



Commercial Areas Plan and Policies

Commercial areas comprise a vital component of a community's land use and provide a tax benefit that helps pay for maintenance, improvements, and future expansion of City services and infrastructure. The health of a community's commercial areas is also a significant contributor to a community's image. It is important that the retail and service needs of Marion residents are provided at all levels.

It is also important that the City's commercial development contribute positively to the community's urban fabric and provide a vibrant, safe, and attractive environment within which to live, shop, dine, and work. Mixed-use, compact development should be encouraged, where appropriate, to enhance the vibrancy of commercial areas. Synergies exist in a mixed-use environment wherein local residents and office workers provide retailers and service providers with a round-the-clock customer base while reducing the need to drive and promoting a sense of place.

Marion's commercial areas are comprised of a diverse mix of land uses. Each commercial land use possesses a unique scale and character of development offering a distinct range of goods and services. The physical needs and site requirements of the businesses operating within these commercial areas also varies.

Marion's commercial areas are concentrated in the southern portion of the community along the City's corridors, and little commercial development exists to the north of the Highway 151 corridor. The commercial areas plan builds upon the Land Use Plan, which identified five categories of commercial land use: Neighborhood Commercial, Corridor Commercial, Uptown, Light Industrial, Business Parks, and Growth Area Commercial.

The locations of these commercial uses are illustrated in Figure 6. General policies that apply to all commercial areas as well as growth area policies for commercial development are also discussed at the end of this section.

Neighborhood Commercial Recommendations & Policies

Neighborhood commercial centers serve local residents and provide the goods and services needed on a daily basis. According to the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and The Urban Land Institute (ULI), a neighborhood center typically attracts consumers from within three miles or a drive of under 10 minutes. These centers usually have a single anchor tenant, typically a grocery store (e.g. Hy-Vee, Fareway), and range from three to fifteen acres in size.

Little neighborhood commercial development exists within the City outside of the Highway 151 and Highway 100 corridors. As a result, residents from throughout Marion must travel to one of these two areas to meet their daily shopping needs. Ideally, small nodes of neighborhood commercial development would exist throughout the City to provide residents with convenient day-to-day goods and services within a short walk or drive from their homes.

The intersection of 11th Street and Grand Avenue represents the only existing neighborhood commercial node within the City. The demand for neighborhood commercial development is particularly significant in portions of northern Marion where it does not exist. Demand in this area and elsewhere will continue to increase as more residential development occurs north of 29th Avenue and east of Highway 13.

To address current and future needs, the Land Use Plan indicates several neighborhood commercial areas scattered throughout the City. These areas represent locations where commercial development can be readily accommodated within the existing urban fabric or incorporated into developing areas.

In the Commercial Areas Plan, neighborhood commercial areas are depicted as nodes occupying four corner intersections throughout Marion and its growth areas. As development occurs, not all four corners of an intersection may be developed for commercial use and residential uses should also be considered appropriate for these areas. Some of the neighborhood commercial areas are the location of proposed commercial development for which zoning amendments are either pending or approved, others are in undeveloped areas and may require rezoning.

Policies

Policies related to the promotion of high-quality neighborhood commercial development that serves the City's neighborhoods include:

1. New neighborhood commercial development and redevelopment should be designed in a manner which is consistent/compatible with the *scale, appearance, orientation*, and overall character to adjacent development and surrounding residential neighborhoods.
2. New and redeveloped commercial areas should be encouraged to provide structures that are *architecturally detailed on all sides* and have no visible services.
3. *Access to businesses* in neighborhood commercial areas should be from collector streets where possible, minimizing curb cuts and access points along arterial streets and minimizing cut through traffic on local streets.
4. *"Drive-thru" facilities*, such as a fast food restaurant or bank, should be sited so that service lanes and pickup windows are accessed via collector and minor arterials streets and located at the rear or sides of the buildings wherever possible.
5. New neighborhood commercial development and redevelopment should be *pedestrian friendly and very walkable*. All developments shall to put in sidewalks, street trees, parkway lighting on both sides of the public rights-of-way, and incorporate pedestrian connections through the entire site.
6. Wherever feasible, *parking lots should be separated from roadways* through a landscaped parkway, sidewalks, and parking lot setbacks.
7. Parking areas of significant size should be improved with *landscaped islands*.
8. Parking lots should emphasize *pedestrian scale lighting* and minimize light pollution, glare, and nuisance to neighboring properties.

Uptown

Uptown Marion is a traditional uptown area that is distinct in both character and function from other commercial areas in the City. While auto-oriented commercial uses predominate the 151 corridor to the east and west of Uptown Marion, the area surrounding Marion Square Park has retained many of the desirable characteristics of historic, pedestrian scale development. The separate land use designation emphasizes and distinguishes the Uptown Area and seeks to ensure its continued role as a unique destination within the community.

Uptown Marion is characterized by mixed use commercial development in multi-story buildings that form a consistent streetwall along portions of 10th Street and 7th Avenue.

Marion Square functions as a public plaza and central focus of activity within the uptown area, however 7th Avenue impacts the cohesiveness of Uptown as well. Civic uses such as the Marion Public Library and City Hall also contribute positively to the uptown environment.

Policies

Policies related to the promotion of high-quality mixed use commercial development within Uptown Marion include:

9. The City should continue to *encourage pedestrian oriented development* with a mix of retail, dining, civic, and entertainment uses.
10. *Professional office and/or residential uses* should be encouraged to locate on the upper floors of buildings.
11. Development in Uptown should meet the City's development *requirements regarding landscaping, parking, etc.*
1. New Uptown mixed use development should be *oriented toward the street* and located at or near the sidewalk line.
2. A *continuous streetwall* should be maintained along primary streets in uptown to reinforce Uptown's strong sense of place.
3. *Large display windows* on the ground floor of commercial buildings should be encouraged to reinforce the pedestrian atmosphere of the Uptown mixed use area, and promote window-shopping and strolling.
4. New buildings should reflect the predominant *scale, height, massing, and proportions of traditional buildings* within uptown and provide a sense of enclosure.
5. *Off-street parking* should be located on the side or rear of buildings, and screened from view with landscaping, a masonry wall, or decorative wrought iron fencing.

Corridor Commercial Recommendations & Policies

Marion's existing corridor commercial areas are generally located along the Highway 151, Highway 13, and Collins Road (Highway 100). The primary function of a corridor commercial area is twofold:

1. Serve the day-to-day needs of local residents; and,
2. Provide commercial uses serving a larger region.

The types of stores found in a corridor commercial area include general merchandise and convenience retailers such as a discount department stores, supermarket, home improvement store, pharmacies, specialty apparel, and restaurants as well as some of the retailers typically found in neighborhood commercial areas. Tenants are comprised of a mixture of national and local retailers and service providers including some large format, or "big box" retailers such as Wal-Mart or Menards.

Corridor commercial areas also typically accommodate a wide range of retail centers that vary in size and service area. As defined by the International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) and The Urban Land Institute (ULI), these commercial centers might include:

- *Community Centers* include big box discount stores (Target, Kmart), home improvement stores (Home Depot, Menards), Sporting Goods (Sports Authority, Dick's). These centers are typically between 10 and 40 acres in size and attract consumers from within a three to six mile trade area, or under a 15 minute drive.
- *Regional Centers* typically have two or more anchor tenants comprised of department stores, general merchandise stores, deep discount department stores, and apparel retailers. Regional centers range in size from 40 to 100 acres and attract customers from up to 30 minutes drive, or five to fifteen miles away.
- *Lifestyle Centers* include some of the same users as Regional Malls, including large format bookstores (Borders, Barnes & Noble) but do not have anchors. The typical trade area is approximately eight to twelve miles or up to a 30 minute drive, and range from 10 to 40 acres in size.
- *Large Regional and Super Regional Malls* containing department stores (Macys, Nordstrom), fashion and apparel (Talbots, Ann Taylor) and home furnishings (Restoration Hardware, Crate and Barrel) attract customers from a trade area that can extend up to 25 miles, or a 45 minute drive.



Corridor commercial areas rely on the residents and businesses of Marion as well as customers from adjacent communities and unincorporated Linn County. As such, commercial development in these areas also relies on access to primary roadways capable of supporting higher volumes of traffic. The roadways that service existing corridor commercial areas in Marion have average daily traffic (ADT) counts of between 10,000 and 20,000.

The corridor commercial areas illustrated in the Land Use Plan exist in various stages of development. The Highway 151 corridor is largely established and contains a mix of older and recent development. Highway 100 and Highway 13 are emerging as commercial corridors with significant commercial development only occurring in recent years. Other corridor commercial areas indicated the Land Use Plan do not yet exist, but their development is anticipated based on proposed roadway improvements and the location of future residential growth.

Policies

Policies related to the promotion of high-quality commercial development along the City's primary corridors include:

1. New and redeveloped commercial areas should be encouraged to provide structures that are *architecturally detailed* on all sides and have no visible services.
2. *Clustered commercial development* and shared parking facilities should be promoted.
3. *Signage, attractive landscaping, lighting, and other signature elements* should be consistent with the design and architecture of new development and incorporated to help accentuate the businesses located within the site.
4. All parking and loading areas should be screened with *landscaped berms* and or a combination of landscaping and hardscape materials.
5. Lot depths should accommodate extensively *landscaped setbacks* along arterials and boundaries with adjacent land uses.
6. Corridor commercial development should provide *cross easement access*, minimize curb cuts, and consolidate access drives.
7. *Detention and retention facilities* should be incorporated into site design and utilized as features within the development, but should not occupy prominent corners.

Light Industrial & Business Parks Recommendations & Policies

Marion has a considerable amount of land dedicated to business parks and industrial uses. Light industrial areas and business parks are critical components of the local economy and the City desires these areas to flourish in the future. Light industrial and business park uses can also negatively impact nearby residential areas and should be located in areas where conflicts with less intense uses can be minimized. The City should strive to provide industrial uses in an environment free from intrusion by lighter commercial or residential uses.

Light Industrial

The term Light Industrial refers to less intensive industrial uses that do not overtax municipal facilities and infrastructure. Light industrial users tend to be smaller service- and consumer-oriented businesses as opposed to large manufacturers. While light industrial uses are desirable and contribute to the economic health of the community, they can also negatively impact the environment and the quality of life for residents living in adjacent properties. There are several instances within Marion where light industrial sites, are located adjacent or near residential neighborhoods or environmentally sensitive areas.

Business Parks / Office

Business park areas are typified by office uses, research facilities, employment centers, incubator businesses, and similar uses. While business park development is not as intense as light industrial uses, sufficient screening and buffering should be provided to ensure the adequate mitigation of incompatible light, noise, unsightliness, and other potentially negative impacts of business park activity.

The Marion Enterprise Center (See Figure 5) offers an example of a modern business park whose development is underway. The Enterprise Center may represent a relocation site for those incompatible light industrial uses currently located within the commercial corridors and residential areas of Marion.

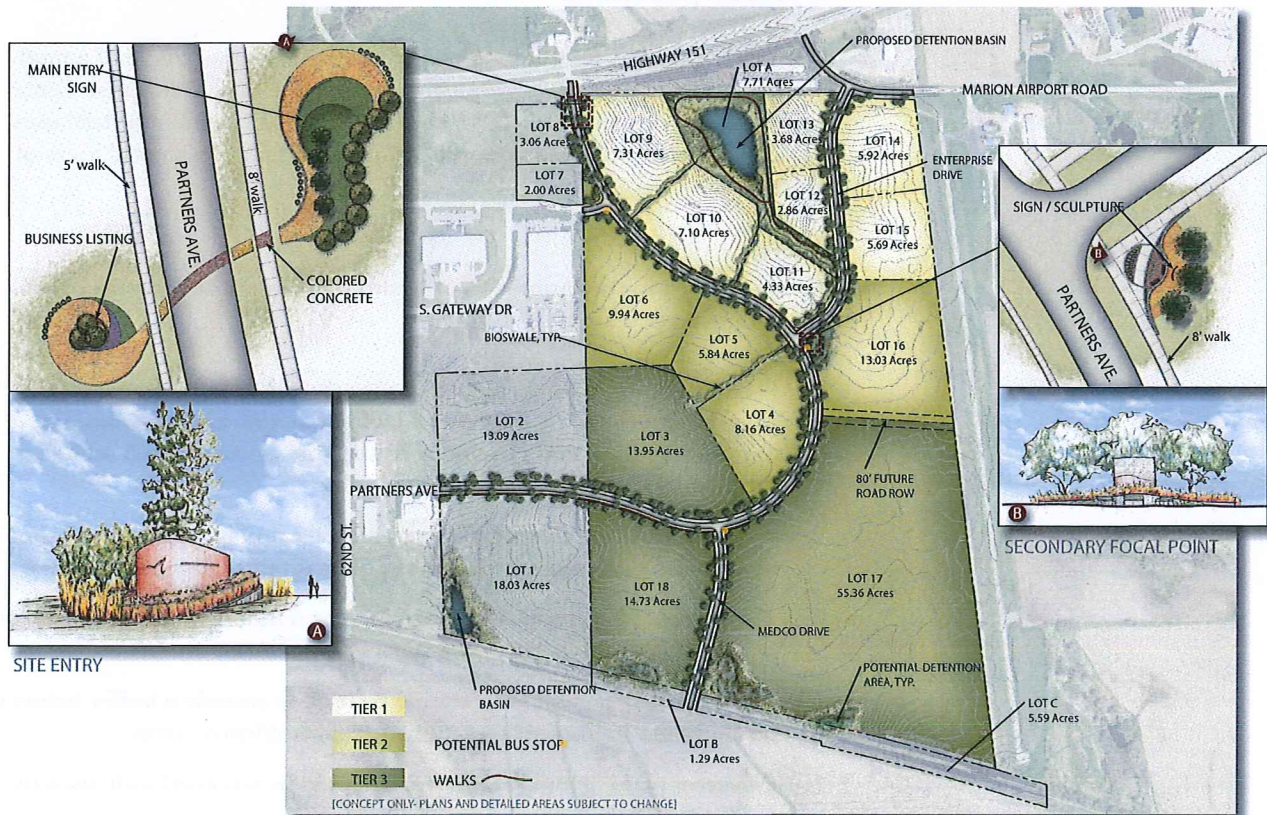
Policies

Policies related to the promotion of healthy and sustainable business park and industrial development include:

1. Business parks and light industrial uses should be *located adjacent to major roadways* such as Highway 13, Highway 100, and Highway 151 to maximize their visibility and access to transportation and minimize through traffic on local streets.
2. *Access points* along arterial streets to business and industrial parks should be consolidated, minimizing access points on the City's busy roadways.
3. The local street network within business and industrial parks *should not connect to local streets in neighboring residential areas.*
4. *Landscaping and green space* should be used to provide a buffer between business and industrial areas and adjacent residential areas.
5. Off-street parking and loading areas should be screened with attractively *landscaped berms.*

6. All new development should be encouraged to design attractively *landscaped public rights-of-way* with street trees, parkway lighting, and sidewalks on both sides of the street.
7. *Open space, parks, and multi-use trails* should be required for all new development.
8. Conflicting industrial uses in predominantly residential areas should be encouraged to *relocate to areas dedicated to industrial and business park uses* elsewhere in the City of Marion.
9. The development of business and industrial parks should be *submitted and reviewed as a PD* (Planned Development).
10. The *use of covenants* should be encouraged to establish a consistent tone or style of design and development within individual business and industrial parks.
11. *Uniform performance standards* shall be enforced to protect adjacent property and land uses from noise, dust, odor, air, lighting, and water pollution.
12. *Gateway and wayfinding signage* should be encouraged at all major intersections, including interior intersections.

Figure 5
Conceptual Site Plan
Marion Enterprise Center



Commercial Growth Area Recommendations & Policies

The demand for goods and services beyond Marion's commercial corridors will increase as residential development occurs in the City's periphery. While the scale and location of future commercial development will be dependent upon a number of factors, the City should anticipate the general need for such development in areas that currently lay outside of its boundary.

Policies

Policies related to the establishment of growth area commercial areas include:

1. Small neighborhood commercial centers should be *developed at the intersections of existing and proposed major roadways* to provide for the daily needs of nearby residents.
2. The location of growth area commercial development should be *revisited as residential development occurs* and the demand for goods and services shifts.
3. Growth area commercial areas should adhere to *design standards* that reflect the scale, character, and identity of the surrounding community.
4. As residential development occurs, some neighborhood commercial nodes should be *permitted to grow in size* and importance and emerge as corridor commercial areas.

General Commercial Area Recommendations & Policies

The following policies apply to all commercial development areas within the City:

1. Commercial development should adhere to the standards indicated in the City's *sign ordinance*.
2. Commercial development should adhere to the standards indicated in the City's *landscape ordinance*.
3. Naturalized stormwater retention and detention basin areas and other *Best Management Practices (BMPs)* should be encouraged in new development.
4. New commercial developments should *establish connections to existing and planned trail segments*.
5. New commercial development and redevelopment should bury overhead utility lines servicing their properties.