

## Section 2: Open Space & Trails

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### Landscape

Lockport's original landscape features -- rivers, streams, creeks, limestone outcroppings, prairies, wooded groves, marshes, and fens -- have all contributed to the shape of the City. Today, these features play an important role in creating the character of Lockport. Refer to page 11 for open space and trail systems within and around the downtown study area.

Lockport is a valley town set above and to the east of the Des Plaines River. The heights were formed by glaciers that left behind moraines deposited in an east-west direction and composed of boulders, sand, and gravel. When the ancient lake that these moraines held back was breached, the torrential out-flow created the river valley.

The amount and quality of open space in Lockport make it one of the City's greatest physical assets. Open space within the project area consists of the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor, the Milne Creek Corridor, West Side Park, the Deep Run Creek Corridor, and the east bank of the Sanitary & Ship Canal. Lockport's natural resources are plentiful and relatively underdeveloped. They present a number of opportunities to enhance or expand upon these resources.



I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor



## I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor

The Illinois & Michigan Canal, set here in the Des Plaines River Valley, is a major asset to the character and cultural history of Lockport. Building of the I & M Canal began in 1836 and was completed in 1848. The Canal connects the waters of Lake Michigan to the Illinois & Mississippi Rivers, thus connecting the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico. Built to transport goods and people, the Canal was originally much wider and deeper than it is today. Historically, the Lockport portion of the Canal was between 60'-100' wide and 6' deep.

The I & M Canal was the final link in a national plan to connect the different regions of North America via waterways. It was one of the first American canals to receive a federal land grant towards its financing. The creation of the canal put Lockport in a major transportation corridor, allowing for the shipment of goods from the southern U.S. to Chicago and reducing the costs of transporting goods between the Midwest and the East.

Today the I & M Canal appears much different from its original state in the 1800s. Transportation operations on the canal ceased in 1933 and from that date I & M has taken a drastically different shape. Currently, the canal is approximately 25' wide and no more than 2' deep in most locations. The canal and its adjacent land are now a haven for wildlife such as black-crowned night herons, bald eagles, and coyotes. As a component of the Des Plaines/Illinois/Mississippi River system, it is in a major flyway for migrating birds. The canal corridor is approximately 45'-50' wide, wooded, and contains a 12' wide asphalt path. The path is part of a larger system of trails, specifically, the 11-mile I & M Canal Bicycle Loop Trail. A notable feature on the canal is Lock #1 located at Division Street and Canal Street. The lock was the first of the originally planned 15 locks along the canal from Chicago to LaSalle. Pioneer Village, a collection of salvaged pioneer buildings from around Will County, is currently in the corridor but slated for relocation.



Historic I&M Canal  
(IL State DNR)



Pioneer Village



Lock #1

## Milne Creek

Milne Creek originates approximately two miles east of the I & M Canal and winds its way west between 7th and 8th Streets. The creek is a major conveyance for Lockport's storm water runoff and empties into the I & M Canal. Over the years, its banks have slowly eroded due to increased flows from upstream development. The Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission implemented plans in April 2005 to stabilize the banks of the creek and reduce the amount of sediment loadings into the I & M Canal.

Residential and commercial land uses are on both sides of the creek in the project area. The north side of the creek bed is a heavily-wooded, long, steep slope. The south side of the creek bed is close to the road and adjacent buildings, leaving little room for green space.

The limestone outcroppings along the creek bed and the lush canopy covering much of the northern side of the creek are outstanding natural features.



Milne Creek Outcroppings (J. Burns)



Image 30: Milne Creek Corridor (J. Burns)

## Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails

### Lockport Loop Trail

The proposed Lockport Loop Trail is a 1.75-mile loop of on- and off-road trails originating at the Gaylord Building. The trail utilizes existing canal corridors and trails to provide opportunities for users to educate themselves about the canals that have shaped Lockport. From the Gaylord Building, the trail will follow the I & M Canal Trail to Lock #1 at Division Street. It will then run west over the Division Street bridge to the Sanitary & Ship Canal and head north along the S&S Canal to the historic Seven Arches Bridge. Winding its way back to the Gaylord Building, the trail will run east on 9th, Daviess, and 8th Streets. Some of the land where the Loop Trail is proposed is currently occupied by several marginal light industrial and commercial businesses. According to the plan, buildings on these parcels will need to be relocated. Land acquisition is being considered to create a connection with the Heritage Park Corridor.



## Lockport Bicycle/Pedestrian System Master Plan

On a regional scale, Lockport has prepared an extensive system of on- and off-road bicycle/pedestrian trails and connections. The proposed trail system is comprised of four main components: the Outer Loop “Beltway” Network, the North Loop Network, the Central Loop Network, and the South Loop Network. The loop networks will connect a number of key destination sites as well as provide a safe and effective means of transportation and recreation. The proposed trails will connect to the existing I & M Trail and the proposed I-355 Trail, thus providing connections on a regional level.

## Surrounding Green Space & Parks

There are a number of parks and open spaces within the City of Lockport that contribute to its wealth of natural resources. These spaces include Dellwood Park, Dellwood Park West, Deep Run Creek, the Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve, and Lockport Prairie East.

Dellwood Park is a 150-acre site containing playgrounds, baseball fields, soccer fields, an in-line skating area, picnic areas and shelters, tennis courts, and trails. Dellwood Park West is a 176-acre site owned by the Lockport Township Parks Department. It is severely degraded from past canal construction, quarry operations, and agricultural uses. However, portions of the site still contain remnants of rare plant species. A long-term plan has been commissioned by Openlands to restore the site and involves the removal of debris, site clean-up, hydrologic restoration, and burn management.

Deep Run Creek runs between the Sanitary & Ship Canal and the I & M Canal. When the S & S Canal was built it necessitated the moving of the Des Plaines River bed. Deep Run Creek, a hydrological vestige, now runs in the the old Des Plaines River bed. Lockport Prairie East is a 30-acre parcel just north of Dellwood Park West. It is a high-quality Illinois Natural Areas Inventory Site. The prairie provides habitat for the endangered leafy prairie clover and a rare sedge meadow. Public access is planned to be part of future development.

## Heritage Park

Heritage Park is planned to be an “integrated historic, natural and recreational site within the cultural landscape of the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor.” The park will incorporate 260 acres and a 4.5-mile stretch of land along the I & M Canal from Lockport to Joliet. Heritage Park is an important link in the trail system being developed along the canal. The proposed site offers many opportunities to highlight outstanding natural and historic features. Ruins from the steel industry, prairies, wetlands, and bird habitats will all be a part of the future park site. The park will continue the I & M Canal trail system.



## Section 2: Historic Resources

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### Downtown Historic District & Surrounding Structures

Lockport is a city rich in history and unique to the Chicago area due to its intimate connection with the I & M Canal. Before Lockport was established in 1853, the town was already recognized for its strategic location when it was chosen as the site of the I & M Canal Headquarters. This designation aided greatly in the development of the downtown commercial district. Although a fire in 1895 destroyed several of Downtown Lockport's early buildings, many pre-fire structures still stand along with the structures that were built immediately after the fire.

Generally, the existing buildings and structures within the downtown study area are in very good condition. A number of structures have been recognized nationally and locally by organizations such as the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and the Lockport Heritage and Architecture Commission. The City of Lockport has taken great pride in their historic and cultural resources, and with the help of other local groups such as Lockport Main Street, Inc., the Will County Historical Society, and the Lockport Area Development Commission, the historic fabric of Lockport has been protected and recognized throughout the area.

While there are many historically significant structures within the downtown study area, the following structures are some of the most well-recognized:

- Lock #1 (at the canal and Division Street)
- Seven Arches Bridge (listed on the National Register)
- Lockport Commuter Rail Station
- Norton Grain Warehouse Building and Scale House
- Gaylord Building
- I & M Canal Headquarters Building (listed on the National Register)
- Old Lockport Grade School (Central Square)
- Pioneer Settlement
- Old Congregational Church (Gladys Fox Museum)
- John Heck House (listed on the National Register)



Lock #1



Seven Arches Bridge



Historic Districts



There are two historic districts located within the downtown study area. In 1975 a section of Lockport's downtown was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The City of Lockport later designated a slightly larger area (the Lockport Historic Preservation District) that includes the I & M Canal, Central Square, Old Congregational Church, Old Baptist Church, Pure Oil Gas Station, and a section of East 7th Street. The map above indicates the level of historic significance of the structures within the historic districts.

-  Project Boundary
-  Lockport Historic District (National Register)
-  Lockport Historic Preservation District
-  High Importance Historic Structures
-  Notable Historic Structures
-  Contributing Historic Structures
-  Non-Contributing Structures



## Existing Buildings

The buildings and various transportation routes located in the Historic Preservation District are a visual representation of Lockport's overall development. State Street was built parallel to the I & M Canal to service the canal during construction. Most of the downtown streets were built on a grid following the canal as opposed to the typical north-south-east-west layout of the region. Another transportation feature in the downtown is the railroad; the Lockport Commuter Station is not located in the center of Downtown which implies that the primary development of Downtown was always focused on the canal and not on the train.

## Limestone

One of the most prominent architectural features of the downtown is the common use of limestone. It is a local material that was quarried at the same time as the construction of the I & M Canal and is found to be the primary building material in many early Lockport structures. Limestone is a very durable material and the condition of the existing limestone buildings outshine many other structures throughout the City. Because it was so accessible, limestone can be seen in the variety of architectural styles shown below:



Institutional Buildings: Old Grade School



Canal Buildings: Norton Grain Warehouse



Commercial Buildings: Adelman Building



Residential Buildings: John Heck House



## Greek Revival

A building style that was popular in the United States between 1825 and 1860 and one that is still prevalent in Lockport is Greek Revival. One of the most significant buildings in Lockport that survived the 1895 fire is the original I & M Headquarters building. The one-story section was built in 1837 and the two-story section was built in 1875. The building is currently the headquarters for the Will County Historical Society.

Not far from the Canal Headquarters building is an old stage coach shop at 1024 South State Street. Although this 135-year-old building may seem out of place along State Street, it is one of the few remaining examples of the Greek Revival style in the City.



Old Stage Coach Stop  
1024 S. State Street



I & M Canal Headquarters Building (Will County  
Historical Society)

## State Street

Most of the historic districts' buildings are located on State Street between 11th Street and 7th Street. The buildings along State Street are in fairly good condition. Because State Street was built to service the I & M Canal construction, it was built as a very wide street. That large width remains today and places the historic building street-wall farther apart than what typically would be seen on a Midwest downtown main street.

There are two buildings within the street-wall that seem out of place. One is the Old City Hall Building at 921 State Street. This building is in good condition but it is set back from the sidewalk, detached from the other buildings, and designed in a Colonial Revival style. Because it has historic importance, it should be considered a contributing building to the historic character of Lockport.

Another building that feels out of place but is historically significant to Lockport is the Pure Oil Gas Station at the southwest corner of State Street and 11th Street. This small building was built in the late 1920s and the "cottage" design of the building eventually became a widely recognized feature for Pure Oil. It is located in Lockport's Historic Preservation District but outside the National Register District.

## Post-fire 900 Block



When the fire broke out in 1895, a majority of the buildings between State Street, 9th Street, Hamilton Street, and 10th Street were damaged or lost. Apparently the firefighters were successful in keeping the fire on the east side of State Street from spreading to the buildings on the west side. The effort made by the firefighters is still visible today. Only months after the fire devastated the east side of the 900 block of State Street, new buildings were erected. This section of buildings is one of the densest, well-maintained historic sections in the city. Compared to the pre-fire buildings on the west side of the street, it is apparent that these buildings were built at similar times because they all follow the same setbacks and storefront levels, though they represent a variety of architectural styles and materials: two types of limestone, two brick colors, arched windows, bay windows, and pediments -- all harmoniously in a single block.

## Secondary Streets

While State Street contains a majority of the historic buildings in the two historic districts, 9th and 10th Streets also have buildings that contribute to the historic fabric of downtown Lockport.

Central Square and the Old Congregational Church are located near 9th and Washington Streets and are two of the first buildings seen when entering Downtown from the east. There are also high importance and notable buildings on 9th Street between Hamilton Street and the Pioneer Settlement. 10th Street has a few supporting buildings between Hamilton Street and State Street that are in good condition.

See the accompanying map for other historic and cultural resources located outside of the two historic districts but within the downtown study area.



## Past and Current Preservation Efforts

Because Lockport has such a rich history, there are many resources and reports that relate to the cultural and historic importance of the City.

In 1977, a Historic District Preservation Plan was conducted by Preservation Urban Land Design Incorporated to determine the importance of the recently listed National Register Historic District. The plan includes an in-depth analysis of all the buildings located in the district and recommendations for future improvements. In some instances the recommendations have been implemented, but there are still many improvements that can be made based upon these recommendations.

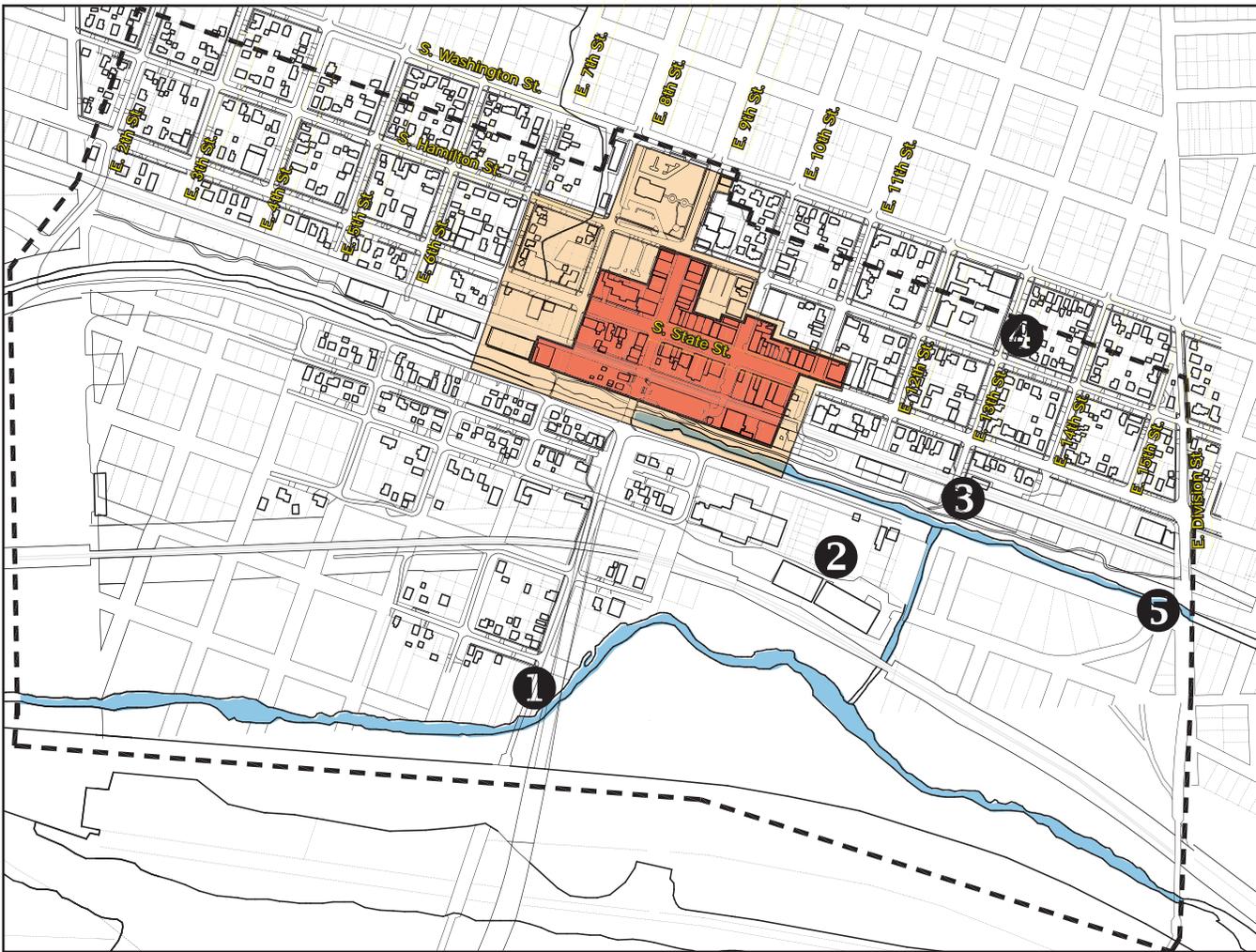


Example of Past Recommendations from 1977 Report (Preservation Urban Design Incorporated)

There are many active organizations within the City that support the revitalization of Lockport’s downtown and cherish its historic fabric. One of the most active groups in the City is Lockport Main Street, LLC. This non-profit group has created a “Vision 2025 for Lockport, Illinois” document that attempts to “identify ways in which the Downtown Historic District can be prepared for growth, preserved and protected with good planning, and enhanced by forward thinking.” This dedicated group has also created walking tour maps and information for home and building owners regarding ways to protect their historic properties.

The City of Lockport’s Heritage and Architecture Commission has also been involved in designating local landmarks, enforcing the Preservation Ordinance, and recommending proper maintenance and rehabilitation practices for historic structures throughout the City.





There are many historic and cultural resources within the study area. While a majority of them are located within the two historic districts, there are a few just outside of the district that are all very notable. These five structures to the right represent a variety of historic resources within the downtown area that are not just limited to buildings.

### Other Historic Resources

- ① 9th Street Seven Arch Stone Bridge
  - ② Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Shelter
  - ③ Commuter Rail Station
  - ④ John Heck House (1225 S. Hamilton St.)
  - ⑤ Lock One
- Lockport Historic Preservation District
  - National Register Historic District



## Section 2: Transportation

### Existing Roadway Conditions

**State Street (Illinois Route 171)** is a north-south, four-lane roadway that extends through downtown Lockport and is under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). This regional roadway provides connectivity to the City of Joliet to the south and Interstate-355 and the City of Lemont (via Archer Avenue) to the north.

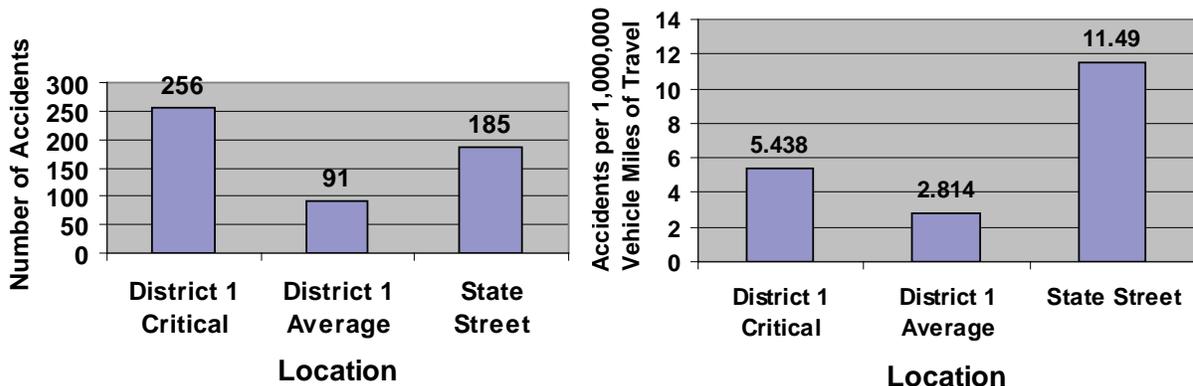
Traffic counts were conducted in 2008 by Land Strategies. Traffic volumes range from 12,000 vehicles per day (vpd) south of 9th Street to 16,200 vpd north of 9th Street. There are approximately 700 trucks per day (6% of total traffic) south of 9th Street and 1,900 trucks (12% of total) north of 9th on a daily basis. The primary truck movements at the intersection of State Street and 9th Street are through movements, as opposed to left and right turns.

Some of complaints about State Street include:

- “It is unsafe to cross”
- “Too wide to cross”
- “It divides connectivity of business’ on both sides of roadway”
- “Traffic has hurt our downtown”
- “It’s unfriendly for anything but the car”
- “People drive too fast on State Street”

In addition to the above listed comments, there are serious vehicular safety concerns on State Street. According to the data provided by IDOT, there were 185 accidents in this section of State Street between 2004 and 2006. An average of 62 per year for this one mile stretch of roadway. Of the 185 accidents, the type of accidents are as follows:

- 29 Angle = 16%
- 38 Rear End = 21%
- 24 Sideswipe Same Direction = 13%
- 49 Turning = 26%
- 4 Pedestrian Accidents



State Street has three traffic signals in the study area: 2nd Street, 9th Street, and Division Street. State Street transitions from a posted 35 mph speed limit north and south of downtown to 25 mph in the downtown area.

State Street's signalized intersections with 2nd Street and Division Street operate without significant delay during the weekday p.m. peak hours. It should be noted that State Street is a five-lane roadway at Division Street with one left turn lane and two through lanes in both the northbound and southbound directions. The intersection of State Street and 9th Street operates below the acceptable standard for level of service and has vehicular queuing issues.

On-street parking is provided on State Street with striping between 12th and 8th Streets. This parking is free with a two-hour limit.



Pedestrian Crossing: State at 8th/T. Fagen



Truck Traffic: State at 9th Street/T. Fagen

Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway without any gaps. In most locations, the sidewalk is five feet wide, separated from the roadway by a green parkway. As State Street approaches 9th Street, a parkway does not exist, and the sidewalk extends between the roadway and the property line. This occurs between 11th and 9th Streets on both sides of the roadway and between 9th and 8th Streets on the west side of State Street.

**Hamilton Street** is a local north-south, two-lane roadway serving both residential and commercial uses within and outside of the downtown core. This roadway maintains its local character as it extends into a residential subdivision north Thornton Avenue. South of Division Street, Hamilton Street extends south for approximately ½ mile where it terminates at Parkview Lane. Vantage points along Hamilton Street provide good view points to the west. The roadway is under the jurisdiction by the City of Lockport.

Downtown in front of City Hall, Hamilton Street carries a small volume of traffic, approximately 600 vehicles per day. The only traffic signal that Hamilton Street has within



the study area is at 9th Street. The roadway contains varying widths which are:

- 20 feet near 5th and 6th Streets
- 24 feet in most locations
- 30 feet at 10th and 11th Streets
- 40 feet at its signalized intersection with 9th Street.

The on-street parking provided on Hamilton Street serving the commercial areas and Church south of 9th Street and the area in front of City Hall, north of 9th Street, could be classified as sporadic with regards to striped supply.

Sidewalks are provided along Hamilton Street, along with a wide parkway separating the roadway in the residential areas. This parkway is narrowed or eliminated within some portions of the downtown core. A gap without a sidewalk occurs on the east side of Hamilton Street between 8th and 7th Streets, at the greenway. A small gap also occurs on the west side of Hamilton, between 15th and Division Streets.



Parkway: Hamilton Street/T.Fagen

**9th Street (Illinois Route 7)** is an east-west, two-lane roadway that extends through downtown Lockport and is under the jurisdiction of IDOT. This regional roadway provides connectivity across the I & M Canal to Interstate 55 to the west and I-355 to the east. Importantly, this roadway provides direct access between downtown Lockport and what is certain to be new development near I-355. An Illinois Route 7 corridor study was recently completed just west of downtown Lockport through the interchange at I-355. There are approximately 13,500 vehicles per day east of State Street and approximately 500 trucks per day (4% of total traffic).

The roadway has two traffic signals in the study area: at State Street and at Hamilton Street. As discussed previously, the intersection of 9th Street and State Street operates at a poor operational capacity during the am and pm peak periods. The intersection of



9th Street and Hamilton Avenue operates well during the pm peak period.

On-street parking is provided with striping between State and Hamilton Streets. This parking is free with a four-hour limit.

Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the roadway without any gaps. The sidewalk runs entirely between the roadway and the property line. It is stepped in some locations due to the change in walking elevation.

9th Street acts as a formidable barrier between downtown Lockport and points west of the I & M Canal due to the geometric design and elevational changes of the roadway bridge.

The other east and west streets within the study area have different characteristics whether you are in the downtown core or the primarily residential areas. In the downtown area, both 10th and 11th Streets are wide paved cross section that provides two lanes of travel and angled parking for a total cross section width of about 56 feet.



9th Street: at Hamilton/T. Fagen



9th Street: Westward/T. Fagen



Angled Parking: 10th Street/T. Fagen

12th, 13th, 14th and 15th Streets are narrower and serve a mix of small offices and residential or strictly residential as you move farther south. Sidewalks, with green parkways, are typically provided on both sides of the roadways, although a few gaps do exist. Some properties use the wide parkway to provide perpendicular parking for clients or residents. The City of Lockport plans for 13th Street to have an on-road bike lane in the future, connecting the I & M Canal Trail and a future roadway bike lane on Washington Street to the west.

**8th Street** provides service to the City Library and a public parking lot. On-street parking is provided on both sides of the roadway. There is a marked pedestrian crossing on State Street, at 8th Street. However, given the speeds and volume of traffic on State Street, crossing the roadway is dangerous. The City of Lockport plans for 8th Street to have an on-street shared bike lane in the future, connecting the I & M Canal Trail and a future roadway bike lane on Washington Street to the west.

Further north, 7th, 6th, 5th 4th 3rd and 2nd Streets primarily serve residential land uses



- or provide State Street commercial land uses with side street access - as you move farther north. These roadways typically have 24 feet of pavement width, aside from 6th Street which maintains 20 feet. Sidewalks, with green parkways, are typically provided on both sides of the roadways, although a few gaps do exist. Some properties use the wide parkway to provide perpendicular parking for clients or residents. The City of Lockport plans for 2nd Street to have an on-street bike lane in the future, connecting the I & M Canal Trail and a future roadway bike lane on Washington Street to the west.

**Commerce Street** is a north-south, narrow two lane roadway that runs along the existing freight and Metra transit railroad tracks. This roadway acts as an alley access for the adjacent land uses from 8th to 11th Streets.

**Canal Street** is a north-south, two lane roadway that serves the land uses located in the lower canal area between the two sets of railroad tracks. It runs from W. Division Street on the south, to W. 2nd Street on the north.



Head In Parking: 12th Street/T. Fagen



Railroad Tracks: CN & Metra Tracks/T. Fagen

## Existing Traffic Counts

Existing traffic counts were conducted in March of 2008 between the hours of 4:00 PM and 6:00 PM at the following intersections:

- State Street and 2nd Street
- State Street and 6th Street
- State Street and 9th Street
- State Street and 11th Street
- State Street and 13th Street
- State Street and Division Street
- Hamilton Street and 9th Street
- Hamilton Street and 10th Street



Traffic counts were also conducted at the intersection of State Street and 9th Street between the hours of 7:00 AM and 9:00 AM. The results of the traffic counts are shown in Figure 1.

## Bicycling, Pedestrian, and Trail Systems

As discussed previously, the study area is well served by sidewalks within the study area. However, connectivity both within the study area and to points outside the study area are lacking at the following locations:

- State Street, except for at its signalized intersections is a dangerous roadway to cross due to its width and lack of vehicular control such as traffic signals, stop signs or effective pedestrian crossings.
- 2nd Street, west of State Street
- 10th Street, west of State Street on the north side of the roadway
- 11th Street, west of State Street
- Division Street, west of the Metra tracks
- 8th Street, west of Hamilton Street near City Hall
- Poor connectivity to the neighborhoods north of 2nd Street due to their lack of sidewalks
- 4th Street, east of Hamilton Street
- Most streets in the lower canal area
- Hamilton Street, between 7th and 8th Streets on the east side of the roadway.

The existing I & M Canal Trail provides a north/south recreational route through the study area, located on the east side of the I & M Canal. This 10 to 12 foot wide trail is made of crushed limestone. Destinations along the trail that have direct access points are the Gaylord Building, the Metra Station and 8th Street (serving the Library). The trail has an offset at crossing Division Street of 100 feet that requires mitigating.

According to the City's 2003 Bicycle/Pedestrian System Master Plan, there are three proposed on-street bike lanes that will connect the I & M Canal Trail, through the study area to Washington Street. They are at 2nd, 8th, and 13th Streets. Also, the plan proposes an on-street bike lane on 9th Street (IL 7) over the entire canal and river, connecting to Lewis University.

Aside from the I & M Trail, there are no other recreational or transportation based bike lanes planned to run north and south in the study area.

## Public Transit

Metra leases railtracks and provides transit service for the City of Lockport along the double tracked lines owned by the Canadian National Railroad Company. This line,



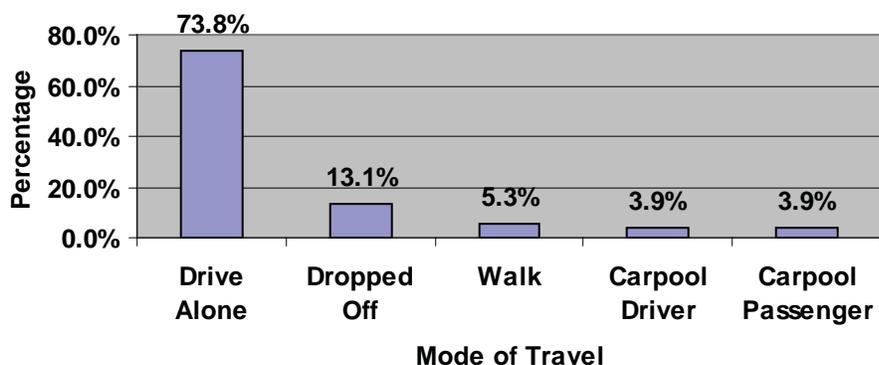
called the Heritage Corridor, runs parallel to the Illinois and Michigan Canal Heritage Corridor and has six station stops at the following locations: Joliet Union Station, Lockport, Lemont, Willow Springs, Summit and Chicago’s Union Station. The Historic train station in downtown Lockport has the capacity for four Metra cars to load. There are plans to construct a new station north of Lockport in the Village of Romeoville at 135th Street.

There there has been an increase from 200 riders per day in 1999 to 550 in 2006. However, the Heritage Corridor Line only runs three trains inbound to downtown Chicago in the morning and three trains back out in the evening, with no weekend service. This ride takes about 50 minutes to complete between downtown Chicago and the City of Lockport.

According to Metra, *“The Heritage Corridor has limited commuter rail service due to the large amount of freight rail traffic along the line and crossing the corridor. The ROW is owned by the Canadian National Railroad and we lease trackage rights to operate Metra service along the line. Our current lease allows for the three trains in each direction each weekday. As far as expanding service in the future there is no existing plan as to when it would be possible or what it would look like. This corridor has been identified as in need of improvements by the CREATE Program, a public-private partnership between the City of Chicago, IDOT, Metra and the freight railroads. CREATE proposes to grade separate two of the four rail-rail crossings along the corridor. So far CREATE has received only limited funding. Once the CREATE projects along the Heritage Corridor have been completed Metra might be able to negotiate a lease agreement with the Canadian National to operate more commuter service along the line.”*

The following provides a snapshot of how people travel to and from the Metra station in downtown Lockport in 2002. This snapshot can be used as an indicator of future land use development around the station and how that corresponds with mode of travel. It would be expected that more people would walk to and from the station as more residential and employment is provided in downtown Lockport.

### Lockport Station Use



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**PACE**, the suburban bus provider, has two routes that serve the City of Lockport. Route 831 has service to the City of Joliet, including Union Station and downtown area, Statesville Prison, Orland Square Mall and Midway Airport. This route provides connectivity to Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) service at Midway. However, on November 24th of 2008 the east west portion is going to shift south to 159th Street off of 143rd Street. It will make a northbound right turn from State Street to 9th Street and then follow 159th out to Orland Park.

Route 834 has service to the City of Joliet, including Union Station and downtown area, Good Samaritan Hospital, Romeoville, Bolingbrook (including Pace's Park-and-Ride on selected trips), and Downers Grove. This route provides connectivity to other PACE suburban routes. Ridership on this line averages about 650 riders per day during the weekday and 285 per day on Saturdays.

There is a PACE future transit corridor planned for 159th Street, between the Village of Plainfield and southern Cook County that would serve the City of Lockport along 9th Street.

## Rail Infrastructure and Crossings

There are two separate rail lines that travel generally north and south through downtown Lockport. One is owned by the Canadian National Railroad company with double tracks which run through downtown Lockport between the I & M Canal and State Street. The tracks are rated to serve train speeds up to 79 mile per hour, also serving Metra suburban rail to and Amtrak which runs 10 trains per day (5 inbound/5 outbound), generally very fast through downtown Lockport.

About 800 feet to the west are the double tracked freight railroad lines owned by the Burlington North Santa Fe Railroad lines. These lines carry about 60 freight trains currently and act as a barrier between the neighborhoods east and west of these tracks.

Within the study area there are eight vehicular and two pedestrian at-grade rail crossings. None of these crossings are equipped with the necessary gates or other equipment needed to Lockport to be designated "Quiet Zone" by the Illinois Commerce Commission and the Federal Rail Administration.

## Parking

Within the study area, there is a large supply of both on-street and off-street parking spaces that is available to the public. During a peak summer Saturday evening that included a Moose Lodge event, the on-street parking spaces were near capacity on 9th and 10th Street (between State and Hamilton), and on State Street (between 8th and 12th Streets). The Gaylord Building parking lot and the parking lot on Hamilton Street



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(between 9th and 10th Streets) were both near capacity due to events at the Gaylord and Moose Lodge. The remaining on- and off-street parking areas surrounding the Historic District were significantly underutilized. Furthermore, at other times of the week and weekend, parking is underutilized. In general, downtown appears overbuilt with respect to paved infrastructure and the perpendicular parking spaces on 10th and 11th Streets are an example of this. Also, other residents and business' along the east/west roads have used the wide parkways as paved, head-in parking spots.



## Section 2: Market Analysis

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As part of a project team headed by BauerLatoza Studio, ERA was engaged by the City of Lockport to evaluate market conditions that will shape near-term redevelopment opportunities in Downtown Lockport. The assessment highlighted demographic and economic base factors for Lockport in addition to characteristics of the downtown's primary (0-6 miles) and secondary (6-10 miles) markets. Key market findings included:

### Local Conditions

- **Population:** The Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) estimates a current (2007) Lockport population of 21,215—annualized population growth since 2000 in Will County (4.9 percent) and Lockport has far exceeded regional and statewide benchmarks. Over the next five years, annualized population growth in the City of Lockport (5.8 percent) is projected to exceed county, regional, and statewide benchmarks.
- **Households:** Annualized growth between 2000 and 2007 in total Lockport households (4.8 percent) exceeded the countywide (4.7 percent), regional (0.7 percent), and statewide (0.8 percent) benchmarks. Over the next five years, Lockport annualized household growth (5.9 percent) is projected to exceed county, regional, and statewide benchmarks. While the average household size across the U.S. is decreasing, it increased in Lockport between 2000 and 2007, highlighting a shift from older, empty-nest households to those of younger families with children.
- **Income:** Median household income in Lockport (\$70,651) is presently 91 percent of Will County's (\$77,661). Over the next five years, Lockport and Will County are projected to experience significant growth in high-income households (\$200,000+ annually); households with a median household income less than \$99,999 are projected to represent a smaller share of total households in Lockport and Will County by 2012.
- **Age:** Lockport's resident population is slightly older than that at the state or county level, but recent increases in Lockport's average household size suggest a resident population shifting towards younger families with children. Between 2000 and 2007, Lockport's median age is estimated to have increased by 1.10 years, which is less than the projected age increase at the county (1.40 years) and state levels (1.2 years).

### Primary and Secondary Markets

ERA has defined Lockport's primary market as those residents living within a six mile radius of downtown Lockport. The secondary market has been defined as residents living within a six to ten mile radius of downtown Lockport. Key market findings have been highlighted below:

- **Population:** The ESRI estimates a current population of 220,279 in Lockport's primary market and 309,565 in its secondary. Over the next five years, annualized population growth in both markets is projected to far exceed the statewide benchmark (0.8 percent) at a rate of 4.2



percent in the secondary and 3.9 percent in the primary.

- **Households:** Presently, average household size suggests there are more families with children in the secondary market (3.10) as opposed to the primary market (2.79). By 2012, average household size in the secondary market is projected to increase suggesting growth in the number of households with children. The opposite is projected for the primary market—an average household size decline suggests increasing numbers of “empty nest” households.
- **Income:** Currently, households with a median household income of \$50,000 to \$74,999 represent the largest share (23 percent) of primary market households. By comparison, households with a median household income of \$100,000 to \$149,999 represent the largest share (26 percent) of secondary market households. Over the next five years, annualized median household income growth is projected to be greater for secondary market households (3.7 percent) as opposed to primary market households (2.7 percent). By 2012, households earning more than \$100,000 annually will represent a larger share of total households in both markets, while households earning less than \$99,999 will represent a smaller share.
- **Age:** The 35 to 44 age segment is estimated to represent the largest share of primary (15.3 percent) and secondary market (17.8 percent) populations. Median age, however, suggests a slightly older population in the primary market (35.1 years) as opposed to the secondary market (34.3 years). Consistent with this finding is that children under age 14 represent a greater share of secondary market populations as opposed to primary market populations. By 2012, children aged 0-4 and 10-14 and residents aged 45 to 64 are projected to represent the largest growth cohorts in the primary market. By comparison, residents aged 35 to 44 and children aged 5-9 will represent the largest growth cohort in the secondary market.
- **Tapestry Segmentation:** The household segmentation analysis highlights primary and secondary market populations that combine an evolving mix of younger, more affluent families with children with middle-income empty-nest households. The analysis highlights the importance of housing diversity in Lockport, in addition to recreational opportunities and events that cater to physically-active households.

## Office Market Findings

Costar identifies roughly 34,500 square feet of downtown office space-- 6.9 percent of Lockport's office inventory. Lockport's downtown has a considerably lower vacancy rate (5.2 percent) as compared to the greater city (13.5 percent) or county levels (17.5 percent). While downtown Lockport vacancy levels are low, downtown Lockport in recent years has been impacted by surrounding office developments-- vacancy levels spiked to 7.8 percent in 2006 with an increase in office inventory that exceeded overall growth in Lockport office sector employment.

Although location quotient analysis suggests that the Lockport office market is underdeveloped, downtown Lockport presently supports a significant number of offices—a greater share of downtown Lockport's businesses are office uses (38 percent) as compared to other downtown communities (13 to 32 percent). This has implications for downtown vitality, especially during the evening hours and on the weekends. Although office uses are a critical demand generator for downtown business during mid-day hours, downtown offices in high-visibility, storefront spaces should be limited.



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## Retail Market Findings

The market assessment highlights a downtown retail inventory of roughly 200,000 square feet, about 13 percent of the city total, down from 15 percent in 2002. Overall citywide retail sales growth has been strong, especially in the categories of food (grocery) and general merchandise—this is consistent with the arrival of the Wal-Mart Supercenter and Aldi in north Lockport. Pull factor analysis indicates that Lockport citywide is experiencing retail leakage in categories of significance to the downtown, namely restaurants, apparel, furniture and household, and lumber and building hardware—this means Lockport residents are traveling to other jurisdictions to shop for these items. These retail categories present downtown retail development opportunity, especially considering downtown Lockport lacks the retail variety as found in other downtowns. Notable gaps in downtown Lockport retail by category include apparel, miscellaneous, furniture and household.

While downtown Lockport's viability is strengthened by the presence of city offices and considerable historic character, the retail inventory planned for north and east Lockport may present significant competition to current and future downtown business. In order to compete, downtown Lockport's shopping experience will have to be enhanced through specialty retail and entertainment options.

## Residential Market Findings

The tapestry analysis highlights an apparent market interest in Lockport for urban housing-- higher density, zero lot-line, possibly attached housing in an urban setting. ERA estimates there are roughly 1,360 of these urban lifestyle-focused households in Lockport-- none of these households live within a walkable distance (0.63 mile) of the downtown. This is in comparison to other downtown communities where between 20 and 80 percent of households within a walkable downtown distance are urban-lifestyle focused. Although Lockport has experienced significant housing growth over the past six years, the city has lagged other communities (Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Lemont, Tinley Park, etc.) in developing downtown urban housing options. Consistent with this finding is that downtown Lockport's housing inventory is older than in communities that have focused upon downtown redevelopment. This is being reflected in the market value of downtown Lockport housing-- in 2006, a downtown detached single family home sold for only 74 percent of that in Lockport overall.

## Recreation/Historical Attraction Findings

Lockport's primary and secondary market households are very physically active—as compared to the average US household, they have a greater propensity to participate in aerobics, backpacking, bicycling, boating, weightlifting, and yoga. Additional activities more frequently pursued by primary and secondary market households include dining-out, going to the movies and attending events. Based upon these findings in addition to current recreational options in the primary and secondary markets, ERA believes there may be demand in downtown Lockport for mini-golf, a small-scale gym or aerobics facility, and recreational rentals such as kayaks along the canal. Findings also suggest



there could be demand for a downtown movie theater as long as 1) downtown population density increases; 2) additional restaurants and bars locate in the downtown; 3) parking is addressed; and 4) no theaters within a five-mile radius establish in the area. Commercial recreational uses in Lockport's downtown are critical for extending business hours and establishing downtown Lockport as a "destination".

Presently, ERA feels the I&M Canal is underutilized as a historic attraction and more could be done to maximize this asset—research indicates other canal communities have enhanced their canals through recreational rentals, extensive activities and festivals, and visitor centers. ERA feels activity preferences of Lockport's primary and secondary market households would be supportive of further downtown Lockport canal-related festivals and events, in addition to further recreation along the I&M Canal. Building upon the success of Canal Days, ERA notes developing new, business-oriented events such as a "Taste of Downtown Lockport" featuring the existing restaurants and other businesses will reinforce downtown Lockport as a destination. Consideration should also be given to the development of a permanent farmers market that can develop into a permanent public market--markets can often evolve into strong tourist destinations.

## Preliminary Recommendations

Moving forward, three primary near-term issues will need to be addressed in downtown Lockport:

- Ensuring parking is adequate for existing and planned needs consistent with development objectives;
- Intensifying and increasing the number, mix and strength of various uses (retail, residential and recreational/entertainment),
- Intensifying uses associated with the I&M Canal to enhance it as a draw for visitors.

Looking five years into the future, City, downtown, and community leaders will need to build consensus for future projects that will enhance downtown Lockport as a destination and stabilize the downtown's economy. Near-term goals and objectives should include:

- **Parking:** Downtown parking was noted to ERA as a primary concern by both business owners and Lockport residents. Destination business development in downtown Lockport and expansion of the canal as a historical attraction will be limited as long as parking remains a perceived issue.
- **Urban Residential Development:** Residential projects will enhance the appeal of downtown as a destination, and build support for retail. Linkages to trail systems and other amenities will also be supportive of demand. Project-specific site, parking, and income factors will dictate feasibility and the potential need for public sector involvement.
- **Business Consulting:** Discussions with local residents and business owners revealed there is a high turn-over of businesses in downtown Lockport. A City or Chamber specialist could be hired to work with downtown businesses to establish business plans, marketing goals and objectives, and to coordinate amongst other business to establish consistent store hours and plan for events.

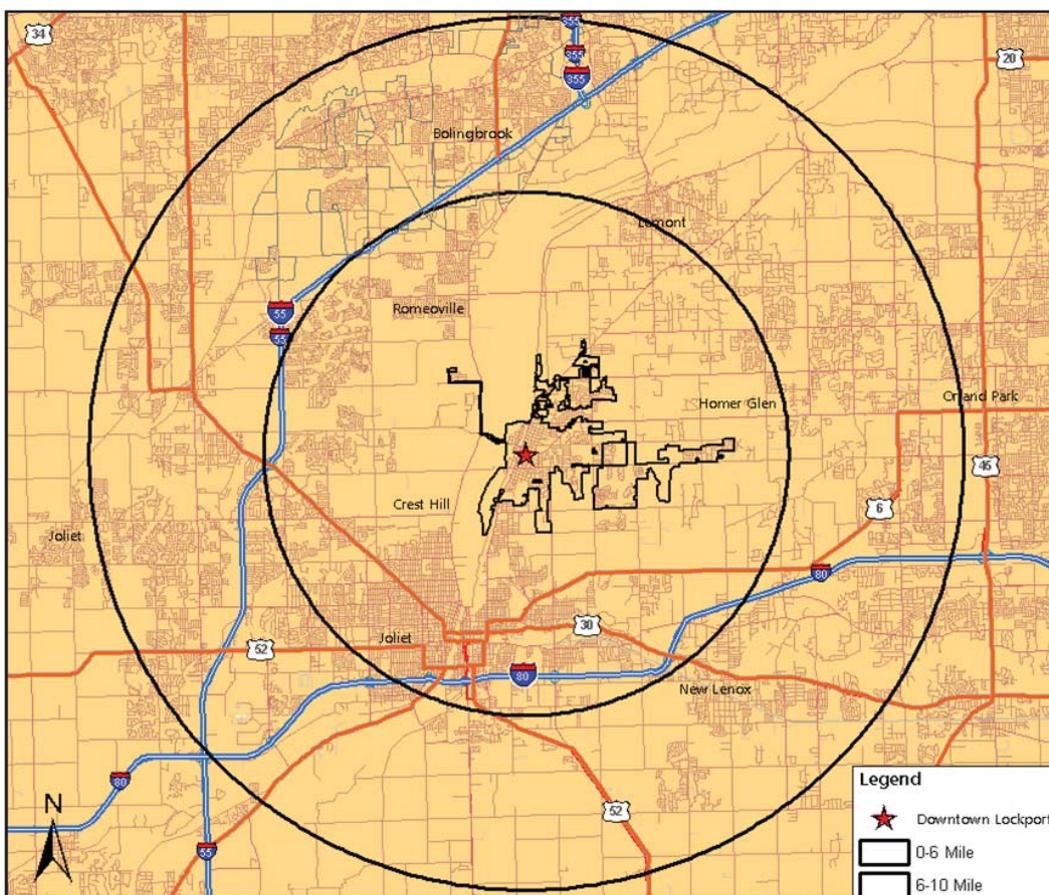


## Preliminary Policy Recommendations

**Demand Generators:** ERA's national experience highlights the critical need to develop a range of demand generators for downtown with the intent of increasing the market for downtown, broadening the length of stay for downtown visitors, and expanding hours of operation. Demand generators are critical in building off of the modest scale of many downtowns, and also help build critical mass which will gradually build support for other stores and restaurants. City government office functions, downtown events, and new downtown residential are all considered critical demand generators.

**Role of the Public Sector:** ERA's national experience highlights the on-going challenges of small downtowns remaining economically competitive. Reflective of the real challenges of effecting change in downtowns, a number of successful policy responses have emerged with an underlying theme of an aggressive public sector role in redevelopment:

1. Building public consensus and involvement upfront;
2. Identifying important sites for redevelopment;
3. Marketing the downtown and its assets aggressively.



Regional and Visitor Markets



## Section 2: Infrastructure

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### General

The existing utilities within the planning area have been evaluated by reviewing available data provided by the City, sight observations, and interviews with City staff.

### Watermains

The existing watermain within the project area varies between 4" and 12". There are no available records which indicate the material type and age of the existing watermain. However, judging from the size of the mains, it is likely primarily cast iron and likely in excess of 75 year old, some may be in excess of 100 years old.

There are no known domestic use service problems within the project area.

The spacing of the fire hydrants does not appear to meet the current City Ordinance, which requires that the near corner of any structure that could burn be within 150 feet of a hydrant. Any redevelopment should consider the addition of hydrants. In addition, the recent fire at the corner of State Street and 11th revealed that the water system cannot provide sufficient water flow for the fire equipment currently in use within the City.



Image 1: Building at corner of 11th & State (Source)

The existing watermain sizes within the project area do not meet modern standards and will not likely have the capacity to meet the water and fire flows for a redeveloped downtown. In particular, the mains along State Street, which is only 8" for some sections and the intersecting streets of 4th, 7th, 9th, 12th, 13th and 15th where the main is only 4" diameter will require upgrade to provide sufficient water volume to meet fire flow demands of redeveloped buildings.

A consultant for the City is currently studying the water system for the entire City. This study will evaluate the downtown area in detail and will specific recommendations for improvements.

## Sanitary Sewers

The existing sanitary sewer within the project area varies in size between 10" and 30" and is located in various places within the rights-of-way, from along the edge of the right of way to the center of the street. The main trunkline for the north portion of the project area runs down State Street from 2nd Street to 8th Street at which point it crosses over to Commerce Street. One 15" and one 30" on Commerce Street collect sewerage from the southern half of the project area. The 30" is tributary to the 13th Street lift station and the 15" flows by gravity to the crossing of the canal at Division Street. The crossing is then tributary to the Sewage Treatment Facility just west of Prairie Street south of Division Street.

There are no sanitary sewer force mains located with the project area however a forcemain outlets to a structure at the intersection of State Street and 2nd Street.

No documented information is available regarding the age of the existing sewers, based on the age of the surrounding development and the sizes of the sewer it is likely that much of the sewer pipe was originally installed as a combined system and is more than 50 years old. Some may be in excess of 75 years old.

The Village has no documented problems with the existing system, but experiences significant infiltration from the sewers. There are no known cross connections, but there are likely some that are unknown as they encounter additional connections when infrastructure projects are constructed in this area.

Based on the size of the existing sewers and size of the areas served, the capacity of the pipe network is likely adequate for the future redevelopment of the area however, the capacity of the 13th Street lift station should be verified if there is substantial development which is tributary to this station.

## Storm Sewers

The existing stormsewer for the project area is very limited. No size or condition data was available through the City and only partial atlas location information is available. The area from 4th Street north to 2nd Street flows north to the Project Area limits, the sub-basin surrounding 5th street drains to the east across the canal. Little information is available from 5th Street to 8th Street. The area around 9th Street drains to the West across the





canal. The areas south of 10th Street appear to drain to the west across the canal at multiple locations. Although the atlases suggest that the sewer crosses the canal in several locations, small outlet structures were observed at the canal bank and could be connected to portions of the sewer system that drains the project area.

It is likely that there are still stormwater drains connected to the sanitary sewer system, although the Village has separated the sewer system during the 1980's. An update of the City's Atlases will be performed during the summer of 2008 and additional information may be available later in the study.

There are no stormwater detention facilities within the project area which is not uncommon for an urban area such as Lockport.

Stormwater detention and water quality enhancements will be required for proposed redevelopment areas per the Village Development Ordinance Section 153.50.40

### Lighting

Lighting is provided by ornamental fixtures (at a spacing of approximately 60 foot) along State Street from 8th Street to 13th Street; along 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th street from the canal to east of Hamilton; and, on Hamilton from 8th to 11th Street. All of the ornamental poles and fixtures are painted green. On State Street from 6th Street to 8th Street and from 13th street to 14th Street, Roadway lighting is provided by Davit Arm roadway poles painted green. At the transition points from the ornamental poles to the more modern Davit Arm poles, there is one ornamental mast arm roadway pole on each side of the street.

Roadway lighting within the remainder of the areas is provide by aluminum mast arms on wood utility poles which are owned and maintained by Commonwealth Edison.



Image 2: Davit arm pole (Source)



Image 3: Ornamental fixture (Source)



Image 4: Ornamental roadway fixture (Source)

### Vaulted Sidewalks

There are numerous vaulted sidewalks that exist within the project area. The following list was developed from records from an improvement project performed by the Illinois Department of Transportation along State Street.

- 916 State Street
- 900 State Street
- 906 State Street
- 910 State Street
- 908 State Street
- 914 State Street
- 920 State Street
- 922 State Street
- 924 State Street
- 938 State Street
- 931-935 State Street
- 925 State Street
- 905 State Street
- 903 State Street
- 901 State Street
- 831 State Street
- 823 State Street
- 809 State Street

The above list was developed from available information and is dated from 1994. This list should not be considered to be complete and the existing vaults may have been filled since this data was recorded.

### Roadways

Majority of the street have curb & gutter and enclosed drainage, however portions of Hamilton do not have curb & gutter.

The condition of Hamilton Street is very poor except for the intersection of 13th Street which is currently under construction and from 9th to 10th Street where it has been recently improved. The recent improvements consist of new curb & gutter with asphalt pavement and faux brick cross walks.

State Street which is under IDOT's jurisdiction is in fair to good condition. The curb & gutter is in serviceable condition as is the asphalt pavement. The adjacent concrete



sidewalks are in very good condition. There is a grade differential along the east side of State Street from 9th street to 10th Street, on 9th Street from State to Hamilton Street, and on the southeast corner of State Street and 11th Street. This has been resolved by constructing a single step at approximately 3' from the back of the curb along this side of the street. This step presents a trip hazard and does not meeting current ADA standards. If redevelopment occurs within these areas, consideration should be given to mitigate this problem.

The roadways in the residential areas in the northwestern portion of the study area do not have curb and gutter and are in fair to poor condition. This area is also within a floodplain, which will require special permitting for improvements within this area.

Portions of the planning area are currently under construction. The roadway is being replaced from along 13th Street from State to east of Hamilton and along Hamilton from south of 13th to north of 11th Street.

There are several locations within the planning area where there are significant changes in grade along the roadways. The grade change from State Street to Hamilton Street between 11th Street and Division Street and the side streets between the canal and State Street from 9th to 11th may not allow the construction of walks that meet current ADA standards.

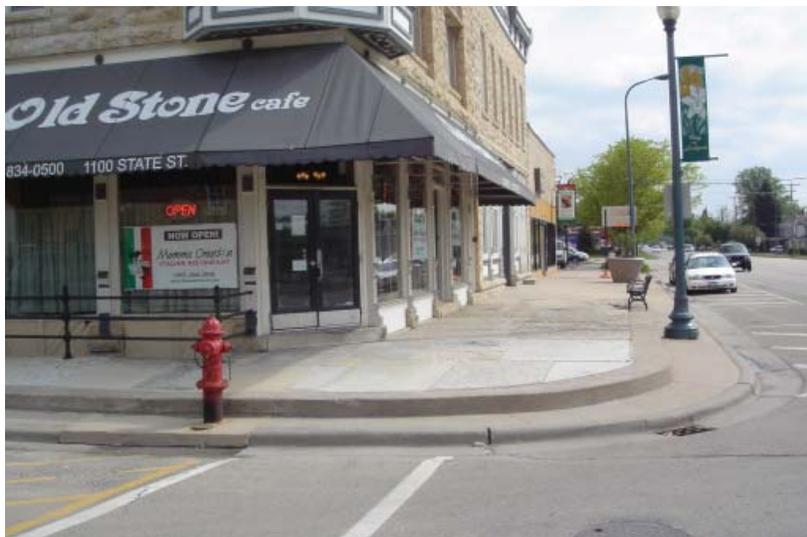


Image 5: Grade differential at 8th and State (Source)



Image 6: Steep slope on 11th Street (Source)

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## Electrical and Telecommunication Utilities

Overhead electrical lines exist along the west side of State Street from Division Street to 11th Street and on the east side from 2nd Street to 7th Street. There is also cable and telecommunications equipment on these poles. Although State Street from 7th street to 11th Street has no overhead utility poles, the service to may of the building in this area are provided via overhead poles in the alleys behind the buildings.

Along Hamilton Street there is overhead electrical along the west side of the street from Division to 2nd Street. There is also cable and telecommunications equipment on these poles.

The cross streets within the project limits also have overhead utilities located on either or both sides of the street from west of State street to east of Hamilton. There is also an overhead electrical line which runs along the east side of the rail line east of the canal.

Nearly all of the existing properties within the planning area have overhead electrical, telecom and cable utility services. However AT&T has some underground service within the planning area. Gas service is provided underground to the entire planning area.

Consideration should be given to conversion of the existing overhead utilities line to an underground system to improve the aesthetics of the area.



Image 7: Overhead utility near canal  
(Source)



Image 8: Overhead utility near Hamilton  
(Source)

