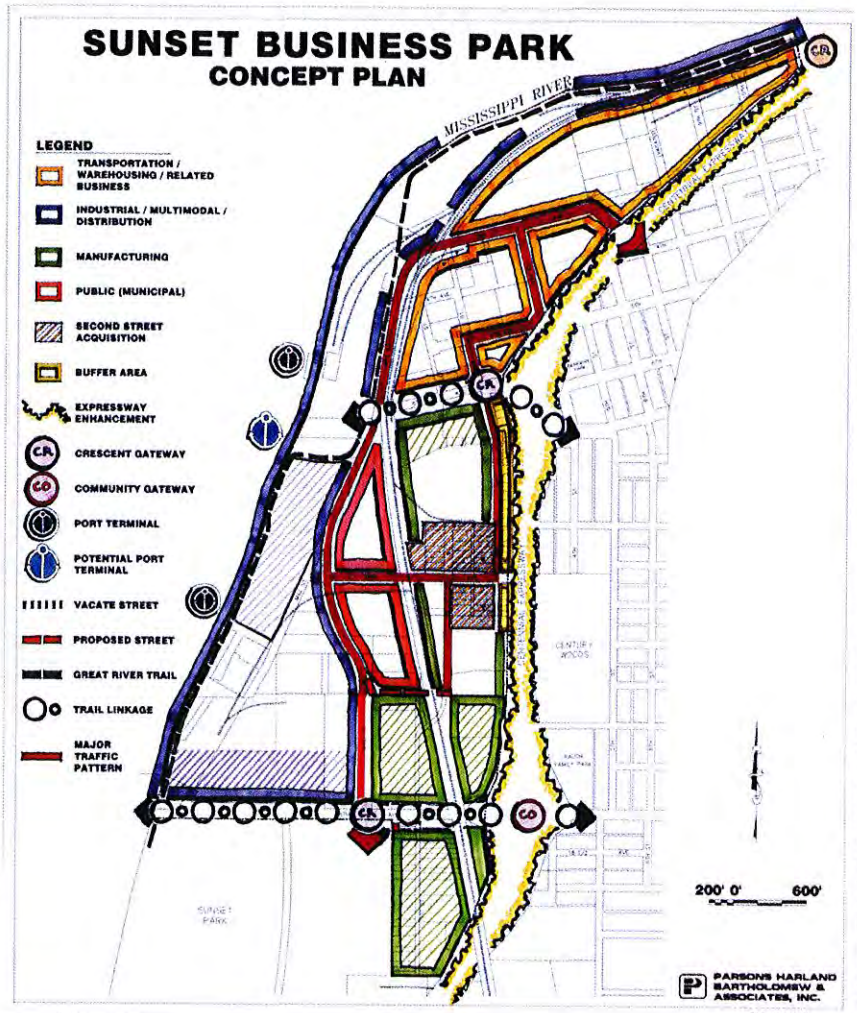

Redevelopment Strategies:

for the

Sunset Business Park

May, 2000

The City of Rock Island, Illinois

Parsons
Harland Bartholomew & Associates

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1.0 Introduction and Executive Summary

This report summarizes the efforts of the City of Rock Island, the Sunset Business Park Steering Committee, and its consultant to formulate redevelopment strategies designed to expand and attract businesses to the Sunset area that will provide employment opportunities for residents living in adjacent neighborhoods.

In producing the report, a variety of methods and tasks were used including: demographic data review; market and economic evaluations; physical site analysis; key person interviews; a mailed survey to Sunset employers; meetings with area residents; workshops and meetings with Steering Committee members; and site planning and design work.

The Sunset Business Park incorporates approximately 300 acres in northwest Rock Island between the Mississippi River and the Centennial Expressway. It is home to Rock Island's largest manufacturer, Norcross Safety Products, as well as other manufacturing and transportation /distribution companies such as Dohrn Transfer, Quad City Distribution, Moline Consumers and Dexton Enterprises. While the area presently employs an estimated 1,100 people, it is evident that many Sunset sites are underutilized, occupied by obsolete facilities, or suffer from constraints to redevelopment such as unattractive entryways and residential uses interspersed with industrial operations.

These impediments to business expansion and investment must be mitigated if Sunset is to capitalize on its excellent location, superior multi-modal transportation access and existing core of viable businesses. Unless these challenges are addressed, it is unlikely the Sunset area will generate the desired future employment opportunities for the Chicago Addition and Douglas Park neighborhood residents. The recent announcement that Weyerhaeuser will soon close its packaging plant in Sunset underscores the importance of adopting and implementing a redevelopment plan and strategy to retain, expand and attract the desired businesses for this important business activity center.

Highlights of the recommendations and strategies resulting from the Sunset Business Park study are summarized below, and explained in further detail within Sections 2.0 through 5.0 of the report:

- The study area should be officially designated "Sunset Business Park" to identify its location near Sunset Park and to broaden its appeal as a location for a variety of business types.

- A serious barrier to business development in Sunset is the lack of adequate building sites for expansion of existing businesses and attraction of new ones. Residential uses adjacent to industrial properties hinder development and cause safety concerns. A key mitigation strategy includes the acquisition and demolition of residences in the 13th Avenue area, the redesign of interior arteries, and assembly of vacant parcels to create redevelopment sites. The vacant Weyerhaeuser facility offers an opportunity

for a sizable redevelopment site, and donation of the property should be sought. Additional property acquisition is recommended for the area south of 18th Avenue on the east and west sides of First Street, along with the relocation of First Street, to provide redevelopment sites of marketable size.

- The unsightly nature of several prominent properties and buildings and an overall neglect of property maintenance detract from the marketability of the area. Mitigation strategies include the relocation of the metal salvage yard operation at 18th Avenue, the removal of the eight-story high rise at the JI Case site, and clean-up of the Watts property on 6th Avenue. Existing property maintenance codes should be enforced, and a business park overlay zoning district is recommended, with standards for new development or redevelopment throughout Sunset.

- Publicly funded capital improvements in Sunset should include landscaping and buffering on both sides of Centennial Expressway and along the public right-of-way throughout the business park, installation of a signage system with a unified design theme for key intersections and selected entryways, development and implementation of a street lighting plan, and review and programming of streets for reconstruction as part of the city capital improvement planning process.

- The age of the area and industrial uses associated with Sunset indicate a potential for environmental contamination. It is recommended that phase one, and if indicated, phase two, environmental assessments be performed on selected sites.

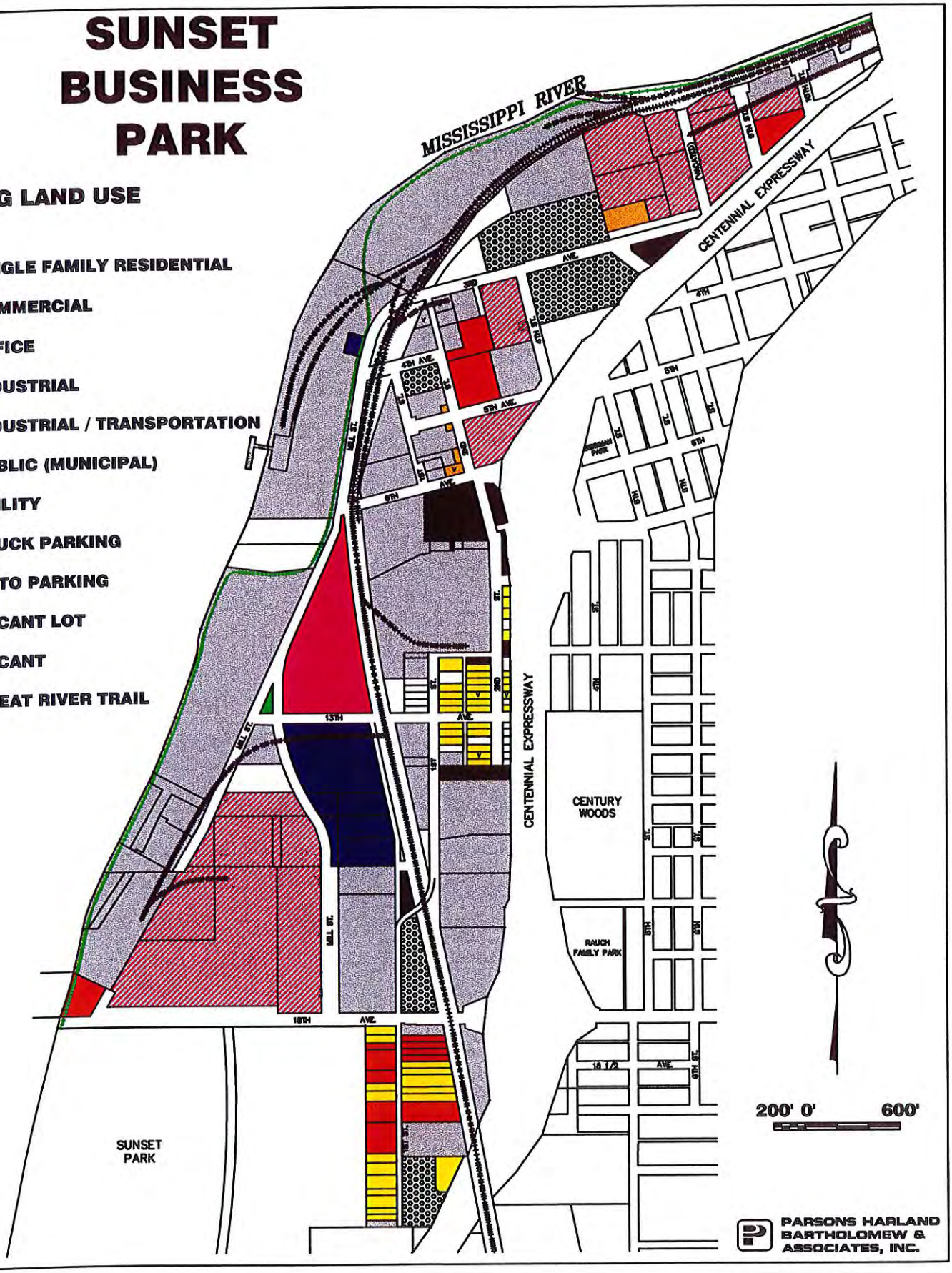
- Existing industries in Sunset that should be targeted for future retention and expansion include freight transportation, warehousing/distribution; safety products manufacturing; metal fabrication; commodities shipping; lubricants and chemical distribution; boat services and maintenance; building products; business and industrial supplies; specialty manufacturing; tool supply; tool and die making. Strategies for retaining, expanding and attracting the targeted industries should focus on the "industry clusters" within which each operates. This approach includes marketing Sunset to the existing or new target industry itself, but also as a business location for their suppliers, clients, end product business users and sometimes their competition.

- The present workforce development center at the MLK Community Center should be designated as the communications link between Sunset employers and adjacent residents seeking jobs. A web-based job posting system should be established in which Sunset employers agree to post open positions in exchange for getting pre-screened qualified applicants, a wage off-set and customized job training provided by Blackhawk College. The center should also develop and provide an employee support package incorporating transportation, mentoring and childcare for residents placed in Sunset jobs. Homeownership opportunities could also be included as part of the employee package to increase residents' commitment to their neighborhood and their jobs.

SUNSET BUSINESS PARK

EXISTING LAND USE

- SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- OFFICE
- INDUSTRIAL
- INDUSTRIAL / TRANSPORTATION
- PUBLIC (MUNICIPAL)
- UTILITY
- TRUCK PARKING
- AUTO PARKING
- VACANT LOT
- V VACANT
- GREAT RIVER TRAIL



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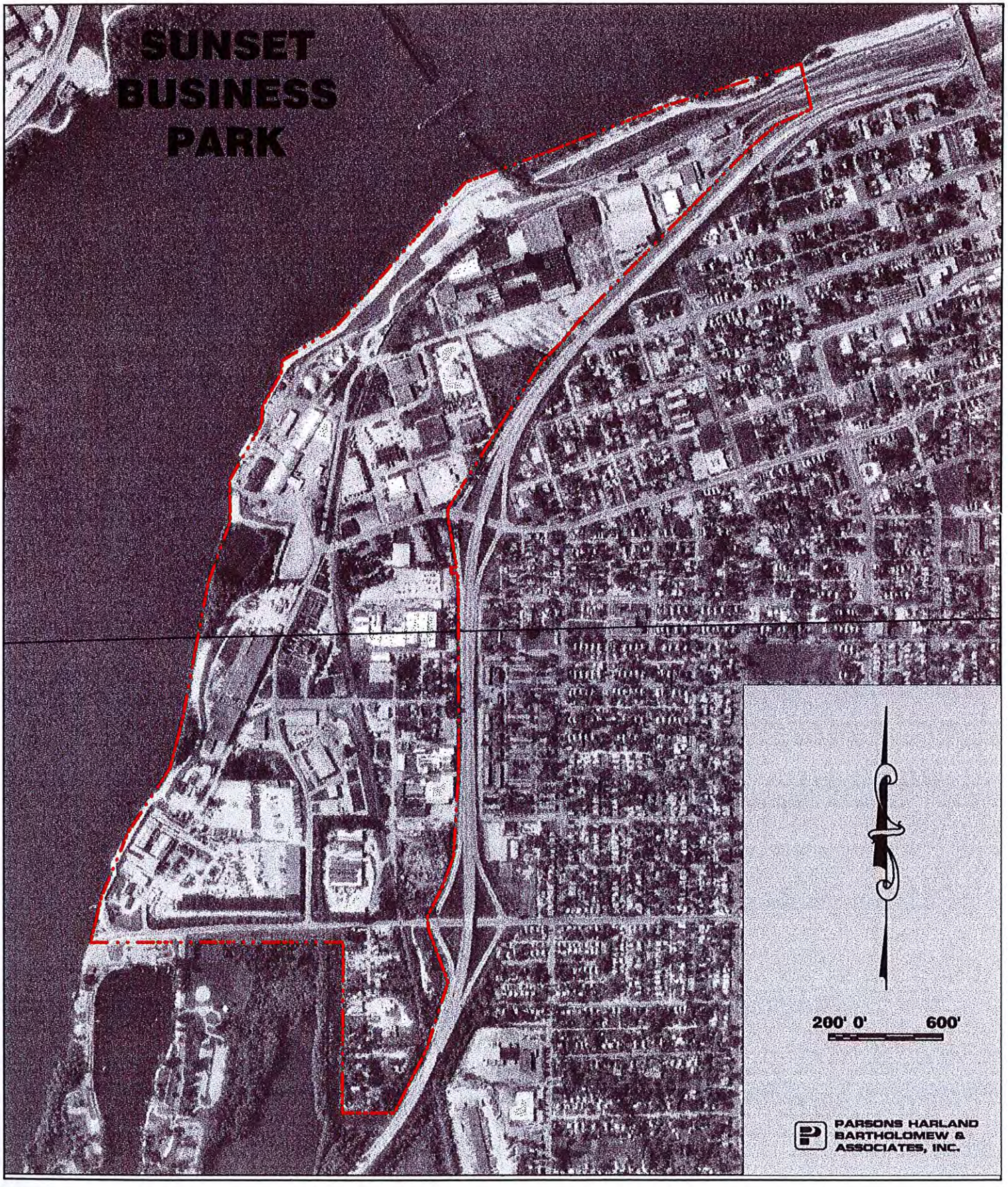
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2.0 Business Retention, Expansion and Target Industries Strategies

The first step in formulating strategies designed to retain, expand and attract industries to the Sunset Business Park is to examine businesses currently there. Those that are well suited to the location and that represent desirable uses for the future become the core "industry clusters" around which a target industry strategy is built. An industry cluster includes the business itself, its suppliers, customers and sometimes its competitors – all of whom may be prospects for locating in Sunset. The next step is to examine industry expansions within the metropolitan area and the broader northern Illinois and eastern Iowa region to identify other industries that may have potential for being attracted to the Sunset area. Finally, the competitive position of Sunset within the Quad Cities industrial real estate market was evaluated to provide a market "reality check" related to the target industries strategies.

Existing Industries in the Sunset Area

The Sunset Business Park currently consists of a mixture of transportation, distribution and warehousing uses, and smaller-scale industrial processing and fabrication, special trade contractors, and wholesaling uses. Exceptions to the small-scale nature of many of the businesses are Norcross Safety Products (protective footwear) which employs over 400 people and Weyerhaeuser (corrugated boxes) which has over 100 employees. However, the Weyerhaeuser plant is presently scheduled to close in May of this year. It is estimated that there are approximately 1,100 people employed in the Sunset Business Park.

Transportation related uses comprise the majority of the land area within the Sunset area. These uses consist of trucking terminals, warehousing and distribution facilities, and port related facilities, all of which require a larger land area for efficient operation.

Existing industries in Sunset that should be targeted for future retention and expansion include freight transportation, warehousing and distribution; safety products manufacturing; metal fabrication; barge terminal industries; lubricants and chemical distribution; boat services and maintenance; building products; business and industrial supplies; specialty manufacturing; tool supply; tool and die makers. The physical requirements of these industries are well served by Sunset and they can be accommodated in a manner that is compatible with other business uses and the desired character of the area as described in the Redevelopment Concept Plan (Section 5.0).

Regional Industry Cluster Trends and Implications for the Sunset Area

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs tracks business and industrial expansions and new plants on an annual basis throughout the State of Illinois.

Business expansions and new businesses are categorized according to the SIC (Standard Industrial Classification) Code. Based upon data for 1998 and 1999, the only years for which information was available, the following expansions/new plant facilities occurred in Rock Island City and County.

- SIC 2800 Chemicals and Allied Products (1)
- SIC 3200 Stone and Concrete Products (1)
- SIC 3300 Primary Metal Industries (1)
- SIC 3400 Fabricated Metal Products (1)
- SIC 3500 Industrial Machinery and Equipment (5)
- SIC 3800 Instruments and Related Products (1)
- SIC 4200 Motor Freight Transportation and Warehousing (3) (Includes General Warehousing and Storage, Trucking Terminal Facilities)

Based upon information from Conway Data Systems in their annual New Plant Report, there were almost 500 new industrial-related plant openings/expansions in northern Illinois in 1995 and 1998, the two years for which data was analyzed. Included in the northern Illinois area, in addition to non-metropolitan areas, are the following metropolitan areas: Bloomington-Normal; Champaign-Urbana; Chicago; Decatur; Kankakee; Peoria-Pekin; Rock Island-Moline; and Rockford. Commercial (e.g. hotels) and office type developments are not included in this tabulation. (See Appendix A for additional data including data for Iowa.)

A wide variety of industries were represented with no single industry/product predominating. Of all the various industries/products listed, none were represented more than 4-5 times during this 2-year period. An exception, however, is the warehousing/distribution/trucking industry sector that was represented by over 70 new or expanded facilities during this 2-year period. Following are the "industry clusters" most frequently represented in new plant openings/expansions during 1995 and 1998 in northern Illinois.

- SIC 3000 Miscellaneous Plastic Products
  - Plastic Pipe
  - Plastic Foam Products
  - Plastic Injection (molding)
  - Other Plastic Products

- SIC 3400 Fabricated Metal Products
  - Screw Machine Products
  - Sheet Metal
  - Metal Stamping
  - Wire Products
  - Forging
  - (Steel Products/Tubing)

- SIC 3500 Industrial Machinery and Equipment
  - Machine Tools
  - Dies and Tools
  - Packaging Machinery

- SIC 4200 Motor Freight Transportation and Warehousing
  - Local Trucking
  - Non-Local Trucking (long-distance)
  - General Warehousing/Storage
  - Refrigerated Warehousing/Storage
  - Packing and Crating
  - Truck Terminals

This information reveals a number of businesses not currently represented in Sunset but that are expanding/locating in the broader Illinois and Iowa region in similar sites. Among those that should be targeted for locating in Sunset are: plastic products including injection molding; welding machinery and robotics; business services (graphics, photo imaging, document management, office interior space systems, etc.) packaging machinery; stone and concrete products; printing and binding; cabinetry and millwork; medical equipment and supplies. Again however, as with the existing businesses previously targeted, the industry cluster approach should be used in marketing efforts.

Quad-Cities Industrial Real Estate Market Context

Information on available industrial sites and buildings was collected and analyzed for the purpose of assessing the current industrial market in the Moline-Rock Island metro area.

Based upon information from the Quad City Development Group, a survey was completed for 27 industrial/business parks in the Quad City Metro Area. The majority of these sites are "green fields". Included in this group are fully developed, developing and advertised undeveloped sites. The majority of these sites are intended for heavy, light or general industrial uses, with the remaining being commercial or office uses. Rail access is available or can be extended for sixteen of these 27 sites. The per acre price within these parks varies widely depending upon location and site amenities (infrastructure), but the most common price range is between $20,000 - $50,000 per acre.

These 27 sites contain a total of almost 3,000 acres. Approximately 55% of this acreage consists of industrial/business parks which are advertised as being available for development, but no development has occurred. Examples include the Great River Industrial Park, Eastern Iowa Industrial Center, Deere I-80 Industrial Site, and Galva Business Park.

There are approximately 1,350 acres within those industrial/business parks that are currently in some stage of development. Approximately one-half (625 acres) of this

acreage has been developed. Industrial-related uses represented include warehousing, distribution, storage, light assembly, fabrication, and processing.

Based on the data base compiled by the Quad City Development Group on "Industrial Warehousing" space available for lease, it is estimated that there is over 1,100,000 square feet of industrial/warehousing building space currently available for lease in the Quad City area. This space is about evenly distributed between the Illinois and Iowa side. This leasable space is distributed in approximately 65-70 buildings. The majority (over 75%) of these sites do not have access to rail, while the majority are multi-tenant buildings. Lease rates range from $2.25 - $5.00\sf, with the older facilities leasing at the lower end of this scale. The majority of available leasable space is within the $2.50 - $4.00\sf range. Lease rates for newer industrial/warehousing space in the "greenfield" areas generally range between $5.00 - $6.00+\sf. Lease rates within the Sunset Business Park range between $2.50 - $4.00\sf.

The preceding metro area real estate market context information indicates that the Sunset area has established a niche in the metro area market that appeals to a fairly wide range of industrial and business users. However, two common factors that attract most of the users are Sunset's easy access to transportation systems and its competitive lease/ownership rates. Another important feature is access to barge terminal facilities. The existing bulk commodities companies capitalize upon this as evidenced by Moline Consumers current development of a new barge terminal.

The multi-modal (truck, rail and barge) accessibility of this area is unique and could be a catalyst for future development and redevelopment so long as the area's space constraints are recognized (the land requirements for rail/piggyback operations, for example, probably cannot be accommodated in Sunset). Less than five percent of industrial/business parks in the country have this combination of immediate highway, rail and water access. Thus, uses that are transportation-dependent should be a primary target for new development in the Sunset area.

3.0 Neighborhood Employment Strategies

The need for strategies to link Sunset area jobs with residents of the adjacent Chicago Addition and Douglas Park neighborhoods was clear from reviewing existing demographic data. Overall 1990 unemployment in these neighborhoods, for example, exceeded 20% compared to 7.8% for Rock Island as a whole. While the city's rate has dropped to approximately 5.3% today, the neighborhoods adjacent to Sunset are estimated to remain at 13% to 16%.

However, the need for neighborhood employment strategies was increasingly evident as our interviews with Sunset employers got underway. Most of the employers we interviewed indicated that they did not know of any of their employees who currently live in the adjacent neighborhoods. Additional checking with neighborhood residents and other employers suggest that less than 20 people from the neighborhoods are included among the 1,100 employed in Sunset Business Park.

Likewise, no current training or other program is targeted to connect adjacent residents with Sunset jobs. Several Sunset employers did indicate, though, that they operate their own in-house job training programs. Also, the MLK Community Center has a workforce development center. However, its past programs were very small scale. Last year only 9-10 people went through their program and none were targeted toward Sunset jobs. Two local community colleges (Blackhawk and Scott County) offer GED and specific skills training such as computer classes, truck driving, etc. and Blackhawk also designs customized training programs for some employers.

Local Employment Data

Based on employment data from the Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Total full- and part-time employment for Rock Island County increased from 90,010 in 1990 to 94,848 in 1997, or a five percent increase. Analysis of this data indicates that the services sector accounted for the majority of this increase. However, employment in the transportation/public utilities sector had the greatest relative increase with employment increasing by over 30 percent during this time period. Employment in the manufacturing sector had a modest five percent increase during this period. Employment in Scott County, however, increased by almost 20 percent during this period with total full-and part-time employment at 102,989 in 1997. Scott County reflected the same employment trends as Rock Island County with services accounting for the majority of the increase in employment, while employment in the transportation/public utility sector increased substantially (28 percent) with only a modest increase in the manufacturing sector.

Analysis of the County Business Patterns (Department of Commerce) for Rock Island County for 1993 and 1997 also indicates a substantial employment growth in the transportation/public utility sector, and an increase in the number of businesses engaged in this industry sector. The majority of the employment growth within this sector

occurred in trucking and warehousing. Data for Scott County exhibits similar trends during this period, with the exception of a greater employment increase in the manufacturing and construction sectors compared to Rock Island County.

Neighborhood Employment Approach

If the residents of the Chicago Addition and Douglas Park neighborhoods are to benefit from existing and newly created jobs in Sunset, a program for linking employers to the neighborhood labor force must be established. Currently, there is no labor shortage in the local labor market that would cause Sunset employers to undertake such an initiative themselves. In fact, our interviews and the employer survey results indicate that most Sunset employers currently do not have problems finding and keeping employees, although they generally agreed that the labor market for skilled workers is tight.

One real advantage of the Sunset area as a source of jobs for the adjacent neighborhoods is the broad range of businesses and industries operating there. Consequently, available jobs in the Sunset businesses and industries include a wide range of skills: assembly; mechanics; sheet metal workers; warehousemen; drivers; equipment operators; movers; maintenance; welders; sales; shipping and receiving; bookkeepers; engineers; clerical; painters; and other skilled and professional jobs.

The key to connecting the neighborhood labor force with Sunset jobs is to build upon existing resources but using new approaches. The current workforce program offered at the MLK Center provides a wage offset to employers who hire program participants. This incentive provides for the employees' wages to be 100% paid by the program the first month. The employer pays a 50% share of the second month's wage and then pays the full 100% in the third and subsequent months. The employee is required to visit the workforce program office three times per week throughout the training period. Current funding for this program is extremely limited; only one participant is presently enrolled.

The present workforce development center at the MLK Community Center should be designated as the communications link between Sunset employers and adjacent residents seeking jobs. Discussions with the director of the workforce center and with neighborhood residents indicate their willingness and commitment to lead this initiative. Key elements of the program would include:

- A web-based job posting system in which Sunset employers agree to post open positions in exchange for getting pre-screened qualified applicants, a wage off-set for up to three months, and customized job training (provided by Blackhawk College) for selected positions.

- This program should be developed and presented as an inducement package to a consortium of Sunset employers willing to be the initial participants and promoters of the concept.

- The workforce development center should also develop and provide an employee support package incorporating transportation, mentoring, childcare, and training for residents placed in Sunset area jobs.

4.0 Barrier Mitigation Strategies

A physical review and evaluation of the Sunset Business Park reveals a number of conditions that are barriers or impediments to the redevelopment and the private reinvestment required to ensure its viability as an employment center and sustainable economic asset to the community. Unless these barriers can be mitigated, it is unlikely that the target industry strategies and the neighborhood employment strategies outlined in the previous sections can be implemented.

Included in the list of physical conditions operating as barriers are:

- Road conditions range from good to inadequate. Many areas are paved-over brick streets. Sections of 13th, 6th, and 3rd Avenues in particular require re-paving and improvement.

- Rail crossing on 1st Street is inadequate for large trucks due to grade and alignment.

- Access to 1st Street business is circuitous and 1st Street intersection with 18th Avenue splits potential redevelopment site.

- Lighting within the area is inadequate and limited to fixtures mounted on poles that also carry utility lines.

- Potential brownfield sites are located at several locations throughout Sunset. While a Phase I study was beyond the scope of this assignment, the nature of several existing and former industrial operations (waste hauling, salvage yards, etc.) indicates that environmental investigations likely will be needed prior to substantial redevelopments upon specific sites.

- Directional signage is inadequate in the Sunset area.

- No entryway or other features provide identity to the Sunset area.

- Incompatible land uses exist due to industrial and residential uses being mixed along 2nd Street and along 1st Street. This creates traffic/safety hazards and prevents expansion of business operations.

- The physical appearance of the area presents a negative image in some locations. A serious image problem exists due to the salvage yard operation at the 18th Avenue entry. Other problems simply involve unused trailers parked in unpaved areas, poor screening of outdoor storage areas and general yard maintenance conditions.

- Several vacant or underutilized sites are evident including the former dumpster storage site, the obsolete eight-story former Case building, the areas north and south of 18th Avenue and Centennial Expressway, and the soon to be closed Weyerhaeuser plant.

Many of these conditions are indicated on the accompanying opportunities and constraints map.

Barrier mitigation strategies addressing these conditions include the following recommend actions:

- One of the most serious barriers to business expansion and attraction in Sunset is the incompatible juxtaposition of residential uses adjacent to industrial uses. A key mitigation strategy includes the acquisition and demolition of residences in the 13th Avenue area to eliminate land use conflicts, safety hazards and to create business expansion opportunities in that location.

- The obsolete eight-story warehouse building on the former Case plant site presents another barrier to business development in Sunset. It not only represents an under-utilization of property, but its prominence dominates the skyline and characterizes the Sunset area as a whole as being an area of disinvestment despite other improvements that have been made. The City should partner with the present owner to demolish and redevelop the site.

- The Watts Trucking Company storage and maintenance site on 6th Avenue currently is occupied by abandoned dumpsters, trailers and debris that are barriers to marketing surrounding properties in Sunset. The property is on a main entry street into Sunset and is highly visible. The site should be cleared, cleaned up and redeveloped or combined with adjacent parcels to create a larger development site.

- It is unrealistic to expect to attract the desired target business investment or to successfully market Sunset as a location for those industries and businesses unless the 18th Avenue entryway is improved. Consequently, another barrier mitigation strategy includes the buyout or relocation of the existing salvage operation as well as acquisition and redevelopment of the mix of incompatible residential and business uses south of 18th Avenue.

- A signage system has been developed and recommended with a unified design theme for key intersections and at selected entryways.

- It is recommended that the area officially be designated the "Sunset Business Park" to better identify its location (near Sunset Park) and to broaden its recognition as a location for a variety of business types (not just industrial uses).

- The Concept Plan includes landscape buffering and screening on both the east and west sides of Centennial Expressway.

SUNSET BUSINESS PARK

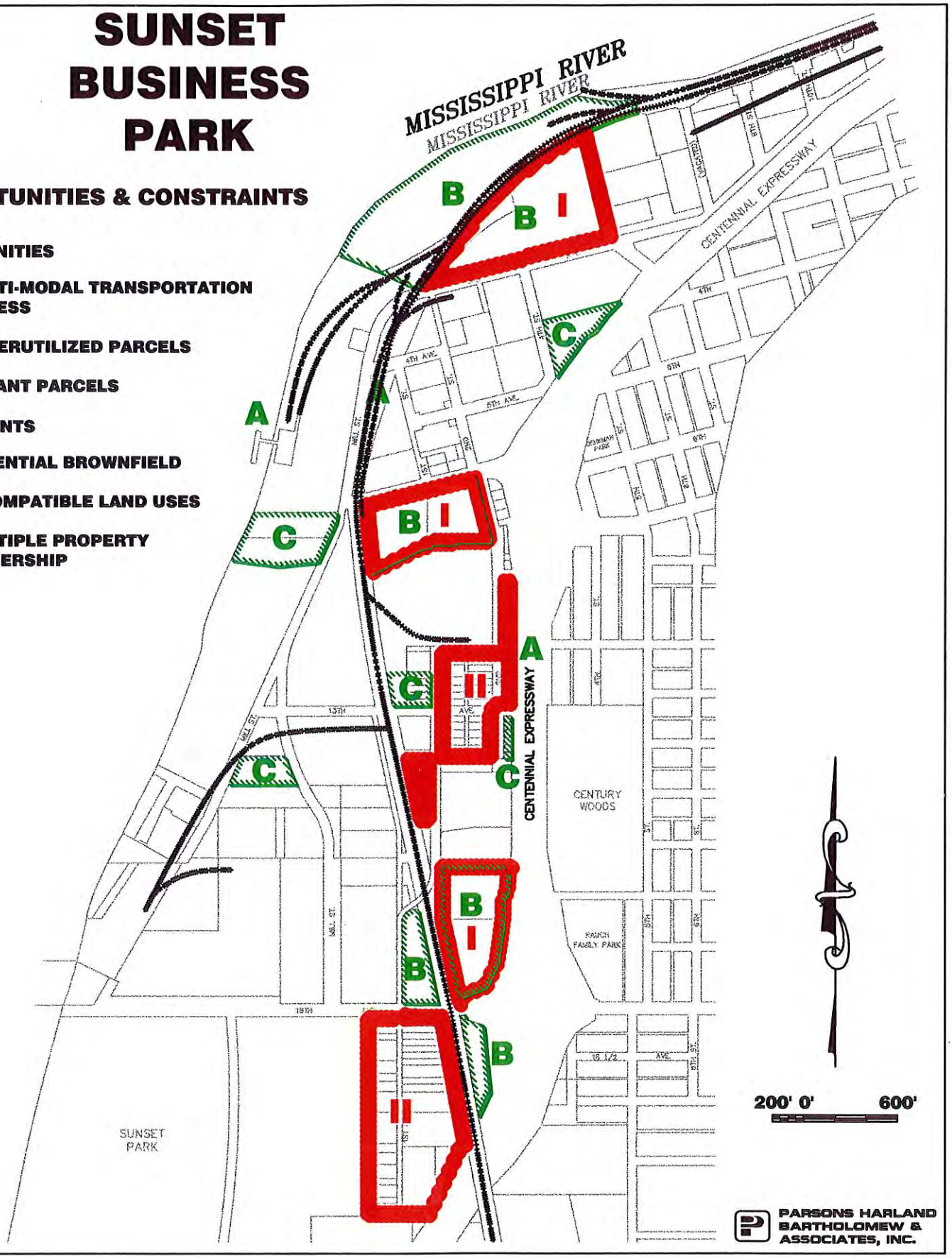
OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS

OPPORTUNITIES

- **A** MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION ACCESS
- **B** UNDERUTILIZED PARCELS
- **C** VACANT PARCELS

CONSTRAINTS

- **I** POTENTIAL BROWNFIELD
- **II** INCOMPATIBLE LAND USES
- MULTIPLE PROPERTY OWNERSHIP



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- It is recommended that the presently vacated 16th Avenue be rebuilt to improve access to properties in zones B and C and that 1st Street eventually be vacated north of 18th Avenue.

- A business park overlay zoning district is recommended with development standards for new development or redevelopment in high visibility portions of the business park. The proposed district would apply to any property in the area. Standards would require screening of outdoor storage, paving of all visible parking areas, orientation of buildings to prevent loading docks and overhead doors from facing streets, and submission of a landscape plan for the new development. Standards would apply when actions at a property required issuance of a building permit, special use permit, rezoning or action by the Board of Zoning Appeals.

The Redevelopment Concept Plan presented in Section 5.0 provides additional detail regarding the recommended improvements and phasing of the physical aspects of the barrier mitigation strategies.

5.0 Redevelopment Concept Plan

As the city works to retain/expand and attract business and industry to the Sunset Business Park, we recommend that certain areas be designated for uses with similar location requirements. To some extent, these patterns have already begun to emerge – in other parts of Sunset, inconsistencies and land use conflicts persist. The objective is to provide a general guide to achieving a more logical, predictable and efficient use of the land available in Sunset.

The Redevelopment Concept Plan for Sunset includes four recommended development zones designated for uses with similar location requirements – a Transportation/Warehouse and Related Business zone north of Sixth Avenue and east of the railroad tracks; an Industrial/Multi-Modal/Distribution and Related Business zone along the river west of Mill Street; a Manufacturing and Related Business zone south of Sixth Avenue and east of Mill Street; and a Business Public Service/Use zone currently occupied ty the city's Public Works Department north and south of 13th Avenue.

The Redevelopment Concept Plan includes potential redevelopment sites both north and south of 18th Avenue at the Centennial Expressway gateway, at the Weyerhaeuser plant location, and along the north side of 18th Avenue from the river to Mill Street. These sites represent approximately 48 acres and could support business development generating up to 500 jobs depending upon the type of business or industry.

The recommended development zones are described below and indicated on the map. This is intended to help existing and future property owners and industries make more informed decisions about their own businesses and future investments. It is also intended to provide the city with a guide for how to direct public resources to ensure the long-term viability of Sunset as an economic development asset for the community and for residents in the adjacent neighborhoods.

Zone A - Transportation /Warehouse and Related Business

- Location: north of 6th Avenue and east of railroad tracks
- Includes businesses that require large parking areas for fleets of over-the-road trucks and local/regional trucking, medium to large warehouse space, and related/compatible uses

Zone B – Industrial/Multi-Modal/Distribution and Related Business

- Location: between the river and the main rail line but excluding the city public works property and not extending east of Mill Street
- Includes the barge terminal properties and associated bulk commodities businesses, the implement packaging/distribution business, metal fabrication and corrugated container industries. While there is multi-modal access, it is unlikely that true multi-modal terminal/transfer operations can be accommodated due to space restrictions in Sunset

Zone C – Manufacturing and Related Businesses

- Location: between 6th Avenue on the north, the southern tip of the study area on the south, Mill Street (excluding the Public Works property) on the west and Centennial Expressway on the east
- Includes manufacturing and assembly firms, and local/regional service and distribution firms that do not require large trucking and operations/fleeting space

Zone D – Public Service/Use

- Location: the area between Mill Street and the railroad north and south of 13th Avenue presently occupied by the city Public Works and sewage treatment operations
- The sunk investment and recent expansion of the treatment plant will keep this zone occupied by public uses for the foreseeable future

Recommended Short-Term Actions (immediate – next 3 years)

Acquisition

- Purchase and demolish residences in 13th Avenue area to eliminate land use and safety conflicts and allow business development/expansion

- Actively pursue donation of Weyerhaeuser property

- Encourage and assist relocation of Del's Metals salvage yard to improve appearance of business park entrance and city gateway

- Purchase narrow strip of property at southwest corner of 18th Avenue and Centennial Expressway to allow for landscape buffer

- Seek brownfield funds for phase one and phase two environmental evaluations of several potentially contaminated sites

Infrastructure

- Prepare lighting plan and cost estimate for primary roadways in Sunset and 18th Avenue

- Increase enforcement of existing property maintenance codes in regard to mowing, inoperable vehicles and junkyard permits.

- Develop a business park overlay zoning district with standards for new development and redevelopment

- Seek mitigation (elimination or inside storage) of salt pile on property adjacent to Mill Street

- Work with lessee of Case property to determine future use of the site, encourage demolition of the vacant high-rise, renovation of the remaining buildings and enhancement of the grounds

- Collaborate with other major property owners such as Watts and Quad City Consolidation, to determine future use of sites and encourage development of underutilized properties.

Design Enhancements

- Install landscaping, and/or "soundwall" buffering/screening on east side of Centennial Expressway to improve viewshed, separate industrial from residential neighborhood, and enhance residential neighborhood to retain and attract labor force

Workforce Development

- Designate the workforce development center at the Martin Luther King Center as the communications link between Sunset employers and job seekers in adjacent neighborhoods

Marketing

- Develop marketing strategy focusing on targeted industries, and targeted industry suppliers, clients and related businesses

<u>Recommended Mid- to Long-Term Actions (3 to 10 years)</u>

Acquisition

- Property assembly assistance south of 18th Avenue

Infrastructure

- Improve/repave sections of 13th, 6th and 3rd Avenues

- Vacate and remove First Street north of 18th Avenue to create a future redevelopment site and improve traffic/circulation

- Rebuild the presently vacated 16th Avenue to provide improved access to properties between 13th and 18th Avenues

- Vacate First Street south of 18th Avenue if necessary to provide redevelopment parcels of adequate depth

Design Enhancement

- Install signage system as recommended in concept plan including entryway, and internal directional signage with unified design

- Install landscaping along west side of Centennial Expressway north and south of 18th Avenue

- Create entryways to Crescent at 18th Avenue, 6th Avenue and the Centennial Expressway from downtown by using landscaping, signage and lighting

- Design and install landscape enhancements along 18th Avenue from Centennial Expressway to Sunset Park

The following pages provide a Concept Plan, Signage Plan and signage graphics that illustrate the concepts described in this section.

Plan Summary and Conclusion

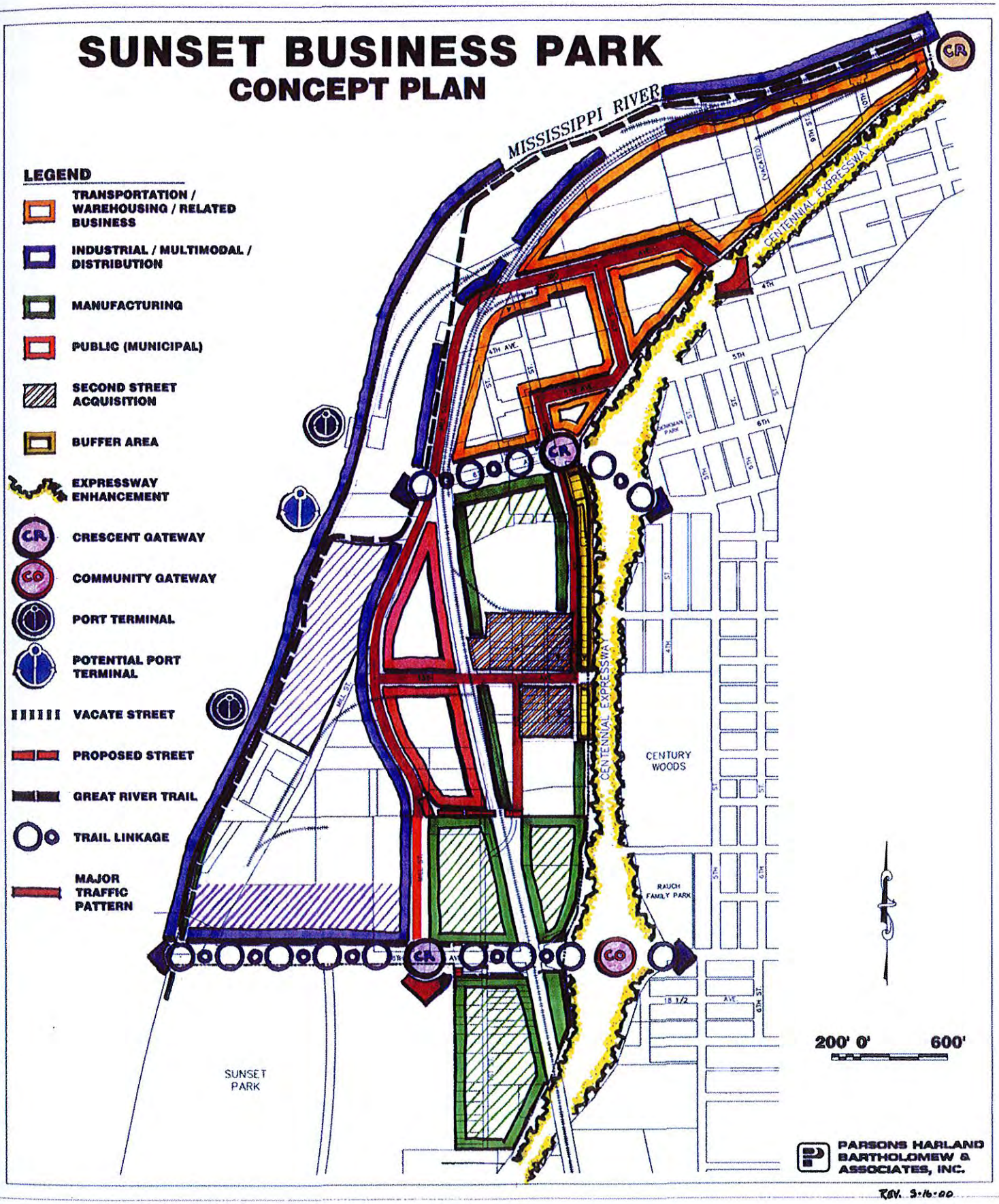
This study and strategic planning process have clearly demonstrated that the Sunset Business Park, with its diverse businesses and estimated 1,100 jobs, is a key economic development asset to the City of Rock Island and to the greater Quad Cities metropolitan area. However, our work also reveals that the Sunset area is an asset that is not performing up to its potential for the current businesses located there, for the residents in the adjacent neighborhoods and for the city economic development team responsible for promoting it as a site for business expansion.

The Redevelopment Concept Plan previously described in this section and illustrated by the graphics on the following pages provides a framework for the future land uses and physical improvements that will help create the vision for the Sunset Business Park. But physical improvements alone cannot produce the desired redevelopment and private reinvestment envisioned for Sunset Business Park. It will also require an integrated effort to implement the Business Expansion/Target Industries Strategies, the Neighborhood Employment Strategies and the Barrier Mitigation Strategies outlined in this report.

As this plan is implemented, it should be remembered that the economic development strategies and redevelopment plan contained in this document are the results of input, recommendations and insight provided by many stakeholders. Existing businesses and

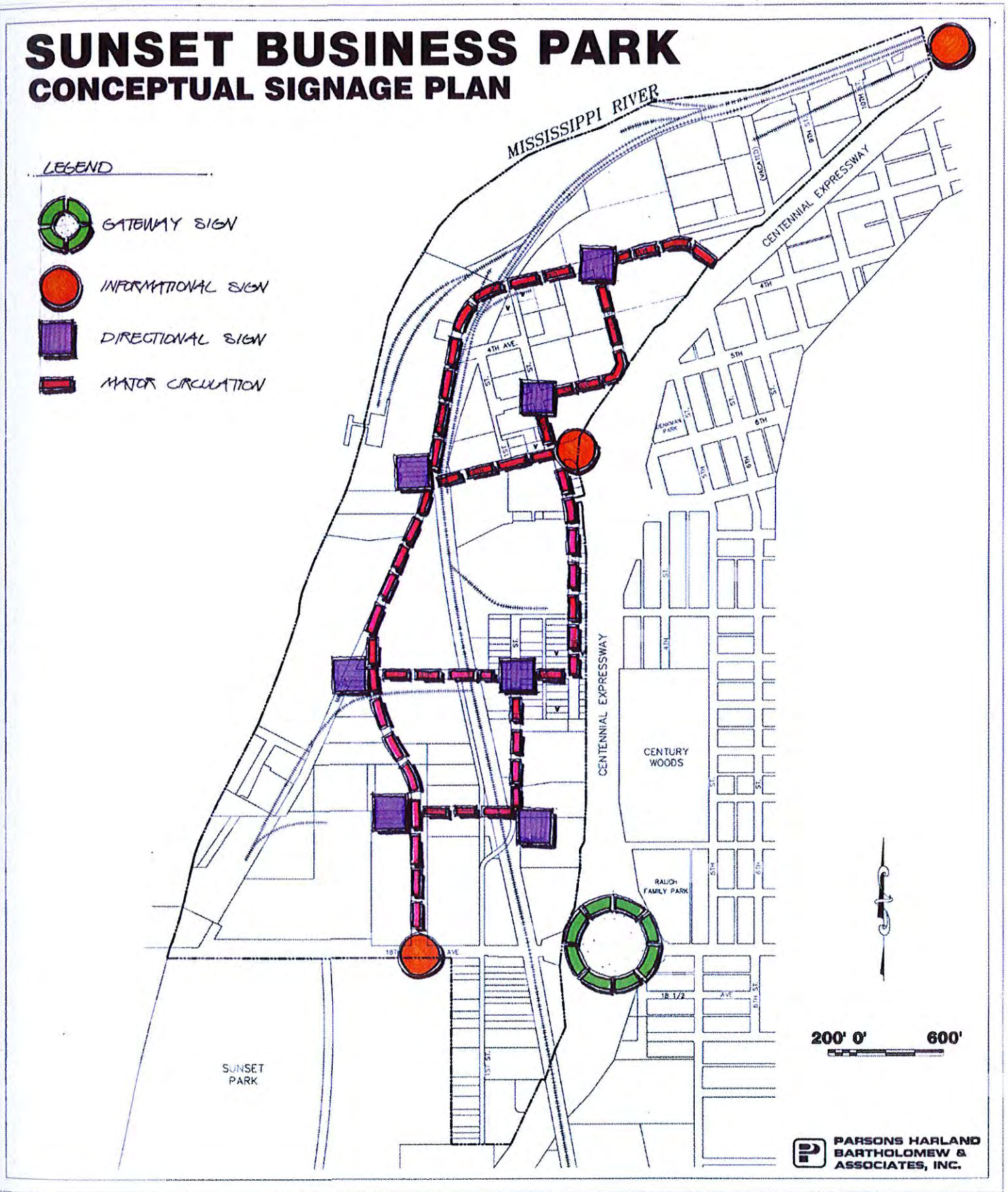
property owners, residents from surrounding neighborhoods, city representatives and other service providers have helped craft the strategies and plan. Their assistance, resources and monitoring should, likewise, be incorporated into the implementation process in the future.

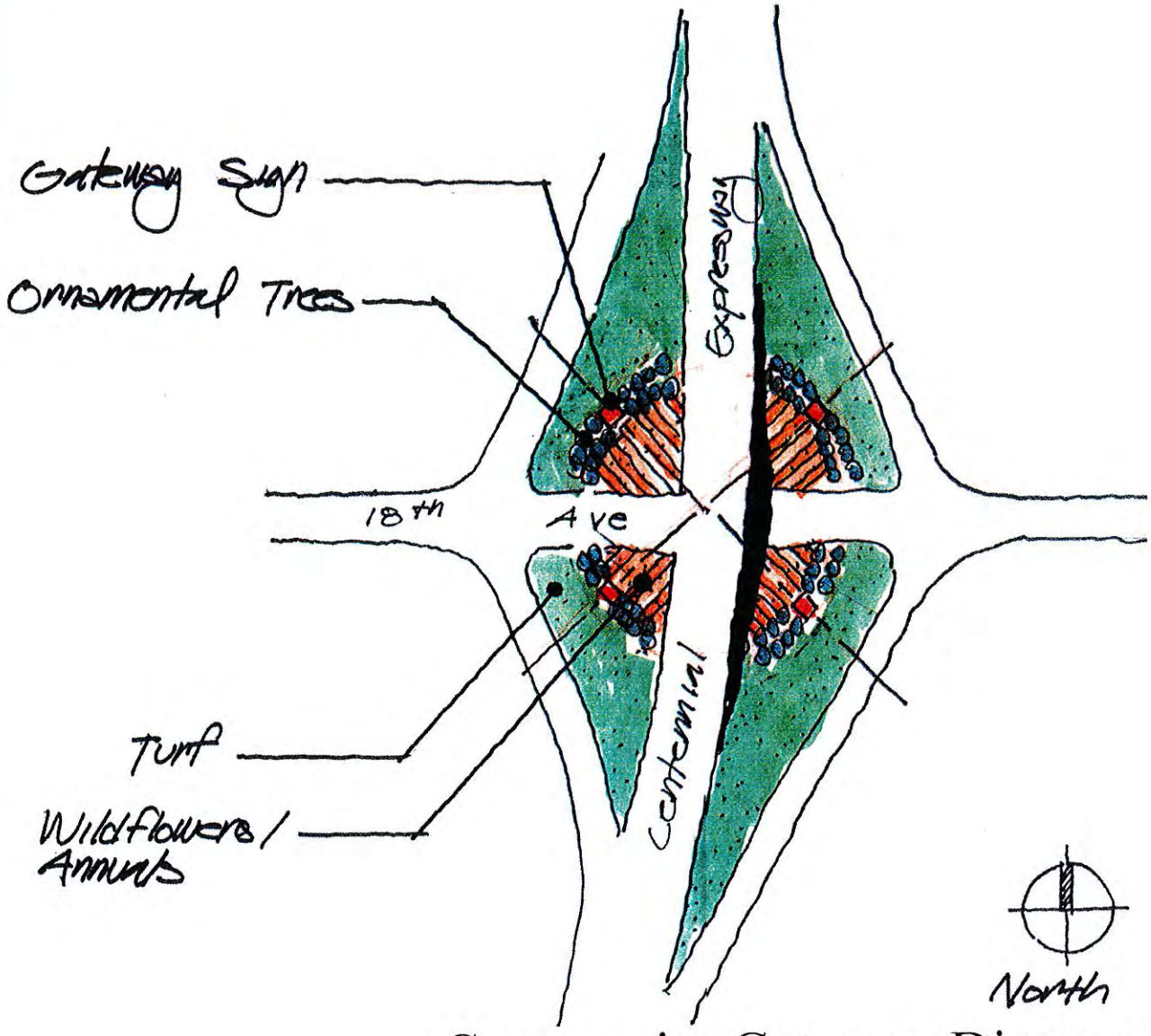
SUNSET BUSINESS PARK
CONCEPT PLAN



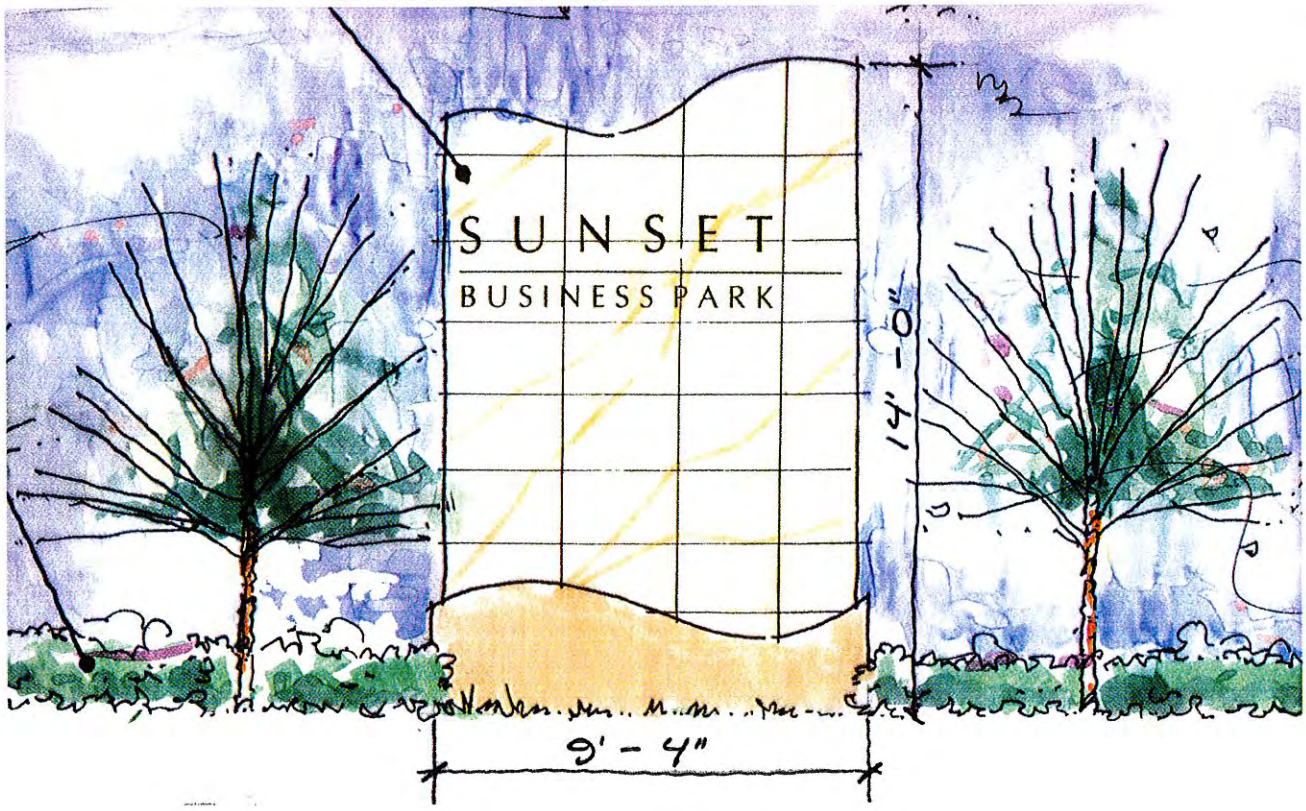
REV. 3-16-00

SUNSET BUSINESS PARK
CONCEPTUAL SIGNAGE PLAN

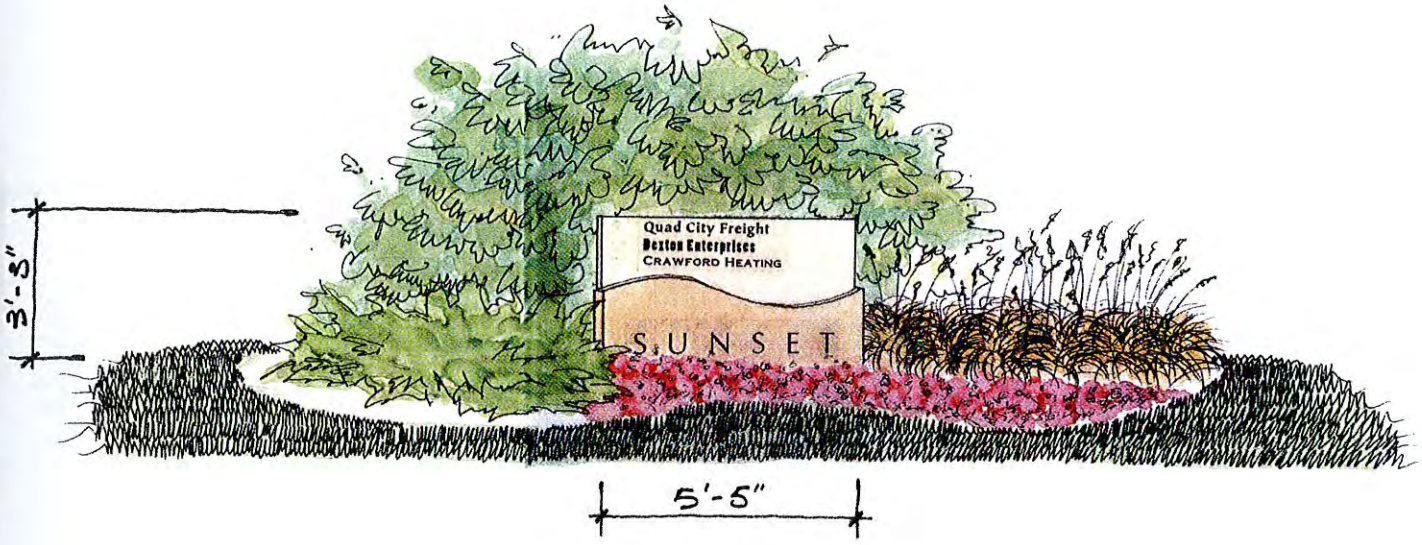




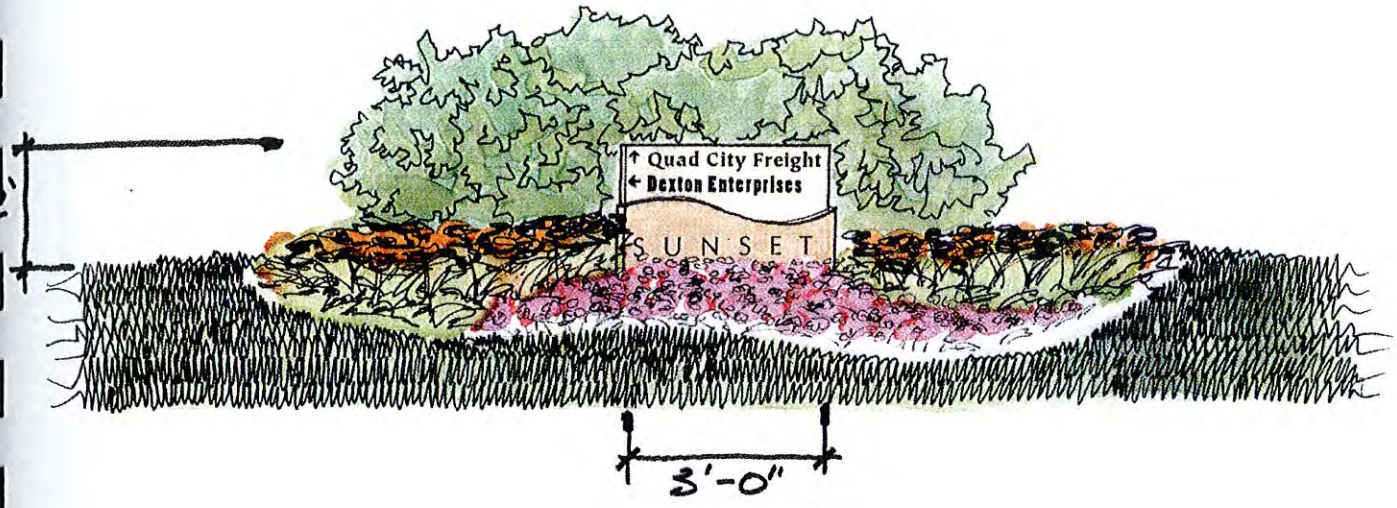
Community Gateway Diagram



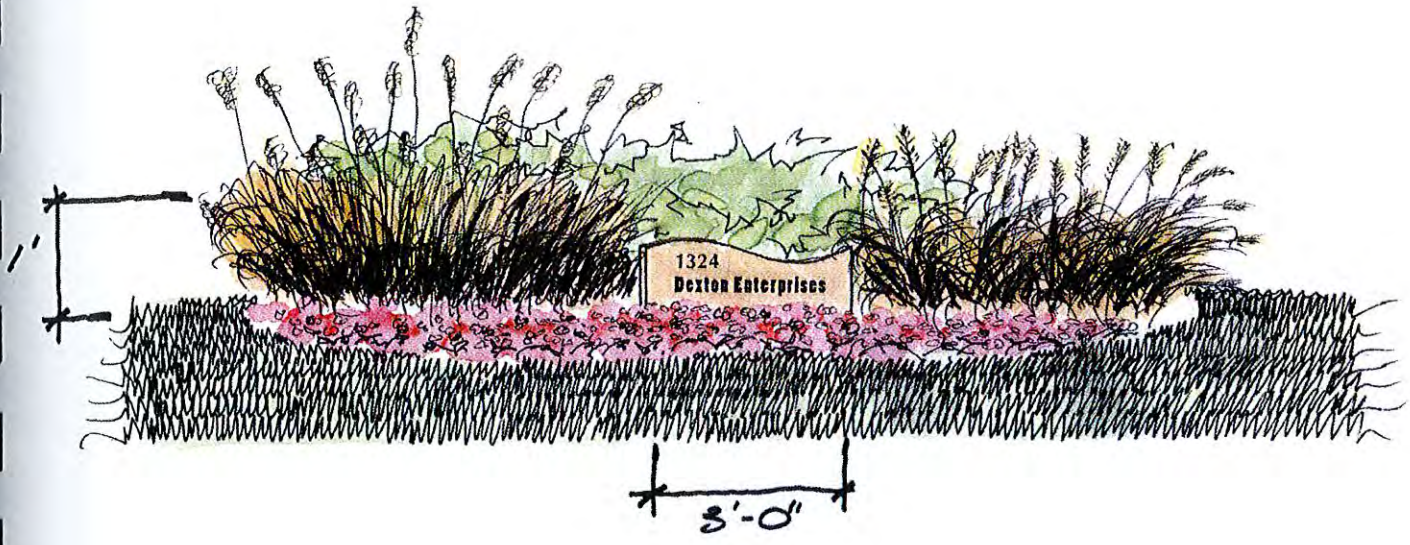
Gateway Sign



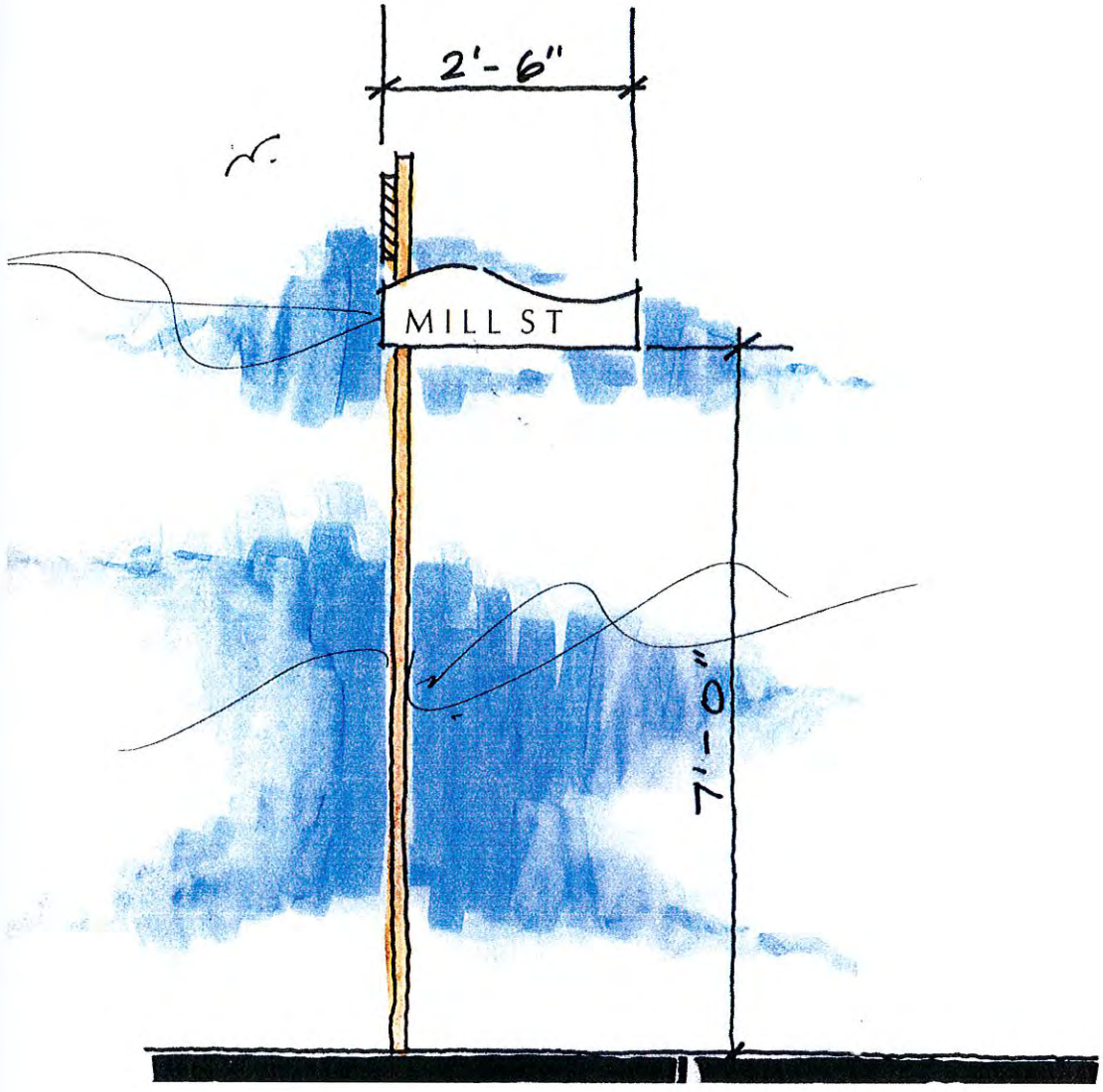
Informational Sign



Directional Sign



Address Sign



Street Sign