



Schenk-Atwood Neighborhood Business District Master Plan

**Prepared for the Schenk-Atwood Revitalization Association (SARA)
and the City of Madison**

**SCHREIBER/ANDERSON ASSOCIATES, INC.
BEST Real Estate Group, Inc.  Design Coalition, Inc.**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

In February 2000, the Schenk-Atwood Revitalization Association (SARA), and the City of Madison jointly commissioned Schreiber/Anderson Associates, Inc., BEST Real Estate, Inc., and Design Coalition, Inc. to prepare a detailed Master Plan and Implementation Strategy for the Schenk-Atwood Business District. The Master Plan focused on the Schenk-Atwood commercial district, generally defined by East Main Street on the north, Dunning Street on the east, Eastwood Drive on the south, and First Street on the west. The study area also included Schoep's and the Jenifer Street Market area south of Eastwood Drive.

The primary purpose of the Master Plan is to build on the district's strengths and assets by providing comprehensive guidelines for improvements to land use and business mix, transportation, parking, streetscape design, and district character over the next 10-15 years. The plan builds on the general recommendations for the business district stated in the Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Worthington Park Neighborhood Plan. This plan is intended as a tool to guide investment decisions by the City, public agencies, developers, business owners, property owners and others and to minimize the impacts of unguided planning decisions and parcel-by-parcel development.

The master plan document is highly graphic, providing the reader with eye-level and aerial photographs of the district to describe the existing conditions and character of the area. The plan also includes plans and sketches to illustrate recommendations such as desired development patterns and potential changes to streets and intersections.

PUBLIC PROCESS

The Schenk-Atwood Business District Master Plan was developed as part of a thorough public review and input process. A Master Plan Steering Committee was established to coordinate the project with members who represent the interests of the business district, including business and property owners, developers, residents, Alderperson Judy Olson, and Archie Nicolette from the City Department of Planning and Development. **A total of 18 meetings were held to discuss the plan and solicit public input, and numerous interviews were conducted with individual business owners, property owners, developers and residents throughout the planning process.** Preliminary plans and sketches were displayed in the storefront of Design Coalition on Atwood Avenue and an e-mail listserve was set up to receive public comment.

MASTER PLAN GOALS

The Schenk-Atwood Master Plan Steering Committee drafted the following Mission Statement and goals based on public input from Community Forums:

The Schenk-Atwood Neighborhood Business District Master Plan is a comprehensive planning and implementation process to guide the physical and economic revitalization of the Schenk-Atwood Neighborhood Business District. This planning process will build a partnership among business owners, property owners, residents, and the City to frame a long-term vision for the district and a coordinated strategy to achieve that vision.

1. Enhance the business mix, including neighborhood-oriented and community destination businesses, that fit the scale and character of the district and strengthen the district as an activity center.
2. Provide clear and efficient automobile circulation to the business district while strengthening pedestrian, bicycle and transit access and improving connections between the district and the adjoining neighborhood.
3. Strengthen visual character of the district through streetscape improvements, public space development, attractive entrances, historic preservation and architectural guidelines for new buildings and rehabilitation of existing buildings.
4. Provide adequate parking to support the business district in a manner that promotes efficient land utilization and an attractive streetscape character.
5. Promote a range of infill development opportunities that provide more residential choices and business opportunities that serve the neighborhood.
6. Develop funding strategies with the City and neighborhood and business/property owners to implement plan recommendations. Consider TIF as the primary funding tool to implement redevelopment opportunities and public improvements.
7. Create a business association to promote and manage the needs of the business district.



Schenk's Corners at the intersection of Atwood Avenue and Winnebago Street



West gateway to the Schenk-Atwood Business District on Eastwood Drive from Williamson Street



Rail corridor at Second Street and East Main Street

MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

A comprehensive list of Master Plan recommendations was prepared for the Schenk-Atwood Business District based on a review of recent plans and information, an inventory and analysis of existing conditions, an assessment of market potential, worksessions with the steering committee and City staff, and public input sessions. Short-term projects that will establish a framework for neighborhood rehabilitation, business improvements and new development activities were also identified.

Transportation Recommendations

Traffic Circulation

In the mid 1970's, major street improvements were implemented in the Isthmus area in the Schenk-Atwood Business District to redirect traffic away from neighborhood streets. While these improvements were helpful in reducing traffic congestion in the neighborhood, they also isolated the business district, resulting in difficulty and confusion for customers to find and enter the district. The Schenk-Atwood Business District Master Plan recommends that the historic traffic patterns and the relationship of Schenk's Corners to the arterial street system be re-established while continuing to allow commuters to bypass the district on Eastwood Drive and First Street. Several intersection and street design improvements have been recommended in the master plan, including the redesign of the intersections at Winnebago Street/Eastwood Drive (west) and Atwood Avenue/Eastwood Drive (east) to provide two-way access and egress for the district.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations

The Schenk-Atwood Business District is located at the center of several neighborhoods, and many community residents traverse the district on foot or by bicycle to reach work, school, or other destinations. Currently, arterial streets and the rail corridor are barriers that present challenges for safe pedestrian and bicycle access through and around the district. The master plan recommends several pedestrian and bicycle circulation improvements, including safer street crossings, additional sidewalks such as Amoth Court, parking lot designs that provide dedicated walkways, and improved bicycle paths.

Mass Transit

According to the 1998 Isthmus 2020 Committee Report, more than 50% of neighborhood residents in this area journey to work by means other than single occupancy vehicle. The master plan recommends improved bus connections and facilities and future commuter rail service to enhance transportation choices for residents, visitors and customers and to strengthen the connections between the business district and the community.

Parking Recommendations

The Schenk-Atwood Business District includes a system of public and private parking facilities that collectively support the district's customer, employee and resident parking needs. While the interviews conducted during the planning process did not indicate a parking problem, it is important to maintain an adequate, convenient and attractive parking supply to meet the district's current and future parking needs and enhance the economic success of the

business district. The master plan recommends additional areas where on-street and off-street parking can be provided, opportunities for shared parking, and zoning ordinance changes that allow greater flexibility for businesses to meet their parking requirements.

Redevelopment Recommendations

A number of recent initiatives including Isthmus 2020 and the Dane County BUILD program have encouraged infill development and the renovation of existing building stock in areas where there is already an existing infrastructure as sound, "smart growth" policy. Analysis of the business district indicates that large parts of the district have been assembled in common ownership, and interviews with property owners indicate a strong interest to redevelop and/or rehabilitate these properties. The master plan identifies several sites for both short-term and long-term development, rehabilitation and historic preservation, and provides design guidelines for how these sites should be developed to achieve a unified and coordinated land use pattern that complements and enhances the character of the neighborhood.

Business Mix

In the early 1900s, the Schenk-Atwood Business District was considered the "downtown" of eastside Madison. Today, surrounded by a stable housing stock, neighborhood schools and churches, and convenient public transportation, the Schenk-Atwood neighborhood retains strong viability and is considered to be one of Madison's most successful neighborhood retail districts. The master plan recommends building on this foundation by recruiting new neighborhood-serving and community destination businesses, and by clustering related businesses together that complement one another and the adjoining land use mix and traffic patterns.

Streetscape and Open Space Recommendations

Enhancing the streetscape and visual character of the Schenk-Atwood Business District will be necessary to create a stronger identity for the district as a retail destination and to establish a pedestrian character that reflects the best principles of traditional "Main Street" design. The master plan recommends several improvements to enhance the visual and pedestrian character of the business district focusing on developing a Town Square at Schenk's Corners as a focal point for the district, expanding open spaces and landscaped areas, creating attractive entrances to the district, and providing streetscape improvements.

Design Guidelines

General design guidelines were prepared for the Schenk-Atwood Business District to address how new development and rehabilitation can preserve and enhance the historic architectural character of the area, including:

- Preservation of historically significant buildings.
- Rehabilitation of commercial and residential buildings to enhance their traditional design features.
- How new infill development can complement the scale and character of the adjoining historic buildings and maintain the integrity of the historic block face.

The master plan recommends that a committee be formed to prepare detailed design guidelines, and then to use these guidelines to review proposed projects. It is recommended that this be a consensus-based body of neighborhood stakeholders, including members from both SARA and the Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Yahara Neighborhood Association (SASY).

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

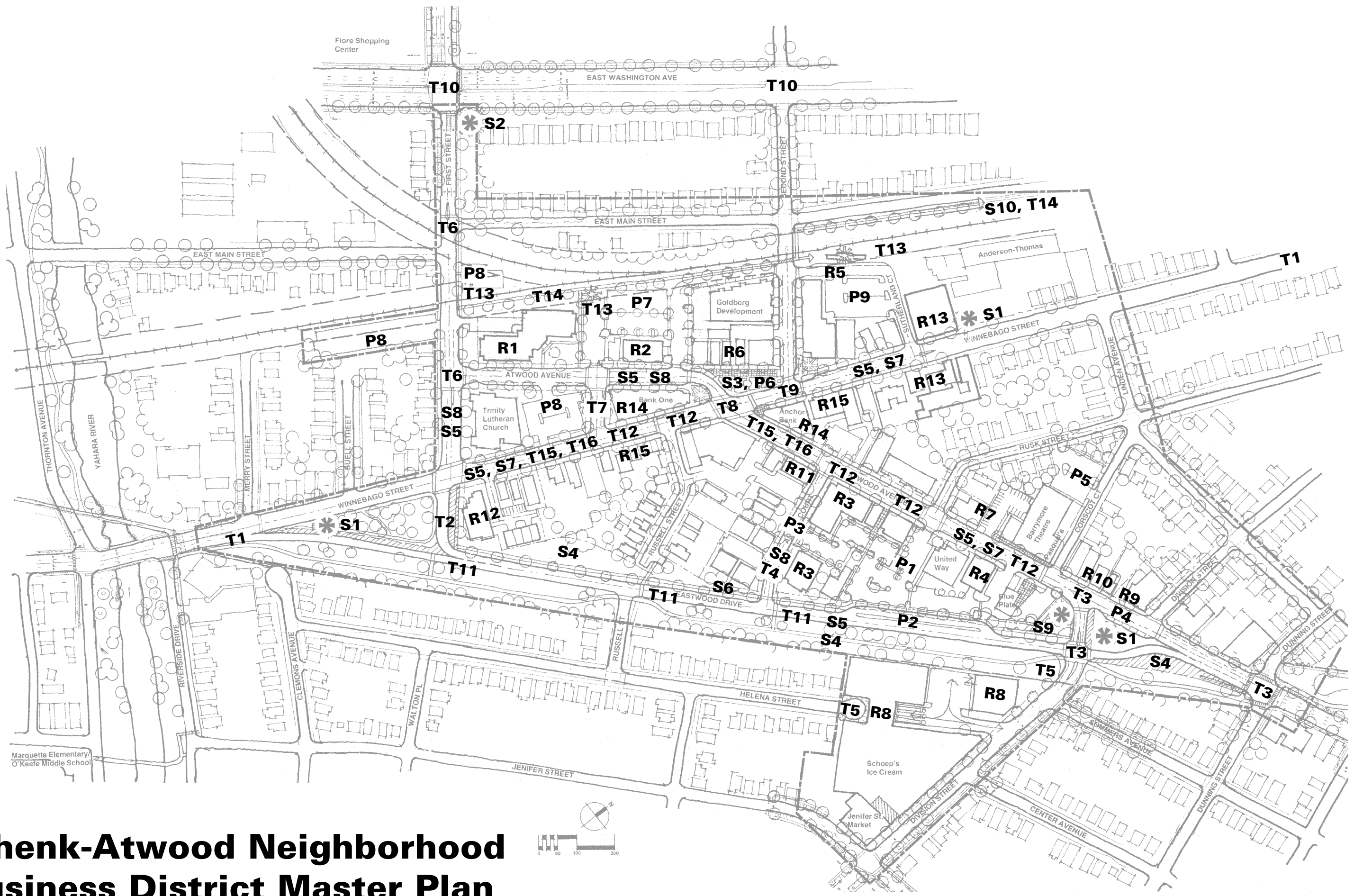
A key component to any master planning work is the ability to implement the plan's recommendations. There needs to be an organized structure to coordinate and monitor implementation priorities. The Schenk/Atwood Revitalization Association (SARA) has played an important role in the neighborhood for over 20 years, installing beautiful neighborhood gardens, spearheading an elderly housing development on an underutilized site, assisting in a land swap with the City of Madison to make way for the development of the Eastwood Court Apartments, and participating in the purchase and renovation of the Barrymore Theatre to retrieve it from an undesirable use to the live performance venue it is today. **The master plan recommends that SARA, working closely with the City and the neighborhood, should assume the leadership role in implementing the master plan.** SARA should organize into a project management team (PMT) with a structure of subcommittees similar to the Bassett Neighborhood PMT. The plan outlines the key steps that this new organization should undertake to guide implementation.

The implementation strategy prioritizes the following public projects for implementation:

- Intersection reconstruction to improve traffic flow
- Development of a Town Square at Schenk's Corners
- Gateway entrance improvements
- Pedestrian crossing improvements
- Bicycle circulation improvements
- Improved bus connections and facilities
- Landscape, public art and park improvements for the Isthmus Bicycle Parkway
- Street reconstruction coordinated with new development

The plan also identifies a possible phasing strategy for redevelopment activities, and how public infrastructure improvements should be coordinated with these activities.

Finally, the plan recommends that a Tax Incremental Financing District (TIF) be created for the business district, based on the real possibility that a number of significant developments will occur at the Dean Clinic site, the Bank One site and the Central Atwood area. It will be desirable to capture the income derived from these developments to fund public improvements recommended for the business district.



Schenk-Atwood Neighborhood Business District Master Plan

Figure 5: Master Plan Recommendations

Transportation

The following recommendations identify specific transportation improvements for Schenk-Atwood Business District including automobile, transit, pedestrian and bicycle circulation and commuter rail. Important considerations for transportation improvements include improving access to the district for all travel modes in a manner that is consistent with community transportation goals; strengthening the district as a neighborhood and community destination; and providing safe, attractive and convenient pedestrian circulation patterns. These recommendations have been developed in consultation with the city and the neighborhood. It will be necessary to further evaluate and refine these recommendations with more detailed transportation analysis and design prior to implementation.

- T1** Intersection improvements to allow two-way traffic flow on Winnebago Street. Terminate Winnebago Street at Milwaukee Street to discourage through traffic.
- T2** Reconstruct First Street south of Winnebago Street for one-way traffic flow into Eastwood Drive. Reclaim existing pavement for parkway and open space use.
- T3** Intersection and street improvements for Atwood Avenue, Eastwood Drive, Division Street and Dunning Street to allow two-way eastbound traffic on Atwood, a four-legged intersection at Dunning, and a reduction in street width on Division.
- T4** Reconstruct Amoth Court with on-street parking and a sidewalk on one side.
- T5** Vacate the end of Helena Street for use by Schoep's as a truck loading facility.
- T6** Reconstruct the intersection of Atwood Avenue and First Street to eliminate the free flow right turn. Provide a safe pedestrian crossing on First at Atwood Avenue and East Main Street.
- T7** Construct a new two-way street to allow better access between Atwood Avenue and Winnebago Street with one side on-street parking.
- T8** Evaluate potential to reduce the width of Atwood Avenue intersection to expand the Town Square and provide better defined pedestrian crossings. Maintain efficient one-way traffic flow on Atwood Avenue.
- T9** Reconstruct Winnebago Street intersection at Atwood Avenue and Second Street to provide additional terrace and landscape space and a safer intersection for automobile, pedestrian and bicycle circulation.
- T10** Provide better defined ped./bike crossings on East Washington Avenue at First Street, Second Street and Fourth Street.
- T11** Provide better defined ped./bike crossings on Eastwood Drive at First Street, Russell Street and Amoth Court.
- T12** Provide better defined pedestrian crossings on Atwood Avenue at Amoth Court, Rusk Street, and Corscot Court, and Winnebago Street at Russell Street and the new street near Bank One.
- T13** Evaluate the location for a future commuter rail station between First Street and Second Street. Possible locations include the area west of Second Street near the existing post office; the Dean Clinic site at the extension of the new street (T7); and the parking lot at the junction of the rail lines east of First Street. Each site must accommodate a bus loop for transit connections and provide convenient pedestrian access to retail uses. Long-term transit parking is discouraged.

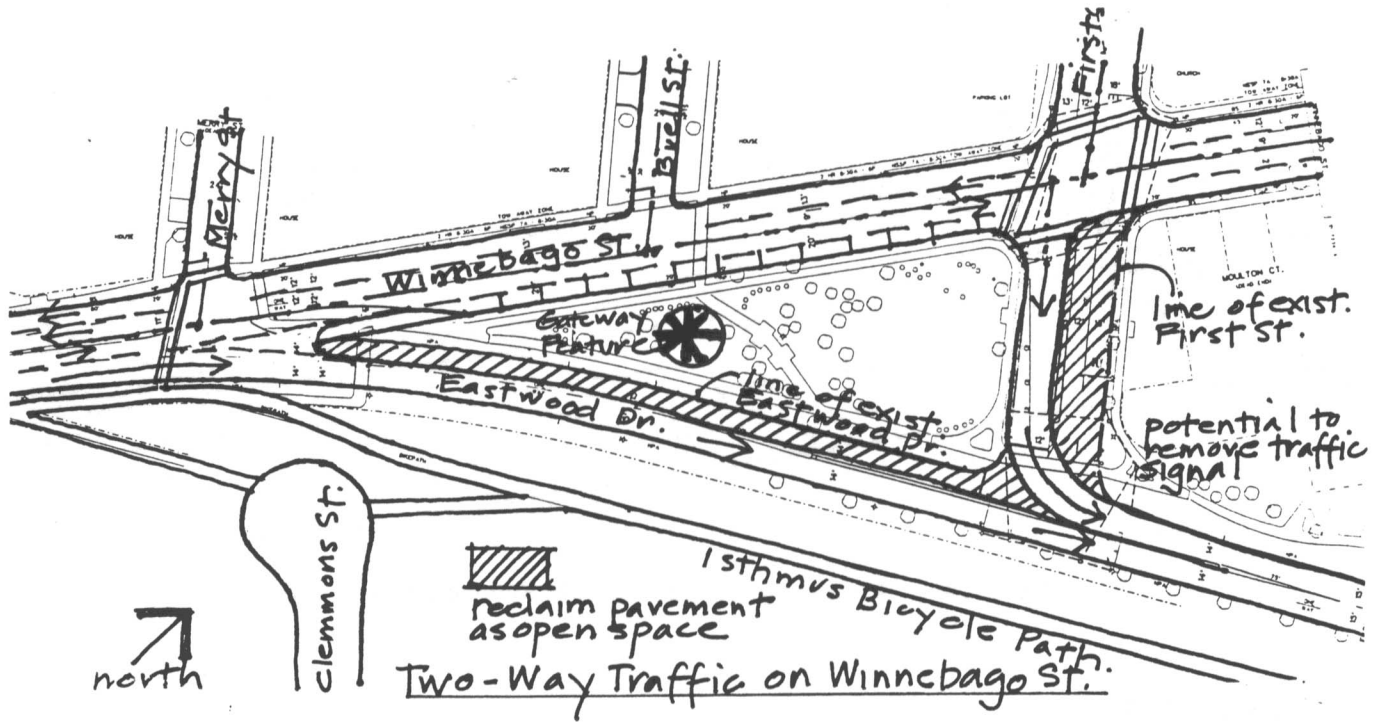


Figure 15 Winnebago South: Potential Transportation Improvements