Rebuilding Marion’s Central Corridor

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Background (Pre 2009)
Marion’s Central Corridor

- Most prominent area
- Major east-west arterial (Business 151)
- Front door into the community
- Commercial backbone

Vision:
Revitalize the corridor as a regional-hub for businesses, urban living and entertainment – cementing Marion as an independent and self-sustaining regional destination.
Infrastructure Driving Investment

• Where did we start?
Infrastructure Driving Investment

Fun Facts:

• 62% of parcels valued at $100,000 or less

• 53% of all traffic accidents along 1.2 mile stretch of 7th Avenue (vs. 150 miles of streets)
Study Begins

• Fall 2002: Started applying for brownfield grants
• Aug. 2004: Phase I Area Wide ESA work completed
• Nov. 2009: Marion Central Corridor Master Plan adopted
• Sept. 2011: Uptown Streetscape Plan adopted
• Oct. 2011: West End Corridor Plan adopted
Brownfield Investigation

- Brownfield: idle or underused site due to real or perceived environmental pollution
- City has received approx. $1.5M in Brownfield Assessment Grants related to this project
- City received ‘no further action’ letter for the former railroad ROW
Brownfield Investigation

- Phase I ESAs: 281 properties identified
- Environmental Investigations: 14 completed
Study Area
Final Design

Features:

• Roundabouts defining new Uptown footprint
• Co-equal priority on 7th and 6th Avenues
• 3 Lane Cross-Sections
• Bicycle/Pedestrian Elements
• Varying Intensity of plantings and infrastructure
Breakeven Point: 9.7 years
Design Life: 40 years
Net Gain: $49,716,000
Public Engagement & Education

• Public Open Houses
• Project Website Pages
• Educational Materials
• Project Posters
• Marion Messenger
• Farmers’ Market
6th Avenue: 8th – 13th Street (2012)

• Central Corridor – Phase 1
  – Pedestrian accommodations
  – Brick street
6th Avenue & 7th Street Viaduct (2012)

• Removal of the viaduct

• Project cost: $114,704

• Allows for the 6th Avenue & 7th Street roundabout connection to be made
• On-street parking was not allowed on the south side of these two blocks.
• Project cost: $200,433
• 10 additional on-street parking stalls were added to the Uptown area with this project.
10th Street Reconstruction (2015)

- 10th Street: 5th – 6th Avenue
- Project cost: $341,000
- Only one block was reconstructed due to the unknown future elevation of 7th Avenue
7th Avenue and 7th Street Roundabout (2016)

- Central Corridor - Phase 2
- West end gateway
- Commercial impacts
- 1st planned roundabout in the corridor
7th Avenue and 7th Street Roundabout (2016)

- Federal-Aid project
- ROW acquisition
  - Total acquisitions – 3 parcels
    - Partial acquisition – 1 parcel
  - Temporary Easements – 19 parcels
  - 1 Land Swap
- Challenges
  - Public perception
  - Roundabout design
  - Construction staging
  - Maintaining access to businesses
Funding:
• $2.9M Project
  – $1M from ICAAP (Iowa Clean Air Attainment Program)
  – General Obligation Bonds
  – No assessment
7th Avenue & 26th Street Roundabout (2016)

- Central Corridor - Phase 3
- East end roundabout
- Former Marion Iron site
- New commercial development underway
Funding

• This is a joint public/private project

• ~$2.3M Project (This Part)
  – Development Agreement
  – General Obligation Bonds
  – TIF (Tax Increment Financing)
  – No assessment
7th Avenue & 26th Street Roundabout (2016)

• Developer (Public/Private Partnership): City of Marion and Genesis Equities
• Working days and completion date are set and controlled by the developer, but are tracked by City.
• Challenges
  – Former industrial site
  – Acquisitions
Upcoming Phases

• Construction of and improvements to 6th Avenue: 13th-26th Street
• To be completed in multiple phases
• Working on acquisitions and temporary construction easements
Final Thoughts

• Strategic investments in infrastructure can attract economic development, and they do
• Capital projects can be used to drive reinvestment
• Don’t let your elected officials forget that infrastructure is an investment in your community!
Questions?

Marion
Iowa
Reach higher!