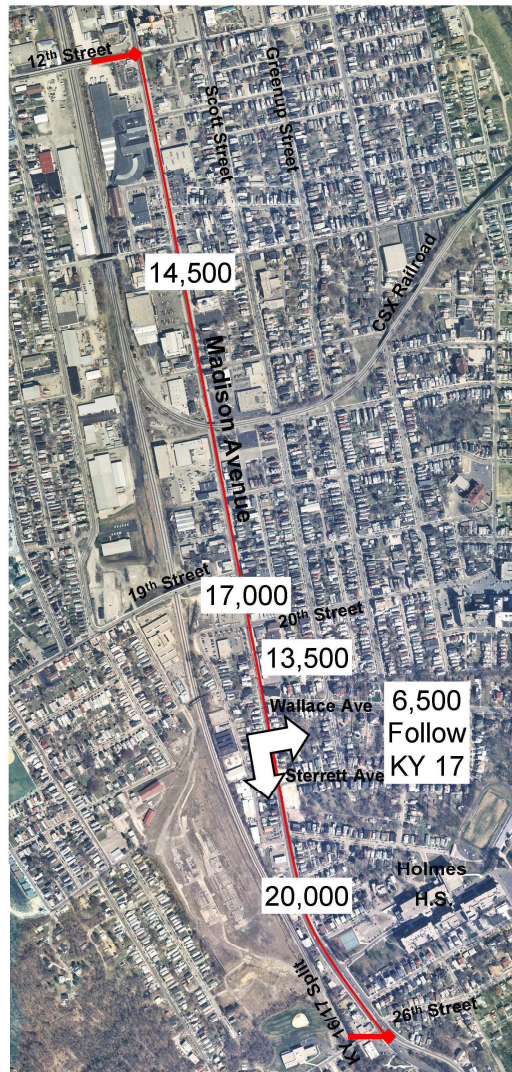


Figure 4-1  
Existing Average Daily  
Traffic Volumes

### Madison Avenue Corridor Daily Traffic Distribution

## Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan

*City of Covington, Kentucky*

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Figure 4-2  
Existing AM Turning Movement Counts

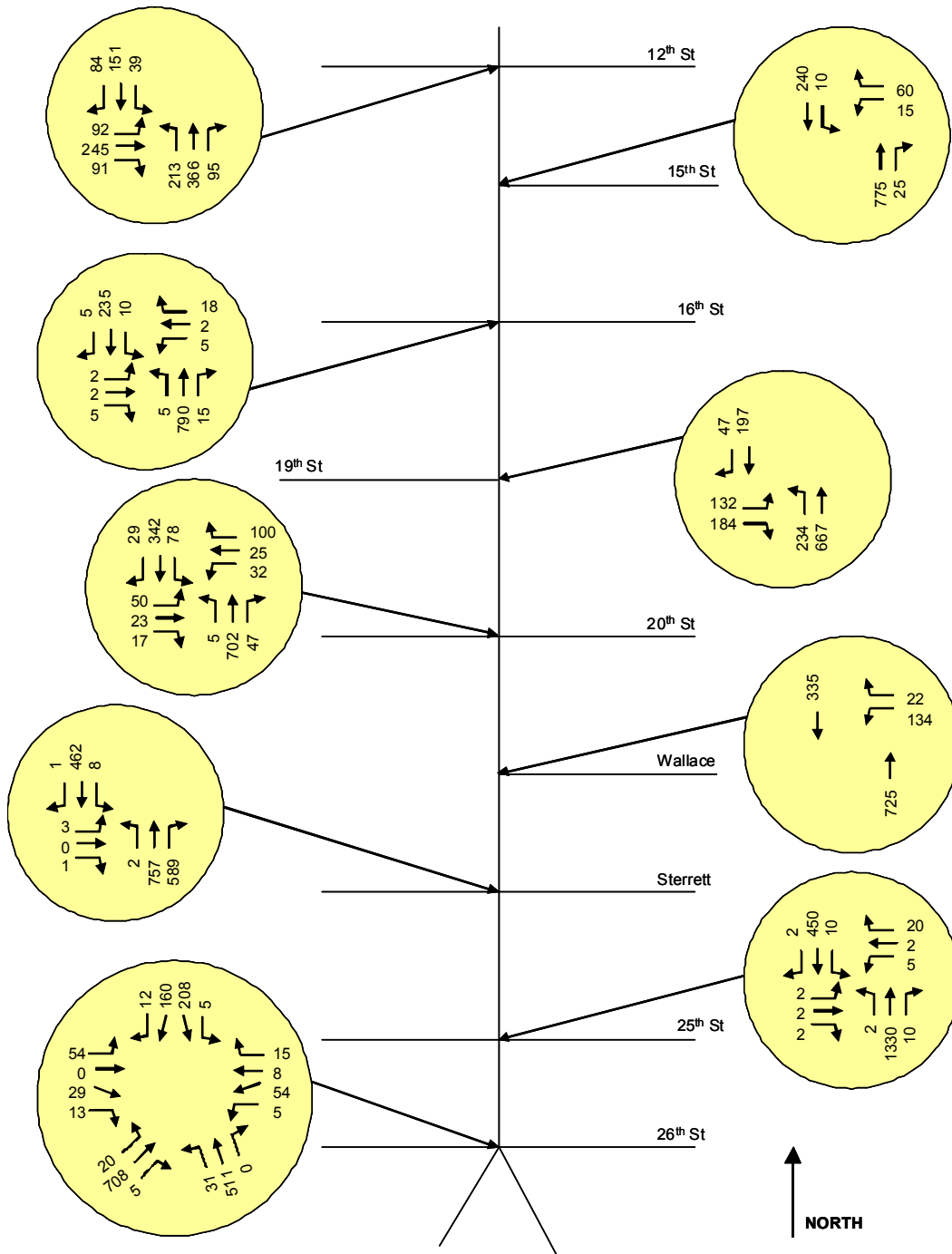
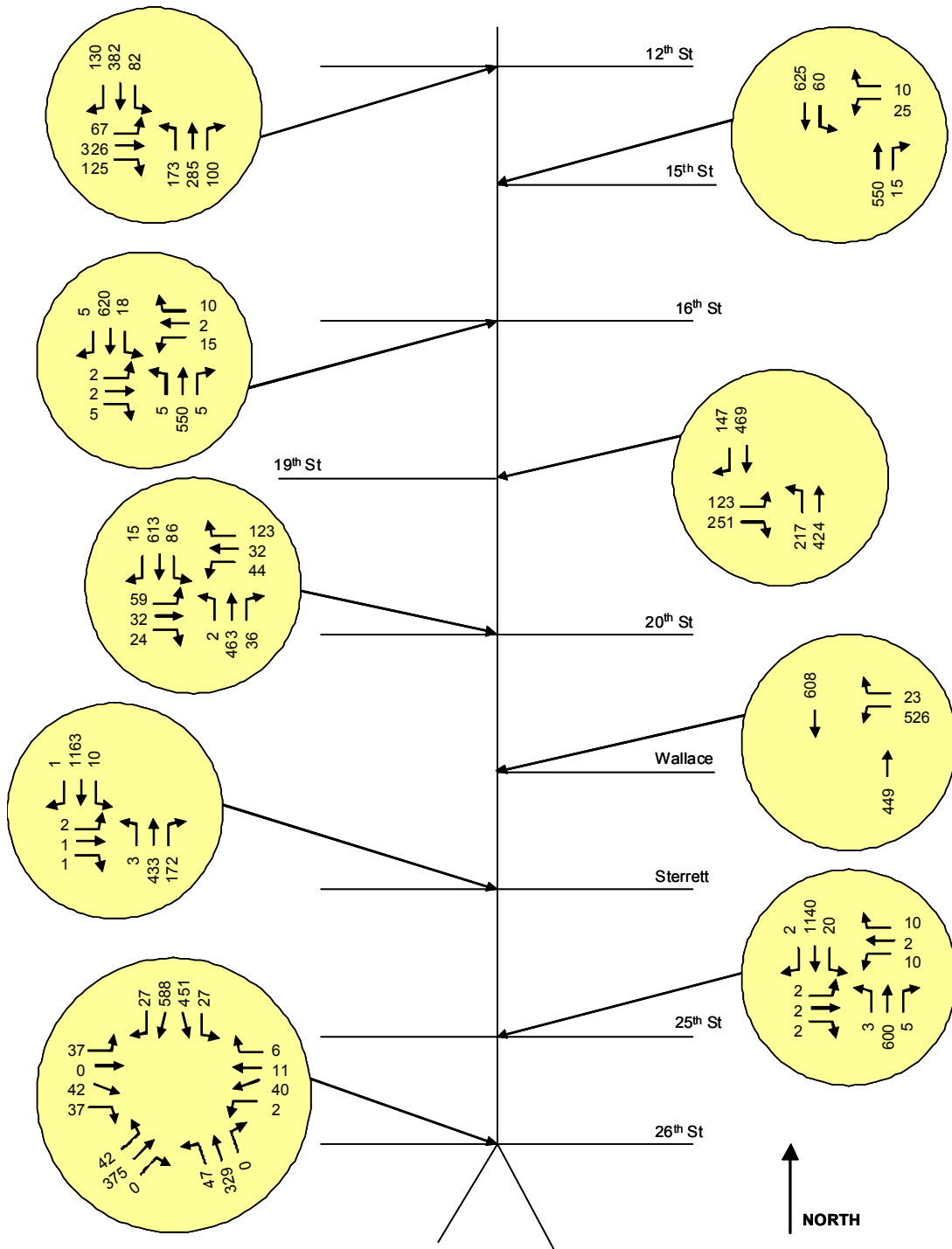


Figure 4-3  
Existing PM Turning Movement Counts



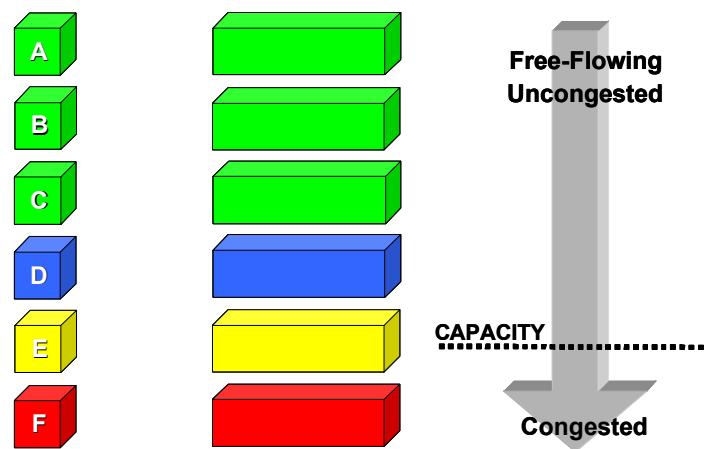
Travel time studies were performed by using the floating car method. This method involves actively driving the route under prevailing traffic conditions and recording the travel time between two points with a stop watch or other means. Madison Avenue was driven three times in each direction and the results were averaged. During the AM peak the average travel time was 2.7 minutes and during the PM peak 2.9 minutes. The prevailing travel speeds on Madison Avenue were between 30 and 35 miles per hour. At this speed range, a non-stop trip across Madison Avenue should take approximately 2.5 minutes. The results of the travel time studies indicate that the traffic signal progression is good and there is little delay along the length of the route.

Crash data was requested from the Kentucky State Police for the most current three-year period available.

## Traffic Analysis of Current Conditions

The capacity of a road is defined to be “the maximum number of vehicles that a facility can accommodate with reasonable safety within a specified time frame.”<sup>2</sup> The qualitative measure of operation of these facilities is evaluated using “Level of Service”. Level of Service (LOS) is a scale from A through F, where “A” is the best operating condition and “F” is the worst. Level of Service E represents a facility operating at capacity. Figure 4-4 presents a detailed summary of the various LOS designations.

Figure 4-4  
Qualitative Description of Level of Service



<sup>2</sup> Highway Capacity Manual, Chapter 2, October 2000

To aid the analysis of Madison Avenue, a traffic simulation software package was utilized. Synchro and SimTraffic were used for intersection analysis, evaluating traffic signal timing, and producing traffic simulation models. Synchro reports intersection performance measures such as delay and Level of Service (LOS) using the methodologies described in the *Highway Capacity Manual* (HCM). Usually there are minor variations between Synchro and HCM output; however, given the current levels of congestion, the close intersection spacing of some intersections, and the need to test future alternatives, Synchro was chosen as the preferred analysis tool. Synchro analyzes the transportation system as a network of connected intersections whereas the HCM analyzes each intersection individually.

The signalized intersections along Madison Avenue were modeled. The only unsignalized intersection in the model is Sterrett Avenue. All other stop controlled intersections were determined to have only minor influences upon the corridor and not analyzed as part of this study. Table 4-2 presents the existing Level of Service (LOS) for the signalized intersections.

**Table 4-2**  
**Existing Level of Service on Madison Avenue**

Signalized Intersection	AM Peak LOS	PM Peak LOS
Madison Ave & 12 <sup>th</sup> Street	C	C
Madison Ave & 15 <sup>th</sup> Street	A	A
Madison Ave & 16 <sup>th</sup> Street	B	B
Madison Ave & 19 <sup>th</sup> Street	A	B
Madison Ave & 20 <sup>th</sup> Street	A	B
Madison Ave & Wallace	B	B
Madison Ave & 25 <sup>th</sup> Street	A	A
Madison Ave & 26 <sup>th</sup> Street	C	C
Arterial Level of Service for Madison Avenue		C

The signalized intersections in the Madison Avenue corridor operate very well. The combination of short cycle times and coordination between signals contribute to maintaining a high level of service. The busiest intersections are at the endpoints of the study area: The 12<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Street intersections.

## Safety Analysis

The crash analysis was performed using methodologies developed by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and Kentucky Transportation Center at the University of Kentucky.

The crash analysis reveals that the study area from 12<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> Streets has a high occurrence of crashes. Over a three year period, measured from October 1, 2001 to September 30, 2004, a total of 319 crashes were reported.

There are two particular types of crashes that have usually high occurrences. Single vehicle crashes account for 25 percent of all crashes in the corridor. Side-swipe crashes account for 21 percent of the total number of crashes.

Another crash trend revealed by the crash data is that 33 percent of all crashes occurred on wet pavement. Nationally, wet pavement crashes account for approximately 20 percent of all crashes. This can be an indication of drainage problems or worn pavement that becomes slippery when wet.

### License Plate Survey

A limited license plate survey was performed to determine what percentage of vehicles pass through the corridor. In other words, how many motorists are currently using Madison Avenue without a destination in the corridor. Table 4-3 presents the results of the study.

**Table 4-3**  
**License Plate Survey**  
(% indicates percent of traffic passing through the corridor without making a stop)

Direction	AM	PM	Sample Size
Northbound from 26 <sup>th</sup> St to 12 <sup>th</sup> St	40%	30%	AM – 40 vehicles PM – 37 vehicles
Southbound from 12 <sup>th</sup> St to 26 <sup>th</sup> St	50%	50%	AM – 26 vehicles PM – 40 vehicles

As is shown in the license plate survey results, nearly half of all motorists are driving through and not stopping on Madison Avenue.

### Operational Improvement Plan

The Operational Improvement Plan is a list of short-term improvement projects that will provide incremental capacity and safety benefits in a cost effective manner. The focus of these projects is to provide safer and more efficient utilization of the existing transportation system quickly and at a relatively low cost.

#### Pedestrian Level Recommendations

- **Roadway Markings** – In general the crosswalk markings at intersections are in good condition. These markings should be observed routinely under a variety of driving conditions to insure proper visibility, especially during dark and/or wet conditions.
- **ADA Compliant Curb Ramps** - It is recommended that the City continue upgrading sub-standard or installing new ramps at intersections. This photo illustrates new ramps installed in late October 2004.



- Sidewalk Repairs – It is recommended that a sidewalk master plan be implemented to address sidewalks that are in need of repair as well as define uniformity standards regarding widths, trees, furniture, as well as other streetscape issues for the corridor.



In the vicinity of 13<sup>th</sup> and Madison, on the west side looking south

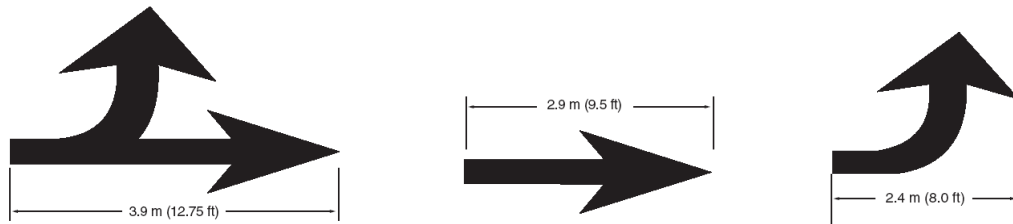
## Other Roadway Issues

- Lane Markings – Some of the lane markings (i.e. turn arrows) are very small, hardly visible, and do not conform to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. It is recommended that these markings be updated using durable reflective material such as preformed thermoplastic. The turn arrows shown below can be difficult to see by some motorists.



Markings such as those above are in several locations in the corridor

Illustrated below are the shapes and sizes of proper lane markings from the MUTCD.



- Lane Continuity – There are two occurrences in the northbound direction where motorists have to shift to the right and left to avoid exclusive turn lanes in order to travel through on Madison Avenue. This occurs at Sterrett Avenue and again between 20<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Streets. A three-lane section, with a two-way left turn lane, is recommended between 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Streets. In some cases a lack of lane continuity is caused by street parking allowed on some blocks and not others.
- Handicapped Parking – Street parking is at a premium in the Madison Avenue corridor and the surrounding neighborhoods. It is recommended that the City inventory the current street spaces that are reserved for Handicapped Parking permits. Several individuals at the public meeting report that many of those for which these spaces were reserved no longer live at the residence.

- Street Parking, Street Scape and Roadway Cross Section – These items are closely interrelated. Street parking is necessary for residences and businesses and usually occupies a lane. Difference strategies can be utilized to maximize the amount of street parking. These include:
  - Recessed parking spaces
  - Creation of off-street parking lots
  - Closely examining roadway and intersection capacity for opportunities to extend parking lanes
  - Implement the use of capacity enhancing strategies such as reversible lane controls to eliminate the use of peak hour parking restrictions

## Analysis of Traffic Signal Timing

As mentioned earlier, the traffic signals along Madison Avenue are part of an interconnected grid of 68 traffic signals in the City of Covington. The signals on Madison Avenue are controlled by the State but the City is free to modify the signals it owns: 15<sup>th</sup> and Madison, 16<sup>th</sup> and Madison, 19<sup>th</sup> and Madison and 20<sup>th</sup> and Madison. The existing programming for each signal was evaluated by traffic modeling software. Due to little change in the corridor since the signal system was installed in 1997, it was determined that the current programming is adequate for the current conditions.

## Recommended Traffic Signal Upgrades/Removal

- Study removal of 15th & 16th – It is recommended that the traffic signals at these intersections be studied for removal. Field observations indicate that these streets have insufficient side street traffic to warrant signals.
- Actuate LT phases at 19th & 20th Streets – Nearly all of the traffic signals in Covington operation on a “pre-timed” basis. This is traditional for downtown signal networks. Actuation is a means of making the signal responsive to traffic. In other words the left turn arrows would not automatically turn green if no traffic was present. This increases intersection efficiency by transferring the unused green time to other movements.
- Update Traffic Signal Timing at 12th Street – This intersection currently experiences the most congestion in the corridor. It is recommended that the signal timing for this intersection be updated, even at the expense of losing coordination with surrounding intersections on Madison Avenue and 12th Street during peak periods.

## Future Madison Avenue Alternatives for Redevelopment

### Trip Generation

Given the large and conceptual nature of the redevelopment plan, trip generation for individual parcels was not practical. Instead, global growth rates were applied to the existing traffic volumes to account for the additional traffic generated.

Two growth scenarios of 25 and 40 percent were examined to develop possible roadway cross-sections for Madison Avenue that can accommodate the additional traffic and offer future flexibility.

### **Trip Distribution**

The distribution of these trips matches the existing traffic patterns. It is difficult to predict how traffic patterns may shift in the future as a result of the redevelopment plan. It is anticipated that the biggest shift will be in the form of transportation mode. Growth in tourism, the number of pedestrians, and transit ridership can be anticipated as a result of a neighborhood and pedestrian oriented redevelopment plan.

### **Diversion of Through Traffic from KY 17**

As mentioned earlier, since the beginning of this study, the relocation of KY 17 has been a popular item of discussion at the public meetings, steering committee meetings, and in the local newspapers. Realizing that the possibility exists for relocating KY 17 onto Madison Avenue, consideration was given to whether the corridor could accommodate the relocated KY 17 traffic plus that generated by the redevelopment.

The traffic simulation models were again used to broadly estimate the impacts of this issue. KY 17 traffic volumes were identified from the Wallace and Sterrett Avenue traffic counts. These vehicles were then assumed to travel to the general area of 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets where they would then link with Scott and Greenup Streets. With the existing Madison Avenue and KY 17 traffic volumes merged, a 25 percent growth rate was applied to the AM and PM models and the traffic signal timing was optimized. Generally, each signalized intersection in the corridor was projected to operate with a Level of Service "C."

To further test this scenario to determine what the ultimate capacity of a three-lane Madison Avenue could be, a 40 percent growth rate was applied. With this assumption it was necessary to employ the use of reversible lane controls to allow more capacity in the peak directions. With these assumptions, the signalized intersections in the corridor were estimated to have a Level of Service of "D" to "E." Level of Service "E" corresponds to limits of a facilities traffic capacity.

The combination of relocating KY 17 and adding a 40 percent growth translates into projected average daily traffic of 27,000 vehicles per day on Madison Avenue, more than double what most of the corridor currently experiences. The conclusion of this planning level analysis is that the relocation of KY 17 to Madison Avenue is feasible and merits additional study at the appropriate time.

### **Street Parking**

Street parking is a vital component of an urban environment for both residents and businesses. Through the public involvement process, street parking emerged as a key issue for residents in the corridor. Due to peak hour restrictions, some residents move their vehicles at 4 p.m. each weekday to accommodate the afternoon rush hour. Others want two parking spaces directly in front of their

houses. Since most lots are 25 feet wide, and 25 feet is required for a parallel parking space, off-street solutions to enhance parking are required.

### Roadway Cross-Section

The existing cross-section is basically four lanes wide with the exception of the viaduct. In the southern part of the corridor, Madison Avenue is striped as a four-lane roadway, the middle section of the study area is marked as a two-lane roadway, and the northern area near 12th Street is once again marked as a four-lane road.

Realizing that widening Madison Avenue would be a very destructive and costly project, creative ways of utilizing the existing road width were explored. Other major goals of this process include maintaining street parking and correcting the lane continuity issues mentioned previously.

Using a three-lane cross-section offers the most options that may be pursued in the final redevelopment plan for Madison Avenue. Alternatives that were explored include:

- **Flush Three-Lane Section** – One lane in each direction with a two-way left turn lane as the center lane allows for left turn lanes at intersections and mid-block access points. The three-lane section maintains street parking on the east side of the road.
- **Three-Lane Boulevard Section** – Very similar to the flush three-lane section, this option would have a planted median in the center lane and have left turn lanes at the intersections. While very aesthetic, there are disadvantages like additional streetscape maintenance, prohibiting turns to mid-block access points, and it would not allow the use of reversible lane controls.
- **Reversible Lane Use Controls** – Reversible lane control is a congestion management tool that allows lanes to be redesignated during peak traffic flow. Often traffic flows are directionally oriented during peak periods (i.e. heavy traffic flow in one direction and lighter traffic flow in the other). With the proper signalization during peak-hours, these more lanes can be dedicated in the direction of the heaviest traffic flow. This allows for better utilization of the existing pavement.

The flush three-lane, three-lane boulevard, and reversible lane control options are presented in Figures 4-5, 4-6, and 4-7, respectively.

Figure 4-5  
Flush Three-lane Cross-Section

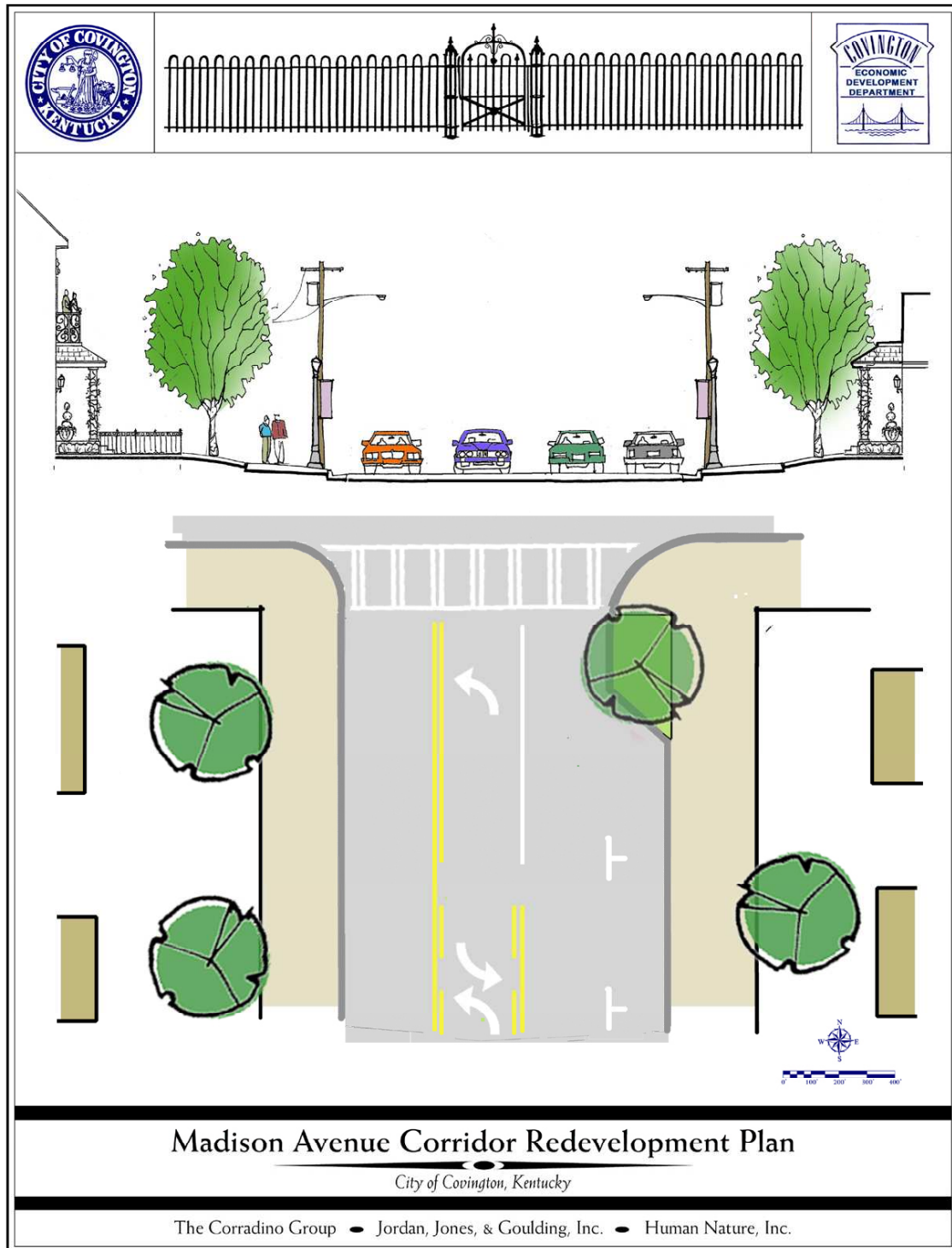


Figure 4-6  
Three-lane Boulevard Option

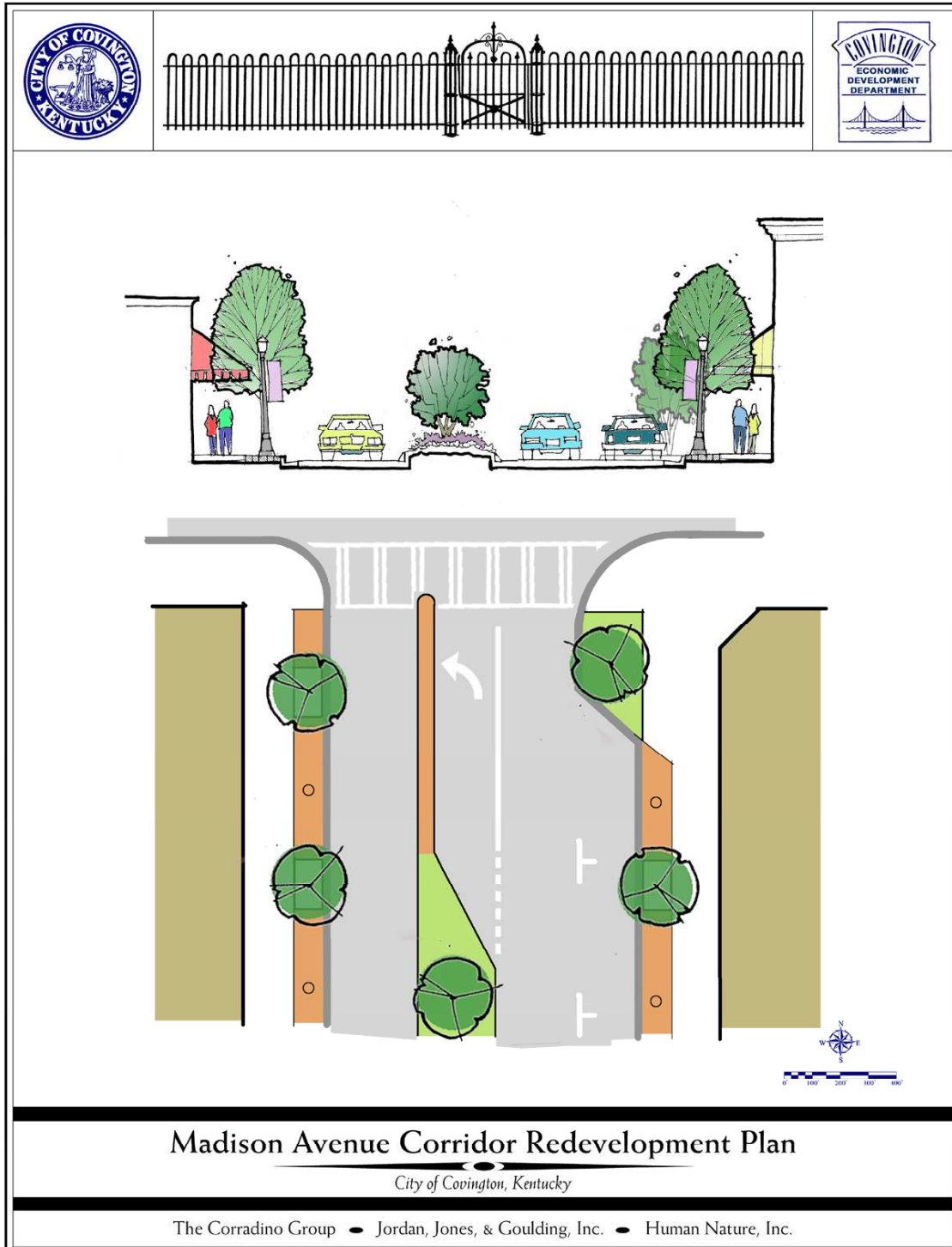
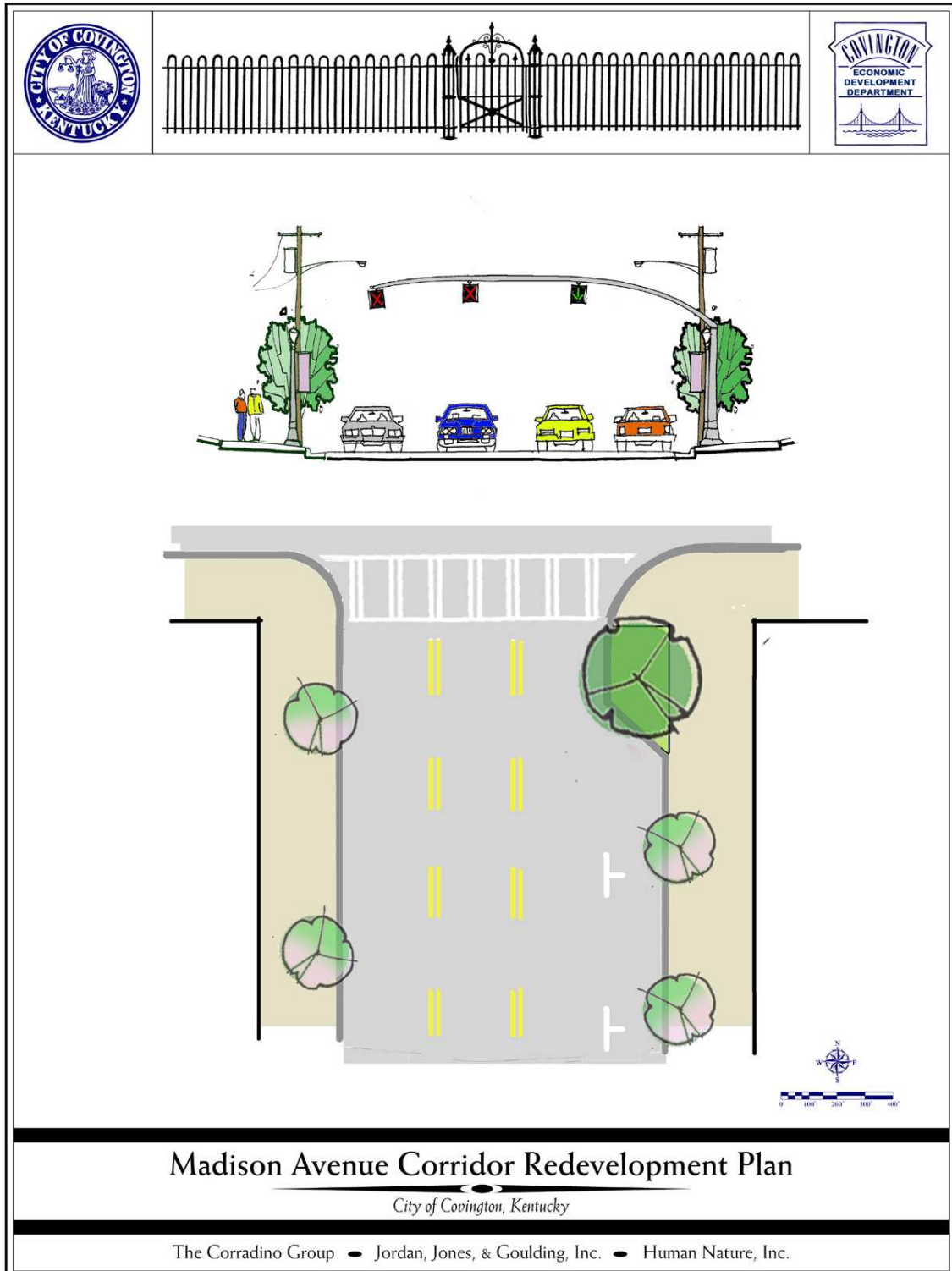


Figure 4-7  
Reversible Lane Option

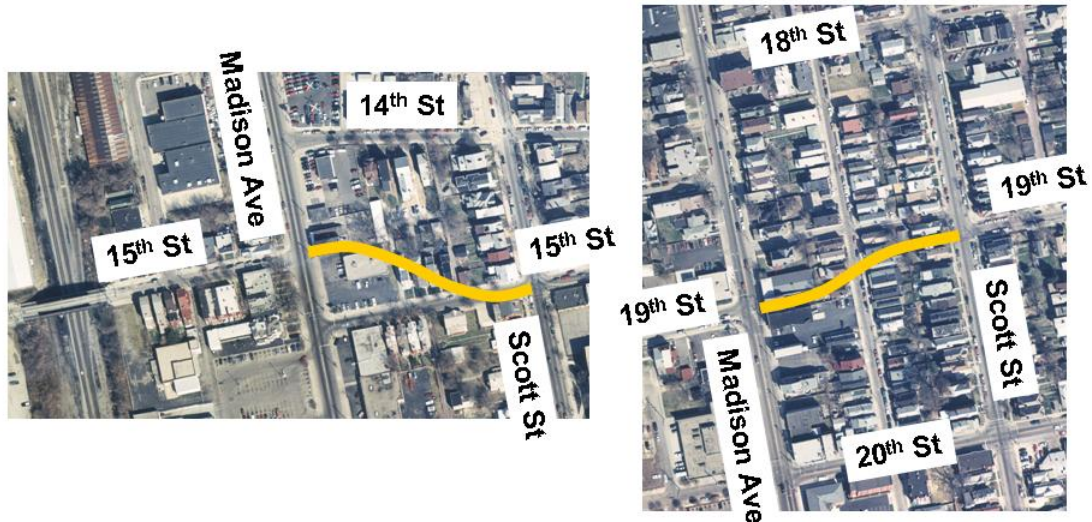


## Recommendation

The consultant recommendation is that the flush three-lane section be implemented from the KY 16/17 Split north to 12<sup>th</sup> Street. This alternative offers the most flexibility for future traffic growth, including accommodating traffic from KY 16/17.

Additional improvements that are recommended over time include:

- Increased East-West Connectivity – Opportunities exist to enhance east-west connectivity between the Madison Avenue corridor and the adjacent neighborhoods. It is recommended that the following connections be considered.
  - Realignment of 15<sup>th</sup> Street into one intersection
  - Connection of 19<sup>th</sup> Street from Madison Avenue to Scott Street



These connections will improve intersection safety and connectivity between the east and west sides of Covington. The improved connection of 19<sup>th</sup> Street will be necessary if reversible lane controls are installed on Madison Avenue. The dedicated northbound left turn lane onto the 19<sup>th</sup> Street bridge would be eliminated during the afternoon lane shift. Therefore left turns would have to be prohibited. The left turn movement can be replaced by diverting motorists to Scott Street via 18<sup>th</sup> and/or 20<sup>th</sup> Streets and then turning west onto 19<sup>th</sup> Street at Scott Street.

## Construction Costs

Line item construction estimates have been developed to assist the City with budgeting and programming these streetscape enhancements. The cost estimates are based on the following assumptions:

- Length of one block is 400 feet
- Replacement of 10-foot sidewalks on each side of the street
- Improvements to street drains
- Install new pedestrian street lighting
- A total thirty trees would be planted on the block
- Pedestrian “bump outs” would be constructed on the eastern intersection corners
- Resurface Madison Avenue (one block)

Item	Cost Estimate
Streetscape Improvements (As listed above)	\$140,000
Add Center Lane Median (to a 400-foot block)	\$35,000
Reconstruct Traffic Signal (with mast-arm poles)	\$70,000
Reversible Lane Use Span (average two per block)	\$25,000/each

Textured surfaces, such as brick pavers in crosswalks or intersections are not included in the cost estimates.



## 5. Implementation

This section presents the detailed Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan. It is structured to reflect and address the requirements of KRS 99. It was developed in light of the strong public support for Concept D, and focuses on creating a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood and street.

### KRS 99

#### Description of the Development Area

The Development Area covers the portion of Madison Avenue between 12<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown Covington and the Ky 16/17 Split just north of 25<sup>th</sup> Street. It includes all properties contiguous to and abutting the street.

#### Potential Staging

At the time of development of this plan the following implementation schedule is anticipated:

##### 2005

- Plan adoption
- Development of detailed design guidelines and creation and adoption of a design overlay zone

##### 2006 – 2008

- Inclusion of the plan into the Area-wide Comprehensive Plan Update
- Acquisition of properties as specified in the detailed development plan and others as determined through subsequent planning
- Implementation of traffic recommendations as presented in detailed development plan

##### 2007 – 2009

- Planning and implementation of a major public/private mixed-use redevelopment project

#### Redevelopment Opportunities Phase I: Buildings to be Acquired for Public and Private Development

The City's intent is to facilitate the acquisition for public or private development the following buildings as soon as possible under KRS 99: 1515 Madison, 1725-27 Madison and 2545 Madison Avenue.

## **Redevelopment Opportunities Phase II: Buildings Proposed for Future Acquisition for Public or Private Development**

There are several buildings identified in the plan for acquisition and/or future public or private development. These are:

1234 Madison,  
 1428 Madison  
 1901-1909 Madison  
 1918 Madison  
 1922 Madison  
 1924-24 ½ Madison  
 1926 Madison  
 1928-1932 Madison  
 1 Wallace Avenue  
 2541 Madison  
 2537 Madison  
 2533 Madison

In addition, property in the 2200 block of Madison may be acquired for neighborhood parking.

### **Statement of Proposed Improvements**

A set of properties have been identified in the plan which will be targeted for improvements.

### **Statement of New Construction**

No new construction has been identified at this time.

### **Statement of Portions of the Development Area to be Left as Open Space**

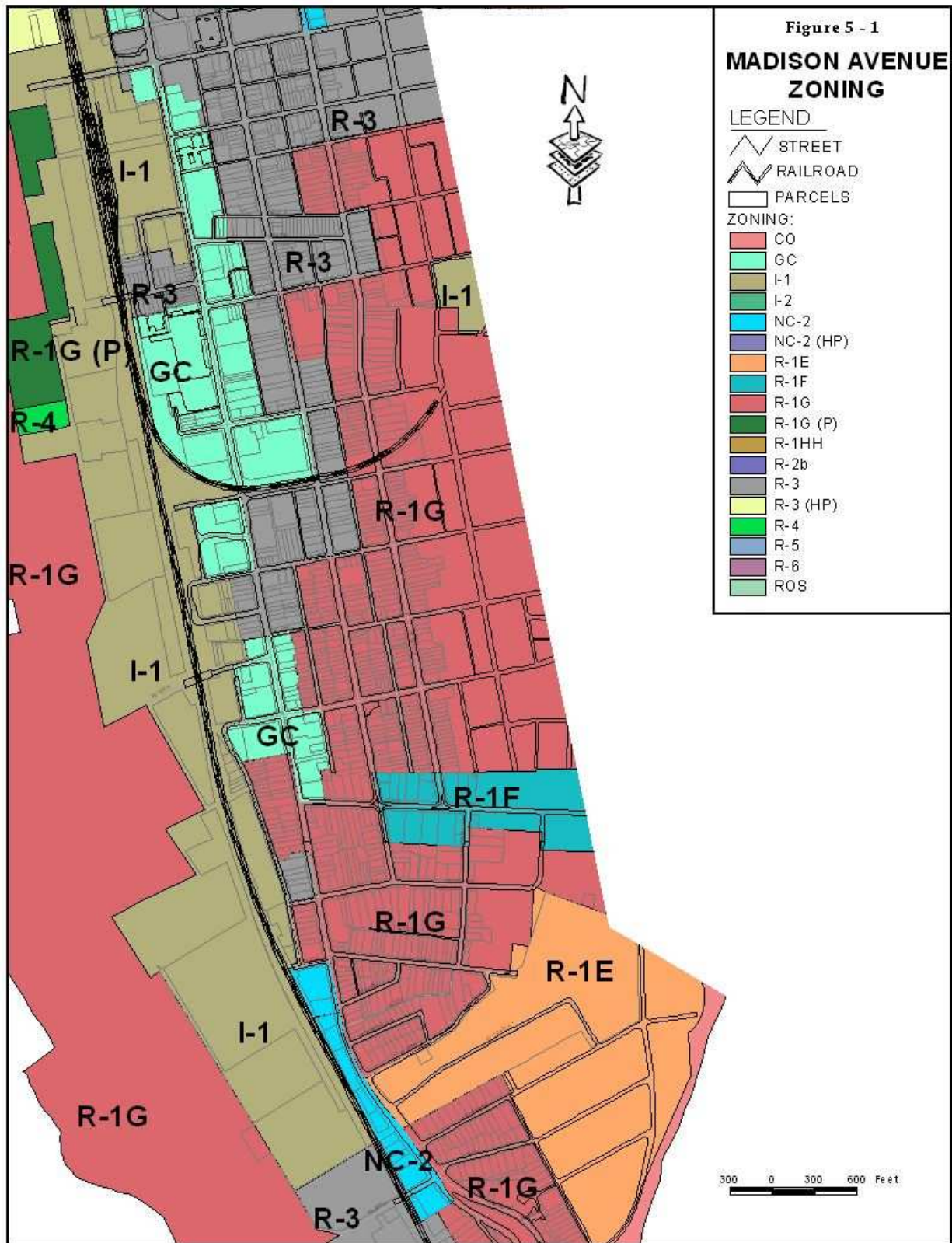
The City plans to explore creating an open space on the west side of Madison Avenue at 25<sup>th</sup> Street and to create several “green” parking lots at selected locations in the corridor.

### **Zoning Changes**

Figure 5-1 illustrates the existing zoning in the area. The City is currently having the zoning code revised. As can be seen in the figure the City has a mix of industrial, residential and commercial zoning. The recommendations in this plan are not in conflict with this plan. A design overlay district is suggested to be adapted by the City to be used by the Planning Commission to guide future development.

### **Street Changes**

The plan recommendations call for changes to the street laneage and parking. The street will be configured as a three-lane section with parking eliminated on the west side. In the future, provisions could be made for a reversible lane concept to maximize traffic flow.



## Character of Existing Residential Dwellings

The character of the residential dwellings in the development area varies from poor to good condition. As noted in Table 2-1, 34 percent of all structures had major violations when inspected. The median gross rent for the three census tracts analyzed for the corridor (609, 611, 671) was \$464 per the 2000 Census.

## Plan for New Residential Development

Residential development is an important goal of the redevelopment plan. The detailed implementation plan presented next includes a proposal for a mixed-use, resident-focused development in the corridor. The plan includes creating physical infrastructure improvements (roads, sidewalks, amenities) that will encourage private developers to invest in the corridor.

## Financing

The urban design improvements in this plan are ambitious and no single funding mechanism will allow the City to meet its goals. A mix of financing mechanisms will be needed. These include: general fund of the City of Covington, Community Development Block Grants, Capital Improvement Projects fund, creation of a Special Improvement District, creation of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, General Obligation Bonds, Grants, and Private funds. Additionally, the Kentucky legislature also recently passed a residential tax credit program that could be a stimulus for a residential development project.

## Project Manager

The City of Covington Planning Director will be responsible for management of the redevelopment plan and any projects resulting from the plan.

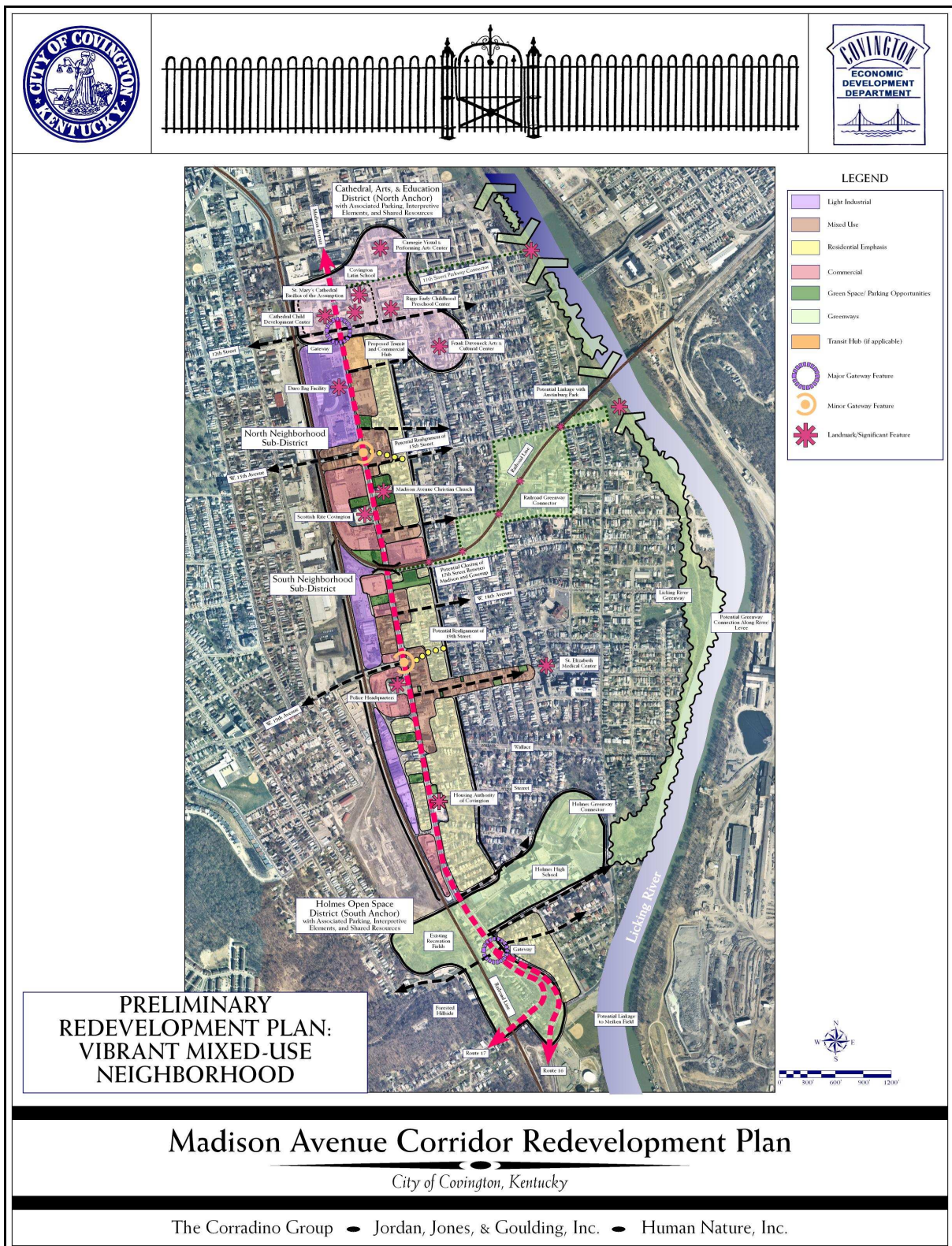
## Detailed Development Plan

This section presents the Detailed Development Plan proposed for the Madison Avenue Corridor. The plan is divided into distinct segments: traffic, sidewalks and streetscape, and property acquisition and redevelopment. Figure 5-2 illustrates at a conceptual level how land use in the corridor would evolve.

There are several issues the City must address to ensure the success of this plan.

- The plan must have a champion. Certainly the City will be a champion. But it will greatly enable the success of the plan to get private or non-profit stakeholders in the forefront of plan implementation.
- All stakeholders must share the vision of the plan. As this plan was developed in a highly open and public process, this issue has been achieved.

Figure 5-2



- Area designs must encourage pedestrian use and accommodate vehicular traffic. The plan has recommendations that address these issues.
- Parking should be configured so that shoppers and residents can find multiple locations from block to block. The plan's strategy for mid-block parking to be developed on park-like landscaped lots address this.
- Because residential development is an overall key to the revitalization of the corridor a committee formed of the City, developers, and representatives of the Covington Housing Authority should be formed to guide the residential components of this redevelopment plan.
- The area needs to be clean, safe, and friendly. Design guidelines for development of infrastructure and thorough and regular maintenance combined with effective community policing are key if this corridor is going to truly develop into a great street leading into the heart of Covington.
- How to attract customers at night as well as the day is going to be important. Planning should begin now to create incentives for restaurants that can offer local options to the local neighborhoods.

These are some of the key issues that will need to be addressed for the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan to be a success. Following is the implementation strategy recommended for the plan.

## Transportation and Streetscape Recommendations

### Traffic

The following recommendations for Madison Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to the KY 16/17 Split are proposed:

- Retiming of the traffic signal at 12<sup>th</sup> Street (this should be done before the reconstruction of 12<sup>th</sup> Street) – (Priority A)
- Study of the removal of a traffic signal at 15<sup>th</sup> Street – (Priority A)
- Study of the removal of a traffic signal at 16<sup>th</sup> Street – (Priority A)
- Actuation of the left-turn phases at the signals on 19<sup>th</sup> Street and 20<sup>th</sup> Street
- Update of roadway lane markings – (Priority A)
- Update of crosswalk markings at intersections – (Priority A)
- Study of the realignment of 15<sup>th</sup> Street from Madison Avenue to Scott Street – (Priority B)
- Possible closing of 17<sup>th</sup> Street (to improve traffic visibility and be part of East Licking River Greenway Loop) (Priority C)
- Study of the realignment of 19<sup>th</sup> Street from Madison Avenue to Scott Street – (Priority B)

- Implementation of a three-lane cross section on Madison Avenue from 12<sup>th</sup> Street to Sterrett Avenue – (Priority A)

In summary, these recommendations will allow the City to maximize the efficiency of traffic flow on Madison Avenue, increase east-west connectivity and thus “better connect” adjacent neighborhoods to the street, and allow for the possible diversion of KY 16/17 through traffic to Madison Avenue.

In terms of implementation, the recommendations have been subjectively prioritized by their relative cost and their impact on the possibilities of the redevelopment plan. The proposed street realignments, which would include fairly significant property acquisition, are not considered as Priority A options relative to this plan and would need further study.

## Sidewalks and Streetscape

The City can greatly improve the chance to cause a long-lasting revitalization of the Madison Avenue corridor by implementing a consistent approach to sidewalks and streetscape. (Figure 5-3) This should include pedestrian friendly design at intersections, widths of nine feet where possible, use of pavers at certain locations, use of a standard palette of street furnishings and materials, minimizing clutter with overhead utilities (and removal of such utilities when possible in the future) and establishing a stronger sense of place via enhanced signage and way finding design.

The City has adopted a master downtown streetscape book of standards. These general standards are expected to be applied to other areas of the city and include addressing the following issues:

- Create more vibrant streets and promote economic development through context responsive street design standards;
- Maximize pedestrian convenience;
- Establish a standard palette of street furnishings and materials as appropriate to respective districts;
- Establish on-street pedestrian spaces that support outdoor dining, entertainment, and cultural activities;
- Improve access and orientation to on-street and remote parking;
- Minimize clutter associated with overhead utilities; and
- Establish stronger “Sense of Place” via enhanced signing and “way finding” design.

It is recommended that all streetscape designed in the corridor adhere to the city’s adopted streetscape program. As part of the overall redevelopment plans, a series of landscaped parking areas is envisioned. These could be designed as shown in Figures 5-4, 5-5 and 5-6. Several locations have been identified for these parking areas in this plan. As implementation proceeds, other good locations will emerge.

CORRADINO



Figure 5-4



## Internalized Greenspace/ Parking



Figure 5-5



## Corner Greenspace/ Parking



Figure 5-6



Edge Greenspace/ Parking



Way finding and signage systems are used in many communities to develop a strong civic identity and welcome residents and visitors. Covington has already created a strong destination presence on the riverfront. As redevelopment opportunities expand away from the river, way-finding signage oriented to vehicular traffic should be implemented.

Implementation of the signage/streetscape program should occur generally beginning in the cathedral district and expanding south as projects develop. This would be consistent with the overall theme of the redevelopment plan to begin by creating an environment that attracts people to destinations and uses in the corridor and then circles back by having other uses enter the corridor to serve those initially attracted.

Table 5-1 presents conceptual costs identified for transportation and streetscape improvements. These costs assume generally replacing sidewalks, repaving the streets, improving street drains, installing pedestrian level lighting and street furniture, planting trees and other landscaping, and constructing pedestrian bump-outs. Table 5-1 also presents costs for specific traffic recommendations, including equipment for future conversion of Madison Avenue and reversible lane configuration.

## Property Acquisition and Project Development

As noted earlier, the Madison Avenue corridor exhibits significant examples of blight and decay – houses in poor condition, vacant lots that are not kept up, a disparate mix of uses that do not complement each other, and more. The proposed redevelopment plan focuses on addressing “Opportunities for Development” to achieve the overall mix of uses shown previously in Figure 5-2, which is a rendering on the corridor profile of Concept D (refer to Figure 3-5).

To achieve the goals of this redevelopment plan, the City should use its power of eminent domain (if necessary) to acquire certain properties at the outset of the plan. These would be targeted for ways that complement presented in the vision for the area.

The properties identified for acquisition were either: 1) identified to have multiple violations and/or an excessive record of criminal activity based on visits by police; considered to be easily acquired (i.e., they are vacant) and/or the owner is willing to sell and they could be used to meet the goals of the plan; or, are uniquely positioned by location to be opportunities for development. Additionally, there are other properties that are in private ownership and which there has been discussion of possible development, such as the former Robke Auto Dealership now owned by a local developer. Clearly, the future use of this site significantly impacts the character of the corridor and every effort should be made to ensure that as the sites are developed their character, proposed use, and physical design with respect to the corridor meet the streetscape and zoning design guidelines adopted by the City and suggested by this plan. Finally, the City may wish to consider creating an ongoing Housing Rehabilitation Loan fund under the provisions of KRS 99 to provide a source of funds from which the City may make loans, and invest in loans, for rehabilitation of residential housing in the designated corridor.

**Table 5-1**  
**Cost for Specific Traffic Recommendations**

Item	Estimate
Improvements from 12 <sup>th</sup> to Sterrett Avenue	\$3,810,000
- Replace sidewalks	
- Improve street drains	
- Pedestrian lighting and street furniture	
- Landscaping	
- Pedestrian bump-outs	
- Street resurfacing	
Improvements from Sterrett Avenue to KY 16/17 Split	\$1,260,000
- Replace sidewalks	
- Improve street drains	
- Pedestrian lighting and street furniture	
- Landscaping	
- Pedestrian bump-outs	
- Street resurfacing	
Restriping and Signage for three-lane flush cross section	\$100,000
Reversible lane use span (from KY 16/17 to 12 <sup>th</sup> Street (possible future use – two per block)	\$390,000
Traffic signal removal study for 15 <sup>th</sup> and 16 <sup>th</sup> Streets	\$20,000
Realignment of 15 <sup>th</sup> Street (does not include property acquisition)	\$350,000
Realignment of 19 <sup>th</sup> Street (does not include property acquisition)	\$350,000

Project design costs are typically ten to eleven percent of construction costs.

Properties identified for acquisition (in a north to south relationship), the reason for their acquisition, their potential future use, and possible impacts are as follows:

1234 Madison – the One Force Staffing building and lot should be acquired. The location of the building adjacent to the proposed Cathedral District would make it a unique opportunity to develop a complementary use for the Cathedral District, including but not limited to a residential development, which could be known as Cathedral Commons, a location for a transit superstop, or a magnet retail location for businesses such as Starbucks, destination bookstores, etc. The City should work with One Force to find a suitable replacement location that does not impact the ability of their clientele to find work.

1428 Madison – This site has a vacant commercial building and an adjoining out building. The commercial building exhibited multiple violations when inspected by the City's code inspector. The site is prominently located near the top of the hill heading south from 12<sup>th</sup> Street. The proximity to the Cathedral District and the proposed transit super stop could make it an ideal location for a residential or mixed-use urban development.

1515 Madison – This is the site of the Colonial Hotel. It exhibited multiple violations when inspected by the City's code inspector, was listed high on the list of police calls for possible incidents, and is considered a location where a shopping retail development that could complement a revitalized Kroger. Any development in this area would be coordinated with Kroger's future plans for its store at 1525 Madison. This site should be acquired and demolished immediately.

1725-27 Madison Avenue – This property exhibited multiple code violations and is visually very unappealing. It contributes to the blight of the corridor and the neighborhood and should be acquired. It would be a good candidate for one of the proposed green parking inserts proposed for the corridor. This site should be acquired and demolished immediately.

1901-09 Madison Avenue – This is the former Valvoline site. It is currently vacant and subject to environmental remediation. It should be acquired and used as a green-space parking insert.

1918 Madison Avenue

1922 Madison Avenue

1924-241/2 Madison Avenue

1926 Madison Avenue

1928-1932 Madison Avenue

These properties are located on the east side of the street and abut to 20<sup>th</sup> Street, which leads to St. Elizabeth Hospital. The properties are currently a mix of occupied residential, vacant residential, and occupied commercial. Together, they represent an opportunity to bundle a strong location at the heart of the corridor in a location targeted for mixed-use residential development. While not in dilapidated condition, the buildings are like many in the corridor and are not aesthetically attractive.

1 Wallace Avenue

2214 Madison Avenue

These properties exhibited multiple code violations when inspected by the code inspectors and are only partially occupied. To the casual observer, they “look” bad and detract from the street and the neighborhood. They should be acquired and demolished as soon as possible and banked, until suitable development can be identified. In the interim, they could be used as a small park or green-space parking area. As other retail and residential opportunities in the corridor evolve, their best use can better be determined.

2545 Madison Avenue

2541 Madison Avenue

2537 Madison Avenue

2533 Madison Avenue

These properties are the arriving motorists first experience of Covington as they come north through the KY 16/17 Split. 2545 Madison is in poor condition and exhibited multiple code violations when inspected by the City’s inspector. Of the other addresses, 2541 is vacant and has minor violations, 2537 is a vacant lot with trash and overgrown grass and weeds, and 2533 has multiple violations. Similar to the bundled acquisition in the middle of the corridor, the city can greatly control the appearance and development at this important entrance point to downtown. They could be used as a park area connecting the Holmes Campus experience and the proposed Licking River Greenway to the recreation and conservation areas west of the tracks and they could be the sites of a prominent gateway feature.

## Summary of Planned Acquisition

Table 5-2 presents the planned acquisitions identified for the Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan. Both public and private actions are anticipated as this plan is implemented. In addition, as noted, there are currently planned developments, such as the redevelopment of the former Robke Autos Sales property that will have immediate impact on the corridor and should be coordinated with this plan. The table also identifies estimated acquisition, demolition and land reclamation, and possible future development costs.

Table 5-2  
Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan  
Property Acquisition and Redevelopment Cost Estimates

Address	Existing Bldg SF	Cost			Possible Future Use	New Project Cost <sup>3</sup>
		Acquisition <sup>1</sup>	Demolition	Total		
1234 Madison	na	\$150,000	\$15,000	\$165,000	Mixed Use Residential	\$900,000
1428 Madison	2,268	\$137,500	\$22,680	\$160,180	Mixed Use Residential	\$680,400
1515 Madison	13,140	\$319,000	\$131,400	\$450,400	Commercial/Retail	\$1,314,000
1725-27 Madison	14,103	\$169,500	\$141,030	\$310,530	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
1901-09 Madison	1,292	\$170,000	\$12,920	\$182,920	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
1918 Madison	7,809	\$100,000	\$78,090	\$178,090	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$780,900
1922 Madison	na	\$1,890	\$1,000	\$2,890	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$300,000
1924-24 1/2 Madison	5,164	\$22,400	\$51,640	\$74,040	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$516,400
1926 Madison	5,164	\$5,625	\$51,640	\$57,265	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$516,400
1928-1932 Madison	5,164	\$119,500	\$51,640	\$171,140	Mixed Use Neighborhood	\$516,400
1 Wallace Avenue	3,610	\$80,000	\$36,100	\$116,100	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
2214 Madison	2,424	\$50,000	\$24,420	\$74,420	Greenspace parking	\$50,000
2533 Madison	2,057	\$34,000	\$20,570	\$54,570	Park	\$25,000
2537 Madison	na	\$8,000	\$1,000	\$9,000	Park	\$25,000
2541 Madison	2,574	\$42,000	\$25,740	\$67,740	Park	\$25,000
2545 Madison	4,389	\$75,000	\$43,890	\$118,890	Park	\$25,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>69,158</b>	<b>1,484,415</b>	<b>\$708,760</b>	<b>\$2,193,175</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>\$5,824,500</b>
<b>Contingency (12%)</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>\$178,130</b>	<b>\$85,051</b>	<b>\$263,181</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>\$698,940</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$1,662,545</b>	<b>\$793,811</b>	<b>\$2,456,356</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>\$6,523,440</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL<sup>4</sup></b>						<b>\$8,979,796</b>

<sup>1</sup>Acquisition costs for properties were based on PVA estimates if available.

<sup>2</sup>Demolition/property reclamation costs are estimated at \$6 per square foot.

<sup>3</sup>Conceptual new project costs will vary widely depending on the final development proposed for a site.

<sup>4</sup>Sites with existing single story structures are assumed to be 3-story in future development.

<sup>5</sup>Assumes public and/or private investments

## East Side Licking River Greenway

The development of a greenway along or within the easement of the Licking River Greenway is seen as a project that will draw more people to invest in the neighborhoods adjacent to Madison Avenue. These people will be part of the residential influx that will support the types of businesses and uses that are generated on the street. The greenway as envisioned would extend from the Holmes Campus near the KY SR 16/17 Split on the South to the Austinburg Park near the CSX rail line. From the park sidewalks and new connections would be used to follow the rail line back to Madison Avenue. Future phases may see the greenway extended on north to bicycle/pedestrian trail interfaces at the Ohio River. Depending on whether the final alignment followed the levy or the floodplain, the length of the trail between the end of the Holmes Campus and the CSX line would be approximately 1 mile. The linkage between the CSX Line and Madison would be approximately 1/3 mile. Table 5-3 presents an initial estimate of what such a facility may cost.

**Table 5-3**  
**Madison Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan**  
**East Side Licking River Greenway – Initial Conceptual Cost Estimate**

Planned Improvements	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
Property Acquisition	na	Na	Na	Na
Construct pathway (10' Asphalt with 2' shoulder)	lf	5,280	\$46	\$242,880
Use sidewalks and connectors from CSX to Madison	lf	1,760	\$23	\$40,480
Parking at Holmes Entrance (5 spaces)	sy. yd.	225	\$40	\$9,000
Rest and river-viewing benches	Unit	5	\$300	\$1,500
Trail entrance and directional signage	na	na	na	\$10,000
Contingency (20%)				\$52,676
Total				\$356,536

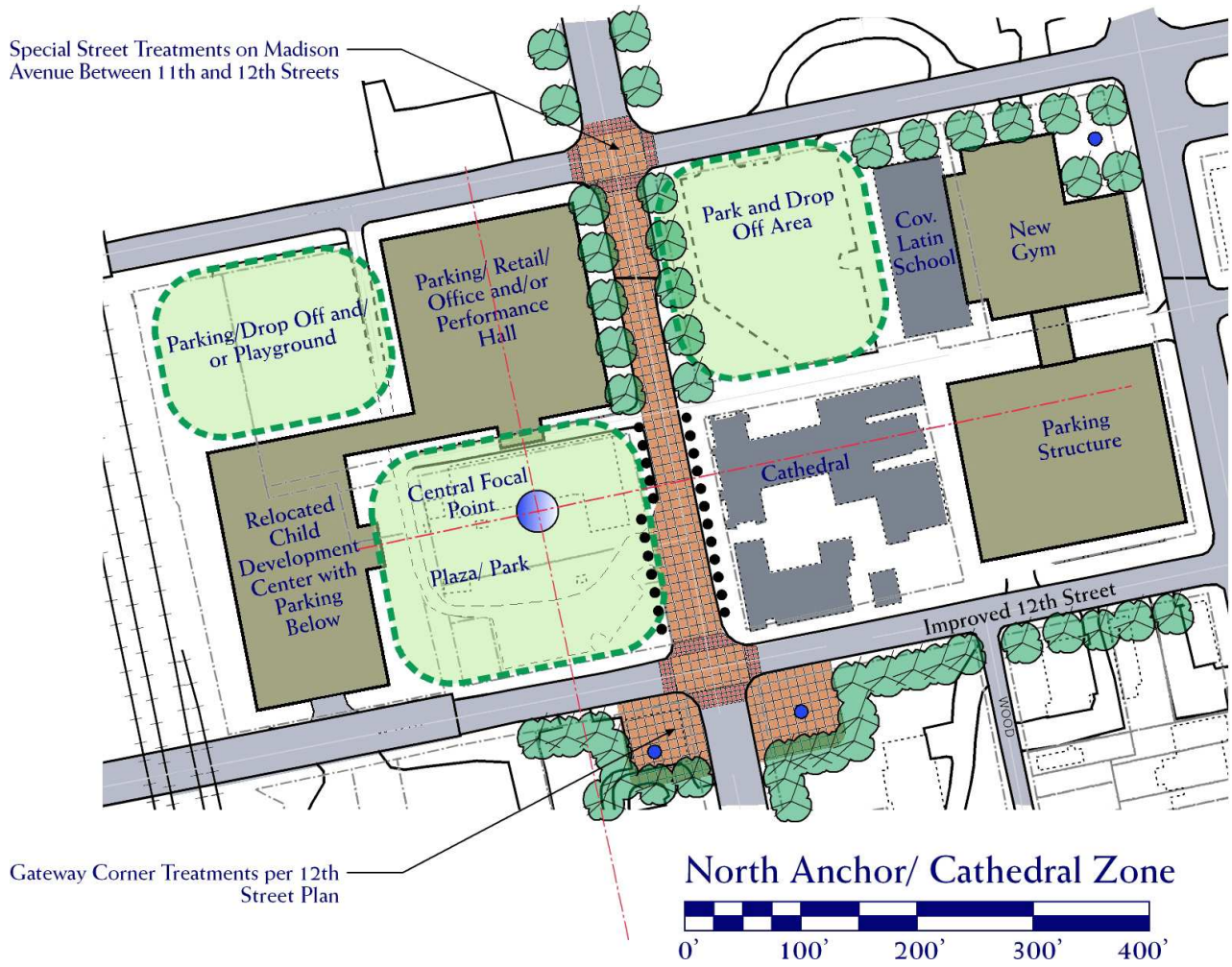
## Cathedral Arts & Education District Development – North Anchor

The Cathedral District is highlighted in the Concept D as the north anchor to Madison Avenue and as the gateway to downtown Covington. This area holds potential to be the most important stimulus to the revitalization of the corridor. The key concepts involve initially creation of a more advantageous viewing area for the Cathedral façade. The recommended plan involves using special pavers and treatment on Madison Avenue to identify the location as a special place and possibly relocating the Cathedral Child Development Center on the property and creating a plaza on the west side of Madison that celebrates the Cathedral. Figure 5-7 illustrates how this could be accomplished.

The Cathedral already draws approximately 100,000 visitors each year to Madison Avenue. If its viewing opportunities and experience are enhanced, this number could increase dramatically. In addition, the plaza, as presented, could become a neighborhood attractor and the type of urban space that encourages urban residential development.

Beyond the immediate concept of the plaza is the concept of creating an Arts and Education district, building on the existing resources in the area but also stimulating and attracting other entities into the area.

Figure 5-7



## Holmes High School Campus – South Anchor

Both from a visual and size standpoint, Holmes High School is one of the dominant areas in the corridor. It is the focal point as people enter the corridor from the KY 16/17 Split. A number of concepts were reviewed with the goal of improving the “gateway” entrance to the corridor, improving pedestrian safety, and examining options to school bus circulation patterns. While further study of how the Holmes Campus can be better integrated into the corridor is recommended, initially use of special street treatments at the intersections of East 26<sup>th</sup> Street and East 25<sup>th</sup> Street with Madison Avenue should be considered along with development of a prominent and attractive gateway feature at the point where the two highways come together.

## Recommendations

This plan differs from a redevelopment plan such as that done for 12<sup>th</sup> Street, where State action is precipitating the plan. As noted earlier, the City needs to champion this plan. The following actions are recommended for the first five years.

### 2005/2006

- Adopt plan
- Develop design guidelines and create a design overlay zone for the corridor
- Initiate initial property acquisition and assembly
- Conduct detailed planning study of the Cathedral District redesign project
- Review plan to identify additional projects or activities to be included in the next year’s work program

### 2006

- Create infill parking opportunities on west side of Madison with acquired properties
- Implement traffic recommendations
- Have all new development projects approved by overlay district
- Conduct detailed planning study for Licking River Greenway
- Issue first Request for Proposal’s for infill development
- Acquire additional designated properties as feasible
- Review plan to identify additional projects or activities to be included in the next year’s work program

### 2007

- Design and construct Licking River Greenway
- Prepare plan for park across from Holmes High School Campus
- Issue second round of RFP’s for development
- Review plan to identify additional projects or activities to be included in the next year’s work program

### 2008

- Monitor progress of ongoing projects
- Construct south west Madison Avenue park across from Holme’s High School

- Review plan to identify additional projects or activities to be included in the next year's work program

**2009**

- Continue design review activities
- Evaluate progress on Madison Avenue revitalization
- Review plan to identify additional projects or activities to be included in the next year's work program

