

CHAPTER SEVEN



THE VISUAL CITY

An Urban Design Program for Yankton

Yankton's riverside setting and high quality built environment give the city a distinctive physical character. As the city moves toward the future, it should maintain and enhance its visual appearance, recognizing that maintaining community quality is an important priority in competitive environments.

Urban design considers the overall appearance of a community – the sum total and relationships of different components of its built environment and the interaction between the urban and natural setting. Chapter Two, Growth and Land Use, considered large-scale elements of urban design, such as the patterns of development and the forces that help form the city. It also presented a city development concept that defines a future urban structure based on the city's characteristics and resources. This chapter will consider the design of specific elements of Yankton's urban environment, including landscaping of the public environment and of major private development projects, streetscape, signage, downtown building appearance, residen-

tial neighborhoods, and major transportation corridors.

Good urban design is a strategic economic decision, adding value to the community, increasing property values and producing a city that its residents find rewarding. Good urban design promotes community growth and establishes an environment for healthy neighborhoods. Just as the growth, transportation, parks, and community services elements of this plan define aspects of its development vision, the urban design helps to describe the long-term vision of the City's physical appearance. This is particularly true in Yankton, whose traditional town is defined by several major design elements: its riverfront location, the quality of its historic downtown district; its historic residential neighborhoods oriented to Douglas Avenue, a grand residential boulevard; and the blufftop campus and green space defined by Avera Hospital and Mount Marty College.

People choose to live in places that are attractive and have a high quality of life. The design of Yankton will continue to be important to the city, and is a characteristic that separates it from competitive communities. While people oppose restrictions that regulate the use of property, it is in everyone's best interest to control certain elements in order to maintain property values and ensure that the appearance of Yankton's remains an important asset.

Yankton's reputation for placing a value on its history and appearance lay a foundation for future planning and development. Future development should continue to be sensitive to Yankton's historic character and the value of its riverfront and bluff environments. The city has emphasized history in the marketing of its city center and in the maintenance of its historic residential districts. The quality of this traditional city should be extended to the other commercial and residential sectors of the city.

GOALS

In developing a community-wide urban design program, Yankton should:

- **ASSURE THAT COMMUNITY ENTRANCES AND MAJOR TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS CONVEY A STRONG STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY QUALITY AND ACCOMMODATE A VARIETY OF USERS.**

Yankton's gateways are a visitor's first glimpse of the community, and convey a powerful first impression to visitors. The city's front doors should welcome and invite visitors, making a dramatic statement about the quality and character of the community. The strategic planning process identified the East Highway 50 corridor as an area of primary community concern, as participants believed that the negative appearance of this largely industrial corridor contradicted the overall quality of the city. The redirection of streets and replatting in the East Cornerstone project promises to improve Yankton's critical east entrance.

But entrances and corridors are also important to residents who use the city every day. Major corridors like the 4th/Summit/8th Street sequence and Broadway are important places of commercial and civic activity. Other attractive residential streets like Douglas Avenue and Mulberry Street, add tremendous value to their surroundings and provide avenues on which people travel at slower speeds. These streets ultimately are public spaces that should accommodate a variety of users in an attractive and functionally efficient way. Indeed, many communities have found significant economic benefits in the aesthetic upgrading of key community corridors, created by a consequent improvement in the quality and even intensity of adjacent development.

- **PROVIDE CONSISTENT STANDARDS FOR THE DESIGN OF MAJOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**

Yankton's historic downtown is rich in history and aspiration, developed when the builders of the community were creating statements of permanence and quality. This was a period when the builders and developers of commercial buildings were proud to put their names on the fronts of their structures. Much contemporary auto-oriented development, with its "big boxes," strip centers, and free-standing buildings surrounded by parking lots, has surrendered this concept of building a legacy for the future. It is difficult to require new buildings to have the fine masonry details and features that characterize Yankton's historic architecture. Yet, Yankton should consider improved site development standards to improve the quality of new projects.

- **MAINTAIN THE HIGH QUALITY AND HISTORIC CHARACTER OF DOWNTOWN.**

The historic Downtown is Yankton's signature district and lends the city much of its special distinction, as well as its attraction to visitors and retail strength. The continued conservation and enhancement of this unique district's quality should remain a fundamental part of city policy.

- **DEVELOP THE CENTRAL RIVERFRONT AS A SIGNATURE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT FOR THE CITY.**

Riverside Park and Yankton's public riverfront, extending from the lagoons into Downtown, are both major recreational and aesthetic resources for the city. However, the older industrial character of neighboring land uses does not take full advan-



tage of this special feature. The Yankton Development Concept envisions the central riverfront as a key community design feature – an urban district where people will live, work, shop, and visit. As such, this corridor should link the East Cornerstone entrance and the historic Downtown into a substantial economic and investment opportunity area.

- **ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVE THE APPEARANCE OF THE CITY'S STREETS AND NEIGHBORHOODS.**

Yankton is graced by distinguished residential neighborhoods, including its Historic Homes District and adjacent neighborhoods. The city also includes distinctive residential streets, the most notable of which is Douglas Avenue, a divided residential boulevard. The conservation of these valuable neighborhood assets, including the residential streetscape, is fundamental.

URBAN DESIGN POLICIES

This Urban Design element addresses six major portions of the built environment consistent with these goals:

- **COMMUNITY ENTRANCES AND PRINCIPAL CORRIDORS**
- **DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS**
- **DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS**
- **YANKTON RIVERFRONT**
- **COMMUNITY STREETS**
- **TRAIL NETWORK**
- **NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

COMMUNITY ENTRANCES & PRINCIPAL CORRIDORS

Yankton should implement programs to enhance the physical appearance of its major crossroads highways, along with their associated community entrances.

Yankton's major crossroads highways – Broadway (north-south US Highway 81) and the major east-west system composed of East Highway 50, 4th Street, Summit Street, and 8th Street) define the city's major gateways and arterial corridors. Each of these corridors has a different personality, requiring individual design policies.

Highway 50 from the East

Highway 50 provides a four-lane connection from the center of Yankton to Interstate 29 and, as such, is the city's most heavily used entrance. Yet, adjacent commercial and industrial uses are generally not landscaped, parking areas are frequently not paved, and signs encroach over private property lines. Because of its unattractive appearance, the visual improvement of the East Highway 50 corridor is a significant community priority. The East Cornerstone project, involving the realignment of the 4th and Burleigh intersection, replatting development lots, and creating a community entrance and major trailhead, is part of the effort to upgrade this strategic community entrance.

The initial phase of a corridor enhancement program should focus on property that the city owns on the north side of Highway 50. This linear strip is ten feet wide from Burleigh to 7th Street; and twenty feet wide from 7th Street east to Ferdig Street. Beyond Ferdig, the state right-of-way widens. A segment of the proposed James River Trail will run along the north side of Highway 50 from 7th to

Ferdig, and then continue northeast on city-owned abandoned railbed to the river.

The ten-foot section on the north side of the highway does not provide adequate room for both a sidewalk and trail and landscaping. Conceptual design within this section should include:

- Removal of all encroaching private uses, including signs and vehicle parking.
- A 12 to 18-inch maintenance strip, paved with stamped, colored concrete. This provides protection for landscaping and definition of the curb line.
- A low earth berm developed in the remaining city property. A maintainable berm can achieve a height of about 18 inches. Alternatively, a berm may be established against a retaining wall on the property line, allowing a vertical buffer of about three feet. The berm should be sodded or seeded.
- Landscaping, including trees planted 30 feet on center, with an intervening hedge of shrubs. The shrubs should achieve an ultimate height of 4 feet, providing a total buffer height of between 5 feet 6 inches and 7 feet.

The twenty-foot section is adequate to accommodate a link in the James River Trail. This trail would join Highway 50 via 7th Street and diverge from the highway at Ferdig Street, connecting there with the abandoned railbed. Conceptual design within this section should include:

- Removal of all encroaching private uses, including signs and vehicle parking.



- A 36-inch separation strip, paved with stamped, colored concrete. This provides a clear visual buffer between the street and the trail segment.
- An 8-foot wide concrete trail.
- Behind the trail, a landscaped berm, consistent with the concept identified for the narrower section between 7th and Burleigh.
- Part of the south side of East Highway 50 will be improved as the community entrance and trailhead portions of the East Cornerstone project. East of East Cornerstone, the city should encourage redevelopment or upgrading of older industrial properties, and landscaping consistent with the north side concept for other properties.

Fourth Street, Burleigh Street through Downtown

The design personality of Fourth Street changes as it continues to the west. The street transitions from an industrial highway east of Burleigh to an urban arterial, bordered by a mix of commercial, residential, and civic uses.

Urban design actions in this segment of the corridor should include:

- Strengthening property maintenance standards along the corridor, identifying violation of these standards, and taking appropriate enforcement actions.
- Using thematic directional graphics and banners to identify the street as a distinctive corridor.
- Establishing and gradually implementing a corridor landscaping standard, providing up to ten feet of landscaping on private, non-residential properties, along with requirements for trees and buffering plants.
- Maintaining sidewalk continuity on both sides of the street. When adjacent to the curb, sidewalks should be set back and defined by at least a two-foot separation strip of a contrasting pavement pattern.
- Preparation and gradual implementation of improved sign standards along 4th Street.

Broadway, Missouri River to 4th Street

This area includes the divided section of Broadway (Highway 81) as it passes along the edge of historic Downtown Yankton. Following construction of a new Missouri River bridge, this segment of Broadway will become the major south entrance to the city. Urban design elements in this corridor segment should include:

- *Work with the Nebraska Department of Roads and the South Dakota Department of Transportation to incorporate design enhancements into the new Missouri River Bridge. Enhancements may include features that recall the area's riverboat and Lewis and Clark heritage.*
- *Development of a major entry feature at the landing of the northbound bridge approach.*
- *Incorporating special downtown lighting and graphic features into the downtown Broadway corridor.*
- *Including gateway signage and directional graphics, announcing entrances into the Riverfront district at 2nd Street and the historic Downtown at 3rd Street.*
- *Defining pedestrian crosswalks at intersections with contrasting paving.*
- *Maximizing landscaping and tree-planting along the sides of the roadway.*



Broadway, 4th Street to 8th Street

This portion of Broadway is a residential boulevard and includes a landscaped median. This segment is the “greenest” part of the street, reflecting the residential scale of surrounding development. It will be affected by the Broadway improvement project, which will reconstruct this portion of Highway 81 connecting to the new Missouri River Bridge. Urban design policies appropriate to this segment include:

- *Retaining the maximum amount of landscaping in the median, and replacing trees that are removed by the road reconstruction.*
- *Providing maintenance strips along the edge of medians, to provide both definition and protection for landscaping. Use a contrasting pavement pattern to form the maintenance strip.*
- *Incorporating pedestrian-scale lighting, using the lighting pattern installed in Downtown and along the Auld-Brokaw Trail, to supplement roadway lighting.*
- *Defining pedestrian crosswalks at intersections with contrasting paving.*

Broadway, North of 8th Street

This portion of Broadway includes the city’s principal auto-oriented commercial corridor. The section in the segment between 8th and 21st Street is a four-lane divided with parking lanes along the curb. This street will be reconstructed between 2003 and 2005 as part of the North Broadway improvement project. Urban design policies appropriate to this street segment include:

- *Providing continuous sidewalk or roadside trail access along North Broadway. Sidewalks where present are often in deteriorated condition; other parts of the street lack them entirely. Sidewalks should be set back from the road where possible. In most cases, sufficient right-of-way exists to provide a 6- to 8-foot sidewalk setback.*
- *Providing clear and safe pedestrian access from the street to adjacent commercial development.*
- *Implementing a comprehensive corridor enhancement program, using such components as landscaping, trails, both low-scale and roadway lighting, and environmental graphics. Landscaping in the higher speed segments of the corridor can be a particularly effective device. Between 20th and 22nd Streets, improvement of the Marne Creek Channel could improve the design quality of the street.*
- *Establishing improved site development standards for new growth along the corridor.*
- *Including design features that mark the transition from higher to lower-speed environments along North Broadway.*

West Highway 52

This corridor connects Yankton with Lewis and Clark Lake and its recreation areas and, as such, is used frequently by visitors to the area. While outside the city, it is viewed as an extension of Yankton and therefore its being an attractive linkage between the city and one of its major recreational assets is an important design priority. Highway 52 is paralleled by a roadside trail to the lake recreation areas. The highway is likely to undergo significant reconstruction and widening during the planning period.

Urban design policies for the West Highway 52 corridor include:

- *Improving landscaping and buffering between the trail and roadway.*
- *With reconstruction, incorporating environmental graphics and roadside landscaping into the corridor design.*
- *Enforcing site development standards for new development along the corridor, including landscape requirements, sign limitations, and trail connections.*

General Issues and Policies

The following policies pertain to each of these principal corridors.

• *Signage.* In auto-oriented settings, often characterized by substantial building setbacks and large parking areas, signs have a greater impact on environmental design than other structures. Yankton should consider sign regulations and practices that:

- Discourage excessively high pole signs and provide incentives for monument and ground signs.
- Encourage developers to develop comprehensive sign plans for their properties.
- Link the maximum amount of signage permitted on a property to the amount of frontage along streets, and restrict the number and size of individual signs on a property.
- Remove constitutionally challengeable distinctions between on- and off-premise signs. These include regulations that control signs differently depending on their editorial message. Signs should be regulated on the basis of size, setback, aesthetics, and other physical or design issues.

• *Visual clutter:* Another way to improve the design of principal corridors is to reduce visual clutter where possible. This can be accomplished by grouping signage, reducing posts and other obstacles (this has the added benefit of making the public works staff job easier by reducing maintenance and improving safety), relocating monuments to a place where they are more easily accessed and appreciated by the public, and implementing a comprehensive program for welcome



signage and directional graphics. All City signage, directional and informational, should be of consistent design.

An important element of this effort is a community wayfinding system. This system would replace a variety of directional signs with a unified system. In addition to making the city more readable to visitors, such a system can also help to market Yankton's various features and resources.

Community Entrances

Entrances that define the gateways to Yankton are also important to the overall design concept. In many ways, community entrance features are marketing tools that provide visitors with an initial image of the city, along with a series of expectations about what they might find there. Entrance locations and features for Yankton may include:

- *East Cornerstone*. This will be the principal gateway to the city, and the location of a major entrance feature. The city is developing a major trailhead park here for the Auld-Brokaw Trail, and the Chamber of Commerce is building a new office and visitors' center at the site. A new entrance feature may include icons that reflect the special features of Yankton's community life and history, and provide information and features that accommodate trail users. The feature should be highly visible from the Highway 50 approach and include a degree of verticality.
- *South Highway 81*. With the construction of a new bridge on the Broadway alignment, this will also become a principal gateway into the city. A significant entrance feature should be developed at the end of the bridge approach, near 2nd and Broadway. This should be integrated into the riverfront development program.
- *North Highway 81*, north of 31st Street.
- *West Highway 52*, west of West City Limits Road.

DESIGN STANDARDS FOR PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT

Yankton should develop detailed, consistent, cohesive guidelines for the design and development of residential, commercial, and industrial properties.

Many communities believe that establishing good design standards is “unfriendly” and discouraging to development. In truth, communities with consistent, predictable guidelines thrive and prosper, and generally attract better projects and greater investment. Reasonable design guidelines that apply to new construction and future growth benefit both the development community and the public at large. The community benefits from the knowledge that all development will have at least a minimum level of quality and amenity. Developers benefit by knowing that their projects are being built in a community where consistent standards are applied, thereby protecting their investment and ensuring resale. In addition, developers appreciate predictable standards, consistently applied to all projects. In many cases, enhanced standards make project approval easier by allowing the city to enforce site design and landscaping principles.

Design standards should also apply to contemporary industrial development, particularly in new developing areas such as those proposed for the east belt of Yankton. While industrial sites are often utilitarian, they should still meet minimum standards in order to remain hospitable to their neighbors and to present a positive public image. In addition, new industrial growth often includes flex buildings, combining aspects of light industrial and office development. These projects often require good site development for effective marketing. The East Highway 50 Corridor displays the problems inherent in relatively uncontrolled industrial development.



The following presents general areas for enhanced site development standards.

Landscaping and Screening

- Developments should be required to meet minimum landscaping standards. Standards should require a minimum depth of landscaping adjacent to public right-of-way and within large parking lots to break up large areas of paving. Ordinances should also provide incentives for installing irrigation systems and lighting, and must require good maintenance of sites. Trees should be required within landscaped areas.

- Landscaped buffers should be required when more intensive land uses are developed adjacent to less intensive land uses. Landscaping or fencing should be used to screen utility areas, dumpsters and other trash receptacles, outside storage areas, and other unsightly areas. Utilities that are visible should enter the buildings in an inconspicuous location. Buffering and screening can be provided by evergreen trees, berms, or fencing. In addition, projects should be encouraged to design all sides of the building, providing for more effective management of service areas when they are adjacent to housing.

Signage and Displays

- Yankton should establish and enforce guidelines producing appropriately scaled signage that communicates effectively without becoming the dominant feature on the streetscape.

Paved Areas and Impervious Coverage

- Yankton should establish standards for a maximum percentage of impervious coverage within each zoning district. Impervious coverage includes hard surfaces, building footprints, and any other areas on the site that prevent penetration of water to the soil. In addition to improving the site's appearance, impervious coverage limitations help to manage stormwater.

- Parking lots should be developed with both perimeter and interior landscaping. Ideally, large parking areas should be divided into smaller units to reduce continuously paved areas, help to detain storm flows, and provide easier orientation for users. The number of curb cuts should be restricted based on the size of the lot but should accommodate the needs of the business.

Street and Pedestrian Relationships

- Development standards should encourage location of parking areas to the side or back of new commercial and office development. A clear relationship between the public streets sidewalk and the entrance to buildings should be established. The city's ordinances should reduce the amount of required parking that can be located between the street and the front wall of a building.

- Large parking lots should provide clear pedestrian paths to commercial building or store entrances.

- Sidewalks should be required with all new construction and site or structure alterations.

- Major developments should connect to community trails when they are available. The Auld-Brokaw Trail and other branches provide Yankton with a significant trail spine and make non-motorized transportation a real option for moving around the city.

New Development Forms

- The city should encourage innovative development designs, including small lot residential development, "New Urbanist" development, and conservation development. New Urbanist (or neo-traditional) development includes a mix of uses and densities within an environment that includes significant public and civic spaces and a high degree of street and sidewalk continuity. Conservation development encourages the preservation of open spaces and environmentally sensitive features while allowing the same overall density permitted under conventional zoning.



DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Yankton should continue its program of downtown improvements designed to increase the degree of safety and comfort that it provides to users.

Yankton's historic Downtown is a signature district and one of its most distinctive physical assets. The city has completed a well-designed and straightforward streetscape program, incorporating thematic lighting, new sidewalks, and street furniture, and centered around 3rd Street, the district's main shopping street. However, any successful retail center must continue to make investments and improve to maintain and expand its share of the market. Elements of a continued investment program for Yankton include the following.

Downtown Streetscape

The City installed new sidewalks, corner nodes, period lighting, and street furnishings in Downtown's main retail area in 2000. This installation concentrated on 3rd Street between Broadway and Douglas Avenue, and Douglas from 4th to 2nd Streets. Ultimately, this streetscape vocabulary should be extended throughout the Downtown core district, from Broadway to Capital Street and from 4th Street south to the Riverfront.

Douglas Avenue Connection

Douglas Avenue is the major community street connecting residential neighborhoods; 4th Street, Yankton's major east-west arrival corridor; the historic Downtown district; and Riverside Park and the Missouri River. The street environment should strongly reinforce this linkage by including:

- A continuous pedestrian connection to Riverside Park, including new sidewalks between Riverside Drive and 2nd Street. Lighting and landscaping should give the Douglas Avenue sidewalks a processional quality.
- Replacement of diagonal parking in the center of Douglas Avenue with a landscaped and lighted median, extending its boulevard character south of 4th to the River. This parking receives relatively light use and can be replaced by off-street parking as part of riverfront redevelopment.
- Strong visual features at the downtown "entrance" at 4th and Douglas and at the terminus of Douglas at Riverside Park. A gateway, possibly including an arch or vertical elements at 4th Street, can emphasize the importance of this street and its role as the preferred access to the river. An equivalent feature at the south, a primary entrance to Riverside Park, provides a visual destination that marks the downtown riverfront.
- Crosswalks along Douglas that use contrasting paving surfaces, such as stamped or textured concrete. This further strengthens the sense of continuous pedestrian access.
- Greenway setbacks rather than diagonal parking along the frontage of large off-street parking lots. Here, frequent curb cuts make it difficult to provide a long row of diagonal parking. An example

of such an area is the east side of the street north of 2nd Street.

Third Street

Third Street is the “main street” of Downtown Yankton, and has been upgraded through the city’s streetscape program. Additional features can be added to reinforce the pedestrian and historic quality of this important street. These include:

- District arrival features at the Broadway and Capital Street intersections. Third and Broadway will become an even more pivotal gateway into the main street district with the completion of a new US 81 bridge on the Broadway alignment. Third and Capital marks the eastern entrance to the main retail district, and should also be appropriately marked.
- As also proposed for Douglas, crosswalks that use contrasting paving surfaces, such as stamped or textured concrete. This further strengthens the sense of continuous pedestrian access.
- Graphics and interpretive materials that emphasize the historic character of the central district. The graphics might include pictograms or icons that relate to specific historic themes of the city, reinforced by interpretive materials.

Corner Nodes

Corner nodes are currently employed along 3rd Street. This device protects parking from turning traffic, reduces the distance that pedestrians must negotiate in crossing the street, and provides an opportunity for landscaping and special street furnishings. They have the additional benefit of tending to calm traffic through a business district. The corner node program should be extended throughout the core downtown district.

Parking Lot Landscaping

Downtown includes some relatively large parking lots, bringing pavement all the way to the edge of the sidewalk. Providing landscaping and tree cover along the edges of these lots, separating the parking area from the sidewalk, adds shade and dramatically improves the amenity of the Downtown environment. This program should begin with publicly controlled lots. The city should provide incentives for landscaping of large private lots as well. Incentives might include providing landscape materials.

Visitor Information

Future kiosks/gazebos containing water fountains, lists of current events, and maps showing restroom locations, museums, shopping, and other key features should be located at major entrances to downtown. Potential locations include 3rd and Broadway, 3rd and Douglas, 3rd and Capital, and 4th and Douglas.



YANKTON RIVERFRONT

Despite its first-rate Riverside Park, Yankton's central riverfront is a major, but largely unrealized asset. Its reuse can provide a major advance for both economic and aesthetic development, and should be a significant community priority.

While the Missouri River is probably Yankton's defining physical feature and Riverside Park one of the city's most popular open spaces, areas are in older industrial uses and do not take advantage of these great assets. Comprehensive, but economically feasible, development of the riverfront should be high on the community's agenda. The Gurney property, between Capital and Mulberry south of 2nd Street, is owned by Yankton Area Progressive Growth, and is available for redevelopment. This strategic site can be the starting point for a major development effort. A full program for Riverfront development is presented in Chapter Eight.

COMMUNITY STREETS

Yankton should enhance the physical environment of its "community streets."

Community streets are streets that are often not arterials but have special significance to the city. They are frequently lined by significant uses or distinctive structures, including churches, museums, schools, or large houses; or have elements of scale or landscape that create excellent environments. Several streets in Yankton are special for various reasons and can be considered to be community streets. They require special design treatment to showcase their distinctive quality. Community streets in the city include:

- *Douglas Avenue.* Douglas Avenue parallels and complements Broadway's arterial role. Douglas is the processional, neighborhood boulevard to Broadway's regional corridor. Douglas also passes the city's historic residential districts and the former Yankton College campus, now the federal prison camp.
- *Mulberry Street.* Mulberry Street supplements Douglas as a community street and like Douglas, links the Historic Home District with Memorial Park and neighborhoods to the north.
- *8th Street.* Eighth Street between Burleigh Street and Broadway parallels the city's railroad corridor, and boasts a significant amount of green space between the street and the tracks. The rehabilitated Yankton Depot at the Douglas Avenue intersection is an important feature along this potential community street.
- *15th Street.* This crosstown street connects Sertoma Park on the east with the Yankton High School/Summit Activities Center campus on the western edge of town.

- *21st Street.* This street also provides a continuous east-west link to major community activity centers, including Memorial Park, Yankton Mall and the south entrance to the North Broadway business area, and Summit Activities Center.

- *Summit Street.* Summit connects Westside Park with the Summit Activities Center campus.

- *Parkway streets* proposed for new development areas.

Improvement or development programs for these streets include:

- Street landscaping efforts, including tree planting along streets, and flowerbeds and special landscaping of larger areas, such as open spaces associated with 8th Street.
- Multi-modal use, including signage and facilities for pedestrian and bicycle use.
- Occasional use of street furniture such as benches, arbors, pergolas, and other design features to reinforce the use of these streets by pedestrians.
- Graphics and interpretive information where appropriate, specifically in historic districts.

TRAIL NETWORK

Trails and trail environments should be a strong city design feature in Yankton.

The Auld-Brokaw Trail, along Marne Creek, is emerging as an extremely strong design element in Yankton's urban fabric. Prior to this development and other, relatively recent creek improvement projects, Marne Creek was an evident, but often unappreciated, feature. The trail has opened access to this unusual meandering creek and urban greenway. In addition, its high standards of development, including lighting, expand both its use and importance, and establish trails firmly as a key design theme for the city.

The design and character of the community trail network have been considered in previous sections of the Yankton Plan. Steady development and progress on completing trails, along with designating and signing complementary on-street routes, will assure that Yankton remains a connected city, one that uses its transportation and open space systems to link people to each other, to the natural environment, and to major activity centers.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Yankton should implement programs to increase awareness and maintain the integrity of established neighborhoods.

Yankton's residential neighborhoods represent its biggest aggregate investment. Many of these neighborhoods have substantial architectural and historic importance, and contribute strongly to the design quality of the city. The housing component of the Yankton Plan describes specific program approaches that can be used to conserve and enhance neighborhoods and their housing. From the perspective of urban design, Yankton should pursue the following neighborhood conservation measures.

Historic Districts

Several neighborhoods in Yankton are potentially eligible for listing as districts on the National Register of Historic Places. District listing lends a degree of recognition and neighborhood marketing benefits that individual listings do not offer. If designated, National Register districts should be marked by special signs and historic markers or plaques. Potentially eligible National Register districts in Yankton include:

- The Historic Homes District, incorporating the area from Mulberry to Douglas (both sides) and from 4th to 8th Streets.

- The Yankton College District, from 9th to 15th and from Mulberry to Douglas (both sides).

- The River Bluffs District, south of 3rd Street and west of Green Street.

- The Lower Yankton District, along 3rd and 4th Street east of Capital Street.

Neighborhood Associations

Neighborhood associations are especially important to community design, because strong neighborhood groups are often the first line of defense in the preservation of residential areas. The City, working with residential areas and available technical assistance agencies, should encourage the natural creation of neighborhood associations. Neighborhood associations can benefit by completing small but effective projects such as group weed pulling, community plantings, shared painting projects, and similar activities, many of which advance the goals of this urban design element. Neighborhood associations can also act as the "eyes" of the City in spotting significant code violations.

Neighborhood Development

A neighborhood development program that preserves houses and fills voids in neighborhoods can be extremely important to the health of residential areas. Components of this program, also discussed in the housing element, include:

- *A Community Development Corporation*, a non-profit development corporation with the ability to complete strategic projects. The CDC's initial focus should be housing development and residential conservation, but may have the ability to do other types of project.
- *An acquisition/rehab/resale program*. In this program, a CDC can acquire vacant houses or other units whose owners want to sell at a relatively low price; completely rehabilitate the unit; and resell it at affordable prices to new homeowners. This program, with a demonstrated record of success in many communities, helps preserve housing and create opportunities for new homeowners.
- *New housing development on vacant lots in neighborhoods*. Infill development, in styles that reflect the traditional design and styles of houses in the surrounding neighborhood, can re-establish the fabric and population of residential areas.
- *Public improvements*. The installation of curbs, gutters and sidewalks should be a requirement for all new developments for both residential and commercial properties. Where possible, existing brick sidewalks should be uncovered and restored. A maintenance and repair program for sidewalks should be developed by the city.



CHAPTER EIGHT



A CENTER ON THE RIVER

A Downtown and Riverfront Development Program for Yankton

Downtowns occupy a special place of importance in cities. They are unique to their individual communities – no downtown district looks exactly like any other downtown. Downtowns are also the seat of memories of community life for many people – they are the places that form experience and have a special magic for residents. Because of this special relationship between people and place, members of a community and visitors alike often measure the health of their city by the health and appearance of the traditional downtown district. Downtown Yankton has special resonance because of its relationship to the Missouri River and the historic connection of the river as the birthplace of the community. Yankton’s logo is a riverboat, and the city’s historic connection with the Lewis and Clark expedition of course stems from the river.

Downtown Yankton is also a significant economic engine. Other of the contemporary North Broadway commercial district, Downtown remains Yankton’s largest single commercial concentration

- a place where the tradition of long-standing businesses mix with more recent enterprises in a unique setting. It is also a vital mixed use center, a focus for business, civic life, public infrastructure, transportation, and the arts.

The city’s residents and visitors alike treasure downtown, evidenced by its lively business environment, well-maintained appearance, relatively low storefront vacancy rate, and recent investments in streetscape. The district is relatively compact, centered along its main 3rd Street retail corridor, but extending north and south one block. Unlike many central districts of similarly sized communities, Downtown’s building area and size is appropriate to the size of the community, reflecting the city’s pattern of steady, moderate growth. To date, the policy directions for Downtown development have been very sound, involving a solidly redesigned streetscape, effective organization, and historic preservation. This plan recommends some elaborations on this sound downtown approach,

as well as a major project to take advantage of the district's strategic position.

However, the area that requires major redirection is the central riverfront, the area south of 4th Street to the East Cornerstone area. Yankton has maintained a public riverfront through this area, and developed Riverside Park as a premier open space. This tradition of riverfront recreational development is continuing with the growth of the Paddle Wheel Point nature area and the construction of a new visitors' center and trailhead for the Auld-Brokaw Trail at East Cornerstone. However, industrial uses north of the park, some of which are approaching obsolescence or might be more appropriately located in a new industrial park, prevent the city from taking full advantage of its public riverfront. One strategic site, the Gurney plant, is owned by Yankton Area Progressive Growth (YAPG), the city's economic development corporation, and has been the subject of efforts to market it for redevelopment. A strong Downtown can be a catalyst for major riverfront development, together creating a major development district that extends from the center of the city to its primary gateway.

GOALS FOR DOWNTOWN YANKTON

This chapter considers both the traditional downtown between Capital Street, Broadway, 4th Street, and the Riverfront; and the Central Riverfront, from Capital Street east to the new 4th and Burleigh intersection at East Cornerstone. Overall directions for this central district should:

- **MAINTAIN DOWNTOWN'S ROLE AS A "FLAGSHIP" DISTRICT FOR THE CITY.**

Downtown Yankton is a psychological focus for the city and its image is bound up with that of the entire community. Downtown should capitalize on this identification by becoming a source of pride and vitality, a center that people in the city and around the region like to visit for enjoyment, commerce, and cultural enrichment.

- **INTEGRATE THE RIVER INTO THE LIFE OF DOWNTOWN.**

The Missouri River is Yankton's initial reason for being and its most visible feature. The natural environment of the river creates a sweeping foreground for city, and is a major recreational resource as well. Despite the strong image of the river, however, downtown does not take full advantage of this special resource. The link between Downtown and the river is relatively weak, despite the strong tradition of public riverfront use. In addition, adjacent land uses do not effectively use the river as an amenity to promote economic development.

•CREATE A MIX OF USES AND ACTIVITIES.

Downtown Yankton and its adjacent riverfront are a principal business center for both the city and, during the season, a large community of vacationers and seasonal residents. As such, the district should be alive with activities, events that enrich the lives of visitors and, not unimportantly, also encourage them to spend money by eating at area restaurants and shopping at its stores. Downtown Yankton should include a lively mix of uses, designed to make it a focal point and place of pride for all residents of the city and the region. In addition, its special features can make it a center for visitors.

An important aspect of this work is the development of a hotel and conference center in Downtown Yankton. The city's major lodging facilities are both in heavily traveled highway environments, east on Highway 50 or on North Broadway between 21st and 31st Streets. Both of these sites are remote from the river and provide visitors with few places within comfortable walking distance. Downtown provides both, plus such cultural attractions as the Events Center and the Dakota Theater, and the recreational activities of Riverside Park. A downtown site for such a project also features very convenient access and plentiful land for parking. Increasing Downtown Yankton's role as a destination for visitors can add major momentum for the district's retail and hospitality markets.

**•INCREASE THE ECONOMIC REWARDS OF BUILDING OWNERSHIP IN DOWNTOWN YANKTON.**

Any investment must provide a reasonable rate of return to its investor. This rule is equally relevant to Downtown properties. Older buildings are often fully amortized, avoiding debt service costs that tend to increase rents. However, many of Yankton's upper building levels are underused and bring limited revenue. When owners can expect a good return on downtown property, investment similarly increases. Therefore, the downtown development strategy must provide reasonable economic rewards to the district's property owners.

•PRESERVE THE PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND HISTORIC FABRIC OF DOWNTOWN YANKTON.

The historic value of Downtown and its role as a symbol of the character of Yankton require measures to preserve and rehabilitate Downtown's buildings. The commercial district between Pine, Broadway, 2nd and 4th is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Many of its buildings are historically and architecturally significant, and many other structures that can play a supporting role to the continued revitalization of the historic retail core of the city. New projects should preserve the fabric and scale of the central business district, and adaptive reuse projects should preserve the integrity of the district.

•INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING AND WORKING ALONG THE RIVERFRONT.

The Central Riverfront, now relatively devoid of people, provides an excellent opportunity for residential development, and for high quality office and even limited industrial or "flex" development. Its aesthetic values and recreational attractions are important, but ultimately, this should be a place that encourages major investment and job growth. It will take ambitious policies to make the area fill its potential. Yet, it can become a signature district for the city, and provide a direct link between the historic heart of Yankton and the city's primary and developing gateway.

Issues and Features in the Central District

This section summarizes important issues in Downtown Yankton.

Land Use and Development Patterns

General land use characteristics of the central district include:

- *Distinct areas with individual personalities.* The Downtown Development Guide stated that the variety of settings in Downtown created a challenging sense of fragmentation. However, these diverse environments also add variety if held together by common features and identifying graphics. Some of the individual parts that together make up Downtown Ottumwa include:

- *The traditional Main Street District*, extending generally along 3rd Street from Broadway to Capital Street and along Walnut and Douglas Avenues from 2nd to 4th Streets. This main street district retains a high degree of integrity. Unusually for an east-west oriented district, the district's alleys were platted in a north-south direction. This area is characterized by a variety of multi-story, older commercial buildings with front facades located on the property line, encompassing a number of historic styles. It is the most pedestrian-scaled area of the district, reflecting the business environment typical of business districts developed during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Main Street District incorporates many of downtown's most important historic buildings, and is the core of the National Register district.

- *The Waterworks District*, south of 2nd Street and west of the Meridian Bridge to Broadway. This



area includes Waterworks Park and includes a mix of older non-core commercial buildings and single-family houses. South of Riverside Drive, a bluff slopes down relatively steeply to the river.

- *The Industrial Corridor*, extending east of Capital Street between Riverside Drive and 3rd Street. This area includes a mix of industrial facilities, agricultural industries, and commercial uses, some of which have industrial characteristics. The city has acquired the Jensen's Salvage Yard, some of which will be redeveloped as part of the East Cornerstone project. The Gurney site, now owned by YAPC, is one of the largest single parcels in this area, and can provide a focus for redevelopment. Other major occupants include Yankton Agricultural Service and Yaggie Feeds, both of which maintain grain storage facilities; and the UBC lumberyard. This industrial corridor is a potential focus for long-term reuse.

- *Lower Yankton*. This area is generally located east of Capital Street between 3rd and 4th Streets. It includes a mix of uses, including scattered commercial uses along the 4th Street corridor, single-

family residential uses oriented to the north-south streets between 3rd and 4th, intermittent commercial and office uses along 3rd Street; and light industrial properties along Picotte on the east side of the sub-district.

- *East Cornerstone*, incorporating a new commercial/industrial subdivision being developed by the city as part of the reconstruction of the 4th and Burleigh intersection.

While these areas in the central district have their own character and functions, they can be linked by graphic themes, directional information, lighting, arrival features, and special streetscape elements.

- *Maintenance needs and site issues*. While most of the building stock in the central district is in generally good condition, the area does display some site and building condition problems. These include unscreened outdoor storage and unpaved parking lots and truck yards at the grain elevators. Some of the houses along Pine, Mulberry, and Pearl Streets in the Lower Yankton subdis-

tract are displaying some signs of distress. On the other hand, beginning the process of relocating the salvage yards would greatly improve the entire area's appearance.

- *Major parks and public uses related to the river.* Riverside Park, one of the city's preeminent open spaces, creates a strong public riverfront. The park divides into several sections:

- *A "civic" section*, entered from Douglas Avenue and including a large parking lot and the territorial capital reconstruction.

- *A multi-use section*, between Capital and Mulberry Streets, that includes unstructured open space and picnic and play facilities. This area becomes a focus for events and general public use.

- *An active use section*, including the baseball stadium and a practice ballpark. This area is accessed from both Mulberry and Pearl Streets. The active use area also includes the city's major public boat launch, at the foot of Pearl Street.

These sections are connected by a trail that extends from Waterworks Park west of the Meridian Bridge to the stadium parking lot near the Pearl Street Boat Ramp. Riverside Drive, on the north edge of the park, provides the vehicular link among these segments of the park.

Riverside Park is flanked by other public uses, including:

- The wastewater treatment plant, to the east of the park. The access road to the plant is scheduled for improvement during 2003, and will ultimately include the construction of a parallel trail that links to the East Cornerstone Trailhead.



This short segment will connect the Riverside Park and Auld-Brokaw Trails.

- The parks maintenance shop, at the west edge of the park west of Douglas Avenue. This facility is undersized and its open storage and yard facilities are inappropriate at the end of the primary boulevard link between Downtown Yankton and the riverfront.
- The primary water treatment plan south of Riverside Drive between Douglas and the Meridian bridge.
- Waterworks Park and the old city waterworks, between the bridge and Broadway. The Riverside Park Trail switches back here, connecting to Riverside Drive.

Transportation and Circulation

Major transportation patterns and issues in Yankton's Downtown and Central Riverfront districts include:

- *Major arterials on the edge of the district.* Broadway (US Highway 81) forms the western edge of the central district. Currently, Highway 81 enters Yankton on the historic Meridian Bridge, on the Walnut Street alignment. It then jogs west along 2nd Street to Broadway, and proceeds north. The new Missouri River Bridge will follow a direct Broadway alignment, landing at 2nd Street. This structure is likely to have a significant impact on properties (including houses) on the Broadway to Cedar block between 1st and 2nd. Fourth Street (South Dakota Highway 50) forms the north boundary of the central district.

The routing of regional truck traffic through and around the district presents a significant issue. Currently, truck traffic traveling from Highway 50 to US 81 has a choice of 2nd or 4th Streets. Second Street presents a clear and relatively unobstructed east-west route that bypasses the mixed use 4th Street corridor and provides direct access to US 81 south at the Meridian bridge or north at Broadway. This 4-lane facility operates at well under design capacity. The East Cornerstone project aligns 2nd Street with Burleigh Street at a four-way signalized intersection on Highway 50, further encouraging this movement. Fourth Street is the primary route through Yankton to the west, including the Lewis and Clark recreation areas. Truck traffic on this route has a greater impact on local commercial and residential uses. Changing uses along the central riverfront could change the character of 2nd Street; care should be taken to avoid

diverting more truck traffic to the higher impact 4th Street corridor.

- *Local riverfront circulation.* Riverside Drive, on the north edge of the park, provides local access to the park, and in some ways functions as a park road. Access to parking facilities is provided at Douglas, Mulberry, and Pearl. This pattern successfully minimizes traffic impact on the park itself.

- *A street grid that distributes traffic around downtown.* Most of the central district is served by a continuation of Yankton's street grid, effectively distributing traffic around the area. Douglas Avenue, a wide boulevard right-of-way, was originally conceived as the dominant connection between the city's neighborhoods, city center, and riverfront; and recent streetscape development efforts have attempted to reinforce this connection. Third Street is the primary "main street" through the Downtown retail district; however, until recently, this street did not connect with the 2nd Street extension to Highway 50. The street improvements being carried out with East Cornerstone will connect 3rd to the 2nd Street through movement, allowing a more direct entrance to the main street district.

- *The Meridian Bridge.* This unique, double-deck bridge will be replaced by a contemporary bridge on the Broadway alignment. The future fate of this historic structure is uncertain and is an important community issue. The bridge is in many ways an important part of Yankton's image; yet, the costs of preservation and restoration are very high.

Market Issues and Opportunity

Yankton's central district exhibits the following market dynamics and opportunities:

- Downtown remains a significant commercial and retail center for the city and its surrounding region, and is the center of the government, professional, and financial sectors of the economy. In addition to its local service roles, the district exhibits specialty retailing uses that serve a visitor economy, including galleries, restaurants, gift shops, and related uses. The district can continue to prosper from a retail perspective by continuing to focus on both local and visitor-oriented markets.

- Retailing trends continue to evolve. While regional mall and big-box retailers dominate the retail environment, a demand continues to grow for retailing that offers a special shopping experience incorporating both specialty businesses and traditional retailers. Thus, the downtown retail community tends to complement the offerings of the more auto-oriented North Broadway district.

- Downtown may have a demonstrable market for hotel and conferencing facilities. The city's major lodging clusters are on East Highway 50 and North Broadway, remote from the city's principal attributes. A downtown facility benefits from both the riverfront and the adjacency of good restaurants and pedestrian-oriented shopping. In addition, the nearby Lewis and Clark Recreation Area, access to other facilities like Fox Run Golf Course, and good regional transportation access make Yankton a good potential venue for retreats, me-

dium-sized conferences, and some trade shows and exhibitions.

- The attributes that make downtown attractive for a hotel also create excellent potential housing environments. New housing should be directly associated with the riverfront setting. In addition, resources like Riverside Park, the trail system, and nearby commercial services make quality new downtown housing extremely marketable in Yankton. Such housing may find a particularly ready market among upper-income empty-nesters and small households.

- Office space is located in traditional office buildings, government buildings, and some converted retail and residential space. As a regional center with significant environmental and commercial assets, and in a location close to both Interstate 29 and the University of South Dakota, Yankton has the ability to attract additional office and office/flex development. These uses also provide potential market opportunities for the central district.

THE CENTRAL DISTRICT PLAN

This section presents a concept and strategy designed to help Yankton's Downtown maintain and expand its role as a quality mixed use center; and help the central riverfront take full advantage of the opportunity afforded by a unique public and historical environment. The overall concept proposes to:

- Create a central riverfront district that is alive with activity, emphasizing the river as a signature, unifying element.
- Maintain Yankton's historic downtown as a quality mixed use district, placing an emphasis on specialty commercial, office and residential development, along with civic and community activities.
- Increase the appeal of the district to regional recreational visitors, who will see Downtown Yankton as the "main street" of an entire recreational region.
- Strengthen the downtown management system, to coordinate and implement additional downtown improvements and to provide a unified marketing and promotional effort.
- Continue the program of enhancements to the district's public environment, making it increasingly friendly and attractive to users.
- Linking the district to all aspects of the regional and local transportation systems, including vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian networks.



The components of this program include:

- THE RIVERFRONT**
- HOTEL/CONFERENCE CENTER**
- DISTRICT MANAGEMENT**
- DOWNTOWN HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES**
- STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS**

Each of these elements is discussed below.

THE RIVERFRONT

Yankton's central riverfront should take full advantage of its potential to develop as a center for investment, living, employment, and recreation.

While downtown Yankton has many distinctive qualities, it is its riverfront that provides the greatest opportunities for new development. Other cities have successfully built revitalization programs on the foundations of their urban waterfronts. Yankton in particular has a head start because of the scenic nature and historical significance of its riverfront, and its far-sighted original decision to preserve this riverfront as public park.

The Central Riverfront Concept calls for the long-term phased development of this district, much of which is now in older industrial uses. It is important to emphasize the gradualism of this approach. Some major industrial users, such as agricultural industries, are heavily established in the area and are likely to remain there for a number of years. However, these uses ultimately may choose to relocate to other sites with better transportation, more space, and reduced urban impacts. It will generally be in the city's interest to encourage these gradual changes and decisions. Other projects can proceed in the short-term, and will begin the process of transforming Yankton's urban riverfront.

The focus of the Central Riverfront Concept is the area south of 2nd Street Walnut and Mulberry Streets; south of 3rd Street between Mulberry and Picotte Streets; up to 4th Street in the East Cornerstone area. Its features include:

Site Development

- *A hotel and conference center on the west side of Douglas Avenue south of 2nd Street.* This major project would help define the Douglas Avenue link and would include the relocation of several small industries on that generally underused block. The concept is discussed more fully below.

- *Commercial reuse and redevelopment on the Riverside Drive to 2nd Street block between Capital and Douglas.* The plan calls for the retention and potential adaptive commercial reuse of the architecturally significant Rhian Building and service station along 2nd Street. The 2nd Street frontage would include new commercial space, potentially with residential development above and incorporating the existing Ice House building at 2nd and Capital. Parking for this emerging commercial complex would be provided by improving an existing lot along Douglas Avenue; and by lots on either side of an existing utilities substation. The north-south alley between Capital and Douglas would provide a circulation spine connecting these parking facilities. All parking should include extensive landscaping along its street exposures.

- *Major development of the Gurney's site.* This site is currently owned by YAPC and is available for development. Yankton Agriculture Service operates several small buildings on the east side of the parcel, along Mulberry Street. The master plan envisions development of three condominium building, lining 2nd Street and providing parking in garages and on the surface behind. These units are designed as floor-through units, providing major riverfront exposures for each apartment. The design concept suggests "stacked attached" units, with two units on each floor served by a common entryway. Each three-story attached structure con-

sists of three entryway modules, with a total of 18 units per building, providing 54 units in the entire development. The project, designed for an affluent market, can be developed in phases. The eastern-most building would require acquisition of the Yankton Agricultural Service properties on Mulberry Street.

The historic Gurney mill building at mid-block on Capital Street would be reused for a combination of commercial, residential, and/or museum uses. Potential joint use, with a commercial/museum use on the first floor and offices or apartments above could provide operating income to maintain a museum facility. The metal addition to this building would be demolished, with the resulting land area used for parking to support the mill and housing development.

The three-story Gurney office buildings along 2nd Street should be reused as affordable rental housing. These brick structures are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and their financing could be assisted through a combination of historic and Section 42 (Low Income Housing Tax Credits). Parking for these apartments would be provided in lots to the south and east of the buildings. Should adaptive reuse prove unfeasible, a new multi-family building fits within the same footprint. Depending on design, this site supports between 36 and 48 apartment units.

- *Office and flex development south of 3rd Street and east of Mulberry.* These areas, currently more commercial or industrial in character, make excellent office or flex space locations if developed to high design standards. Building frontages should frame Pearl Street and the 2nd and Pearl intersection as a principal entrance to Riverside Park. Parking and service space should be located off Mulberry Street



or from 3rd and Picotte, in the interior of the blocks. The intersection of the 2nd Street extension with 3rd Street should be designed as a principal gateway to the main street district four blocks to the west, and provides a site for a signature office building. Park improvements, including a pond across 2nd Street, can provide an environmental enhancement that further increases the site's marketability.

- *Prestige office development at 4th and Burleigh.* The 4th and Burleigh intersection, forming the east gateway to Yankton, provides a good site for quality office development. Another office site can define the 3rd Street intersection as well, creating a strong entrance to the main street district. Parking should be located to the west of major buildings or on the interior of blocks, allowing structures to define the major streets.

Streets and Streetscape Development

- *Second Street.* Second Street becomes a principal service arterial for the central riverfront development. Its improved intersection at 4th and Burleigh will further strengthen this role as a riverfront gateway and as a reliever route around 4th Street. Currently, this four-lane street operates at well below capacity, resulting in excessively high speeds. Modifications to 2nd Street should manage traffic, without reducing its efficiency as a bypass route. Elements of this program might include street landscaping, an improved sidewalk streetscape, thematic lighting, and changes in the street section. Such a facility will continue to operate efficiently, but will somewhat reduce speeds and improve the street's scale as a pedestrian environment.

- *Third Street.* Third Street should be established as a principal link between 2nd Street in the East Cornerstone development district and the main street district. Components of a 3rd Street include a gateway feature (including a divided entrance), an extension of the main street lighting scheme to 2nd Street, street landscaping, and reinforcement of land uses along the corridor.

- *Riverside Drive.* With changes to Riverside Park proposed below, Riverside Drive may be terminated in a gateway circle at Mulberry Street. This involves extension of the park to 2nd Street in the future, with a future relocation of Yankton Agricultural Service. This provides substantially more open space around the baseball stadium.

- *Douglas Avenue.* As mentioned in the urban design section, Douglas would be extended as a boulevard section to Riverside Park. It would terminate in an entrance circle south of Riverside Drive, providing access to the existing parking lot.

Riverside Park

Some improvements to Riverside Park, expanding and enhancing its open space, can advance the overall redevelopment of the central riverfront. Major components include:

- *Relocation of the parks maintenance facility.* Moving this facility from its cramped quarters at the foot of Douglas Avenue improves the quality of the park, provides a better terminus for Douglas, and improves the view corridor from a downtown hotel. The maintenance facility may be located on a joint use site with the Public Works Department.

- *Expansion of the park to 2nd Street between Pearl and Mulberry Streets.* This expansion is predicated on a future decision, potentially with city incentives, to relocate Yankton Agricultural Service to a new site. Construction of the Northeast Passage bypass and a new industrial park on the east side of the city may provide the industry with a far better and more unified location than its current site. If the elevator were relocated, the green space of the park would be extended out to 2nd Street. This would provide better park visibility and a significant open space amenity for new office and flex development in the corridor, and more open space around the stadium. As mentioned earlier, it also permits the closing of Riverside Drive between Mulberry and Pearl.

- *A 3rd Street park entrance and pond.* The creation of a new intersection at 3rd and 2nd Streets also opens the possibility of a new park entrance at this intersection. This provides access to the wastewater treatment plant, with a connection between this drive and the park's Pearl Street entrance. This new park road connection should be lined with parking, expanding the stadium's parking sup-

ply. The concept recommends developing a pond between 2nd Street and the new park road, providing another significant park amenity along 2nd Street. These actions envision 2nd Street as a greenway entrance to the city, make the river more visible from this arterial, and enhance the marketability of sites on the north side of the street for high quality office development.

- *Trail connection.* The new park road configuration permits the extension of the Riverside Park Trail to the East Cornerstone Trailhead, Paddle Wheel Point, and the Auld-Brokaw Trail.

- *Historic interpretation.* The Riverside Park Trail can help tell the story of the Missouri River and its influence on Yankton. Interpretive graphics and information should be integrated into the promenade design to relate the history of this important waterway. Even features like the waterworks and wastewater plant can be subjects for thematic interpretation. Interpretive graphics can use a variety of design approaches. In San Francisco, an historical signage program along the Embarcadero uses vertical pylons to create an outdoor museum telling the rich history of this urban waterfront.



Screening of Industrial Uses

Some remaining commercial and industrial uses in the district will have significant visual effects. These include facilities like the UBC and Custom Marble installations and the Yaggie Feeds site. A screening program is recommended for these sites, utilizing low screening walls and landscaped setbacks to maintain a green appearance on peripheral streets.

HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER

A hotel and conference center may provide a significant downtown development opportunity for Yankton. A logical site for this facility is along Riverside Drive between Douglas and Walnut.

This plan has previously discussed some of the market attributes supporting a hotel and conference center concept. Such a center should be able to support conferences and small conventions, small trade and product shows, and special community events. The facility presented in the plan concept provides up to 30,000 square feet of total floor area. The plan envisions an L-shaped hotel/center facility, with the convention center component oriented to Douglas Avenue. Parking is provided along Douglas, serving both the hotel and conference center facilities, with overflow parking on the east side of the boulevard. Servicing occurs off Riverside Drive, in the shadow of the Meridian Bridge approach. Depending upon markets, a hotel in the range of 60 to 80 units is envisioned at the site.

The strengthening of Douglas Avenue as a boulevard and pedestrian environment supports the overall development concept. This includes replacing parking in the middle of the street with a landscaped median; creating a strongly defined, mid-block pedestrian crossing at the hotel entrance, linking to new commercial development planned to the east, and providing well-defined and landscaped promenade sidewalks leading to the park and the riverfront.

DISTRICT MANAGEMENT

Downtown Yankton should strengthen its organizational structure to manage and promote the commercial district.

Single-owner shopping centers maintain unified management to promote businesses and the overall facility. Marketing and promotional activities are particularly important as Downtown Yankton grows as a signature district for the city. Two organizations have been at work in Downtown Yankton, with somewhat different focuses. One has operated as a traditional merchant's association, while the other has focused on special projects. However, successful Downtowns in both small and large cities have proven the importance of an enhanced, central marketing and management group, fulfilling some of the roles of a shopping center manager. These roles include the preparation and distribution of promotional materials, development of programs, management of improvement projects, and the recruitment of businesses into Downtown.

Some possible initiatives include:

- A program of activities and events, providing an ongoing series of attractions that bring people into the center.
- Marketing and management programs – developing and gaining wide distribution of advertising materials to add the district to Yankton's list of significant visitor attractions.
- Establishing uniform service standards and store hours – establishing a uniform service mission for Downtown Yankton, defining the district as an area in which customers can expect personalized, knowledgeable attention.



- Potentially, performing maintenance and clean-up services on a regular basis in the district, if a higher level of service is required than that normally provided by the city.

These functions are often funded by Business Improvement Districts, with operating funds derived by assessments on properties within the district. Again, this is analogous to common area and marketing fees paid by tenants in shopping centers.

DOWNTOWN HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Yankton should increase housing opportunities within the Downtown district.

Yankton's substantial downtown building stock provides opportunities for upper-level housing development. Indeed, downtown housing is an effective mechanism for increasing investment and activity in traditional business districts. It is particularly appropriate in districts like Yankton's that have the potential to experience evening use. Housing can make Downtown Yankton a neighborhood, as well as a business and civic district, and can provide another setting attractive to young households and supplementing housing concepts for the central riverfront. In addition, adaptive reuse of upper floors of commercial buildings can increase economic returns for building owners and provide needed housing in the community.

These developments can use a variety of financing mechanisms, including tax increment financing; equity financing, utilizing the low-income housing tax credit; historic tax credits; and the use of CDBG/HOME funds. Pooling of several adjacent properties into unified developments can provide shared elevator service and help overcome difficulties with the Americans with Disabilities Act. In addition, the city should utilize standards, such as the Uniform Building Code's model conservation code that maintains high life safety standards while recognizing the exigencies of rehabilitation of older and historic buildings.

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Yankton should continue its current program of incremental streetscape improvements, improving the quality of the district's public environment.

Additional details are included in the section DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM in Chapter Seven of the Yankton Plan.

Yankton has implemented a successful and well-designed streetscape program, focusing on 3rd and Douglas Streets, but including installation of lighting on other north-south streets. Chapter Six proposes a program of additional urban design enhancements that can build on the foundation established by previous projects. Components of this program include:

- Reinforcement of Douglas Avenue as a major boulevard and promenade between 4th Street and the riverfront.
- Additional reinforcement of 3rd Street's role as the "Main Street" of the district, including extension of lighting and graphic themes to the East Cornerstone gateway.
- Corner nodes in the core district, concentrating landscaping and softscape at these nodes. Nodes may include trees, benches, ornamental lighting, and information kiosks. Their design should include a contrasting paving surface. In addition to concentrating landscaping and ornamental paving in strategic areas, nodes allow handicapped accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, decrease the length of street crossings for pedestrians, increase pedestrian safety, and protect parked cars.
- Parking lot landscaping.
- Visitor information kiosks and information features, such as pedestrian-scaled directional graphics.