

CITY OF COUNCIL BLUFFS

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First Avenue Corridor

1st Avenue, a rail corridor vacated in 2013, is City-owned right-of-way located one block south of West Broadway in Council Bluffs and stretches 1.8 miles from 16th Street to 35th Street. Nearly 30% of Council Bluffs residents live within one-half mile of this corridor.

The West Broadway Corridor Plan (adopted July 2015) proposed to transform the former rail line into a multi-modal corridor featuring trails, transit, and redevelopment. A multi-modal corridor will enhance the operation of West Broadway, make an important link in the trail system, and provide the opportunity for redevelopment of obsolete industrial properties.

Phase 1 of this initiative will include the installation of a multi-use recreational trail. This trail will close critical gaps in our regional system and improve access from downtown Council Bluffs to downtown Omaha. Additionally, the trail will enhance access to West Broadway businesses and other nearby amenities and destinations. Conceptual design for the trail has begun and will be completed this fall. The conceptual trail plans will preserve a corridor that is wide enough for transit if that is an opportunity in the future.

A year-long transit alternative analysis begins this fall. Results will assist in determining the viability of transit along the First Avenue Corridor and what level of investment could be expected for redevelopment.

“With 30% of Council Bluffs residents living within one-half mile of First Avenue, the impact of this project is far-reaching. The construction of a trail along First Avenue will connect our regional trail system to both downtowns and West Broadway, and will advance the walkability of the west end,” said Council Bluffs Mayor, Matt Walsh. “The concepts for future redevelopment introduce a variety of innovative and diverse opportunities for housing options, commercial prospects, and transit; all of which serve our mission to continuously improve the quality of life and attractiveness of the City of Council Bluffs.”

Ideally, the First Avenue Corridor will consist of high-density residential and mixed-use redevelopment. The district would benefit from the multi-modal corridor and would assist in providing a residential base to support commercial uses on West Broadway. Developing with substantial structures will result in higher property tax revenue collected from this district.

“FIRST AVE represents a unique opportunity for a metro of our size to connect two downtowns and to revitalize a former industrial corridor in a way that provides housing choices and strengthens the tax base,” said Brandon Garrett, City of Council Bluffs Director of Community Development.

Funding for the First Avenue Corridor will come from the City’s Capital Improvement Program, the Iowa West Foundation, and other grants.

For more information, visit the FIRST AVE webpage at <https://www.councilbluffs-ia.gov/2347/West-Broadway-1st-Avenue-Corridor> or contact Brandon Garrett at 712-256-6944 or bgarrett@councilbluffs-ia.gov.