Iowa City
Riverfront Crossings District
Iowa City

- Population: 65,000 (metro area: 150,000)
- University of Iowa – 30,000 students
Arterial Streets

Other Major Catalysts
- Center of Employment
- Cultural, entertainment, civic core
- Demand for High Density Housing already exists
Barriers to Redevelopment

• Low density commercial and industrial development
• Potential brownfields
• Uncomfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists
• Broken street grid
• Wastewater treatment plant
Existing Conditions Character Photos
Floodplain
University of Iowa investing in new facilities – Recreation Center, Music School and Recital Halls

Future riverfront park and trail

City of Iowa City - Mixed Use Facility
Flood Recovery

• EPA’s Office of Smart Growth offered grants of technical assistance to flood-impacted communities in Iowa.

• Rebuild in a more sustainable way.

• EPA encouraged us to apply for a second grant from the Partnership for Sustainable Communities

• Take planning to the next level.
Partnership

• Initial site visit
• 3 day urban design workshop with EPA, HDR, and SRA
• Iterative development of framework plan
  – planning for future floods
  – traffic circulation – changing street patterns and frontage conditions
  – Residential densities
• Public outreach and final presentation and open house discussion
Framework Plan

Partnership for Sustainable Communities
EPA, HUD, DOT
HDR, Inc. & SRA International, Inc.
Goals

• Develop a new mixed-use pedestrian-oriented district
• Create a resilient riverfront park system
• Enhance Ralston Creek to become a community asset
• Develop a multi-modal transportation network
• Create a network of green streets in the district
• Promote sustainable design practices within the district
Study Area looking East
Riverfront Crossings Character Rendering
The “Park Blocks” Character Rendering
Plan – The Gilbert Street Corridor
Gilbert Street Corridor Character Rendering
Residential Courtyard Character Rendering
Plan – Riverfront Crossings Park
Riverfront Trail Character Rendering
Constructed Wetland Character Rendering
Mobility Character Photos
Diagram - Mobility
Next Steps /Challenges

• Funding for development of street and rail infrastructure
• Funding for park development and creek restoration
• Patience to do it right – resisting development proposals that do not meet the vision
• Working with multiple small businesses and property owners – always a few hold-outs
• Adopting new zoning tools that are unfamiliar to local developers
• Partnership - Financial incentives? Brownfields assistance? Grant funds?