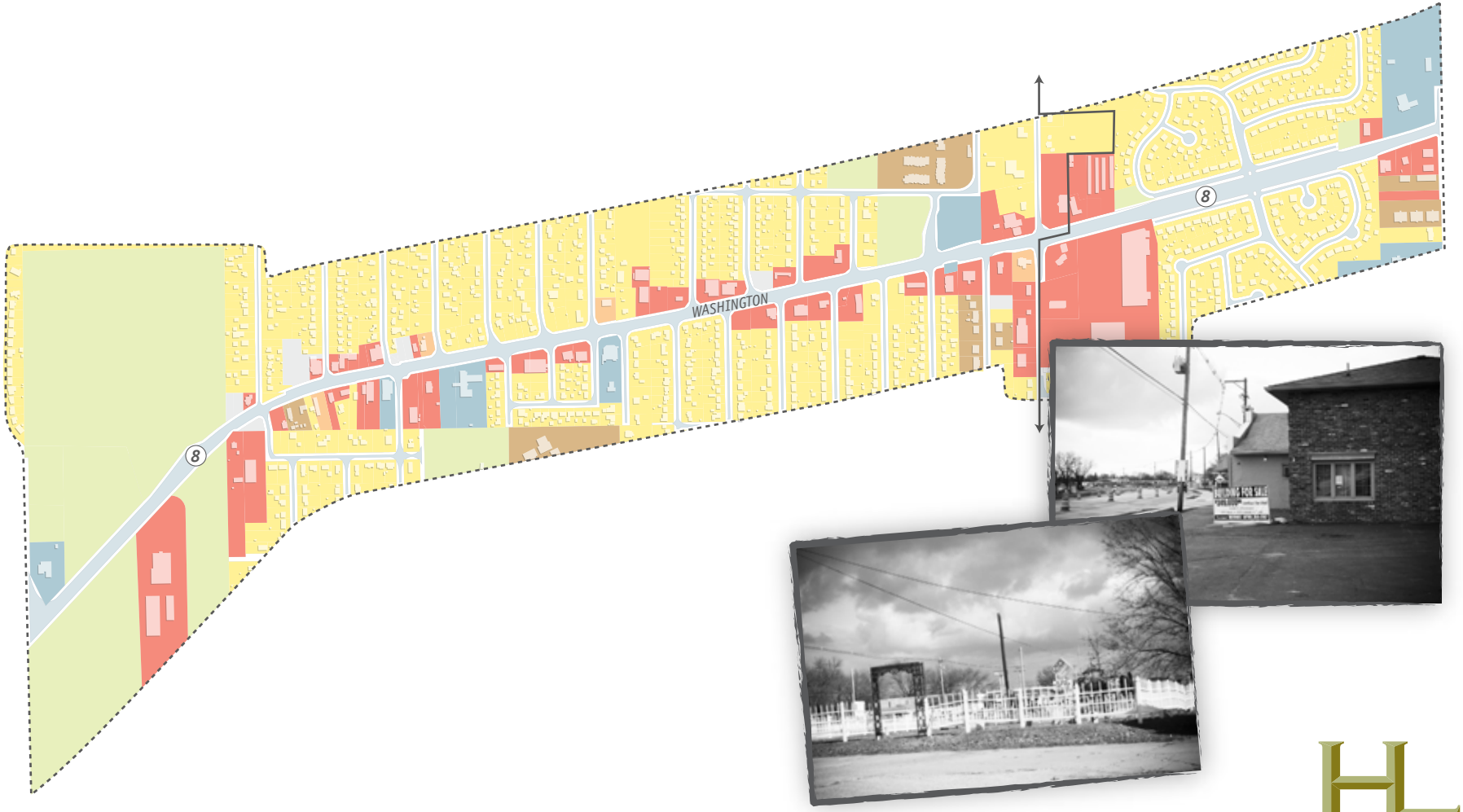
City of East Peoria & City of Washington

ILLINOIS ROUTE 8-SUNNYLAND CORRIDOR PLAN

May 21, 2010



HOUSEAL LAVIGNE ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan is based on a thorough evaluation of existing conditions and provides recommendations for improving the function and physical form of the corridor. The following sections are included in the Plan:

Introduction
The introduction outlines the background to the Plan, the Planning Process and the Organization of the Plan.

Community Outreach
This section provides a summary of the outreach efforts that were conducted as part of the planning process. This includes the input of residents, business owners, property owners, staff and elected officials through various activities.

Existing Conditions
The existing conditions analysis provides insight into the context of the corridor, current land use and zoning, the character of the area and planning considerations that must be taken into consideration. For example, Sunnyland Plaza is identified as a major landmark in the corridor and has significant potential should there be a change in ownership and/or a redevelopment proposal. Additionally, the proposed extension of Summit Drive provides unparalleled opportunities to achieve land use and economic development goals.

Land Use and Development Plan
The Land Use and Development Plan provides a vision, goals and objectives for how the corridor may develop in the future. Goals and objectives are established for residential uses, commercial/mixed-uses, and community facilities and open space. Land use recommendations are provided on a map to guide future decision-making.

Two types of sites are identified for further recommendations: enhancements sites and opportunity sites. Enhancement sites are properties, buildings and areas where aesthetic changes have the ability to improve the look and function of the corridor as a whole with minimal time and expenditure.

Opportunity sites are those sites that through parcel assembly, public-private partnerships and/or public-driven incentives have the potential to dramatically improve the corridor and may act as a catalyst for economic development. Of the opportunity sites identified, two were selected to prepare detailed redevelopment scenarios (two per site). This exercise provides realistic vision for large-scale redevelopment if and when it becomes appropriate. These scenarios are intended to be visionary rather than specific recommendations for change.

Beautification Plan
The goal of the Beautification Plan is to improve the corridor in terms of aesthetics and to create an inviting place for businesses and customers alike. The Beautification Plan includes three components: streetscape improvements, gateways and wayfinding. The recommendations recognize that the primary function of the corridor is to move goods and people while striving to create a unique sense of place.

Implementation
Completion of the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan is only the first step, not the last. The implementation section prescribes specific actions required to carry out the recommendations and policies of the Plan. Implementation tools fall into the following categories: administrative actions, regulatory actions, corridor beautification and economic development. Funding sources are also detailed with text descriptions and a summary chart.

section one

INTRODUCTION

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This document presents the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan for the Cities of East Peoria and Washington, Illinois. The document outlines the Cities' long-range plan for improvement, redevelopment, beautification, and overall revitalization of the Corridor.

The Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan should serve as a foundation for future decision-making for matters relating to all aspects of the Corridor. The Plan should be used as a guide to implement changes in policy and regulatory documents and should be consulted when reviewing and evaluating development proposals for properties within the Corridor. The Plan provides a framework for capital improvement planning and provides a vital first step in seeking grant funding for implementation. Although the Plan contains detailed recommendations and policies for a number of improvements and actions, it also sets the basic framework to guide activities and change, allowing room for adjustment as conditions and potentials change. Finally, the Plan should serve as an important marketing tool to promote Route 8-Sunnyland and the Corridor's unique assets and advantages. The Plan should be used to achieve the shared vision for the Corridor while helping to attract desirable new development to the area.

The Plan has been developed over several months with substantial community input and participation from residents, elected and appointed officials, City staff, and representatives from the local business community.

Background

Route 8 is a state road under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). The Sunnyland portion of Route 8 is approximately 1.7 miles long and is an important link between the City of East Peoria and the City of Washington. Sunnyland is a neighborhood that developed over several decades with an identity distinct from the two cities in which it is located. This identity is mainly due to the established residential neighborhoods adjacent to Route 8. Common to many state roads, commercial development and light industrial also developed along Route 8 providing goods and services to adjacent neighbors and those passing through.

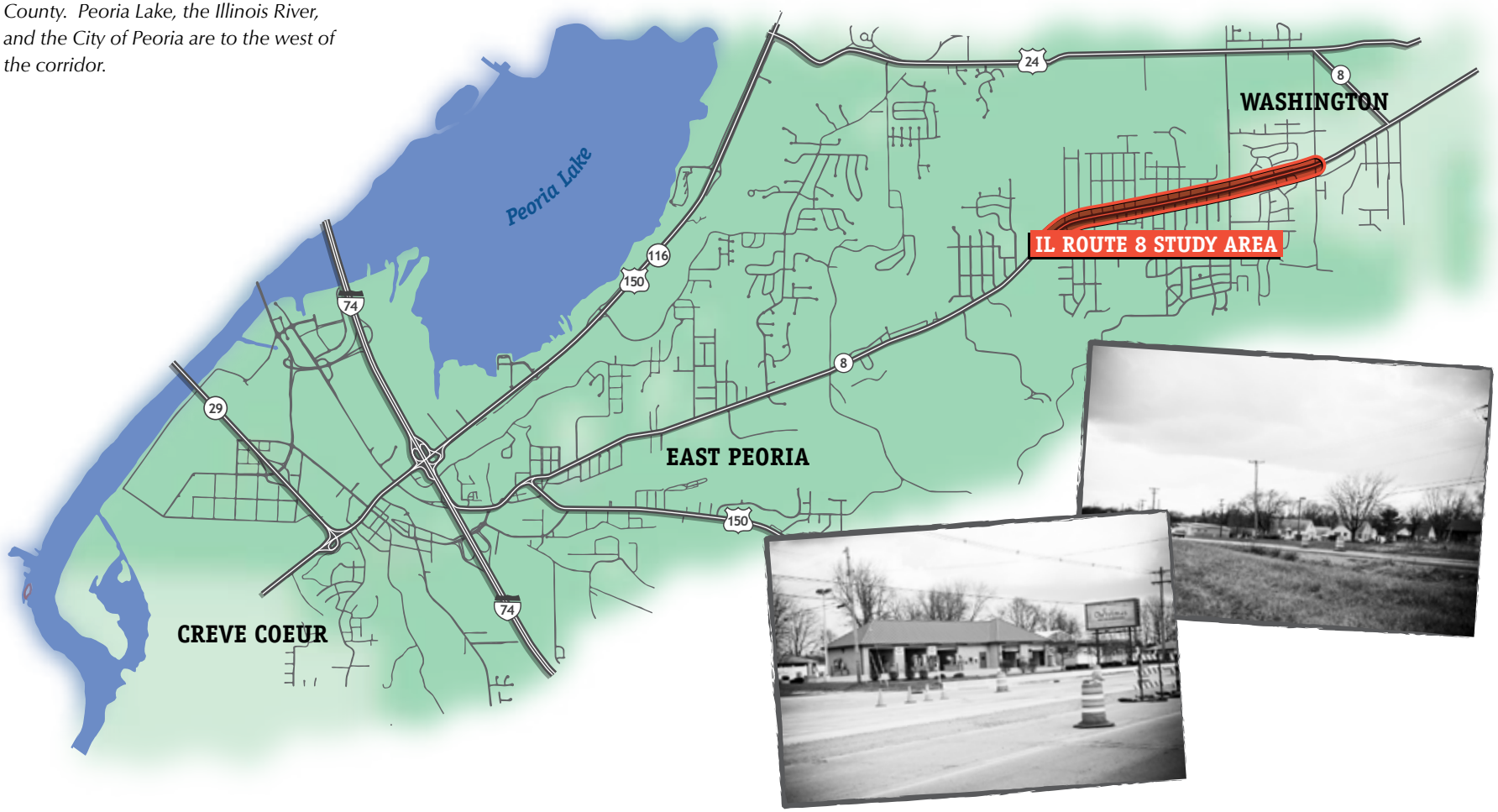
Summit Drive, a major north-south street, is the border between the Corridor's two cities. Its intersection with Route 8 is the only signalized intersection in the study area. From the East Peoria Events Center to Summit Drive, Route 8 is currently under construction for street widening, median reconfiguration and the installation of sidewalks. This project is scheduled to be completed in October 2010. A similar project is proposed east of Summit Drive to Route 24. There is no clear start date for the project due to State funding issues.

Sunnyland Business Association actively promotes and advocates for the businesses located along Route 8. The City of Washington portion of Route 8 is an Enterprise Zone which is set to expire in 2016. The City of East Peoria's Enterprise Zone ends at the East Peoria Events Center. East Peoria has applied to the State to extend the Enterprise Zone to Summit Drive. If approved, this would create a contiguous Enterprise Zone along the entire corridor.

The #8-East Peoria Sunnyland bus runs six days per week and is operated by the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District. The bus runs along Washington Street from the Peoria Transit Center and terminates at Sunnyland Plaza.

Figure One Regional Context

This figure illustrates the context of the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan. The corridor includes the City of East Peoria and the City of Washington in Tazewell County. Peoria Lake, the Illinois River, and the City of Peoria are to the west of the corridor.



Planning Process

In November 2009 the Cities of East Peoria and Washington contracted with Houseal Lavigne Associates to assist in the preparation of the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan. The planning process incorporated analyzing existing conditions, evaluating issues and concerns, developing streetscape improvements, identifying gateways and wayfinding opportunities, and preparing final Corridor Plan recommendations and implementation strategies. The Planning process (illustrated below) utilized several outreach activities, including key person interviews, workshops, and on-line surveys for residents and business owners.

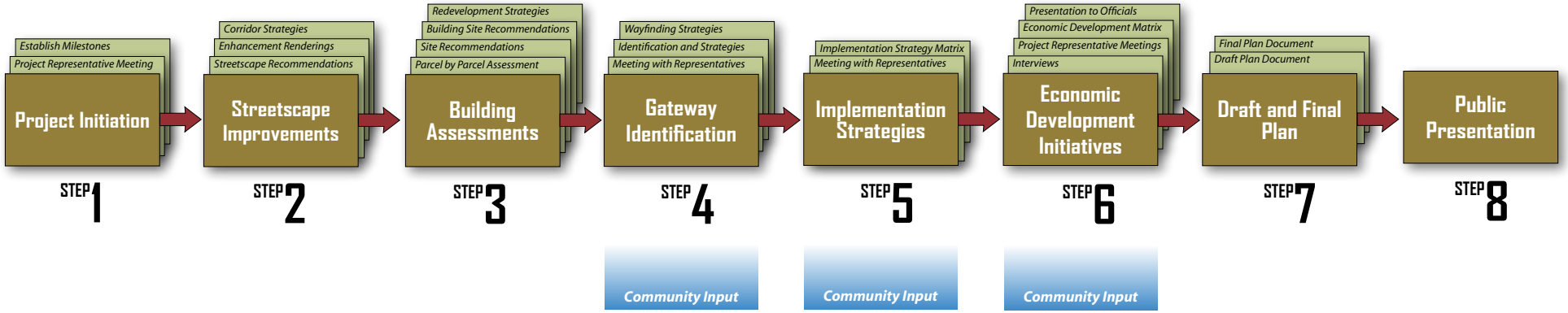
Organization of the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan

Section 1: Introduction
This section provides a brief overview and purpose of the Route 8-Sunnyland Corridor Plan, background to the Plan, and an outline of the planning process.

Section 2: Community Outreach
This section documents the essential involvement of the public: residents, business owners, City staff and elected and appointed officials.

Section 3: Existing Conditions
This section details the existing conditions of the Corridor including land use and development, the regulatory framework and issues and opportunities.

Section 4: Land Use and Development Plan
This section provides recommendations for the type, intensity, orientation, and overall direction for land use and development within the Corridor and identifies enhancement sites and key opportunity sites. Redevelopment scenarios are provided for two key opportunity sites.

Section 5: Beautification Plan
This section provides the framework for corridor-wide streetscape and beautification improvements, including gateways, streetscaping, lighting, signage, site enhancements, and more.

Section 6: Implementation
This section provides recommendations and implementation strategies designed to ensure the success of the Plan. This includes specific recommendations for economic development of the corridor.