

MERLE HAY ROAD REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

THE MERLE HAY ROAD GATEWAY: JOHNSTON'S FRONT DOOR DESTINATION

The primary goal for the Merle Hay Road Gateway is to create a unified vision for district transformation. The Gateway area is truly at the front door to the community and presents a tremendous opportunity for redevelopment. The current condition of the vacant hotel property and other underutilized properties in the area creates an eyesore and public safety concern that detracts from other potential in the district. The master plan will guide and shape the transformation of the district and create a strategy for implementation to allow this area to become a unique and thriving destination for the city of Johnston and the Des Moines metro area.



A NEW DISTRICT VISION

The vision for the Merle Hay Road Gateway is to become a unified district with a mix of commercial, retail, residential and park uses. The proximity to Interstate 35/80 presents a tremendous opportunity to take advantage of the large traffic volumes. The existing vacant hotel site provides an opportunity to create a unique and memorable development at the front door to the community. A development that is truly a destination, either as a specialized retail destination, new hotel and conference center or a corporate office headquarters would serve as a catalyst for transformation.

The Merle Hay Road Gateway vision also suggests a new, more compact urban neighborhood with pedestrian focused streets, and a high level of public realm enhancements will benefit new development. A network of urban streets, infrastructure and public spaces will form the backbone of an urban village highlighted by a new community park and a stronger connection to the natural surroundings of the trail, floodplain forest and Beaver Creek Natural Resource Area. The Merle Hay Road Gateway will be respectful of the natural environment and balance new development with enhanced stormwater treatment and habitat and flood protection.

