INDUSTRIAL MANCHESTER

2008

MASTER PLAN

virginia commonwealth university urban and regional planning program
Industrial Manchester Master Plan

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Section 1. Introduction
Industrial Manchester is located across the James River south from downtown Richmond. Bounded by Commerce Road, Maury Street, and the James River, the area has a rich history as one of the first locations of industrial activities in America. Despite having tremendous assets such as its proximity to Richmond’s Central Business District, waterfront location, and historic architecture, the area also suffers from liabilities including limited access to the river, vacant lots, and the lack of street activity.

In recent years, investments have introduced new commercial and residential uses in former industrial buildings to the area. Undoubtedly, the area is currently experiencing major changes. In order to become a vibrant and sustainable community, Industrial Manchester must organize its land uses in a ways that minimize conflicts, improve circulation to incorporate a multimodal approach to transportation, and introduce urban design elements that will create a sense of place and cohesiveness to the area. As Industrial Manchester transitions from a regional industrial center to an urban, mixed-use community, this document is intended for use by the City of Richmond as a policy guide to create long-term development patterns that will facilitate this transition in a way that benefits the area’s residents, business owners, and visitors.

Accordingly, this document is organized into four main sections. First, Existing Conditions summarizes the current state of Industrial Manchester. Next, Foundations of the Plan describes the five main concepts that guide the recommendations that are detailed in the section that follows. This
section, the Industrial Manchester Master Plan, outlines specific guidelines for the future development of the area over the next decades. Building upon the five foundational concepts, these recommendations are organized into individual components: 1) Land Use Plan, 2) Circulation Plan, 3) Urban Design Plan, and 4) Illustrative Plan.

I wish to thank Mort Gulak and Kim Chen of Virginia Commonwealth University and Brooke Hardin of City of Richmond for their support, encouragement, and advice in the formulation of this plan. I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues in the Master’s of Urban and Regional Planning Program, especially Jeff Eastman, Megan Hesse, Kelly Kinahan, and Abby McCabe, for their constant enthusiasm, assistance, and collegiality during my two years at VCU. And most of all, I would like to thank Babette Fuss for her unwavering support, insight and patience.
Section 2. Executive Summary
With its long and rich history, Industrial Manchester is an important community whose impacts have affected the entire region along the James River. Companies established throughout its history such as the Cheek-Neal Coffee Company, the Franklin Manufacturing Company, and the Dunlop Mills helped Richmond become one of the most important manufacturing centers in the Mid-Atlantic region. While industrial uses continue to play an important role in Industrial Manchester today, recent developments have prompted the transition of the area into more of an urban, mixed-use community.

Existing conditions within the area present both assets and liabilities that need to be addressed for the future development of Industrial Manchester. Assets include the area’s rich history, proximal location to downtown Richmond and the James River, existing infrastructure, historic architecture, and attention from investors and developers. On the other hand, liabilities in Industrial Manchester include the large number of underutilized or vacant parcels, restrictive zoning, poor infrastructure maintenance, incohesive urban design, and lack of access to the river.

The purpose of the recommendations made by the Industrial Manchester Master Plan is to build upon these strengths while mitigating the weaknesses in order to create a community that offers a wide-range of land uses and active, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. A framework for recommendations for these improvements is guided by five foundational concepts that are meant to remain as constants during the long-term scope of the plan. These foundations include an emphasis on the following concepts:

1. Traditional Neighborhood Development
2. Sustainable Design
3. Riverfront Access
4. Multi-modal Transportation
5. Historic Preservation

Guided by these foundations, specific recommendations in the Industrial Manchester Master Plan are organized into the Land Use, Circulation, and Urban Design Plan components.

- The Land Use Plan organizes the pattern of land uses within the area by creating four complementary districts: 1) Commercial Gateway Corridor, 2) Mixed-use Community, 3) Riverfront, and 4) Live/Work Light Industrial District.
- The Circulation Plan component offers recommendations to accommodate different modes of transportation including vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options.
- The Urban Design Plan component introduces elements that are intended to create a sense of place within Industrial Manchester by creating gateways, improving the streetscape, and by making view and vista opportunities.

These recommendations are intended to work in conjunction over the long-term to create Industrial Manchester as an area that features a wide range of land uses, provides a strong sense of place, and is a vibrant and sustainable community.
Section 3. Existing Conditions
The area at the Falls of the James River has long been recognized as a strategic location along the waterway. In fact, this area was inhabited by Native Americans and was used as a center for communication and trade for more than 1400 years before the arrival of the first European explorers in 1609. At the site of what is now Industrial Manchester, permanent European settlement began in 1644 with the establishment of Fort Charles along the southern bank of the James River. Well-suited to host industry because of its location and named simply as “the Mills”, the area quickly became the home to several tobacco warehouses, gristmills, and other industrial uses before its incorporation as the town of Manchester in 1769.

The Manchester Millrace, running parallel to the southern bank of the James River, served as the power source for many of these industries.

Between the inlet and outlet of the this canal, a grassy area known as the Manchester Commons hosted a public gathering space and provided citizens with access to the river. Although John Mayo claimed to have rights to this land, a court case in 1811 established that the land belonged to the citizens of the town of Manchester. A portion the original Commons still exists today as open space and is owned by the City of Richmond.

At the time of its incorporation, Manchester included 312 lots and several tenements close to the James River. The current street grid can also be traced back to this period and includes streets named after American naval heroes that are retained today--Decatur, Hull, Bainbridge, Porter, and Perry.

Just prior to the start of the Civil War, Richmond produced 254,000 barrels of flour annually, most of which came from three mills. One of these,
the Dunlop Mills built in 1853, was located at the southern end of the Mayo Bridge in Industrial Manchester. Other important industries also located within the area. Companies like the Cheek-Neal Coffee Company, who specialized in packing and grinding, helped Richmond become the nation’s premier coffee port during this period. Papermaking also has a long history in Industrial Manchester. Several companies including the Franklin Manufacturing Company in 1834 and the Manchester Board and Paper Company in 1863 established mills in Industrial Manchester. In addition to these large manufacturers, smaller manufacturers also thrived during this period and produced a variety of goods including leather products, brooms, fertilizer, furniture, and tin ware.

The turn of the 20th century brought new sources of laborers to Industrial Manchester. For the first time, African-Americans, women, children, and residents of rural areas entered the work force. Along with the laboring class, prosperous managerial and entrepreneurial classes also saw increases in numbers during this period. This increase in population, along with the annexation of Manchester by the City of Richmond in 1910, led to an increase in urban investments including the installation of streetlights and sewers, and the replacement of the old Mayo Bridge by a new concrete span.

The industrial character of the area continued to strengthen during the rest of the last century as companies such as Reynolds Metals Company, Sampson Paint Company, and the Crawford Consolidated Manufacturing Company all located facilities within Industrial Manchester.

In order to protect businesses and residents from the frequent flooding that has historically affected areas on both sides of the James River, the City of Richmond completed work on its Floodwall in 1994. This floodwall continues to be a prominent and very visible physical feature of Industrial Manchester. While its intent is to protect the area from the cresting of the James River, the floodwall also virtually eliminates all access to the River from the study area.

In recent years, increasing development of residential and commercial uses has joined the traditional industrial uses within the area. Former warehouses along Commerce Road, Hull Street and Decatur Streets have been converted into multifamily residential buildings. Plant Zero, Artworks, and other commercial spaces developed in industrial buildings have also proven to be economically successful. This trend to adaptively rehabilitate industrial buildings for residential or commercial uses is likely to continue in the near future due, in large part, to federal and state historic tax credits that became available to developers when a large portion of the study area was designated as a National Register Historic District in 2000 by the Department of the Interior.
DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2000, the Industrial Manchester study area was comprised of 72 Census blocks. Data from these individual blocks revealed that the 190-acre area contained very few residents. In fact, according to Census 2000 results, only 27 persons lived within the study area.

In order yield a more useful demographic analysis for this document, the Census area was expanded to include tract 601, which also covers the adjacent residential area to the southwest of Industrial Manchester. Analysis of the social, economic and housing characteristics compiled from this expanded region provides valuable demographic data about the general area that includes Industrial Manchester.

In 2000, a total of 481 people lived within tract 601. A vast majority of these residents (80%) were African-Americans. The remaining residents categorized themselves as White-American (17%) or Native Hawaii or other Pacific Islander (3%).

These African American households earned substantially more than their White American counterparts. In fact, African American households earned an average of $22,125 compared with just $12,125 for White American households. These income data are also reflected in the percentage of households living below poverty level--a staggering 61% of White American households compared to 27% of African American households.

Despite their lower incomes, a large majority of households who lived in owner-occupied housing were White American (63%) while only 14% of African American households were homeowners. Conversely, for renter-occupied housing, only 18% of the households were White Americans compared with 82% for African-Americans. For all households that rented, almost 37% spent 40% or more of their income on rent (2000 Census, SF3).

However, demographic data from the 2000 census are unlikely to reflect the development in Industrial Manchester that has occurred within the last several years as part of the general trend to revitalize downtown Richmond. New multi-family housing developments have likely substantially increased the number of residents within the study area. In addition, because many of these units are marketed to middle and upper-
income households, the income data for households are most likely to be considerably different than they were in 2000.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>White American</th>
<th>African American</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total % of Population</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Income</td>
<td>$12,125</td>
<td>$22,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households Under Poverty</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households w/ Home Ownership</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 1: 2000 SF3 Census Demographics of Tract 601. Source: 2000 Census.

Using a method based on records for the number of certificates of occupancy since 2000, extrapolated number of persons per household, and unit vacancy rate, the City of Richmond’s Department of Community Development estimates that an additional 189 persons has moved to the Industrial Manchester area since the last Census. However, other demographic information regarding these new residents are not known.
1. Zoning

The majority of the study area is zoned as a heavy industrial district (M-2) permitting most uses including manufacturing, office, commercial, and automobile-oriented uses such as service and repair stations. In fact, the M-2 district permits many intense uses that are not allowed in any other zoning districts within the City of Richmond. Furthermore, the M-2 district contains no yard, setback, or screening requirements.

A three-block area between Hull and Decatur Streets to 2nd and 5th Streets is zoned as a central business district (B-5). Similar to the M-2 zoning, the B-5 district has no yard or setback requirements. Screening, however, is required for parking lots and all lots adjacent to a residential district. Permitted principal uses include dwellings, offices, and commercial uses such as art galleries, restaurants, and dry cleaners. Uses with drive-up facilities are not permitted. In addition, off-street parking is not required for uses other than dwellings or hotels and motels.

The area west of Commerce Road and south of Hull Street is zoned a general business district (B-3). Permitted uses are much more general than in the B-5 district and include uses such as adult entertainment establishments, auto service or repair centers, storage yards, and sales lots. Small sections of the study area west of Commerce Road and north of Hull Street are zoned as residential-office (RO-2) and office-service (OS). The RO-2 district allows dwellings, offices, and commercial uses such as banks, nursing homes, and private schools. The OS district permits uses such as professional and medical offices, contractor’s shops, and catering businesses. Drive-up facilities are not permitted in this district.
The current M-2 zoning in most of the study area is a significant barrier to the development of Industrial Manchester as a mixed-use community. In order to provide any dwelling uses in this district, developers must apply for a special use permit or a rezoning through the Land Use Administration Division of the City’s Department of Community Development. Because these applications involve a complicated, expensive, and time-consuming procedure with no assurances for approval, developers of proposed mixed-use or residential developments face uncertain outcomes for the completion of their projects.

2. Land Uses

Industrial uses and vacant lots account for almost 80% of land uses by parcel acreage in the study area. Of the 187.5 acres of total parcel area, 51% is categorized as industrial uses. These uses include the manufacturing of metal products, furniture, and paper products. The central location of the study area within greater Richmond and its proximity to Interstate 95 have also attracted several trucking and related services, fuel storage and distribution companies, and materials storage and warehousing firms. Prominent industrial firms with facilities located within the Industrial Manchester include Alcoa Incorporated, Sampson Coating Incorporated, and Citgo Petroleum Corporation.

In addition to these industrial uses, interspersed throughout the study area are numerous vacant parcels. Second only to industrial uses, vacant parcels account for 28% of the study area. The largest of these parcels are localized along the riverfront and access ramp to Interstate 95. Of the remaining land uses, office, and residential uses account for thirteen, six, and five percent of total parcels respectively. While these non-industrial land uses currently account for only 24% of the parcel area in Industrial
Manchester, the pattern of development in favor of these uses in recent years should result in the growth of these numbers in the future.

3. Development Trend

As part of this trend, a number of development projects in recent years have transformed many of the industrial buildings into residential, commercial, or mixed-uses. In one example, the former Mead Westvaco paper plant was converted in 2003 to the Plant Zero Arts Center, which has drawn a large number of artists and patrons to Industrial Manchester. This exhibit space is complimented by other converted buildings such as Art Works and ArtSpace that provide studios for artists of varying disciplines. This concentration of artistic activities has also increased the popularity of the area’s signature arts event—Fourth Friday—by drawing hundreds of visitors to Industrial Manchester each month.

The underlying M-2 zoning of most of the study area does not permit residential uses. However, seven properties have been converted within the past several years to multi-family residential uses through the City of Richmond’s special use permit and rezoning process. The Parachute Factory located on 3rd and Decatur Streets is one example and offers 95 loft apartments within a short walk from the Plant Zero Arts Center. Manchester Lofts is a similar adaptive reuse residential development. This former Virginia Bakery building was converted into 80 one and two-bedroom condominiums with sales prices ranging from $140,000 to $390,000. Similarly, the former Cheek-Neal coffee warehousing building, renamed to Warehouse 201, was recently converted to 14 loft apartments with rents ranging from $750 to $2,100.

In addition to residential uses, a number of industrial buildings have also been converted to office uses. The Corrugated Box Building at 7th and Porter Streets, was converted to 40,000 square feet of office space. This innovative building features an open floor plan with businesses sharing amenities such as a reception area, break room, and multi-media conference facility. The trend to introduce offices, retail, and residential uses to replace industrial uses within the study area is changing the nature of Industrial Manchester. While these changes have the potential to transform the area into a vibrant urban neighborhood, the transition also may create potential conflicts between the more intense industrial uses and other less intense uses that result in issues of parking, traffic, and nuisance complaints.
ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

1. Floodplains

Almost the entire study area lies within the 100 and 500-year floodplains of the James River. This topography and repeated flooding led to the development of the Richmond Floodwall, which was completed in 1994. The southern portion of the floodwall runs along the length of Industrial Manchester’s northern boundary with the James River. This southern portion consists of a 9,000 foot-long earthen levee, a combination bin wall/levee that is approximately 2,000 feet long, and a concrete floodwall that is approximately 2,000 feet long. Ostensibly protected from future flooding, the Floodwall has allowed development—especially residential dwellings—to be completed within a flood zone. This protection, however, comes at a high price as the Floodwall is a formidable physical barrier between the community and the river.

2. Chesapeake Bay Protection Area

The study area’s proximity to the James River also results in large sections, especially along the Manchester Millrace, being designated as Chesapeake Bay Resource Management or Protection Areas. In their natural conditions, these resource areas protect water quality, filter pollutants from stormwater runoff, reduce the amount of total runoff, prevent erosion, and perform other important biological and ecological functions. Although development is not prohibited in these resource areas, new construction must undergo a review process to ensure mitigation of the development’s impact on these ecologically sensitive areas.
industrial uses as Industrial Manchester. Considered in context with the area’s topography, it is not surprising that the portion of the James River immediately downstream of the study area is designated as an impaired waterway and unsafe even for recreational uses.

As a former industrial area located adjacent to an ecologically sensitive waterway, Industrial Manchester poses a number of environmental concerns that must be addressed prior to any future development. Potential developers must consider the added costs of possible environmental impact mitigation or pollution clean-up when considering a site’s feasibility for construction. Growth should occur in a manner that mitigates negative impacts to the environment while producing developments that result in appropriate and functional uses for an urban community. Maintaining this balance has not always been a priority in the past in Industrial Manchester, but should be at the forefront for any future development of the area.

3. Petroleum Release Sites

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality lists eight locations within Industrial Manchester as petroleum release sites. These sites are reported to the DEQ when a release of petroleum products of more than 25 gallons occurs from aboveground or underground storage tanks.

Unfortunately however, many discharges of petroleum or other materials are likely to be unreported in an area with such a large concentration of
CIRCULATION

1. Street Network

Much of the grid street network that was originally implemented during the early part of the 20th century is still evident in Industrial Manchester. Although some of these streets have been converted to one-way and others have been closed, the interconnectivity of the grid system and its advantages for traditional neighborhood development is still present throughout the study area.

Three major roads carry traffic through the area: 1) Commerce Road forms the western boundary of the study area; 2) Hull Street runs through the heart of Industrial Manchester; and 3) Maury Street forms the southern boundary. Using the City of Richmond traffic operation and enforcement ranking system, Commerce Road and Hull Streets have traffic operation rankings (TOR) of 3 and are classified as principal arterial streets. Maury Street has a TOR ranking of 8 and is classified as a minor arterial street.

The 0.39-mile section of Commerce Road that is located within the study area accommodates 5,800 vehicles as its annual average daily traffic (AADT). A majority of this traffic is from automobiles (86%). Fourteen percent of this AADT on Commerce Road is attributable to trucks or buses. On the other hand, the narrower, four-lane, 0.37 mile section of Hull Street that runs through the study area accommodates 17,000 AADT. Hull Street, which turns into 14th Street north of the James River, is a major commuting route between downtown and the residential areas south of the James River. Almost all traffic on this stretch of Hull Street (97%) is from automobiles. To the south, Maury Street provides direct access to north and southbound traffic on Interstate 95 through entry and exit ramps.
located at the intersection of 4th Street. This narrow, four-lane street accounts for 10,000 AADT – most of which results from traffic to and from Interstate 95. Eighty-nine percent of this traffic is from automobiles, while 10% is attributable to trucks or buses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOR</th>
<th>AADT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commerce Road</td>
<td>3 – Principal Arterial</td>
<td>5,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hull Street</td>
<td>3 – Principal Arterial</td>
<td>17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maury Street</td>
<td>8 – Minor Arterial</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decatur Street</td>
<td>12 – Minor Arteria</td>
<td>1,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Decatur Street, running parallel to Hull Street, is representative of the principal local (TOR 12) streets that run throughout the study area. Traffic on these secondary streets is much lighter and serves the local existing residential, commercial, and industrial uses within Industrial Manchester. Compared with the major access routes, traffic counts on Decatur Street are relatively light with only 1400 AADT. Again, similar to the rest of the traffic pattern throughout the study area, most of this traffic is attributable to automobiles (86%) with the rest attributable to trucks or buses (Virginia Department of Transportation, 2006).

The street network generally provides good circulation of vehicular traffic through Industrial Manchester. However, because the area lacks commercial or retail activity, this traffic has little reason to stop within the study area. As a result, a potentially large base of shoppers and consumers only pass through Industrial Manchester. If economic revitalization is to occur in the area, the capture of this potential market must be considered.

### 2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Traffic

Although the grid network is for the most part intact, non-motorized traffic throughout the study area is not well supported. Marked bicycle lanes are missing throughout the study area. For pedestrians, sidewalks are available along some streets, but absent from many others. Of the existing sidewalks, condition varies from good to deteriorated.

Crosswalks are also missing from many intersections, especially along
the busy major roadways such as Commerce Road. The absence of well-marked crosswalks and features such as pedestrian refuge medians and other traffic calming measures greatly impairs walkability throughout the study area. Perhaps partly due to these missing accommodations, pedestrians or cyclists were rarely seen during visual surveys of Industrial Manchester. Improvements to infrastructure to better facilitate non-motorized traffic within Industrial Manchester clearly needs to addressed in order to improve the overall circulation pattern.

3. Public Transit

Two public transit lines run through Industrial Manchester—routes 62/63 and 74. Route 62/63 (Hull Street/Midlothian Line) runs Monday-Friday along Hull Street with approximately 15-minute intervals from roughly 5:00 a.m. to midnight. Weekend services follow the same schedule but with longer intervals between buses. Route 74 (Oakgrove Line) runs Monday-Friday with approximately 20-minute intervals from roughly 5:00 a.m. to midnight. Weekend services also follow the same schedule but with longer intervals between buses (GRTC, 2008). However, amenities that may encourage and increase ridership such as shelters, benches, and schedule signage were absent throughout the study area.

4. Railroad

Several active freight rail lines operated by Norfolk Southern and the Seaboard System Railroad (CSX) and inactive lines run through the study area. Most of these lines are located along the area running parallel to the James River. Norfolk Southern also operates a large rail yard with a turnaround facility adjacent to the floodwall near the Manchester Bridge. The presence of these rail lines and their crossings have perceptible

impacts for all modes of circulation within the study area. Not only is traffic halted when trains cross the study area, most of the tracks are raised above surface of the roadway and interfere with the flow of pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile traffic.
URBAN DESIGN

1. Mass & Scaling of Buildings

The built environment of the study area reflects its history as an industrial center. The street grid system implemented during the late-19th and early-20th century produced compact, regular, and rectangular city blocks.

Many of the existing buildings share characteristics such as red brick construction, rectangular shape, and industrial architecture. Other common characteristics of these industrial buildings include heights between two and four stories. Setbacks from the street also tend to be narrow, as industrial uses have traditionally maximized building footprints on parcels. Additionally, the orientation of these buildings is also consistent. Doors and windows face the street and provide a sense of connection between the building and street. The result is uniformity and static serial vision in terms of scale, massing, and materials in the areas where these industrial buildings have been preserved.

Despite the similarities of the industrial buildings, the study area lacks overall consistency due to the many vacant or industrial storage lots that break up any sense of design rhythm. Newer construction in the study area often do not incorporate the patterns of the historic industrial buildings. These buildings are often automobile-oriented, set further back from the street, and are surrounded by surface parking areas. Many of the newer buildings also lack prominent windows or doorways oriented toward the street frontage. This inconsistency between new and historic buildings, and the noticeable lack of streetscape and pedestrian amenities result in a sense of irregularity, randomness, and neglect throughout Industrial Manchester.

2. Areas of Enclosure and Exposure

The ratio between building height and narrow width of the streets in many sections of the study area provides a sense of enclosure. This sense of enclosure is essential in promoting a comfortable public setting particularly for pedestrians. Especially on narrower secondary roads such as Decatur, Stockton or Bainbridge streets, this sense of enclosure also acts
as a traffic calming measure. Vehicles drive at a much slower pace than on the wider Hull Street or Commerce Road. However, long enclosed stretches do not exist as numerous parking areas, curb cuts, open storage lots, and vacant parcels located throughout the study area interrupt this sense of enclosure.

On the other hand, along the main traffic corridors of Hull Street, Commerce Road, and Maury Street, a sense of enclosure is completely lacking. Even more so than on the secondary streets, the missing buildings, parking lots, and vacant lots combine with the greater width of these streets to create a sense of exposure that does not facilitate pedestrian or gathering activities.

3. Streetscape, Views & Vistas

The automobile-oriented nature of the study area is evident in the urban design of the streetscape. Amenities such as street-furniture, pedestrian scale lighting, street trees and landscaping are noticeably absent throughout Industrial Manchester. In many parts of the study area, sidewalks and other features of the streetscape are neglected and
poorly maintained. Moreover, the lack of storefront windows, retail and pedestrian activities contribute little to the street life or vibrancy.

Grid street systems generally promote views and vistas due to their linear layout. Together with its proximity to the James River and downtown Richmond, Industrial Manchester is well situated for grand views and vistas. However, because of current industrial uses and the existence of the floodwall that runs the length of the river within the study area, views and vistas from within Industrial Manchester are noticeably missing—especially for visitors anticipating river views.

In contrast, just beyond the floodwall on the Manchester (9th Street) or Mayo (14th Street) Bridges, spectacular and unobstructed vistas of downtown Richmond and the James River are available. A paved trail along the northern side of the Floodwall provides impressive views of the river and downtown. Similarly, a walkway on top of the floodwall is accessible from a stairway located between the Manchester and Mayo Bridges.

Additionally, a platform on top of the Floodwall located at the southern end of the Mayo Bridge is accessible via a looping stairway. Unfortunately, because of the automobile-oriented nature of the streets near these facilities, poor access design, lack of parking, and inadequate signage, few people currently take advantage of these view and vista opportunities.
SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS

1. Richmond Central Business District

Across the river to the north of the study area is Richmond’s Central Business District. As the primary economic engine for the entire Richmond Metropolitan Area, developments within the CBD affect not only Industrial Manchester, but also the entire region. Approximately 80,000 people are employed in the numerous private, governmental, and institutional offices located downtown. As the largest employer in the downtown area, the VCU Medical Center alone employs over 25,000 people (Richmond Downtown Plan, 2004). In addition to these employers, according to the 2000 Census, over 3,900 residents call downtown Richmond home. This number is likely to be much higher today given the numerous housing developments that have recently occurred. Combined with retail stores, restaurants, museums, and other attractions, downtown Richmond offers a host of amenities as the cultural, business, and institutional center for the region and the state.

2. Manchester Residential Neighborhood

Just west of Commerce Road is the Manchester Residential Neighborhood with its traditional and historic single-family homes. This neighborhood has historically been centered on the commercial activities of Hull Street. Parallel streets to the north including Bainbridge, Porter, and Perry streets host mainly single-family residences interspersed with churches and other public buildings. However, the general decline of commercial activities on Hull Street during the latter part of the 20th century, population loss, and the large number of vacant lots have adversely affected the Manchester residential neighborhood.

3. Blackwell Neighborhood

Southeast of Hull Street to Dinwiddie Street, the Blackwell neighborhood was originally part of the town of Manchester. Blackwell is distinguished by the street grid system with houses originally constructed for the factory workers in the nearby industries. Less ornate than the houses in residential Manchester, the houses in the Blackwell neighborhood are generally smaller in scale.

Much of Blackwell consists of a mix of single, two-family, and multi-family housing. Multi-family housing is concentrated between Decatur...
and Maury Streets from 9th to 14th Streets and managed by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority. Other land uses in the neighborhood include industrial areas, and an outdoor recreational complex.

Data from the 2000 Census reveals that out of the 1,376 residents living in Blackwell, 1,316 (96%) were African Americans while 41 (3%) were White Americans. Twenty-three percent of the 651 total available housing units were vacant. Of the non-vacant units occupied, 33% were owner-occupied.

Recent developments in the area include over 180 single-family dwelling units which are being constructed as part of the HOPE VI program funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

RELATED & PREVIOUS PLANS

Several ongoing or previous plans offer recommendations for the Industrial Manchester area. These plans include the Richmond Downtown Master Plan Update (2007), the Manchester Industrial District Plan (2004), the 2001 Richmond Master Plan, and the Manchester Industrial Area Revitalization Plan (1986).

2007 City of Richmond Downtown Master Plan Update

Industrial Manchester was added to the study area for the 2007 update to the Downtown Master Plan. After an extensive public participation process during the summer of 2007, the consulting firm of Dover, Kohl, and Partners produced a draft version of the plan that made several recommendations for the Industrial Manchester area. Generally, the plan recommends: 1) the careful balance of new residential and office uses to existing industrial and commercial uses; and 2) the preservation of the viable and healthy industrial economy of the area. Additionally, the draft plan recommends that new infill construction define the street and provide generous mid-block, open-air space for storage, work yards, and other industrial activities. The revitalization of Hull Street through streetscape improvement, adding public, mid-block parking areas, and creating transit connections along the corridor is also recommended.

2004 Manchester Industrial District Plan

Prepared by the VCU Urban and Regional Planning Team, this plan provides goals, strategies, and implementation for a five-year development plan as well as a 15-year long-term vision for the district. The plan outlines zoning changes, provisions for infrastructure development, circulation and urban design improvements for the area as part of the five year plan component. The plan also provides the groundwork for the longer term vision of the district as a vibrant mixed use area that includes a stable commercial and industrial employment base, an active residential community, and a riverfront district that blends recreational, entertainment, and retail uses that serve the entire Richmond metropolitan area.

2000-2020 City of Richmond Master Plan

Industrial Manchester is part of the Old South Planning District in Richmond’s citywide Master Plan. In this plan, Industrial Manchester is recognized as an area in transition from hosting exclusively industrial uses to one accommodating a mix of uses including retail, entertainment, and office. Specifically, the Master Plan recommends that the mix of uses
in Industrial Manchester should be similar to the uses found currently in Shockoe Bottom. Furthermore, in areas where conflicts in land uses exist, the Master Plan recommends that heavy industrial uses transition to lighter industrial uses that are less noxious and more compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods.

1986 Manchester Industrial Area Revitalization Plan

Formulated in 1986 by Carol Byrnes as part of the studio requirement for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree at Virginia Commonwealth University, this plan outlines the revitalization of the Industrial Manchester area through various economic, transportation, aesthetic, and land use recommendations.

STAKEHOLDER ATTITUDES

Individual interviews were conducted with stakeholders including two business and property owners, two developers, and four residents and/or property owners to assess their general views regarding Industrial Manchester. These stakeholders were identified at City Planning Commission meetings or at other public meetings where topics regarding development in Industrial Manchester and surrounding areas were discussed. At the conclusion of these meetings, the stakeholders were approached and asked to take part in the informal interview. Through these interviews, responses were collected concerning the advantages and disadvantages of living or doing business in Industrial Manchester and the stakeholders’ outlook on development trends.

Each stakeholder cited the location of the study area as a strong advantage to locating business or living in Industrial Manchester. Residents also cited the availability of lifestyle amenities of the downtown area such as restaurants and entertainment activities specifically as benefits to living within the study area. Business owners mentioned the clustering of businesses in the downtown central business district and vehicular access to local roads and to Interstate 95 as advantages to their operations. Other advantages mentioned were the relatively low cost of land or rent compared with the downtown area, the history of the study area, the architecture of the existing buildings, and the low incidence of crime and other public safety issues.

Figure 13: Stakeholders acknowledged the changing nature of Industrial Manchester to include more mixed-use developments such as these on Decatur Street.
In terms of disadvantages, common complaints from respondents included the poor maintenance or lack of public infrastructure such as sidewalks, streets, and street trees. Residents also cited the lack of retail, commercial, and pedestrian activity within the area.

One business owner mentioned that the narrowness of some of the secondary streets created difficulties for trucks to access his business. He also complained that the closing of Bainbridge Street at the Alcoa facility impeded traffic and further hindered access to his business.

None of the respondents mentioned environmental concerns such as existing or potential industrial pollution or the threat of flooding as disadvantages for locating within the study area.

For each of the interviewed stakeholders, viewpoints regarding the future development of the study area were very similar. All respondents acknowledged the changing nature of the area from predominantly industrial to a mix of land uses including residential and commercial. Residents did not see a mix of residential with industrial uses as problematic. In fact, one resident felt strongly that some industrial uses should be maintained in the future to preserve the historic nature of these uses to the area.

On the other hand, business owners and operators were more concerned about potential problems with the conflict of land uses. Specifically, they predicted that increasing residential uses would lead to problems with parking and increased traffic. One owner was particularly concerned with the conversion of an adjacent building to a residential use with up to 110 units. The increased traffic and demand for parking resulting from this development, he believed, would have serious and negative impacts on his operation. Another operator of an industrial business conceded that his business would most likely eventually relocate due to increasing residential and commercial development pressures.

In addition to these interviews, the opinions of various stakeholders in the area were collected during a City of Richmond district meeting in Manchester to discuss the Downtown Master Plan update. During the public comment period of this meeting, attendees brought up several concerns for the entire Manchester area. Once concern specific to Industrial Manchester that was voiced repeatedly as a priority was the revitalization of the Hull Street corridor. Many of those who spoke linked the history of Hull Street as a commercial center with their desires to see the corridor revitalized as a shopping and commercial district to serve the needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.
Section 4. Foundations of the Plan
The purpose of this section is to outline the principles that serve as the framework for the recommendations for Industrial Manchester. These foundational concepts include:

1) Traditional Neighborhood Development
2) Sustainable Design
3) Riverfront Accessibility
4) Multi-modal Transportation
5) Historic Preservation

While implementation details may evolve over time as changing conditions necessitate, these principles are intended to remain constant to guide the development of the area. Building on the assets while mitigating the liabilities discussed in the previous section, these principles provide a framework for the specific recommendations on the growth and development of the area detailed later in the Industrial Manchester Master Plan Section.

1. Traditional Neighborhood Development

As its name implies, traditional neighborhood development is not a new concept. Rather, this concept represents the way that cities throughout the world developed before the emphasis of the automobile as the primary mode of transportation in the 1950’s.

Traditional neighborhood development accommodates many different modes of transportation including pedestrian, bicycles, and public transit. Streets are designed to be walkable, human-scaled, and with connections between buildings and the streetscape.

The highly connected street system in traditional neighborhoods also provides for small blocks that host a variety of mixed and compact land uses without the separation of districts so prevalent in suburban development.

In addition to the variety in land uses, traditional neighborhoods also offer diversity in housing types, employment options and household income levels. Through this diversity, traditional neighborhoods like Industrial Manchester offer the wide range of opportunities for residents, businesses, and investments needed to sustain a healthy community.

Figure 15: Traditional neighborhood development emphasizes density, active streetscapes, and mix of land uses. Richmond has a great example of TND in Carytown.
2. Sustainable Design

Construction of public and private spaces incorporates elements of sustainable design in order to reduce energy usage and adverse impacts to the environment. Energy saving methods and materials in new constructions or rehabilitated buildings reduce the use of fossil fuels for heating and cooling. Solar and other renewable energy sources mitigate carbon emissions and dependence on foreign oil. Furthermore, use of recycled materials in construction conserves limited natural resources.

Compact development, a mix of land uses, and transit options also reduce the need to use the automobile as the primary source of transportation. Walking, ride-sharing, cycling, and public transportation are viable options for circulation within Industrial Manchester.

Green roofs, pervious surfaces, landscaping, and other management techniques reduce and slow the rate of stormwater runoff that carries contaminants to sensitive waterways. These green techniques also lessen the urban “heat island” effect and reduce the need for cooling during the summer months. Urban street trees provide added benefits as urban design elements, improve air quality, and reduce glare.

3. Riverfront Accessibility

The James River provides a unique resource for Industrial Manchester. Residents and visitors enjoy this amenity through well-established pedestrian connection points between the neighborhood and the riverfront. These connections provide an enhanced experience of the river by inviting visitors to delight in the contrast between this natural resource and the urban environment.

Expanded parks and public spaces running the length of the riverfront within Industrial Manchester provide continuous gathering spaces and entertainment opportunities.

New innovative multi-use structures extend publicly accessible space at the top of the floodwall and provide restaurants, retail, and promenade with unparalleled views of the James River and downtown Richmond.
4. Multi-modal Transportation

Development patterns, especially in suburban regions, during the latter part of the 20th century have accommodated the use of the automobile as the predominant mode of transportation. This reliance on one mode of transportation has created communities that lack walkability and options in terms of physical mobility.

Unlike these communities, the grid system of streets and the traditional neighborhood development patterns in Industrial Manchester allow for a multi-modal approach to circulation. Streets are arranged to accommodate a variety of transportation options including walking, cycling, public transit, and automobile traffic. One-way traffic is minimized to reduce unnecessary vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and potential conflicts for pedestrians and cyclists.

Because pedestrian activity is so vital to the streetscape of a neighborhood, walkable thoroughfares are priorities within Industrial Manchester. Setbacks between buildings and the public right-of-way are minimized to provide a connection between pedestrians and the streetscape.

Also, since off-street parking is arranged behind buildings, curb cuts that disrupt the flow of pedestrian traffic are minimized. On-street parking acts as a natural traffic calming measure and provides buffer between vehicle and pedestrian traffic.

Figure 17: Multiple forms of transportation including bus transit should be accommodated.
5. Historic Preservation

The rich history of Industrial Manchester is evident through its unique architecture, infrastructure, and public spaces.

As one of its most valuable assets, the history of the area is accessible to the public through the preservation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings to host contemporary functions such as commercial, residential, and retail uses.

Restored historic sites such as the Manchester Commons and the Hull Street Commercial Corridor are not only focal points for the community, but provide unique attractions for visitors to the area. Interpretive markers and landmarks highlight the depth of the history and the importance of its preservation to the community as future development occurs.
Section 5. The Master Plan Components
Guided by the conceptual foundations discussed in Section 3, the Industrial Master Plan is intended to guide the overall growth and development of Industrial Manchester for the next decades. Components of this Master Plan include specific land use, circulation, and urban design recommendations along with the illustrative plan detailed in this section.

LAND USE PLAN

Current land uses in Industrial Manchester are a mixture of industrial uses, storage lots, surface parking, and commercial facilities that have been developed by right mostly under the industrial zoning regulations of the area. With a few exceptions, retail uses are completely absent. This lack of retail and community services compounded with the automobile-oriented nature of the existing uses provide little pedestrian activity and vibrancy along the streets. Recent private investment has introduced some new commercial uses and dwelling units in rehabilitated historic buildings.

However, because residential uses are prohibited under the current industrial zoning, these dwellings require special approval from the City of Richmond. As Industrial Manchester evolves from a predominantly industrial area to one that features a mix of uses, this land use plan offers guidelines for the transition. Land use recommendations are categorized based on four proposed districts within Industrial Manchester, each with their own characteristics. These districts include:

1. Commercial Gateway Corridor Districts
2. Mixed-Use Community Districts
3. Riverfront District
4. Live/Work Light Industrial District
1. Commercial Gateway Corridors

The Commercial Gateway Corridors should be revitalized and developed with commercial activity fronting both sides of the streets. Hull Street, Commerce Road, and Maury Street currently serve as the main routes of travel through Industrial Manchester. However, little traffic stops within the study area due to a lack of commercial activity or services.

- Hull Street has historically served as the “Main Street” for the entire Manchester area. Accordingly, commercial activity along Hull Street such as offices, retail, personal and professional services should once again be encouraged. Likewise, as major thoroughfares serving the area, similar commercial activity should be introduced along Commerce Road and Maury Street.

- As industrial properties become available for redevelopment, commercial activities that can capture some of the traffic that passes through these corridors should be developed. Establishment of regional shopping or commercial destinations should be emphasized based on the corridors’ proximity to downtown Richmond and other surrounding businesses.

- A healthy mix of community-oriented businesses and services should also locate along these corridors.

- Although this district is primarily intended as a commercial corridor, a mix of land uses is encouraged with retail and commercial uses on the ground floor of buildings and office or residential uses on the upper levels.
2. Mixed-Use Community Districts

The Mixed-Use Community Districts should be defined by complimentary commercial and residential developments.

- Taking advantage of the development patterns that have occurred over the past several years, this area should continue the trend of offering dense, multifamily dwellings with new infill construction or rehabilitated historic buildings.

- Community-oriented businesses such as “corner stores”, food establishments, or dry cleaners should be encouraged.

- Similar to the development pattern that can be found in the Fan or Shockoe Districts north of the River, the Mixed-Use Community Districts should host a dense residential population within walking distance to support not only these community businesses, but also those found along the Commercial Gateway Corridor.

3. Riverfront District

The Riverfront District should provide residents and visitors connections to the James River with new developments at the Floodwall, a linear park along the Manchester Millrace, and open space at the historic Manchester Commons.

- Although it protects the area from flooding, the Floodwall forms a formidable barrier for those seeking to experience the James River from Industrial Manchester. In order to increase connectivity to the River, the Floodwall section from the Mayo Bridge to the Manchester Commons should be developed with new commercial and residential uses.

   Figure 21: View of the Floodwall Promenade conceptual development from the north.

   Figure 22: View of the Floodwall Promenade conceptual development from the south showing potential commercial/retail and parking space.
Bridge should be enhanced with new developments that extend the area at the top of the Floodwall to provide space for a promenade or park, venues for food services and retail, and unobstructed views of the River and downtown Richmond. The lower level of this development should provide areas for public parking, commercial storefronts, and interior common space.

- Complimenting this floodwall construction, the Millrace should be renovated as a linear park that runs the length of Industrial Manchester parallel to the James River. Similar to the Canal Walk completed across the James River in 1999, or the River Walk in San Antonio, this linear park along the Manchester Millrace would allow recreational and entertainment opportunities along the River currently unavailable in Industrial Manchester.

- Between the Mayo Bridge and Interstate 95, the historic Manchester Commons should be restored as a green space to allow residents and visitors to Industrial Manchester additional recreation and gathering opportunities. Interpretive exhibits and markers should also be placed throughout Manchester Commons and along the Millrace to reinforce Industrial Manchester’s rich history.
• At the other end of the Millrace near the base of the Manchester Bridge, the Norfolk Southern rail turnaround facility should also be developed as public green space featuring an amphitheater. This green space, connected to the Manchester Commons by the Millrace, would create a pedestrian axis providing recreational and business opportunities once again along the James River. This extensive system of green spaces in proximity to the waterfront would also greatly reduce the amount of stormwater runoff and pollutants introduced to the sensitive Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

• The Southern States grain elevator, although listed as a non-contributing building under the 2000 nomination for the National Register of Historic Places, should be adaptively reused potentially as an Industrial Manchester Visitor Center or other private uses.

4. Live/Work Light Industrial District

The Live/Work Light Industrial Districts should provide land uses that echo the area’s industrial roots while providing affordable live/work space for artisans, craftspeople, and specialty manufacturers.

• While Industrial Manchester is transitioning toward a mix of land uses, some industrial uses should remain in the area. Furniture manufacturing, wood-working, metal crafting, fine arts production and other light industries should be encouraged to locate in this district.

• The removal of the petroleum storage tanks and other heavy industrial uses currently located on parcels in this area should be considered and replaced with infill development that allows for live/work units.

• Properties in this district adjacent to the Mixed-Use Community District and Riverfront District should be screened by landscaping to provide a buffer to less intense land uses.
CIRCULATION PLAN

Industrial Manchester currently suffers from a lack of coordination between different modes of transportation. An over-emphasis on accommodating automobile, truck, or rail traffic have made pedestrian or bicycle traffic within the area challenging. But even for vehicular traffic, one-way traffic along some roads makes circulation patterns difficult and potentially confusing.

Worse still, the lack of crosswalks, poorly maintained sidewalks, and railroad tracks act as barriers and safety hazards for pedestrians. Additionally, rail tracks—many of which are abandoned—create barriers in circulation especially in areas near the riverfront. These issues, along with the lack of street activity, offer little in terms of reasons for most visitors to leave their automobiles.

1. Improve Pedestrian-Accommodating Infrastructure

- Emphasis should be placed on improving the infrastructure designed to accommodate pedestrian traffic within Industrial Manchester. Sidewalks, curbs, and gutters should be present and maintained on all streets with the overall objective of providing an accessible and functional pedestrian amenity throughout the entire study area.

- Special brick-paved sidewalks should be installed in designated areas including the Hull Street Corridor where pedestrian traffic is expected to be high.

- Crosswalks should also be installed at each major intersection and distinguished from the roadway by striping or by use of contrasting paving material. These intersections should also feature crossing signals with timer feature.

- As land uses develop that encourage increased pedestrian activity, mid-block crosswalks should also be considered along the blocks fronting Commerce Road.
2. Accommodate Other Modes of Transportation

As the population grows within Industrial Manchester, alternate modes of transportation will play increasingly important roles in providing circulation while reducing issues with traffic and parking.

- While the two public transit lines serving Industrial Manchester provide convenient routes, the frequency of service should increase as demand increases.

- Along these routes, bus shelters with architectural features designed to reflect the historic nature of Industrial Manchester should be placed at stops that serve 100 or more passengers per typical weekday.

- Similarly, bicycle traffic should be accommodated and encouraged with dedicated lanes along Commerce Road. This road is currently overbuilt for automobile traffic with six lanes accommodating less than 6000 vehicles per day. A five-foot wide bicycle lane in each direction separated from automobile traffic should be established to enhance the safety of cyclists within the area.

- Additionally, racks for securing parked bicycles should also be placed throughout Industrial Manchester in the public right-of-way in front of businesses, dwellings, and along the riverfront.

3. Convert One-way Streets for Two-way Traffic

One-way streets create multiple problems for vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic. For example, drivers often have to travel unnecessary distances to arrive at a location due to the circuitous routes forced by one-way traffic. Signage on these streets is oriented toward only one direction of travel and may not be visible to pedestrians or cyclists leading to way-finding problems. Additionally, traffic speeds are generally higher on one-way streets raising public safety concerns for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists.

- Currently, five streets within the study area are one-way (2nd/Brander, 4th, 5th, 6th, and Bainbridge Streets). Each of these streets should be converted to two-way traffic.
4. Reconnect Grid Street System

One of the biggest advantages of the grid street system is the high level of connectivity for circulation within an area. Drivers have multiple routing options for arriving at particular destinations, navigation is simpler, and traffic loads can be distributed throughout the entire grid. However, these advantages are only available if streets on the grid system remain connected. Over time, many streets within Industrial Manchester have been closed to through traffic.

- The network of street connection should be re-established in two areas: 1) North of Hull Street and East of Commerce Road; and 2) South of Maury Street to the access ramp to Interstate 95.

5. Remove Abandoned Rail Tracks

Numerous rail tracks run through the study area mostly near the riverfront. While some see active use, others are underutilized or abandoned. Tracks leading to sites that formerly hosted industrial uses such as the former Cauthorne Paper facility or Southern States grain elevator are no longer in service.

- Abandoned or underutilized tracks should be removed or consolidated to facilitate circulation near the river.

Figure 28: Abandoned rail tracks such as this one formerly used by the Cauthorne Paper Company should be removed.
6. Street Design

Commerce Road, Decatur Street, and 4th Street represent three different types of streets in Industrial Manchester. Each has varying right-of-way widths, average daily traffic, and operational functions within the study area. Commerce Road is a main thoroughfare and should be designed to be the most traffic-intensive of the street types. On the other hand, Decatur and 4th streets are local routes and see much less traffic. However, the design of each of these streets and the streets they typify should maintain consistency.

• Travel lanes should be 10 feet for all streets in Industrial Manchester. The relatively narrow width of these lanes should act as a traffic calming measure by slowing vehicular traffic.

• At the outer edges of the roadway, parking lanes should be eight feet and located on both sides of streets where possible. This on-street parking not only acts as an additional traffic calming measure, they also provide a buffer between automobile traffic and pedestrian traffic along the sidewalks.

• Street trees should be planted at approximately 35 feet on center to provide additional pedestrian buffer and traffic calming.

• As previously mentioned, sidewalks should be placed throughout Industrial Manchester and maintain a minimum width of six feet.

Figure 29: Proposed street designs within Industrial Manchester.
URBAN DESIGN PLAN

The existing urban design of Industrial Manchester lacks consistency and cohesion. Areas of exposure, poor infrastructure maintenance, unrestrictive zoning, and the absence of views or vistas have all negatively impacted the streetscape and public spaces in Industrial Manchester. This section offers recommendations that improve the streetscape, organize the public spaces, and underline the importance of creating a connection between people and the built environment within Industrial Manchester.

1. Gateways

Gateways into and out of Industrial Manchester should be established on Commerce Road, Hull Street, and Maury Street to create a strong sense of place that is currently lacking within the community. Three different strategies should be used for each of these gateways.

Commerce Road - The space north of the study area on the Manchester Bridge is defined by a sense of exposure as one crosses the James River. The current width of Commerce Road relative to the height of the surrounding buildings continues this sense of exposure, albeit to a lesser degree, into Industrial Manchester. In order to create a contrasting visual gateway at the junction of the Manchester Bridge and Commerce Road,

- A sense of enclosure should be created by narrowing the width of the roadway, planting street trees and widening the median. As it exists now, Commerce road has six travel lanes that are severely underutilized. The roadway should be narrowed by landscaping and widening the median to 18’, reducing the number of travel lanes to four, and introducing an eight-foot wide parking lane in each

Figure 30: The intersection at Commerce and Hull as it currently exist (top photo) and after urban design improvements (bottom photo).
direction. The narrowing of the road, combined with the planting of shade trees (such as “Allee” elms) along both sides of the street and both sides of the median, will create a sense of enclosure similar to that found north of the River on Monument Avenue.

**Hull Street** – Gateways on Hull Street (at 2nd Street and at Commerce Road) should be defined by its streetscape of “Main Street” type commercial storefronts. Buildings along Hull Street should share a consistent serial vision by offering similar heights, mass, scaling and details. Contrasted with the more urban, high-rise central business district of downtown Richmond, Hull Street, with its “Main Street” styled corridor, should present a striking gateway.

- Buildings should be between one and three stories in height. Colors, architectural styles, and design details should be consistent between buildings.

- Architectural styles should also respect Industrial Manchester’s long history. Features such as corbels, arches, pilasters, cornices, stone sills, and the use of bricks as the main building material should be encouraged.

- Building facades at ground level should feature storefront windows covering at least 60 percent of total surface area.

**Maury Street** – The gateway at Maury Street and 4th Street should be defined by the installation of industrial artworks.

- The large grassy divide between the on and off-ramp to interstate 95 is an ideal site for locating a number of industrial sculptural works.

Comprised of materials or products usually found in industrial uses, these art works should also feature the talents of local artists. Not only would they provide visual cues for those entering or exiting Industrial Manchester, these sculptures would also provide a connection to the area’s industrial past and to the Live/Work Light Industrial District located nearby.
2. Streetscape

Design elements for the streetscape in Industrial Manchester should emphasize consistency, quality, and pedestrian-friendliness. Improving the design elements in the streetscape will enhance the aesthetics and functionality of the public space while increasing business opportunities by attracting consumers and visitors.

- **Street Trees** – Streetscapes depend on street trees for framing architecture, providing pedestrian comfort, and for creating greenery in an urban environment. Trees should be planted approximately 35 feet on center to allow space for the crowns to grow as the trees mature. Tree wells should be no larger than four feet by four feet and covered with a decorative iron grate. A listing from the City Division of Urban Forestry should be used to determine the species of trees appropriate for specific streets within the area.

- **Street Furniture** – Benches should be placed in high pedestrian traffic areas such as the Hull Street Corridor or the Canal Walk at the Millrace. Black-green benches five feet wide comprised of wide steel strips should be positioned at frequent intervals in these public spaces. Similarly, trash receptacles made of the same black-green steel strips should also be in the same general location on each block typically near the corners and at mid-block.

- **Lighting and Utilities** – Existing cobra head street lights should be replaced in all areas of Industrial Manchester. Black-green acorn lighting fixtures (or similar decorative pedestrian-scale fixtures) should be used as the primary light source along the streetscape. Lighting performance standards of 3 footcandles maximum and 1.5 footcandles minimum on average should be used to determine the height of poles and brightness of bulbs. In order to not disrupt other streetscape elements, especially street trees, overhead lines should be replaced by underground utilities.

- **Signage** – A cohesive system of informational and navigational signage contributes positively to the streetscape. Street signs and way-finding signs should be consistent in terms of overall design schemes.
Maps, historic information, and directories should be free-standing, eye-level, and easily spotted by visitors. Plaques with detailed information for historic buildings should also be attached prominently on facades at eye-level.

Vertical, rectangular banners affixed to the roadway side of ornamental street lights should advertise special events or festivals along the Hull Street and Commerce Road Corridors. The maximum width of these banners should be no larger than three feet to minimize blocking building facades or general visibility.

Green – Rain gardens, vegetative swales, landscaping, flowerbeds, and accessible intensive green roofs should be established throughout public spaces and buildings and encouraged in private developments. Not only are these features visually pleasing, they also reduce stormwater runoff, heat island effects, and air pollution.
3. Views and Vistas

The best views of downtown Richmond and the James River are from Industrial Manchester. However, these views have been permanently blocked since the floodwall was completed in this area. An opportunity exists along the proposed Floodwall Promenade to make these views and vistas once again accessible to residents and visitors to Industrial Manchester.

- Development on the Floodwall Promenade should be controlled to allow for adequate open spaces to allow wide viewing angles to the spectacular scenery.
- View and vista opportunities from the Floodwall Promenade toward the southwest overlooking South Richmond should be encouraged as well.
Illustrative Plan for Industrial Manchester

1. Green space with amphitheater
2. Commerce Road Gateway
3. Reconnected street grid
4. Millrace Linear Park
5. Floodwall Promenade
6. Hull Street Gateway
7. Commercial Gateway District
8. Adaptively reused grain elevator
9. Mixed-use Community District
10. Restored Manchester Commons
11. Riverfront District
12. Maury Street Gateway
13. Live/Work Light Industry District
Section 6. Implementation
Recommendations for Industrial Manchester outlined in the previous section require appropriate actions if they are to be transformed into built improvements. This section specifies the steps that the City of Richmond and the community of Industrial Manchester can take to implement the recommendations of the Plan.

**LAND USE PLAN STRATEGIES**

1. **Adopt the Industrial Manchester Master Plan.**
   - By adopting the plan, the City and the community of Industrial Manchester signal their commitment to following a clear direction for the future development of the area.
   - Potential developers will also benefit from well-defined objectives that are outlined for specific areas within Industrial Manchester.

2. **Amend the zoning districts within the study area.**

   In order to create mixed-use developments within Industrial Manchester, a special use permit or rezoning is currently required in most cases. The approval procedure for these applications is expensive, complicated, and time-consuming. Worse yet, ultimate approval by City Council is not assured. In order to remove this barrier, the study area should be rezoned.
   - Richmond currently has two zoning ordinances that are well-suited to achieving the goals forwarded by the Land Use Plan: the B-6 and R-63 districts. These two ordinances promote urban, mixed-use developments.
developments and appropriate design by offering elements of form-based code.

• City Staff should undertake a comprehensive study within Industrial Manchester to determine appropriate block-by-block rezoning designations.

• The City should also formulate and adopt a new zoning ordinance which will permit the uses in the Live/Work Light Industrial District specified in the Land Use Plan.

3. Acquire property along the riverfront.

The City currently owns a majority of the land parcels near the riverfront. However, in order to create the Floodwall Promenade, Canal Walk at the Millrace, Manchester Commons and green spaces throughout the riverfront,

• The City of Richmond should acquire parcels when available in order to create a continuous public ownership for these developments.

• A land bank should also be established as part of a parcel assembly program to acquire key sites that would make these riverfront developments possible.

4. Promote development of affordable housing.

A negative side effect of successful redevelopment is an increase in housing costs—a burden especially for low to middle-income households. To prevent the exclusion of households with certain income ranges and to promote diversity within Industrial Manchester especially in the Live/Work District,

• Developers should be encouraged to take advantage of the City’s Affordable Dwelling Unit Regulation that awards density bonuses for setting aside a percentage of their development as affordable housing. Department of Community Development staff should meet with potential developers to discuss incentives and feasibility of incorporating affordable units into new developments.
5. Pursue LEED for Neighborhood Development.

This U.S. Green Building Council rating system, expected to accept project submissions in 2009, integrates principles of smart growth, new urbanism, and green building into the first national standard for neighborhood design.

- The City should form a committee whose members include City staff and members of the community. This committee would be responsible for certifying Industrial Manchester as a LEED ND community and defining the community’s commitment to adopt best environmental practices for sustainable development.

- The City should create a “green” overlay district, similar to the design overlay district, to encourage environmentally sensitive construction methods. City staff should study the feasibility of implementing this green district on a limited basis in Industrial Manchester as a pilot program.

CIRCULATION PLAN STRATEGIES

1. Improve and encourage public transit options.

- City staff from the Department of Community Development (DCD) and Public Works (Traffic Engineering Division) should collaborate with GRTC to improve bus routing, scheduling, and shelter locations based on demand patterns.

- As the population of Industrial Manchester grows, these studies should be updated at intervals of not more than three years.

- Long range options for transit such as fixed rail or wheeled trolley systems should also be studied as part of a collaborative effort between city staff and civic groups.

Figure 39: The automobile-dominated nature of current street design in Industrial Manchester is clear. DPW should phase in improvements in infrastructure to especially to accommodate pedestrian traffic.
2. Prioritize improvements of infrastructure.

The Department of Public Works (DPW) should

- Phase the conversion of streets to two-way traffic, the reconnection of the street grid, and improvements to pedestrian amenities over the next several years as part of the City’s Capital Improvement Projects.

- Specific location and timing of these improvements should be prioritized and determined by DPW with input from DCD.

3. Partner with CSX and Norfolk Southern to eliminate and/or relocate underutilized rail lines.

Especially as heavy industrial uses relocate from the area, the need for multiple rail tracks will decrease and create opportunities to eliminate many of the tracks that currently run through the area.

- City staff should begin immediate dialog with rail corporations to explore the possibility of reducing the number of rail tracks that currently run through the area.

- The City should consider possible “land swap” scenarios with Norfolk Southern to relocate their turnaround facility currently located near the base of the Manchester Bridge.

4. Adopt street design templates.

In order to maintain a consistency in terms of road design,

- DPW should adopt the templates for the street types in Industrial Manchester presented in the Circulation Plan.

Figure 40: The Norfolk Southern rail yard and turnaround facility should be relocated.
URBAN DESIGN PLAN STRATEGIES

1. Create the Commerce Road Gateways.
   - DCD and DPW (Right of Way Management Division) should work with the Urban Forestry Division to narrow the roadway, establish the landscaped median, and plant and maintain appropriate street trees along the Commerce Road Gateway.

2. Create the Hull Street Gateway.
   - The Hull Street Corridor should be designated by the city as a design overlay district. As stated in the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance, "The purpose of the design overlay district is to protect developed areas of the city characterized by uniqueness of established neighborhood character, architectural coherence and harmony, or vulnerability to deterioration. This is accomplished through controlling the patterns of architectural design and development in residential and commercial neighborhoods, which may include new construction, alterations, and demolitions."
   - The overall objective of this district should be to maintain the unique "Main Street" commercial characteristics of the corridor. The City’s Urban Design Committee should review the design of proposed developments along Hull Street for appropriateness.

3. Create the Maury Street Corridor.
   - The City’s Public Arts Commission should implement a “Call for Artists” for the purpose of selecting proposals for the industrial art works to be located on the public right-of-way in this gateway district.
   - The Commission should also coordinate with DPW to identify specific sites and to install landscaping that will compliment these art works.

4. Promote and preserve views and vistas.
   - Guidelines should be established by DCD to direct development of buildings on the Floodwall Promenade ensure views and vistas of the James River and surrounding area.
   - Part of these guidelines should be to promote open spaces on the Promenade by limiting or clustering the number and square footage of development.
5. Implement streetscape design improvements and consistency.

DCD and DPW should collaborate to implement streetscape elements in a consistent manner throughout Industrial Manchester.

- Selection and installation of elements such as street furniture, lighting fixtures, signage, and urban green features should be decided based upon considerations of cost, appearance, function, and maintenance. Priority should be given to streetscape improvements along the commercial corridors.

- Utility lines should be first buried along the commercial corridors and later to local streets.

Figure 41-42: Decatur Street as it currently exist (top photo) and after urban design improvements including ornamental lighting and street trees (bottom photo).
## Implementation Timeline

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<td>• Adopt the Industrial Manchester Master Plan</td>
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<td>• Amend the zoning ordinances within the study area</td>
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<td>• Acquire property along the riverfront</td>
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<td>• Pursue LEED for Neighborhood Development</td>
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<td><strong>Circulation Plan Implementation</strong></td>
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<td>• Improve and encourage public transit options</td>
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<td>• Phase in improvements of infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Partner with rail companies to eliminate and/or relocate underutilized rail lines</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Adopt street design templates</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Design Plan Implementation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve Commerce Road Gateway</td>
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<td>• Improve Hull Street Gateway</td>
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<td>• Improve Maury Street Gateway</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Promote and preserve views and vistas</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Implement streetscape design consistency</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: Implementation timeline*
Section 7. Sources
SOURCES


- City of Richmond Department of Community Development. Old Manchester Neighborhood Plan. Richmond, VA: 1996.


