



# Block Revisioning Plan 700 Block of South 4<sup>th</sup> Street Clinton, Iowa



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# Table of Contents

## Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose of Plan . . . . .	3
Brownfield Basics . . . . .	3
Study Area . . . . .	3
Planning Process . . . . .	4
Project Partners . . . . .	5

## Chapter 2: Study Area Background

Property Overview . . . . .	6
716 South 4th Street . . . . .	6
405 7th Avenue South . . . . .	6
706 South 4th Street . . . . .	6
Parcel 8017790001 . . . . .	7
Public Alleyway . . . . .	7
Previous Environmental Assessments . . . . .	7

## Chapter 3: Land Use Assessment

Planning Context . . . . .	9
Zoning . . . . .	9
Overlay Districts . . . . .	9
Land Ownership . . . . .	11
Transportation & Traffic . . . . .	11
Commuting Patterns . . . . .	11

## Chapter 4: Public Engagement

Purpose of Public Engagement . . . . .	12
Neighborhood Meeting . . . . .	12

Public Open House . . . . .	13
Community Event . . . . .	14
Digital Survey . . . . .	15
Project Website . . . . .	16

## Chapter 5: Block Revisioning Concepts

Overview of Revisioning Scenarios . . . . .	17
Civic Concept . . . . .	18
Convenience/Restaurant Concept . . . . .	21
Mixed-Use Concept . . . . .	24

## Chapter 6: Market Feasibility

Local Trade Areas . . . . .	27
Restaurant Market Potential . . . . .	27
Retail Market Potential . . . . .	30
Market Implications . . . . .	32

## Chapter 7: Implementation

Environmental Due Diligence . . . . .	34
Community Engagement Continuation . . . . .	34
Marketing Strategy . . . . .	35
Property Disposition & Acquisition . . . . .	35
Regulatory Roadmap & Integrated Timeline . . . . .	36

## Chapter 8: Conclusion

Highest & Best Use Recommendation . . . . .	39
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Citations . . . . .	41
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# Chapter 1: Introduction



## Purpose of Plan

The Block Revisioning Plan for the 700 Block of South 4th Street in Clinton, Iowa aims to transform a historically underutilized and blighted area into a vibrant, functional space. This block has faced decades of vacancy and deterioration, including asbestos concerns and emergency demolitions of an unsafe building. The City of Clinton, in partnership with the East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA), was granted EPA brownfield redevelopment funds to address environmental issues and prepare the site for new life through planning to determine the highest and best use of the site.

The plan's purpose is to create a realistic framework for land use, infrastructure, and economic revitalization. The plan seeks to attract private investment, improve walkability, and incorporate pedestrian-scale design while addressing priorities like housing and public amenities. By redeveloping this block, Clinton aims to reverse decades of decline, improve property values, and spur economic growth. Ultimately, the project will convert a neglected section of the city into a safe, accessible, and attractive area that reflects community needs and long-term urban renewal goals.

## Brownfield Basics

A brownfield is property that contains or is perceived

to contain environmental contamination, thus impeding economic development. Brownfields are generally abandoned, idle or underused properties, or vacant land, with or without structures. Environmental contamination varies from property to property, but may include petroleum, asbestos, lead-based paint, heavy metals or other hazardous substances in the soil or groundwater. In general, brownfields are not fulfilling their best use and assessment work should be completed prior to redevelopment.

Initial assessment work, in the form of a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), determines the likelihood of the presence of a hazardous condition. Additional assessment work, in the form of a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment or a Hazardous Materials Assessment, helps determine the extent of the contamination. Based on conclusions from these second-tier assessments, clean-up may be required to further prepare the property for redevelopment. Depending on the scope of the redevelopment, contamination can be mitigated through engineering controls as well.

## Study Area

The brownfield study area, encompassing the 700 Block of South 4th Street, is located within Clinton's central business district. It includes five contiguous parcels bounded by South 5th Street on the west, South 4th



*Former Salvation Army store prior to demolition. Photo Clinton Herald*



*Study area. Photo: Eocene*

Street on the east, 7th Avenue South on the north, and 8th Avenue South on the south. It is within walking distance of Riverview Drive and the Mississippi River waterfront.

This study area for this revisioning plan is nearby other downtown redevelopment initiatives, including reconstruction of the 1000 Block of South 4th Street after several buildings collapsed in 2023. A similar revisioning plan was completed by ECIA for this block. That plan recommended preparing shovel-ready sites for mixed-use or residential development and suggested improving access and traffic flow along South 4th Street. This plan was instrumental in attracting private interest from the development community, ultimately leading to the construction of four new townhomes. Redevelopment also included improvements to the City's stormwater and alleyway infrastructure, and the expansion and enhancement of adjacent privately-owned businesses. The Block Revisioning Plan for the 700 Block of South 4th Street attempts to bridge these successes further north toward downtown.

### **Planning Process**

The block reuse planning process utilizes information generated during environmental assessments to create a realistic plan for the block's potential reuse options. The revisioning planning process begins by mapping the project area and defining parcel boundaries, followed by assessing environmental conditions and determining the developable portions of the site. Next, project partners (identified below) engaged with local stakeholders to shape a reuse vision, while conducting a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)



analysis to identify risks and opportunities. Market viability and demographic data are evaluated to ensure the project aligns with economic realities.

A public engagement process is then implemented to gather community input and address local needs. Based on this feedback and safety considerations, Eocene Environmental Group, Inc. (Eocene) developed the initial revisioning scenarios, alternatives for amenities, and assessed overall project feasibility. Confluence prepared both 2D conceptual plans and 3D renderings to visualize the revisioning scenarios. These concepts were shared with the local community on several occasions. This plan then combines all steps in the planning process into a guidebook for future redevelopment of the study area.

### **Project Partners**

The City of Clinton serves as the lead partner for this project. The City is committed to fostering economic development through revitalizing its downtown core by way of addressing blighted properties. In collaboration with ECIA, Eocene, and Confluence, the City is guiding the planning process, securing funding, and ensuring the project reflects local needs and long-term strategic goals.

ECIA is a council of governments, created in 1974, with the goal of developing regional solutions for local governments. ECIA serves eastern Iowa communities located in Cedar, Clinton, Delaware, Dubuque and Jackson counties. The ECIA Brownfield Coalition was awarded a \$1,000,000 Brownfield Assessment grant from the EPA in 2023. Funding for this project was provided in part by the U.S. EPA Brownfields Assessment Program, via ECIA's 2023 Brownfield Assessment grant.

Eocene is an environmental consulting firm that assists communities find the highest and best use for underutilized properties and areas. Eocene was selected by the City of Clinton and ECIA to lead the block reuse planning process.

Confluence is a planning and landscape design company specializing in urban redevelopment, architecture, and community engagement. The company works with cities and regional organizations to develop sustainable solutions that enhance public spaces and support economic growth. Confluence was selected to prepare conceptual plans for this project.

The project team would like to extend their gratitude to the Children's Discovery Center and Mike's Fun Foods for their support and contributions to this revisioning plan. Their involvement reflects a strong commitment to community collaboration, helping ensure this project meets local needs and creates a vibrant downtown for all.

***Ultimately, the project will convert a neglected section of the city into a safe, accessible, and attractive area that reflects community needs and long-term urban renewal goals.***

# Chapter 2: Study Area Background



Geosyntech Consultants

The Study Area is comprised of 5 properties (approximately 0.9 acres in total), including private property, city-owned property, and right-of-way areas.

## **716 South 4th Street (Property #1)**

This property has a commercial history dating back to the mid-20th century. Historical Sanborn Fire Insurance maps and city records show that the surrounding area transitioned from residential and small retail uses in the early 1900s to more commercial activity by the 1950s. By the late 20th century, the site was home to branded service stations such as Phillips 66 and most recently the Hop N Shop. It operated as a gas station for decades, with records indicating underground storage tanks installed as early as 1958 and later replaced in 1985 and 1993. The property remained active in the 2010s before becoming abandoned. Environmental records document a significant petroleum release in 1993, with cleanup efforts continuing into the 2000s. Today, the property is vacant and the remaining structures (convenience store and gas awnings) are severely dilapidated. Additionally, the underground storage tanks for petroleum products still remain and have not been decommissioned.

## **405 7th Avenue South (Property #2)**

This property is north adjacent and separated by a public alley from 716 South 4th Street. Similar to its neighbor,

the property had a long history of mixed commercial and residential use dating back to the late 19th century. By 1890, the site was developed with a church, drug store, and grocery store. A residence was added to the northwest portion of the lot by 1909. The church and residence were demolished by 1967, while the grocery and drug store were combined into a single grocery retail space that continued operations through the 1980s. From the 1980s until approximately 2017, the building housed a Salvation Army thrift store. After a brief period of vacancy and ownership changes, the property was donated to a church in 2018 but remained unused. In 2023, the City of Clinton acquired the property through a tax sale, and following a partial building collapse in 2024, the structure was demolished. Today, the site is vacant with a remaining gravel lot used for parking. A freestanding pole sign for the nearby hardware store is present on the northeast corner of the property.

## **706 South 4th Street (Property #3)**

This property is shown on the 1885 Sanborn Map as a two-story wood-frame dwelling. The property remained residential through 1960. From the 1960s to the 1980s, it continued as a residential home with gradual updates. Aerial photos from the 1990s confirm its residential use. By the early 2000s or later, the exterior was updated to brick, and the home measured about 1,575 square feet. In 2011, the property sold for \$9,500,



suggesting deterioration, but later tax assessments show improvements. Recently, the property transitioned to mixed-use, hosting a small business by 2024. Currently, the property hosts a locally owned causal restaurant and is zoned C-2 (General Commercial District).

#### **Parcel 8017790001 (Property #4)**

This property, identified as Parcel 8017790001, is located between 706 South 4th Street and the parking lot of 405 7th Avenue South and classified as commercial. It consists of approximately 0.01 acres with a regular lot dimension of 50.0 x 79.00 feet. The site includes a billboard structure built in 2001, and concrete parking added in 1996. The gross assessed value for 2025 is \$39,200.

#### **Public Alleyway (Property #5)**

The final property included in the study area is the public alleyway between 716 South 4th Street and 405 7th Avenue South. Utilities, including electricity, gas, water, and sanitary lines, run beneath the alley, and a storm drain is present. The alleyway begins at South 4th Street and extends west to South 5th Street for access to adjacent commercial and residential properties.

#### **Previous Environmental Assessments**

Geosyntec Consultants completed a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) on March 20, 2025, for Property #5 between the north and south portions of the study area. No structures, hazardous material storage, or evidence of underground or aboveground tanks were observed on-site, and no asbestos containing materials (ACM) or lead-based paint (LBP) were identified. No soil staining, odors,

stressed vegetation, or solid waste were observed during site reconnaissance. This site is not within a designated floodplain.

Two recognized environmental conditions (RECs) were identified due to adjacent properties. To the south, an abandoned gasoline station (Property #1) contains five underground storage tanks that have been out of service since 2019. Historic leaks occurred in 1993, with free product detected through 2006. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has issued three Notice of Violation letters to the current owner of the property stating the tanks must be removed as a result of non-compliance with state laws. The gas station has been closed since 2020.

Southeast of the alley, a former gasoline station at 338 8th Avenue South had a significant leak in 1990, resulting in high petroleum contamination in groundwater. While the site received closure in 2006, restrictions remain prohibiting plastic water lines due to benzene diffusion risk and vapor encroachment. A vapor encroachment screen indicates potential vapor intrusion risk due to proximity to the two former gas stations.

A Phase I ESA was also completed by Geosyntec Consultants on March 20, 2025, for Property #2, the former location of the Salvation Army building. The 0.46-acre property is currently a vacant gravel lot owned by the City of Clinton and has no active utilities, structures, or evidence of hazardous substances, underground or aboveground storage tanks, wells, septic systems, or solid waste. No staining, odors, or stressed vegetation were observed during reconnaissance, and the site is not within a 100-year floodplain.

Two RECs were identified due to adjacent properties. These RECs are the same as the previously identified RECs in the March 2025 Phase I ESA for Property #5. No other controlled or historical RECs were identified. Both reports recommended additional investigation to assess vapor intrusion and confirm no contaminant migration from adjacent properties.



*Abandoned gas station and location of underground storage tanks. Photo: Geosyntec Consultants*

# Chapter 3: Land Use Assessment



Geosyntech Consultants

The planning process was initiated with an assessment of land use within and adjacent to the study area. The assessment included review the context for which the Block Revisioning Plan will be situated, zoning, overlay districts, land ownership, transportation dynamics, and commuting patterns.

## Planning Context

This Block Revisioning Plan builds on the City's existing planning efforts and reflects priorities identified in planning initiatives, including the 2020 Downtown Clinton Master Plan, the 2032 Clinton Comprehensive Plan, and the 2017 Clinton Parks Master Plan. These documents collectively designate the study area and surrounding sites as high-priority locations for redevelopment and future commercial areas. These elements align with the goals of the 2023 Downtown Clinton Master Plan, which encourages the development of multi-story, mixed-use buildings that incorporate offices and housing. The plan also calls for streetscape improvements such as decorative paving at intersections and enhanced crosswalks. Together, these enhancements would strengthen connectivity between 4th and 6th Avenue and create a more defined sense of place, highlighted by intersection bump-outs featuring street furniture. Additionally, the 2032 Comprehensive Plan, and the 2017 Parks Master Plan reinforce goals for

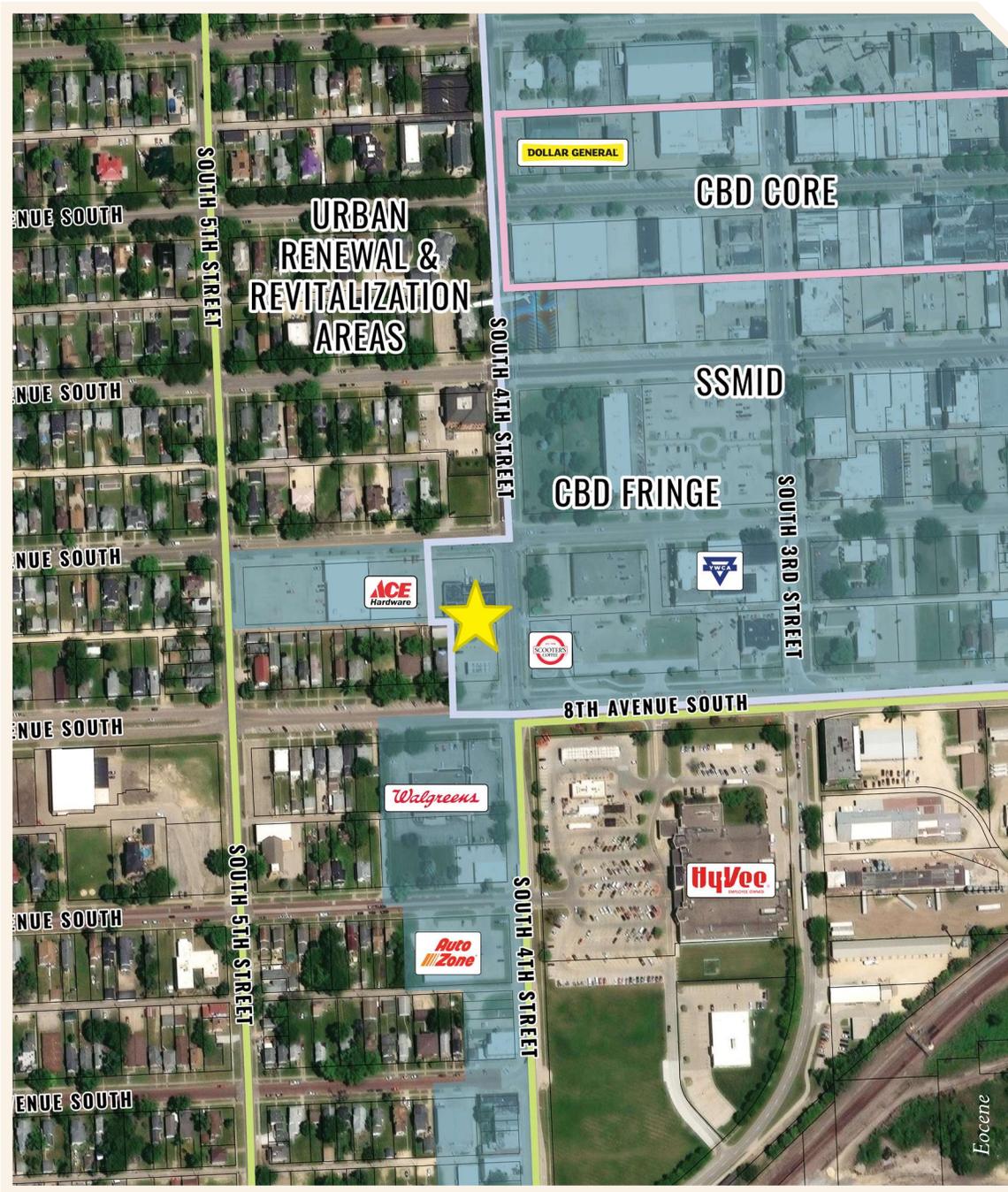
walkability, mixed-use development, and public space enhancements.

## Zoning

The study area is located within the C-3 Central Business District, which is intended for commercial uses that support nearby residential housing. This includes retail shops, restaurants, and personal services. This district encourages pedestrian-friendly development and generally limits building height to 75 feet. The C-3 district expands north and east of the Study Area, accommodating commercial and mixed-use development. To the south, the C-2 General Commercial District supports larger retail and auto-oriented businesses. Conversely, the R-4 Residential District to the west generally consists of single-family and multi-family housing units. Southeast of the study area is the M-2 Industrial Heavy District, which is designated for manufacturing and industrial uses. Positioned between residential neighborhoods and more intensive commercial and industrial zones, The study area functions as a transitional space (being positioned between residential and commercial areas), which lends well to neighborhood-scale businesses.

## Overlay Districts

The Study Area, designated by the yellow star on the



an aerial map on the following page, overlaps several overlay districts. These districts can influence redevelopment decisions due to the regulation of design standards. The Study Area is located within the Central Business District (CBD) Fringe Overlay Zone, which serves as a transitional area between the highly commercial CBD and nearby residential neighborhoods. This zone allows flexible mixed-use development while maintaining compatibility with adjacent housing. It encourages pedestrian-scale design, smaller commercial uses, and residential housing, making it ideal for projects that blend these elements. Being in the Fringe Overlay Zone also provides access to design standards and incentives that promote reinvestment, façade improvements, and streetscape enhancements, while avoiding the density and intensity of the CBD Core. Adjacent to the site is the CBD Core Overlay Zone. This overlay allows for high-intensity commercial and civic uses.

The Study Area is within Clinton’s Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (SSMID). The SSMID collects funds from property owners to support growth, redevelopment, and revitalization, while providing services such as snow removal, street and sidewalk cleanup, sidewalk enhancements and plantings, façade improvements, banners, holiday lights, benches, bike racks, and grant writing.

Additionally, the study area is part of the Urban Renewal and Downtown River Lyons Revitalization Area, which offers incentives for redevelopment and property improvements. The Urban Renewal area permits the City to use Tax increment Financing (TIF) funding for new or redevelopment projects, while the Urban Revitalization Area provides eligible commercial projects 100 percent tax exemption for added assessed valuation for 3 years.



## Land Ownership

Clinton City Hall, the Clinton Public Library, and city-owned parking lots surround the site. Civic destinations such as the Children’s Discovery Center and the Clinton Community School District are adjacent to the east. Nearby commercial uses include Hy-Vee, AutoZone, and a locally owned Ace Hardware. Scooter’s Coffee and a local barber shop are in close proximity. The area also contains several vacant lots, one of which was recently acquired and slated for commercial redevelopment. This recent development may signal opportunities for revitalization along the corridor. Residential neighborhoods concentrated to the west and south create a transition between housing and the more intensive civic and commercial uses to the east. This mix of land uses in and around the Study Area illustrates this block as an important transition point between Clinton’s downtown and residential areas.

## Transportation

South 4th Street, which borders the Study Area’s east side, is an important route within Clinton’s transportation network. Approximately 6,600 vehicles travel South 4th Street every day. 6th Avenue South is an east-west connector and sees around 2,930 vehicles daily. Commuters and visitors travel Highway 67 and Highway 30, which are located just east and south of the site. These corridors experience higher traffic flows of 4,460 to 6,900 vehicles per day, respectively, according to the Iowa Department of Transportation’s 2022 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts study. Traffic volumes vary across nearby streets including daily traffic ranging from approximately 2,820 vehicles on 7th Avenue South to nearly 7,980 vehicles on South 14th Street.

Public parking is located along key corridors, offering convenient access for businesses and visitors. Future redevelopment should also address two notable gaps in the transportation network. First, future redevelopment should consider the abrupt end of the bike lane at 7th Avenue South. Additionally, South 4th Street has inconsistent speed limits, changing three times within just three blocks.

## Commuting Patterns

The Study Area is situated near the center of Clinton’s commuting network and supports a strong local employment base. It also observes a healthy inflow of workers from surrounding communities. According to the Census Bureau’s Center for Economic Studies, 7,681 workers (52.7%) live within ten miles of their workplace (Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics 2022 data). These workers are concentrated in Clinton, which underscores the area’s role as a hub for local employment.

Additional visitors travel from nearby towns including Fulton, Camanche, and Albany, which are all within a six- to nine-mile radius. This proximity validates the short distance commuting patterns. Beyond the local area, 1,450 workers (9.9%) commute between 10 and 24 miles, 1,162 (8%) travel 25 and 50 miles, and 4,269 (29.4%) commute more than 50 miles, according to the Census Bureau. This data highlights a significant share of long-distance commuters. Outbound patterns (those residents leaving Clinton on a daily basis) reveal employment opportunities outside of Clinton. Common destinations include the Quad Cities and surrounding counties.

# Chapter 4: Public Engagement

## Purpose

Public engagement brings the public into the decision-making process and ensures that public input shapes the overall vision for the block. Participation occurred through a series of activities designed to both inform the public and gather feedback through the project's lifespan.

These efforts helped guide decisions, so they reflect community interests and values, are easily understood by the public, and foster a sense of ownership, making the public more invested in the project's success. Incorporating public vision into the final design also reduces the likelihood of challenges and builds trust.

The planning process prioritized fairness, meaningful involvement, and social inclusion for all individuals regardless of race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or income. These principles guided every stage of the public participation process, including development to implementation and decision making.

A variety of communication methods were used to inform the public, solicit feedback, and gain valuable insights for the study area. The public engagement process included several stakeholder meetings, public meetings, a project website, and a community survey.

## Neighborhood Meeting

On December 16, 2024, a small group meeting held at the Children's Discovery Center brought together representatives from the City of Clinton, the Children's Discovery Center, ECIA, Eocene, and local businesses. The discussion centered on redevelopment opportunities within the Study Area and in other areas of Clinton. Each group discussed their priorities for the Study Area as well.

Participants noted strong interest by investors in the Study Area due to high traffic and visibility from Highway 30. Home improvement stores, clothing retailers, and convenience stores were noted as commercial gaps. The group emphasized the importance of collecting visitor data since many patrons come from outside Clinton. City representatives shared insights from retail studies confirming the need for more grocery options and emphasized that this block is the last along South 4th Street slated for redevelopment. Past successes, such as the Hy-Vee redevelopment, were referenced as examples of what could be achieved. However, a local business owner advised against adding another incubator space due to slow progress at the Wilson Building. The City also clarified a common misconception that recent changes to turning lanes and parking were not made by the City but rather by the Iowa DOT, as South 4th Street is a state managed thoroughfare.





Representatives from the Children’s Discovery Center stressed the importance of preserving the greater block as a cultural and family-oriented destination. Local institutions, including the YWCA, Clinton Public Library, and the Discovery Center are adjacent to South 4th Street to the east. The Center’s priorities for the area included improving public safety, enhanced green space, and adequate parking for these public facilities. It was also noted that preference for local businesses to participate in the block’s redevelopment sound be considered . They also noted that half of the Discovery Center’s visitors are from outside of Clinton, reinforcing the need to maintain the area as a regional destination.

Local business representatives expressed interest in expanding operations to include outdoor dining and a food truck court, citing strong local demand and previous success with food truck events. One of the private landowners expressed interest in selling or redeveloping their property in line with the community’s shared vision for the area, as detailed in this plan.



The meeting ended with a discussion of the next steps in the planning process. The small group decided that information boards should be created for the upcoming public event. The information boards will assist in gathering community input, analyzing demographic and zoning data, and investigating commuting patterns.

### **Public Open House**

On January 23, 2025, the City of Clinton hosted an open house from 4-6 PM to gather community input to assist in the revisioning of the Study Area. The event provided the public an opportunity to share their opinions



regarding future land use, roadway improvements, and streetscaping preferences. Feedback collected during the event helped guide the planning team and influenced the revisioning concepts presented later in this plan.

Community members reiterated the need for uses that prioritize public safety, lighting, and aesthetics that align with downtown's historic character. Parking emerged as a persistent concern regardless of future uses. Participants also highlighted opportunities to create family-friendly experiences and attractions that draw visitors from outside Clinton similar to the draw of the Children's Discovery Center. Residents also cautioned against additional strip mall concepts as some other developments in Clinton have stalled.

Cleanup costs associated with the former gas station site raised questions among attendees. Residents also noted concerns with alleys, traffic flow, and the impact of the new nearby supportive housing initiative. Residents identified South 4th Street as one of Clinton's busiest streets. Congestion and public safety ranked high in concerns. Frequent accidents near the intersection of South 4th Street and 8th Avenue South, particularly near Scooter's Coffee, were discussed. Community members preferred improving lane markings, enhancing the intersection, and considering the conversion South 4th Street to a two-way road. There was overall strong support for revitalizing this block in tandem with existing businesses. Several participants stressed the importance of community engagement and expressed optimism about the City's efforts to gather input.

In terms of future land use preferences, residents voiced interest in commercial and mixed-use developments.

The planning team had frequent conversations with the public about sit-down restaurants, healthy local food options, and clothing stores. Locally owned businesses were highly desirable. Residents specifically mentioned the following national chains in response to desirable additions to the community: Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Chick-fil-A, Kwik Star, Caseys, and Five Below. A public plaza compatible with food trucks, professional office space, and a welcome center were also discussed. Mixed-use revisioning concepts combining commercial space with upper-story housing also received broad support.

### Community Event

On August 21, 2025, Eocene, the City of Clinton, and ECIA hosted a booth at the National Night Out event in Clinton to promote the 700 Block of South 4th Street Revisioning Plan. The team presented draft conceptual site plans, which illustrated potential revisioning options. The team also engaged with numerous community members throughout the evening. Attendees were encouraged to share their ideas and feedback using interactive boards, creating a dialogue that helped capture local perspectives and priorities for the project. In total, 29 adults and 15 children interacted in some fashion with project partners or the interactive boards.

Community members responded positively to the proposed greenspace featured in the Civic Concept. However, some attendees were concerned about its location to the nearby supportive housing project. Several participants emphasized that the space should be accessible to all children, including those requiring sensory activities. The underutilized vacant land west of the library was discussed as an alternate area for new greenspace. Interest in adding a daycare facility in the



2 → What type of development would you like to see in this area?\*

(pick one or two)

Make between 1 and 2 choices

<b>A</b> Commercial (stores, businesses, etc.)	<b>B</b> Civic (bus shelter, pocket park, public art, etc.)
<b>D</b> Residential (apartments or condos)	<b>E</b> Mixed-use (combination of these!)

**OK**

*Eocene*

area was noted, reflecting a significant need in Clinton. The addition of sidewalks along South 4th Street was well received, and the single-story commercial building on the northern portion of the study area also drew favorable comments.

The Convenience/Restaurant Concept generated strong interest among event goers. Many attendees supported the idea of a commercial development and suggested specific businesses such as Casey’s, Subway, or a steakhouse. Participants also recommended that future renderings include a drive-through option to accommodate fast-food franchises. However, as reflected in Chapter 5 of this plan, the site was determined to not be an ideal location for a drive through due to the adverse vehicular circulation and general incongruity with adjacent single-family land uses.



Feedback on the Mixed-Use Concept was more divided. Outdoor amenities, such as the patio or terrace space, were viewed positively, and ideas like an ice cream shop and outdoor dining were suggested. However, some participants questioned the need for additional housing in Clinton. An additional concern discussed was potentially insufficient parking in the revisoning concepts. Finally, a broader discussion of tough economic conditions in Clinton occurred. While the proposed redevelopment scenarios would be a positive step for Clinton, there still exists a gap in good jobs to support new construction.

# Public Open House

Thursday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025  
3PM-5PM • Council Chambers of City Hall

Share your vision for the future of the 700 block of South 4th Street!



### Digital Survey

From May 2nd through June 6th, 2025, a community survey was conducted to gather input on the future of



the Block Revisioning Plan. The survey received 305 responses with about 18 percent of respondents living, working, or owning property within three blocks of the planning area. Most participants (86%) accessed the survey via social media, while nearly 7 percent responded via the City’s website.

Safety concerns dominated the feedback. Lighting improvements were rated highly important (4.3 out of 5), while walkability scored very low (2.2 out of 5), which indicates dissatisfaction. Open-ended comments repeatedly cited crime, homelessness, and drug use as major obstacles to revitalization, with these issues mentioned 154 times. Traffic safety was the second most common concern, with respondents noting confusing patterns, poor accessibility, and high traffic speed and volume. The words “traffic” and “safety” appeared over 100 times in open-ended comments.

Respondents expressed a desire for redevelopment to match downtown Clinton’s design standards, with 60 percent rating this as very or somewhat important, though one-third were unaware such standards exist. While only 4.6 percent of respondents use the public bus system, 98 percent know there is a bus stop on the north border of the study area, which was rated 3.2 out of 5 for its quality. Parking availability received mixed feedback. 69 percent believe there is enough parking in the area, but comments suggest uncertainty about parking at the site itself. Public greenspace was considered moderately important, scoring 3.3 out of 5.

When asked about preferred types of development, restaurants topped the list, selected by half of

respondents, followed by entertainment (30%). Broader redevelopment preferences included commercial uses (44%), mixed-use developments (36%), civic features like pocket parks and public art (24%), convenience options such as gas stations and fast food (22%), and residential uses (4%). Comments also highlighted interest for public amenities targeted for young people.

Overall, respondents agreed that the site’s visibility and high traffic make it an excellent candidate for redevelopment, certainly as it relates to high traffic volumes coming into Clinton from the Gateway Bridge from Illinois. The community expressed optimism about transforming the area into a safer, more attractive destination with broad consensus on the need for cleanup, beautification, and improved safety.

### **Project Website**

The project website, created using ESRI StoryMaps, functioned as a digital space for community involvement throughout the planning process. The website presented an overview of the project’s goals, maps, a timeline of milestones, and a mix of photos and graphics that further explained the project. The site also provided links to brownfield resources and provided a survey for residents to share feedback. The goal of the site was to keep the process transparent and accessible. The site received 1,561 total visits, which equates to an average of 4.3 visits each day, between April and November 2025. These metrics show that the website was an important tool that helped the public follow and contribute to the revisioning effort.

# Chapter 5: Block Revisioning Concepts



## Overview of Revisioning Scenarios

This plan has identified why the 700 Block of South 4th Street is one of the City's most important priority redevelopment locations. The site is as a primary gateway into Clinton for visitors arriving from Illinois. Redevelopment of this block has the potential to shape first impressions and sets expectations for Clinton's quality of place. Because of its visibility, access, and proximity to downtown, this area carries outsized influence compared to many other redevelopment sites in the community.

The land use assessment completed for this project shows that existing and proposed uses, such as surface parking and temporary or informal activities, do not match the site's importance or long-term potential. In contrast, the revisioning concepts illustrate how this location can support a higher value development that strengthens this downtown edge and enhances the aesthetics of one of Clinton's primary thoroughfares.

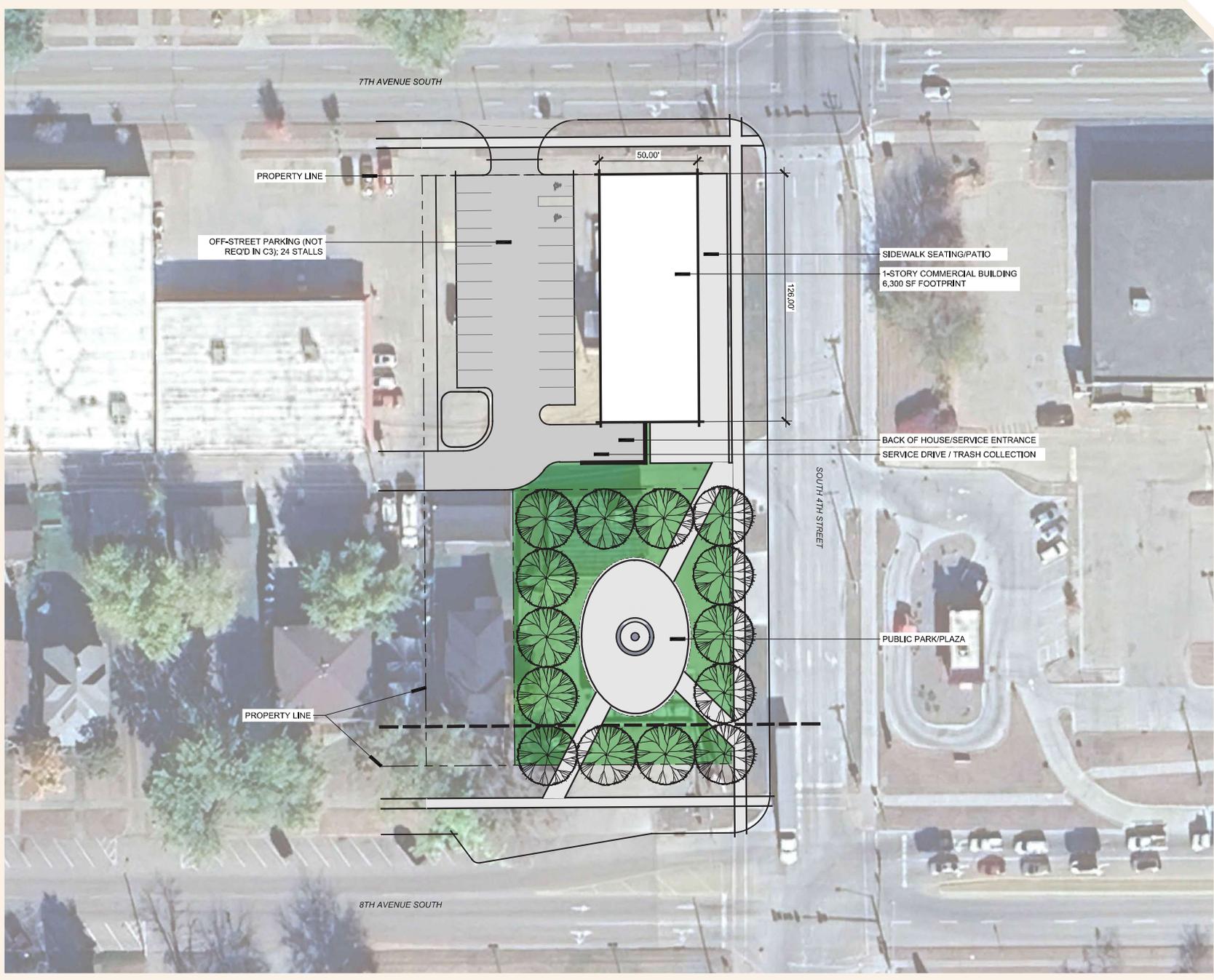
Public involvement conducted as part of this planning process reinforces these findings. Residents and community stakeholders consistently expressed a desire to see this site developed for its highest and best use. This message was reflected in comments by both residents and visitors alike. Public feedback gathered at various meetings and through online discussions illustrates strong support for redevelopment that matches the existing

downtown streetscape. Preference was given to design elements that create a sense of arrival, and elements that maximize the return on investment for the community, rather than the pursuit of the quickest solution.

Additionally, the site's relationship to nearby commercial areas and publicly accessible greenspace is an opportunity to establish a more cohesive, attractive, and intentional gateway into the city.

Taken together, the assessment of land use, public input, the revisioning concepts (presented in this chapter), and market feasibility (presented in the next chapter) highlight the value of making decisions for this site deliberately. Allowing sufficient time to fully evaluate redevelopment options preserves the opportunity to leverage this corridor for a development outcome that reflects community priorities and delivers long-term value for future generations.

This plan incorporates three conceptual scenarios that can achieve such value. Each scenario reflects priorities identified during public interactions. Priorities include a focus on safety, enhanced aesthetics, and functional design that supports both local needs and long-term economic vitality. The concepts offer different approaches to revitalizing the block while maintaining flexibility for future growth and integration with Clinton's downtown character.



# Civic Concept



### Civic Concept

This revisioning concept aims to expand Clinton’s civic core to the west of South 4th Street and across from the Children’s Discovery Center. The concept envisions a vibrant, community-focused space. Key community priorities incorporated into this scenario include vacating the existing alley, enhancing pedestrian crossings, extending the dedicated bike lane further south, adding LED lighting, and a bus stop shelter. The design centers around a public plaza in place of Property #1, featuring a circular greenspace with adjacent parking (24 off-street stalls), food-truck accessibility, shade trees, and built

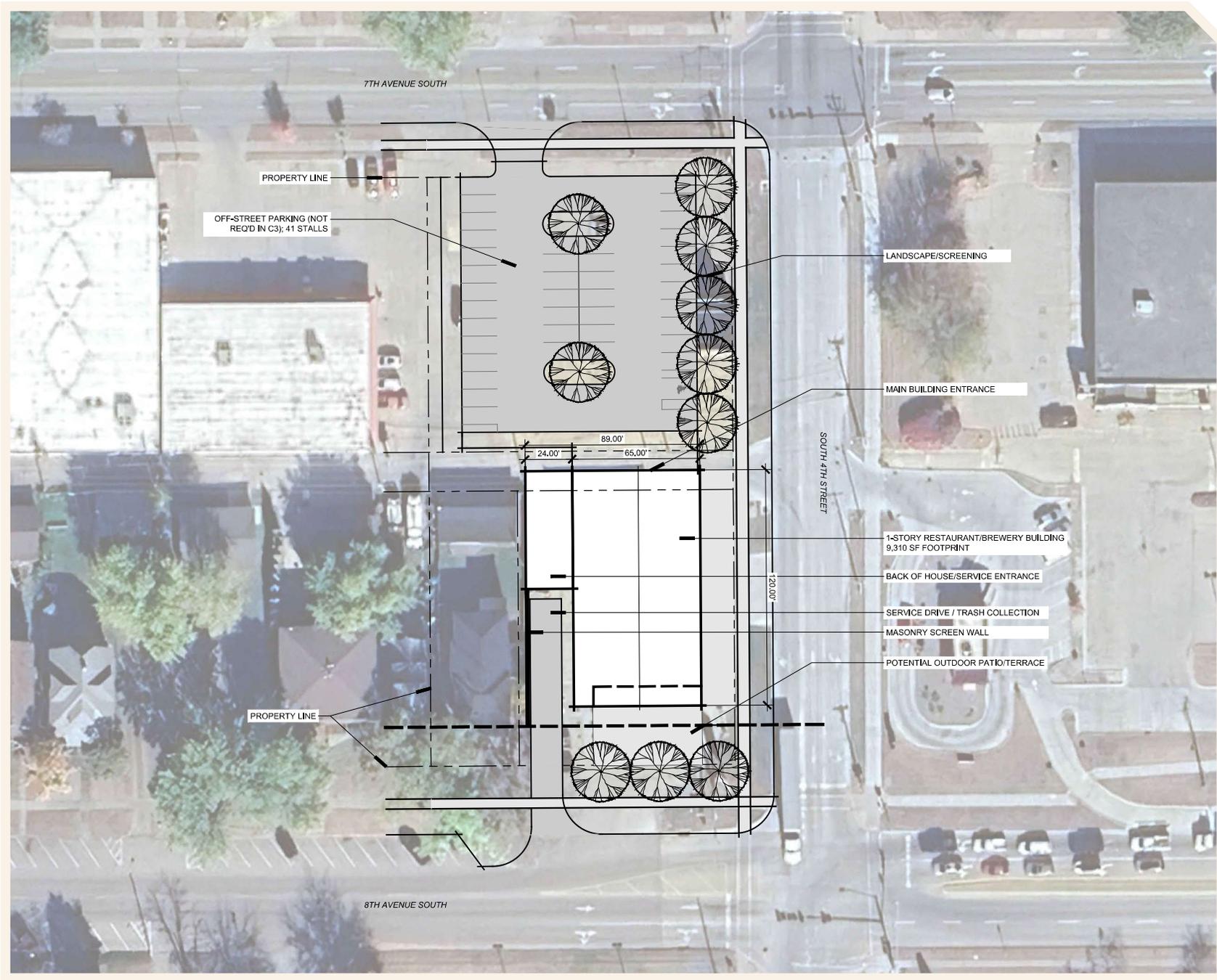
environment elements that mirror Clinton’s existing downtown. Sidewalk seating and patio areas would be integrated along South 4th Street to encourage outdoor dining. A single-story commercial building (6,300 square feet in total space) is proposed on the north half of the Study Area for office, restaurant, or general commercial use. The structure would be complemented by green stormwater infrastructure and a service drive for trash collection and back-of-house access. This scenario supports both the need for flexible community gathering spaces and reflects key safety, aesthetics, and family-first amenities.



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# Convenience / Restaurant Concept



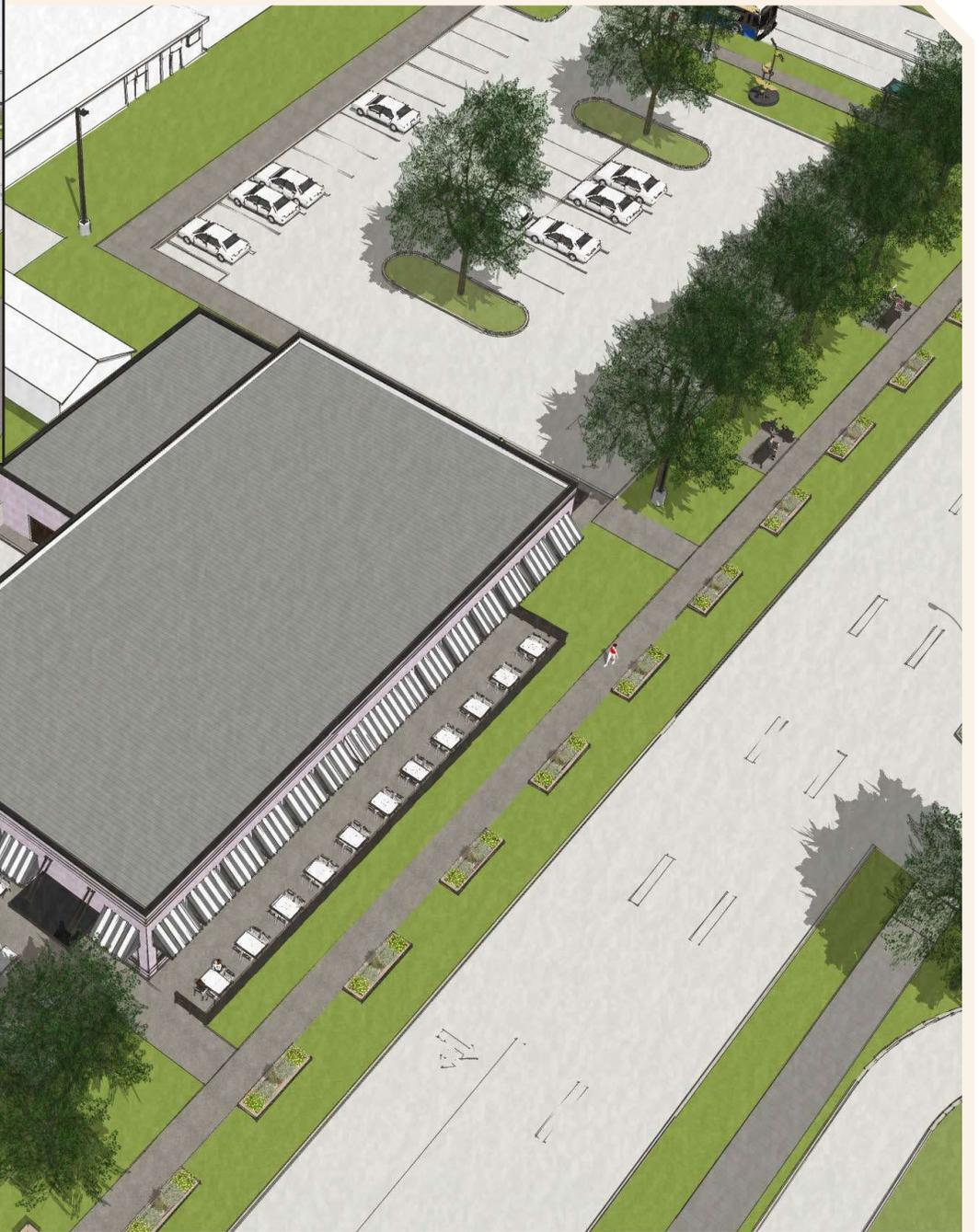
### **Convenience/Restaurant Concept**

This scenario envisions a modern commercial structure with a 9,310 square foot footprint, suitable for a restaurant, brewery, or similar high-traffic use (convenience-oriented), supported by 41 off-street parking stalls and improved site access. Design elements include enhanced lighting, clear lane markings, and pedestrian-friendly features to address safety concerns. Landscape screening through mature trees planted along South 4th Street improves aesthetics and buffers adjacent uses, while also providing traffic calming. Similarly, a masonry screen adjacent to the patio provides separation from the service area. A service drive and back-of-house area for trash collection is also depicted in site renderings.

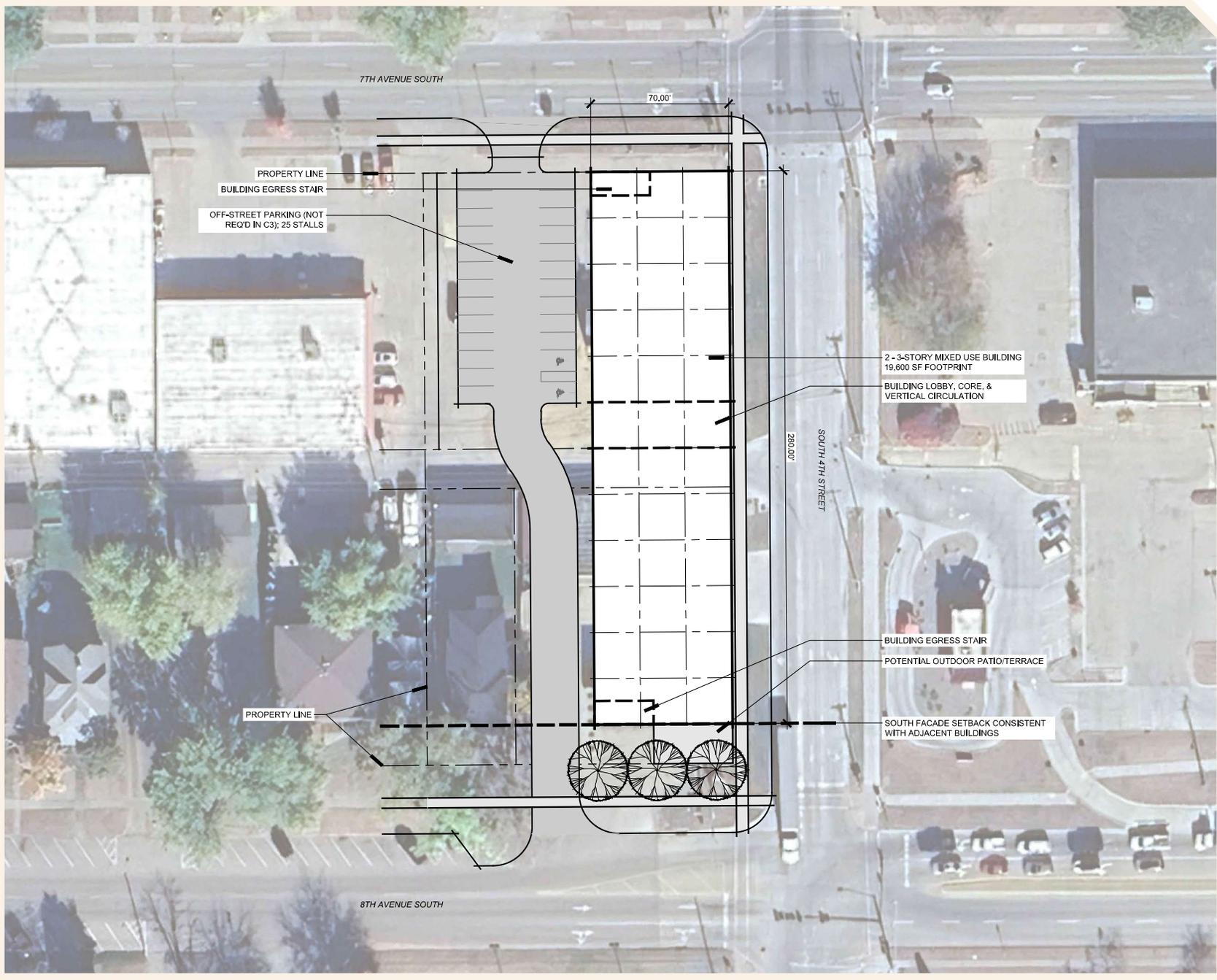
This revisioning concept also includes an outdoor terrace adjacent to the main building entrance off 8th Avenue South, which could be used for dining and social events. Sustainability measures can be integrated through native plants and shrubs, permeable pavers, and other green stormwater infrastructure measures to manage stormwater runoff and reduce the site's overall environmental impact. This scenario responds to community feedback by focusing on the demand for convenience services and dining options. Importantly, it also maintains compatibility with surrounding land uses and demonstrates the City's commitment to advancing environmental stewardship.



Eocene CONFLUENCE



Eocene Environmental Group CONFLUENCE



# Mixed-Use Concept



### **Mixed-Use Concept**

This revisioning concept combines commercial space with upper-story housing to create a multi-functional block. It features a 2- to 3-story mixed-use building with a 19,600 square foot area. The building's first floor could accommodate restaurants, retail, or professional offices. The building includes a lobby, core, and vertical circulation, as well as egress stairs for safety. A south façade setback consistent with adjacent buildings along 7th Avenue South provides continuity with Clinton's downtown core.

The concept provides 25 off-street parking spots and an outdoor patio to enhance social opportunities and elevate dining experiences. Public priorities, including pedestrian signals, bike lane extensions, greenspace, and walkability, are reflected in this vision. The concept presents a unified urban scene where Clinton's diversity in land use is showcased. It aligns well with the public's goal of creating new commercial and residential opportunities.



# Chapter 6: Market Feasibility



## Local Trade Areas

The following analysis summarizes restaurant and retail market potential within 5-, 10-, and 20-minute drive times from the study area. Data is sourced from ESRI’s Market Potential Index (MPI) and demographic forecasts for 2025 and 2030, based on nationally representative consumer behavior patterns applied to local demographics. The MPI compares local likelihood of spending habits to the U.S. average (100 = national average). This information provides insight into population size, income levels, dining preferences, and spending patterns to guide strategic development decisions. The following table describes the population dynamics in each trade area.

## Restaurant Market Potential

The restaurant market analysis developed an understanding of demand to guide revisioning decisions.

Two key behavioral indicators were analyzed: “Went to”, representing visit frequency, and “Bought”, reflecting actual purchase behavior. These were incorporated into composite scores rather than analyzed separately, ensuring a holistic view of demand. Rather than focusing on individual brands, restaurants were grouped into broader categories, such as Quick Service Restaurants (QSR), Fast Casual, Casual Dining, and Specialty/Niche concepts such as breakfast and diners or steakhouses. This categorization provided a means to identify strategic gaps and potential opportunities across the market throughout the analysis process.

To reflect the population’s travel habits, service rings of 5-, 10-, and 20-minute drive-time areas were converted into exclusive bands (0–5, >5–10, >10–20). Each band reflects how people typically choose restaurants: quick, everyday stops tend to happen near home or along

Trade Area by Drive Time	Population (2024)	Households (2024)	Median Household Income (2024)	Projected Median Household Income (2030)
5 minutes	11,279	4,886	\$50,352	\$54,997
10 minutes	26,926	11,751	\$57,928	\$63,845
20 minutes	41,316	17,849	\$64,222	\$71,000

regular routes, while special-occasion meals draw from farther away. Each restaurant category was then weighed according to how it is usually used as either an everyday quick stop or a longer sit-down option for individuals. Additionally, a modest cross-river adjustment was applied to account for a decreased interest in traveling across the Mississippi River within the 10-20-minute service band. This analysis allowed for the creation of two measurements for each restaurant category:

- **Nearby Customers Reached.** The number of people likely to use a category after distance weighting and participation patterns.
- **Engagement Intensity.** An index that shows how much local interest amplifies or softens the category at this block.

Together, these measures provide a realistic, site specific view of what kinds of restaurants are most likely to succeed. Each of the three bands contained several themes. The 0–5-minute band demonstrated a high engagement and demand for convenience. This is where pick-up options are most common, and where burgers, sandwiches, chicken, and pizza have higher demand. These are the places people visit on the way to/from work, between errands, or for a quick meal.

The 5-10-minute band possessed similar characteristics to the inner band but provided more depth with the increased demand for casual family dining options that provided easy access and fit within other daily routines. Sandwich shops, breakfast spots, diners, bakeries, and ice cream places grew in engagement within this central driving band.

The outer service area ring contributes less to quick service options but matters more for sit-down options where the dining experience is the event, such as steakhouses or seafood. People will drive farther for a planned meal, especially in the evening or on the weekends.

Examination of the service bands identifies a clear pattern; quick-service categories are the backbone of the Study Area’s demand. A few selective sit-down options may have potential when paired with easy access and other amenities to draw crowds. Immediate area demands show support for burger QSRs (13.3 percent of the market), sandwich QSRs (5.7 percent), breakfast spots and diners (2.8 percent), and dessert and ice cream shops (2.3 percent). At the same time, there is room for one or two destination-type restaurants, such as a steakhouse or casual seafood restaurant, which would draw from the 10-20-minute service area.

A notable niche that emerged was a seafood QSR option. This smaller in demand size (0.8 percent of the market), scored high in local engagement strength, which suggests the local population may be more enthusiastic about seafood fast food than average.

The following table provides the top five near site (0-10-minute) opportunities with their estimated consumer reach, share of market demand, local engagement strength, and travel pattern description. The local engagement strength measures the Study Area to the national average within the corresponding category.

Another notable finding is that Drive In / QSR draws well (1,350 customers; 1.1%) and fits strongly into close

in patterns. Seafood QSR (893 customers; 0.8%) also has the highest engagement strength (77.9), which could be a meaningful niche opportunity.

Restaurant Type	Customers Reached	Percent of Local Demand	Local Engagement Strength	Travel Patterns
Burgers/QSR	15,601	13.3%	63	Strongest within 0-5 minutes, Steady within 5-10 minutes
Sandwich QSR	6,747	5.8%	63	Strong within 0-5 minutes and 5-10 minutes
Chicken/QSR	4,584	3.9%	48	Mostly Close-in; Consistent 5-10
Pizza/QSR	4,088	3.5%	49	Mix of Close-in and Carry-out Trips
Breakfast/Diner	3,274	2.8%	55	Very Local; Strong Morning Traffic

Restaurant Type	Before / After Adjustment	Change	Why it Matters
Burgers/QSR	10.7% to 13.3%	+2.6	The site strongly favors quick stops.
Sandwich QSR	4.6% to 5.7%	+1.1	Everyday demand increases when local travel behavior is considered.
Mexican/QSR	2.2% to 2.6%	+0.4	Solid 0–10-minute support makes it part of the core mix.
Seafood/QSR	0.5% to 0.8%	+0.3	High enthusiasm near-site; great targeted opportunity.
Drive-in/QSR	0.9% to 1.1%	+0.2	Matches short-trip patterns well.

Looking beyond the near-site service area leads to finding several opportunities that indicate increased demand with the increased distance. The bottom table to the left highlights restaurant categories that showed the greatest demand increase and could have a potentially higher drawing of people into the Study Area. If an outer band indicated a lower score, then it would add little to the core service band and would not indicate strong opportunity potential.

Current local food options within five minutes of the Study Area include Long John Silver’s, Captain D’s, Arby’s, and Hardee’s. Subway runs three different locations within the same area, showcasing its prominence in the local fast-food scene. Even with that presence, the data indicates potential for a seafood quick-service concept as a “small-but-powerful” niche that aligns with the site’s close-in travel patterns, with the highest local engagement strength among QSR sub-sectors (approximately 77.9%). At the same time, burger QSR brands maintain a strong demand but contain clear gaps with several brands that have no nearby stores, such as Steak ’n Shake and A&W. The distance-weighted results also confirm that quick-service is the backbone of demand in the immediate proximity of the Study Area. QSR, as a group, accounts for approximately 28.8 percent of local demand near the Study Area (0 to 10-minute bands); the two largest categories are Burgers/QSR (13.3%) and Sandwich QSR (5.7%). Everyday convenient options such as Breakfast/Diner (2.8%) and Dessert/Ice Cream (2.3%) add morning and early-evening activities.

By contrast, sit-down categories rely more on the broader 10 to 20-minute band under the Family/

Casual restaurant umbrella, which accounts for about 24.4 percent of local demand. Steakhouses and Seafood Casual, within this category, show potential when the setting (lighting, visibility, comfortable parking, and walkability) supports evening and weekend outings. As residents often travel to Davenport for these “slow food” experiences, Clinton’s trade area has a credible opportunity to recapture some of that spend locally, especially with a well-positioned steakhouse, casual seafood, or country family concept.

In summary, both the “Convenience/Restaurant” and “Mixed-Use” revisioning concepts are reinforced by market data in Clinton. A successful program within the Study Area should be anchored by a drive-in-oriented convenience option with burgers and sandwiches and layered with a high-intensity niche (a Seafood QSR) to add variety to Clinton’s mix of restaurants. To broaden dayparts, adding breakfast/diner for the morning market and dessert/ice cream for family evenings could capture more of the market. The addition of one or two sit-down operators with destination appeal could capture dinner trips from the broader region.

It is also important to note that the previous analysis utilizes data from common national brands that report usage patterns, whereas local establishments are less likely to do so. These data are useful to reflect consumer behavior and as benchmarks for identifying restaurants with strong demand. However, many residents engaged in the planning process have expressed interest in locally owned dining options, which often provide greater economic benefits to the community through local sourcing and reinvestment. While the national brand data should guide decisions on the style or concept likely to succeed, such as steakhouse, seafood, or country dining,

implementation of a restaurant concept should prioritize locally owned businesses to maximize value for the local economy.

## **Retail Market Potential**

Building on the previous discussion of restaurant market potential, the following analysis of retail categories reveals additional opportunities for growth that are aligned with the revisioning scenarios presented in this plan. This analysis examined consumer behavior across three independent drive-time bands, 0–5 minutes, 5–10 minutes, and 10–20 minutes, using ESRI’s MPI. Each indicator was organized into broader Retail Missions (such as Grocery, Apparel, Pets, Convenience, Tech, Home Improvement, and Entertainment) to better reflect how real shoppers group their trips.

Because raw MPI values alone do not show how well a category performs locally, a calculated Demand Score (DS) was created. This score adjusts for trip frequency, typical spending levels, and e-commerce substitution, creating a clearer picture of which categories residents visit in person. A positive Demand Score (DS) means residents participate in that retail behavior at a rate higher than the national average, reflecting strong local demand. A DS near zero means local behavior aligns closely with national norms, indicating steady and stable demand. A negative DS means participation is below the national average, signaling weak demand and likely leakage to competing trade areas. Similar to the restaurant model, this model also incorporates cross-river friction, acknowledging that a significant portion of shopping demand flows across the Mississippi River into Illinois, particularly beyond the 5-minute band.

Across nearly all retail missions, the 0–5-minute area displays the strongest demand, while demand drops sharply as distance increases. Less than ten percent of core demand is retained beyond the 5-minute band, underscoring the extent to which shopping behavior is concentrated close to home. This indicates that the Study Area functions primarily as a local-serving retail market, with limited regional pull. Residents rely on nearby options for most everyday purchases, but consumers living farther out, particularly across the river, are more likely to choose other retail centers. Of the 14 Retail Missions, only four show relatively strong local demand, six fall into a moderate middle band, and the remaining missions exhibit significantly negative scores across all distances, revealing a clear hierarchy of which categories are most viable within the core.

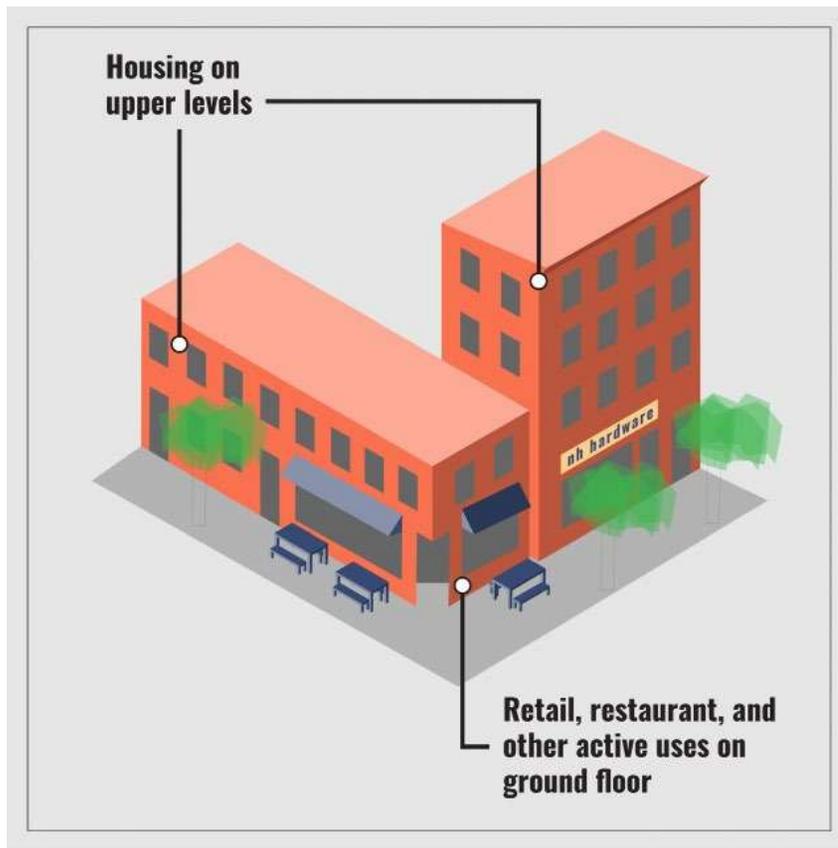
The highest-scoring Retail Missions in the Clinton market, based on the 0–5-minute DS, were “Essential

Daily Needs: Convenience & Fuel, Pets, Apparel & Accessories, and Tech & Connectivity: Cell Phones & Mobile.” These categories demonstrate the strongest local demand signals. In most categories, the DS drops by 85–95 points between the 0–5 and 5–10 bands, underscoring the highly local nature of retail demand. The table to the left shows the DS within the core 0–5-minute ring and the sharp decline that occurs as distance increases. This pattern highlights the highly local-serving nature of Clinton’s retail market: demand remains relatively stable close to home but drops steeply as residents travel outward.

Trips targeting fuel, beverages, and convenience generate reliable demand, especially when they occur in high volume. The convenience and daily needs category present the strongest option in the Study Area and supports businesses that require small footprints. Further, the data supports recurring purchases for pet-related purchases, including pet supplies, grooming, and other household specialty retail within the 0 to 5-minute driving area. Similarly, mobile phone retailers or repair stores translate to viable in-person demand. The site’s size and market data does not support chain apparel stores; locally owned, smaller retailers focused on resale and thrifting show greater feasibility in the Study Area.

The lowest-performing Retail Missions were Travel, Computers and related tech accessories, Financial adjacent services, Cameras and photography, TV and Electronics, Small Home Goods and décor, and Auto Ownership, which all show weak Demand Scores across each drive time area. This indicates that Clinton residents partake in these behaviors at rates far below the national average. Spending from these categories is

Retail Mission	0–5-minute Demand Score	5–10-minute Demand Score	10–20-minute Demand Score	Interpretation
Convenience & Fuel	+0.05	-99.03	-99.41	Extremely local; demand collapses beyond
Pets	-2.5	-91.61	-93.92	Stable demand; weak regional pull
Cell Phones & Mobile	-4.65	-93.92	-94.38	Stable demand; weak regional pull
Apparel & Accessories	-8.07	-91.16	-91.35	Stable demand; weak regional pull



*Mixed-use development illustration. Source: New Hampshire Housing Toolbox.*

unlikely to be captured locally. The categories exhibit potential for online ordering and competition from other regional markets. Travel and camera-related behaviors have shifted almost entirely online, while computers, electronics, and home décor see significant leakage to major chains and e-commerce platforms. Auto-related purchases, particularly vehicle sales, naturally gravitate toward larger metropolitan markets. Together, these patterns confirm that these missions do not align with the Study Area’s strengths and should not be prioritized

for redevelopment. However, some opportunities for repair or service-oriented uses as part of the larger redevelopment effort may be possible.

The retail demand analysis shows Clinton as a strongly local serving market. The concentration of demand within the 0 to 5-minute area illustrates local participation rates. The categories with the best performance (Essential Daily Needs: Convenience & Fuel, Pets, Apparel & Accessories, and Tech & Connectivity: Cell Phones & Mobile) are examples of possible storefronts on the ground floor of mixed use buildings. Pairing these commercial opportunities with upper story housing concentrates everyday trips into multipurpose outings. The mixed-use scenario also increases spending within short walking distances, and aids in sidewalk activity on nights and weekend. In terms of implementation, this means focusing on small, flexible bays with shared parking behind buildings. Nearby residential housing creates a multipurpose district. The data supports targeted mixed use locations in Clinton’s downtown core as the most efficient way to convert local demand into economic development.

### **Market Implications**

The market analysis presented in this chapter demonstrates a real opportunity for infill redevelopment that generates immediate and long-term economic success. Demand in the Study Area is driven by short, routine trips whereas the larger market supports destination-oriented uses. This combination creates a low risk environment for phased development that can scale over time without relying on speculative tenancing.

Building on the retail findings, the data confirm that the

Study Area functions primarily as a local serving market, with less than 10 percent of demand retained beyond the 5-minute drive time area. Retail Missions with the strongest performance, those with convenience in mind, are the types of small commercial operations that succeed in mixed-use or infill redevelopments. These categories are driven by short, frequent trips, which means they can reliably support early-phase development and help stabilize longer-term investment.

Rather than focusing on single use projects, the data supports a layered approach. This approach could include convenience-oriented food and retail options that bring daily traffic. Niche restaurants that are underrepresented locally but demonstrate strong interest present an opportunity to stand out without competing

directly against existing businesses. One or two sit down restaurants could follow, provided the site offers the visibility, comfort, and access that encourage evening and weekend trips. Pairing these food uses with ground floor retail tenants that align with the strongest Retail Missions helps build a cohesive destination that serves both neighborhood needs and occasional visitors.

A key advantage of this block is that the fundamentals are already in place. Streets, utilities, access points, and surrounding infrastructure will reduce both upfront costs. Remaining uncertainty lies with potential soil and groundwater contamination associated with the defunct gas station. Compared to greenfield sites, this site will allow developers to move more quickly from concept to opening. This reduces carrying costs and focuses on building quality and tenant experience instead of infrastructure.

These market findings directly shape the implementation strategy outlined in Chapter 7. By confirming that the Study Area functions as a local-serving district (concentrated near-site demand), the market analysis supports a redevelopment approach focused on small-format, mixed-use concepts. As the site matures over time, a dining destination would be achievable.

### *Why Infill Redevelopment Matters*

- *Infill sites already have streets, utilities, and access in place, reducing upfront costs and speeding projects to market.*
- *Demographic shifts and employer moves back toward central areas continue to strengthen the market for infill locations.*
- *Lower infrastructure needs and higher achievable rents/sales prices make infill competitive with greenfield development.*
- *Reusing vacant or underused properties helps clean up hazards, stabilize neighborhoods, and turn dormant sites into productive community assets.*
- *Infill near jobs, transit, and existing neighborhoods reduces travel distances and supports walkable, mixed-use environments.*

*Source: Smart Growth and Economic Success: Investing in Infill Development (EPA)*

# Chapter 7: Implementation



Moving from planning to implementation is often a difficult hurdle. However, this plan, shaped by robust public participation, presents several viable redevelopment options. Importantly, these options are supported by the community based on previous public involvement. The following sections outline actionable steps to advance redevelopment, including confirming subsurface environmental conditions, asbestos abatement, and demolition. Implementation also includes coordinating utility relocations and development of the City’s non-negotiable redevelopment elements in the form of a Development Agreement.

## Environmental Due Diligence

Previously completed Phase I ESAs identified environmental conditions that warrant further investigation. Implementation begins with a Limited Subsurface Investigation or a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment to determine potential contamination of soil and groundwater, and potential vapor intrusion risks. These findings may influence building design and future land uses.

Older building materials are addressed through a asbestos inspection. If asbestos is confirmed, it must be abated prior to demolition, which requires a 10 working day notification to the IDNR. These two tracks, a subsurface Phase II ESA and asbestos containing materials

inspection, should be run side by side so the site and structures are cleared in a coordinated way without slowing the schedule.

With respect to the remaining underground storage tank (UST) closures at the south property, the current owner needs to provide the IDNR with a 30 day closure notice, complete the closure and confirmation sampling, and submit a Closure Report in accordance with State procedures. If screening indicates potential risk, the Phase II ESA scope can be expanded to verify whether practical safeguards (e.g., sub slab barriers) are advisable for mixed use or residential occupancy. This sequence of events will provide the information needed to design a safe structure for potential residents and workers.

## Community Engagement Continuation

Building on the public involvement efforts detailed in this plan, it is essential to maintain transparency and continue involving the public throughout implementation. The City will post brief public updates at key milestones to include environmental work windows, asbestos notice/abatement and demolition dates, the alley-vacation hearing, and utility adjustments tied to construction. Where decisions are required, such as the RFP release and the development agreement, the City will provide plain-language summaries, open-house opportunities, and a project webpage that tracks “What’s

Next” so residents can follow progress. Leveraging the dedicated project website and social media platforms will broaden awareness and reach diverse audiences. Digital tools allow for timely updates, interactive content, and two-way communication, making it easier for residents and stakeholders to stay informed. Ideas for digital media content include behind-the-scenes footage of the redevelopment process, interviews with project leaders and community stakeholders, and interactive polls. A monthly progress report could also be developed by the City or an advisory group to keep residents informed.

The public should also have opportunities to participate in the physical redevelopment of the block. Volunteer activities, such as community clean-up days, landscaping events, or collaborative mural painting projects, play a vital role in fostering a sense of ownership and pride among residents during the implementation phase. These hands-on opportunities not only beautify the area but also strengthen community bonds and create visible, shared accomplishments.

### **Marketing Strategy**

This plan must be actively marketed to real estate companies, lenders, developers, and other potential investors in order to move from planning to implementation. The plan confirms that the revisioning concepts and associated design elements have been vetted through extensive community involvement. This transparency reduces perceived risk for investors and developers, making the project more attractive and financially viable.

The marketing strategy begins with developer and investor events scheduled early in the process. These events (in a forum or roundtable setting) should focus on the core tenants of the plan, highlight community support, and provide opportunities for direct dialogue with City leadership. They should also emphasize:

1. The buildable footprint after utility relocation and the vacating of the alleyway.
2. The mixed-use vision for land use.
3. A realistic schedule that aligns with by remaining environmental work and demolition activities.

Outreach should also include engagement with industry associations, chambers of commerce, and developer networks. Presentations about the redevelopment opportunity at conferences and webinars will be especially useful. The final marketing piece is the release of a “Highest and Best Use” Request for Proposals (RFP) that asks for concept plans, intended uses, and financing that meets the public’s priorities established in this plan. Providing clear guidance at this stage reduces perceived risk and improves proposal quality.

Throughout the implementation phase, the City should highlight available incentives and financing options, such as tax credits, grants, and expedited permitting processes. These measures will help attract investment and accelerate getting a project to groundbreaking.

### **Property Disposition & Acquisition**

The City will implement a property disposition process, so redevelopment is aligned with the revisioning



concepts outlined in this plan, and so that available incentives are activated. The first step is to consolidate parcels. The remaining privately owned properties should be considered for negotiated purchase or voluntary transfer to allow the City to bundle parcels for disposition to a single developer or development group.

As illustrated in the revisioning concepts, the current public alleyway that separates the north and south parcels will be vacated as part of the property disposition process. This follows the City's established process of the City Planning Commission's recommendation, public hearings, Council adoption by resolution, and recording of the vacated land. Once the alley is vacated and easements are recorded, above-ground utilities such as poles or service boxes that sit within the future building envelope can be relocated while maintaining service to neighboring properties.

In addition, because the study area includes freestanding sign structures along Highway 67 (South 4th Street), which is part of Iowa's Primary Highway System, removal of these signs will be coordinated with the Iowa Department of Transportation's Outdoor Advertising program to confirm visibility, permit status, and compliance with state rules before site preparation proceeds. This sequencing strengthens the City's ability to market the property, reduces design conflicts later in the process, and provides developers with a clear and predictable physical framework for building.

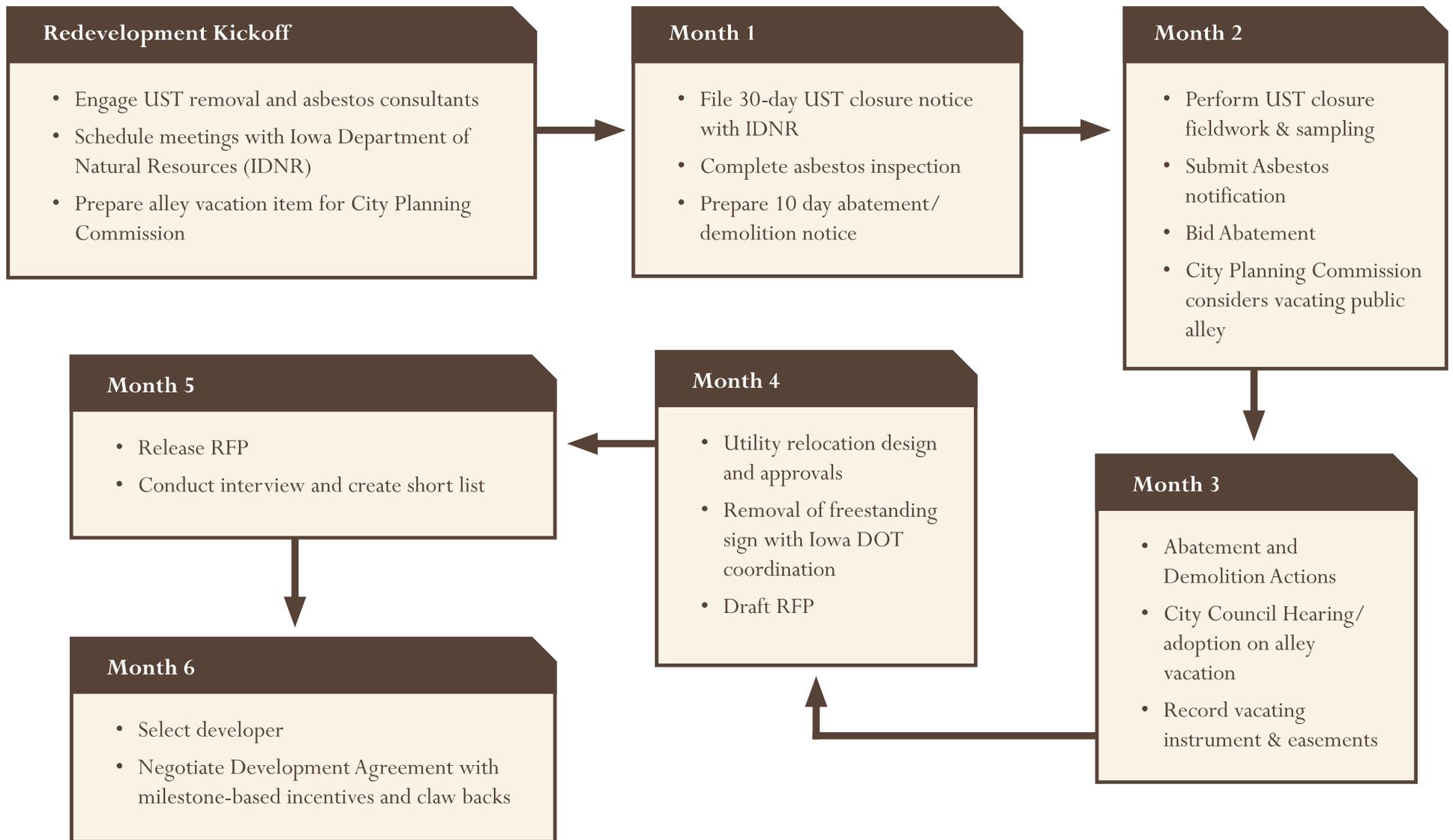
To attract private investment, the City will utilize a range of incentives and funding tools. TIF through Urban Renewal Area incentives will help offset infrastructure costs and Urban Revitalization Tax Exemptions can provide up to 100 percent property tax abatement on

added valuation for three years on eligible commercial projects. Redevelopment projects can also capitalize on the advantages of the CBD Fringe Overlay Zone and SSMID, which provides access to programs for façade improvements, streetscape enhancements, and grant-writing assistance. These incentives will be targeted to tenant types and building forms identified as viable in the market analysis. Environmental remediation and site preparation can be supported through EPA Brownfields Cleanup Grants and ECIA revolving loan funds. Additional opportunities include Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) Downtown Revitalization Grants for façade and streetscape improvements and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) for infrastructure upgrades. These tools will be paired with an emphasis on site readiness to strengthen developer confidence.

Because redevelopment success depends on long term alignment with the community's vision for the Study Area, the City may seek to enter into a Development Agreement with a developer. Under Iowa Code Chapter 403, a Development Agreement states the City's expectations regarding the redevelopment and could include design quality, phasing, public facing improvements, and any environmental controls implement based on previous assessment work. It also ties City incentives to measurable milestones such as permit issuance, building shell completion, and tenant openings. Incorporating a Development Agreement into the disposition process solidifies that the public's investment is protected, that the plan's design intent is carried through to construction, and that future changes in ownership do not compromise the block's long term success.

## Regulatory Roadmap & Integrated Timeline

Successful redevelopment of the Study Area hinges on the careful sequencing of events that are regulated and thus required public notification periods. Where practical, and at the discretion of the City Council, the City will oversee underground storage tank closures, Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, asbestos abatement and potential demolition, and vacating the alleyway. The City will also work in parallel with the local utility providers to relocate overhead and buried infrastructure to reduce risk.



# Chapter 8: Conclusion



The 700 Block of South 4th Street Revisioning Plan provides a roadmap for transforming a historically blighted and underutilized area into a vibrant destination that reflects both community priorities and current market realities. The planning process centered on understanding existing constraints while clearly defining what residents and stakeholders want this highly visible area to become.

This plan looks at key challenges in the Study Area, including contamination concerns, infrastructure needs, safety issues, and many years of limited investment. To better understand these conditions, the team completed environmental site assessments and a market analysis. The plan also identifies opportunities to improve public spaces, support new commercial activity, and make the area safer and easier to walk. Public comments and survey responses clearly showed that residents want better-looking streets and buildings, long-term uses that strengthen the tax base, and locally focused businesses that take pride in Clinton rather than short-term or low intensity uses.

Public engagement throughout the planning process highlighted a shared understanding that this site is important and that redevelopment decisions deserve thoughtful consideration. Residents expressed a desire to see the highest and best use realized at this location,

particularly given its role as a major entry point into the city and its proximity to downtown assets. Feedback highlighted concerns about surface parking, temporary uses, and underutilization. Public involvement suggests favoring redevelopment that strengthens the city's image and a vision that supports both residents and visitors.

The revisioning concepts presented in this plan directly respond to that feedback. The concepts demonstrate how a guided approach to redevelopment can support incremental progress over time while maintaining clear expectations for quality, scale, and overall contribution to downtown Clinton. By illustrating multiple viable redevelopment paths, the plan enables the City to evaluate opportunities deliberately and with greater confidence. This clarity supports informed negotiation and helps align future investment with adopted goals and community values.

Successful implementation will depend on continued collaboration among project partners, the strategic use of funding and incentive tools, and proactive engagement with private investors. Guided by the redevelopment concepts outlined in this plan, the City of Clinton is well positioned to reclaim this key block as a safe and economically productive space.

## Highest & Best Use Recommendation

While it is plausible that all three revisioning concepts would succeed in the Study Area, the recommend direction for redevelopment is the Mixed-Use concept. The concept brings together the community's goals for reinvestment, neighborhood growth, and economic stability. This plan identifies the 700 Block of South 4th Street as one of Clinton's most important redevelopment opportunities due to its visibility and high traffic counts. The site is also gateway location into Clinton's downtown. The public expressed a desire for redevelopment that improves the city's aesthetics and adds character to the downtown fringe area. The

recommended concept responds to these expectations by offering variety and the potential for quality architecture.

Clinton's adopted plans call for a future centered on compact, walkable developments that can grow the community incrementally. The 2020 Downtown Master Plan and the 2032 Comprehensive Plan both call for multi-story mixed use developments, improved streetscapes, and buildings that bring residents and businesses closer to daily services. The Study Area overlaps the C3 Central Business District and the CBD Fringe Overlay Zone. These zones were established to support redevelopment projects that blend neighborhoods and civic uses.

*Consistent Urban Lines  
Matching 4th Street Corridor*

*Upper-Story Residential*

*Active Ground-Floor  
Commercial*

*Right-Sized  
Interior, On-Site  
Parking*



*Pedestrian-Scale Architecture  
& Walkability Improvements*

The block exists between established residential neighborhoods, downtown businesses, the public library, the Children’s Discovery Center, and several commercial areas. This geographic location is prime for a development that adds housing while also supporting commercial space on the ground level. Adding residential space in this location helps meet the City’s goal of creating housing near walkable amenities. The commercial space strengthens the Study Area by introducing uses that create pedestrian and vehicular movement daily. This mix helps create an environment where people can live, work, and spend time in a walkable setting. Importantly, this revisioning concepts reflects the city’s vision for compact growth and stronger connections between key destinations in downtown Clinton.

Market research also supports the recommendation for a mixed-use development. Demand for retail shops and restaurants in the Study Area is highly localized; most activity is concentrated within five minutes of the block. Successful market categories include small format convenience shops, pet supplies, apparel, mobile phone services, and locally owned establishment. These are precisely the types of tenants that perform well on the ground floor of a mixed use building. Upper story residential units strengthen these uses by supplying built in customers who support morning, evening, and weekend activity. This combination creates a foundation for reinvestment rather than relying on a single tenant to anchor the site.

In conclusion, the Mixed-Use Concept provides the strongest combination of economic feasibility and benefit to the community. The recommended concept supports a

development approach that reflects local market realities and neighborhood priorities while improving a key entry point into downtown.

*Reusing a brownfield site in this way supports community revitalization by removing blight, addressing contamination, and returning underused land to productive use.*

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