

Note to Readers:

This 'Preliminary Art & Enhancement Master Plan' is an interim deliverable (product) for the aRT3 Planning Study. This interim document focuses on:

- Overview of the planning process.
- Draft recommendations for art and enhancements.

This report should be considered an in-progress draft and will be updated and edited, as needed, for the final plan. The intent of this document is to provide the preliminary recommendations for art and enhancements along the Route 3 corridor and receive feedback from the Advisory Committee and other project partners.

Thank you for taking the time to read this document and be part of the planning process. Future deliverables include:

- Final Enhancements and Art Master Plan (Fall 2025)
 - Budgets
 - Implementation Plan

Previous work of this planning study has focused on transportation improvements and transportation safety strategies. Previous deliverables have included:

- Preliminary Transportation Improvements and Existing Conditions (October 2024)
- Pre-Final Transportation Improvements and Existing Conditions (April 2025)

Updates during the planning process are available at: www.aRT3Plan.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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OVERVIEW OF PLANNING PROCESS

- Overview
- The Importance of Route 3Priority Corridor for Regional
 - Transportation Safety
 - Tourism
 - **Economic Development**
 - Community Gateways
 - Leveraging Existing Enhancements



OVERVIEW: aRT3 PLANNING STUDY

With a focus on traffic calming and place making, the aRT3 planning study involves identifying locations for enhancements, such as art installations and other transportation features, along the Route 3 corridor and its neighboring areas bordering the right-of-way. The study will also recommend transportation improvements to address safety for various modes of transportation (including vehicles, semi-trucks, and other modes of transportation).

The aRT3 planning study area encompasses the 8.5-mile stretch of Illinois Route 3 from the McKinley Bridge to Interstate 270. The planning process began in Spring 2024 and is anticipated to last 18 months.

The anticipated outcomes of the planning study will be a plan to:

- Enhance the image of Route 3.
- Improved transportation safety along Route 3.
- Attract infrastructure funding for Route 3 improvements.
- Foster economic development and job creation.

America's Central Port is facilitating a 'Planning and Research' grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to conduct the planning study.

The name "aRT3" honors the Route 3 corridor and the significance of existing art along the corridor. While improving transportation safety will be a key objective, the plan will also concentrate on elevating the image of Route 3 through art and enhancements.

SCHEDULE

The planning process for the aRT3 Plan began in the Spring of 2024 and is expected to conclude in the Fall of 2025.



= Key Public Engagement Events

Spring/Summer 2024

- Planning Process Kickoff
- Formation of Stakeholder-Advisory Committee
- Collect Corridor Data
- **Begin Transportation** Improvements Plan

Fall 2024

- Preliminary **Transportation Improvements** Plan
- · Development of Corridor Aesthetic
- · Themes and **Principles**
- Corridor Business and Property Owners Meeting #1
- Community Pop-up * **Engagement Events**

Winter 2024/2025

- Refine Transportation Improvements Plan
- Begin Enhancements and Art Master Plan

Spring 2025

- **Final Transportation Improvements Plan**
- Preliminary Enhancements and Art Master Plan
- Art Working Group *
- Corridor Business and Property Owners Meeting #2 *

Summer/Fall 2025

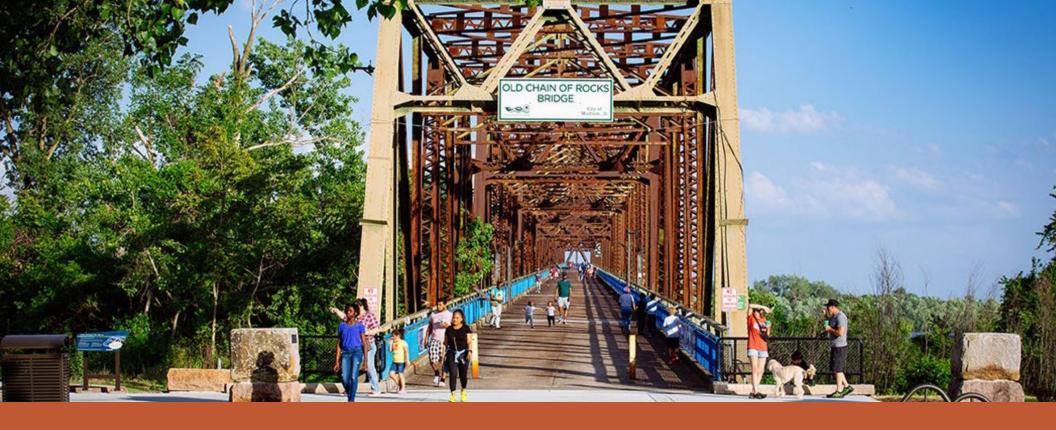
- Final Enhancements and Art Master Plan
- Public Open House 🚼
- Implementation Strategy
- Resolutions of Support

IMPLEMENTATION!

VISION FOR FUTURE ART AND ENHANCEMENTS

- Enhance the image of Route 3 and set the corridor apart from other parts of the region.
- Demonstrate the vitality of the Route 3 corridor to encourage investment by new and existing businesses.
- Welcome visitors and tourists to the communities along the Route 3 corridor.

THE VISION WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED BY....



Showcasing art that celebrates the unique qualities of the area, including its community, industry, natural environment, and history.



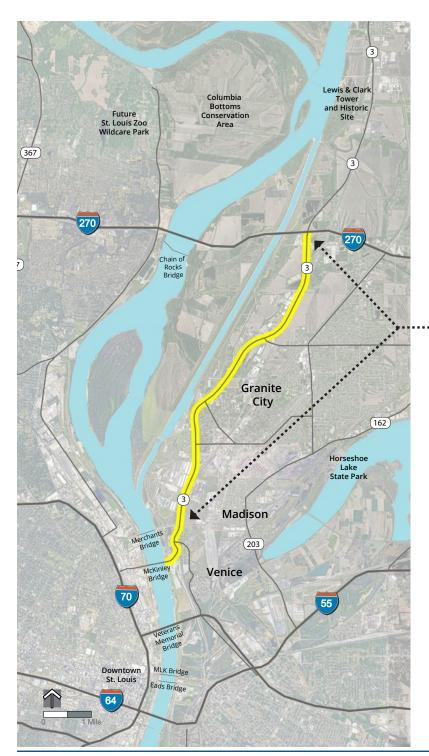
Incorporating design enhancements into roadway infrastructure that further develops the character of the corridor.



Promoting the corridor as a destination for people traversing the Metro East.



Maintaining the corridor as a place that is clean, safe, and well cared for.



THE IMPORTANCE OF ROUTE 3

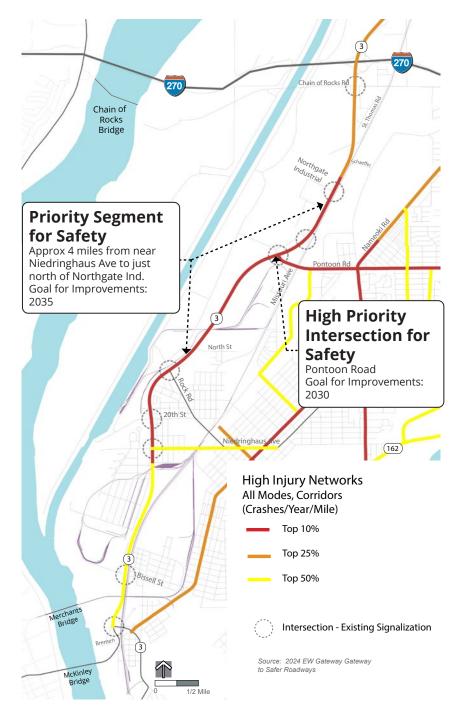
WHY THIS SEGMENT OF ROUTE 3

As outlined on the following pages, this 8.5-mile stretch of Route 3 should be a priority for enhancements, safety improvements, and investment because of:

- Priority Corridor for Regional Transportation Safety
- Tourism
- Economic Development
- Community Gateways
- Leveraging Existing Enhancements

aRT3 PLANNING AREA

The aRT3 plan study area encompasses the 8.5-mile stretch of Illinois Route 3 from the McKinley Bridge to Interstate 270.



PRIORITY CORRIDOR FOR TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

In 2024, the East-West Gateway Council of Governments (EWG) released the Gateway to Safer Roadways: St. Louis Regional Safety Action Plan (Action Plan). The plan is both a call to action and a blueprint for how the St. Louis region can significantly reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on roadways. The Action Plan aims to eliminate all fatalities and serious injuries resulting from roadway crashes in the EWG Region. A goal for 50% reduction of fatalities and serious injuries by 2050 was set to create accountability and momentum.

The Pontoon Road/Route 3 intersection ranks among the top 5% of priority intersections in the Safety Action Plan and is recommended for safety improvements by 2030.

The four-mile stretch of Route 3, from near Niedringhaus Avenue to just north of Northgate Industrial, ranks in the top 10% of priority corridors in the Safety Action Plan and is recommended for safety improvements by **2035**.



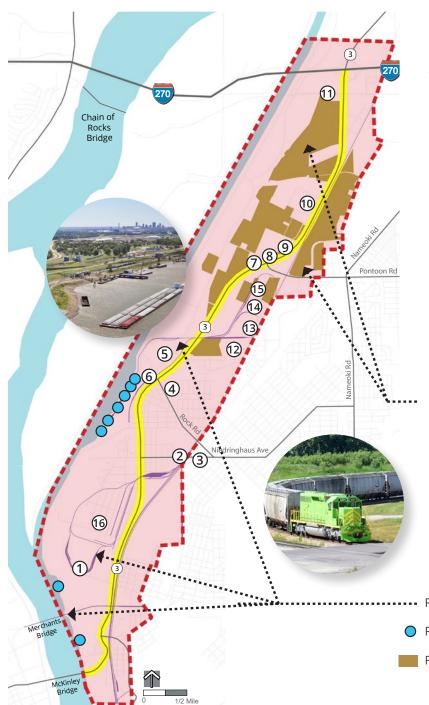


TOURISM

Route 3 serves as an important transportation link for regional tourism, attracting visitors from across the region, nation, and even internationally. It provides a vital route for travelers to access tourism destinations in both Illinois and Missouri.



- (7) MCT Confluence Multi-Use Trail
- (8) Horseshoe Lake State Park
- **9** Gateway Arch National Park



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

JOBS AND MAJOR EMPLOYERS

This segment of Route 3 (highlighted area) has a total of **4,500 jobs** and close to **20%** of the total manufacturing jobs in Madison County according to 2021 Census data.

- (1) Green Plains
- 9 VEGA Transport
- ② ASF-Keystone/Amsted Rail
- Northgate Business and Industrial Park
- (3) Baily International
- 11 Riechmann Transport
- 4 Dynamic Transit
- 12 Kraft Heinz-Granite City
- 5 Friedman Industries, Inc.
 - Wieland Recycling
- **(6)** Lewis and Clark Marine
- 14 Precoat Metals- MMC
- Weber Chevrolet Ford
- (15) GEODIS | Contract Logistics

(8) Walmart

16 America's Central Port

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

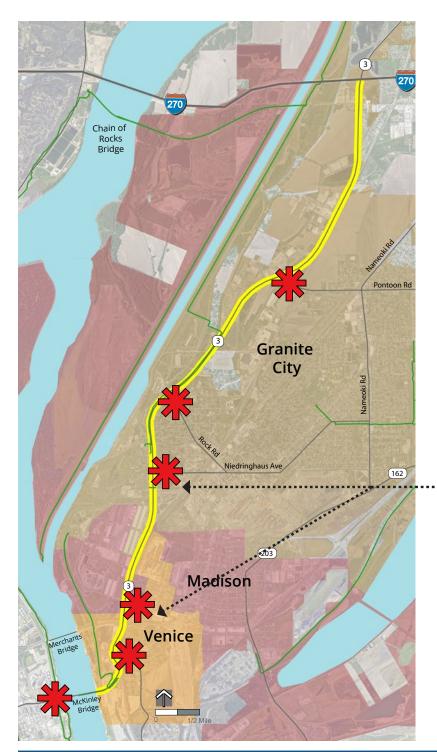
The corridor has numerous available sites for future development, especially in the northern part of the corridor.

TRANSPORTATION HUB

The corridor is served by multiple modes of transportation serving the regional economy, including multiple river facilities, railroads, and over 2,500 trucks per day on Route 3. Truck traffic represents almost 20% of all traffic volumes on Route 3.

Railroads

- River Terminals and Docks
- Potential Areas of Future Development



COMMUNITY GATEWAYS

Route 3 serves as the primary access point for the communities of Venice, Madison, and Granite City. Together, these cities have a combined population exceeding 32,000, with Granite City being the most populous at 27,549 as of the 2020 Census. Situated at the southern end of the Route 3 planning area, the McKinley Bridge holds significant importance as a gateway both to Missouri and the City of St. Louis. This bridge facilitates the passage of vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians, playing a crucial role in the regional bicycle network. The next Mississippi River crossing to the north for bicyclists and pedestrians is the Chain of Rocks Bridge.

The aRT3 planning study presents a unique opportunity to:

- Enhance the aesthetic appeal of each community entry.
- Improve overall transportation safety.

The focus on enhancing traffic safety is paramount. Facilitating safe transportation options is especially crucial given that a significant portion of residents in Venice (38%), Madison (18%), and Granite City (19%) live below the poverty line, according to Census estimates, and heavily rely on alternative modes of transportation such as public transit, walking, and bicycling. The aRT3 planning study aims to address these challenges by recommending measures for traffic calming and improving safety, particularly at intersections.

COMMUNITY GATEWAYS / ENTRANCES

Chain of Rocks Bridge Granite City 6 **5 4 7** Niedringhaus Ave (162) Wake of the Flood America's Central (203)

LEVERAGING EXISTING ENHANCEMENTS

EXISTING ART ALONG ROUTE 3

With the existing 'Salute to Steel' sculpture at the base of the McKinley Bridge and the investments in sculpture made by America's Central Port, corridor stakeholders have recognized the significance of aesthetic improvements along Route 3. In recent years, additional partners have funded sculptures, including the a grant from Great Rivers and Routes for *Rusty* and the Agency for Community Transit for *Tracy*.



Madison

Venice

McKinley

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement will be an on-going effort through the final plan report in Fall 2025. This section highlights engagement to date.

OCTOBER 17, 2024: POP-UP EVENT - SIX-MILE REGIONAL LIBRARY IN GRANITE CITY

Overview

On October 17, 2024, the planning team conducted its first community popup event for the aRT3 project. This event called the Mad Science Halloween Show, was held at the Six-Mile Regional Library in Granite City, IL, from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Participants/Attendees

Six (6) adults and four (4) children stopped by our table to learn more about the aRT3 project and answer a couple of quick questions about the corridor. Flyers about the upcoming open house and a coloring sheet were provided to each person who stopped by our table. Flyers were also left behind in the library's reading room and on the bulletin board.

Below, are the comments/responses received from the participants

- "Pontoon Street Safety was a concern; participants talked about accidents at this intersection of IL Route 3. It was suggested that when looking at redesigning this intersection we "get rid of the spur."
- Participant shared some history about the Granite City area, and they mentioned that "Granite City had a history of being a sundown town."
- Participant talked about there being a "hidden gem" along the corridor.
 This hidden gem was Happy Trails Farm. Suggested that we be sure to reach out to them and asked if there was a way to incorporate information about this place in any wayfinding added along the corridor.
- Participant stated that "Route 3 feels like an industrial corridor"; Thought that connecting the trails along the corridor is a great idea.
- Participant indicated that the roads are awful!!
- Participant stated that any improvement to the condition of the roads would be a great improvement; they also suggested that just cutting the grass, and doing some landscaping would also be an improvement and enhance the image of the corridor.
- Participant suggested that we can improve the image by sweeping the entire roadway; shared a story about getting a flat tire because of the small pieces of debris on the road from crashes at various intersections.





OCTOBER 31, 2024: POP-UP EVENT - JOHN ERVIN MEMORIAL HALLOWEEN PARTY

Overview

On October 31, 2024, the planning conducted its second community pop-up event for the aRT3 project. The John Ervin Memorial Halloween Party was held at the Venice, IL Park District Recreation Center from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Participants/Attendees

There were between seventy-five (75) to one hundred (100) adults and children who visited our table to learn more about the aRT3 project and engage in questions regarding the 8.5-mile segment. Each person that stopped by our table left with a flyer about the upcoming Open House, a coloring sheet, and some candy.

Below, are the comments/responses received from the participants

- Participant shared that Route 3 is "unsafe and needs improvement", and they specially mentioned the segment by Chain of Rocks.
- Participant informed us that there are lots of bumps in the road, and that truckers are in more danger because of this.
- Participant stated that they want to see "More businesses and attractions along the corridor so that one knows where they have been".
- Several participants express similar concerns about the lighting along the corridor, and how there needs to be more of it for the safety of the drivers. One specific participant stated that there should be a "Flagpole with holiday designs and decorations" to add light.
- Participants suggested a route or lane designed for trucks only, and that the cars need to slow down.
- One participant said that they just wanted more exits.
- Several participants shared concerns about how awful the road conditions are along the corridor. One participant highlighted that there is a lot of construction going on, and there are too many holes in the street. Another suggested having "more secure pathways" along the corridor.
- Participant suggested more "beautification". More specifically, they think the corridor could use more flowers.







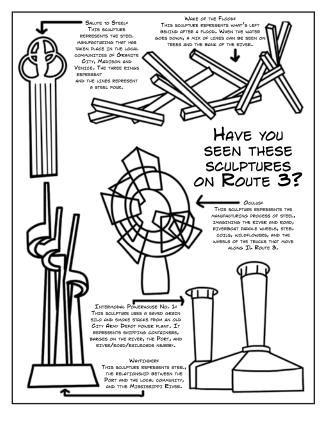


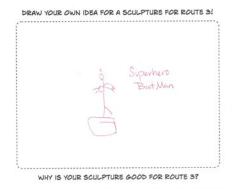
comments continued....

- Participant spoke about wanting "longer train crossing rails"/ railroad crossing sticks.
- Participant suggested the need for "More police presence".
- One participant stated that the corridor be left alone. They said this because they believe there should be more focus about the concerns happening within the city of Venice rather than along Illinois Route 3.
- Participant suggested that our focus should be on economic development of the corridor and that funding or incentives should be provided to those who are interested in opening a business along the corridor.

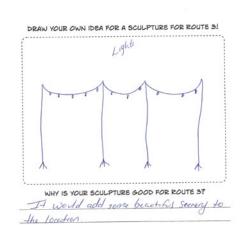


One of the activities for kids was a coloring page of existing Route 3 sculptures (right). Kids also had a chance to draw their own ideas for sculpture (below).









WHY IS YOUR SCULPTURE GOOD FOR ROUTE 3?

You Should put coder signs up and to thing for the road

NOVEMBER 7, 2024: BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNER OPEN HOUSE #1

Overview

On November 7, 2024, the planning team conducted its first open house for business, property owners, and residents at America's Central Port from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm. The meeting was an open house format, with no formal presentation.

Attendees were able to learn about the aRT3 plan, review preliminary traffic safety strategies, and share feedback with the planning team.

Marketing for the open house included a mailing sent to nearly 300 businesses, property owners, and residences along Route 3; digital marketing efforts; and traffic message boards placed by IDOT along Route 3.

Summary of What Was Heard

Attendees identified the Pontoon Road and Missouri Avenue intersections, referred to as the "Walmart intersection," as the highest-priority concern, with general agreement that this is the corridor's most dangerous intersection.

Feedback on proposed roundabouts was mostly positive or neutral. Several attendees had questions about two-lane roundabouts but were open to learning more, especially if roundabouts would improve safety and calm traffic. Some concerns were raised about Restricted Crossing U-turns (RCUT) and Median U-turn (MUT) options. The Continuous Green-T proposal for Missouri Avenue and Northgate Industrial Drive was received favorably.

The proposed lane reconfiguration between McKinley Bridge and Rock Road also received favorable feedback, with general consensus that it could help calm traffic.

Although the open house focused on draft transportation strategies, attendees were also asked to consider Route 3's identity, setting the stage for future enhancement and art planning. The top three themes were River, Nature, and Industrial.

Finally, attendees complimented the recent IDOT improvements to the Route 3 and 20th Street intersection.







Below, are the specific comments/responses received from the participants regarding transportation options.

St. Thomas Road

- From IL-3 to north too hard to slow and turn right on St. Thomas. Need a right turn lane.
- Don't mind not crossing IL-3.
- Make trucks use West Chain of Rocks.
- Need deceleration lane or smoother/more gradual northbound turn.
- Do most westbound left turn at Lola St.

Missouri Avenue

- Merges hard on u-turns (see Rte 141 in
- Concerns about U-Turns, especially for trucks.
- Likes Continuous T.
- Get rid of east leg at Missouri Ave. Waste of space (old II-3). Trucks get stuck here.
- Coming southbound and making left turns can't judge northbound speeds.
- Long light causes problem.
- If left as is make southbound left turn only on green arrow.

Pontoon Road (Realignment)

- Likes northbound slip lane, but okay if deceleration lane.
- Likes westbound lane straight.
- Two westbound left-turn lanes cause confusion.

Pontoon Road (Roundabout)

- Would reduce crashes.
- Would slow down traffic.

Proposed Lane Reconfiguration

- Need 3-lanes from American Steel (Niedringhaus) to 20th street.
- Anywhere at intersections a deceleration lane would be good.
- Can drop to 2-lanes to slow people down. Dangerous when go from 2-lanes to 3-lanes to 2-lanes at McKinley.
- Might need 3-lanes north of IL-3 to bridge.
- How to transition right-turn at Depot.
- Never in major traffic.
- Use right-lane for acceleration and deceleration.
- If road diet, leave 3rd lane for turn lanes.

Corridor (General)

- Turn lane too short onto southbound IL3 from Venice.
- Trucks going into Lock at 20th street deceleration lane so trucks can get out of traffic.
- Single roundabout at Pontoon Rd.
- Increase police presence.

This page includes specific comments/ responses received from the participants regarding the identity of the Route 3 corridor.

What is the Identity of Route 3?



What impression should travelers along the Route 3 corridor have of the area?

Attendees were asked to place dots on images that they identified as the "Identity of Route 3." See photo to the left.

Attendees were asked, "What impression should travelers along the Route 3 corridor have of the area." See responses below.

- Signage and lighting at Missouri side of McKinley Bridge.
- Doorway to STL and Alton.
- Three "Rs": River, Road, Rail.
- Industrial.
- Add sound barrier at Niedringhaus (design on it).
- Like landscape. Needs to be maintained.
- Elevates corridor on Rt 66 gives people a reason to visit.
- Access to River. Info and connecting of highway.
- Connections to history of manufacturing and nature.
- Something unique that others don't have.
- More options, amenities restaurants.
- More info about history.
- 270 & Route 3 First stop in Illinois not welcoming.
- Not know near river.
- Art that is industrial.
- Made in Granite City.
- Access to nature.
- Riverfront camping recreational access.

MAY 21, 2025: BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNER OPEN HOUSE #2

Overview

On May 21, 2025, the planning team conducted its second open house for business, property owners, and residents at America's Central Port from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm. The meeting was an open house format, with no formal presentation.

Attendees were able to learn about the aRT3 Plan, final traffic safety strategies, draft art and enhancement recommendations, and share feedback with the planning team.

Marketing for the open house included a mailing to nearly 300 businesses, property owners, and residences along Route 3; digital marketing efforts; a KMOX radio interview; and traffic message boards placed by IDOT along Route 3. Facebook marketing was particularly effective, reaching over 18,000 users along the Route 3 project corridor, with more than 300 users clicking the link for additional information.

Summary of What Was Heard

Attendees were generally supportive of the recommended transportation safety strategies, particularly given that the recommended next steps include IDOT advancing to Intersection Design Studies (IDS) and a Phase 1 alignment study for the recommended lane reconfiguration from North Street to the McKinley Bridge. While there were differing opinions on specific elements (such as roundabouts) there was strong consensus that action is needed to improve safety along the corridor, especially at the Pontoon Road and Missouri Avenue intersections. Notably, the Pontoon Road/Route 3 intersection ranks among the top 5% of priority intersections in the 2024 St. Louis Regional Safety Action Plan, which calls for safety improvements by 2030.

Attendees were generally supportive of the draft art and enhancement recommendations. Attendees were asked to provide feedback on precedent art examples they saw as a good fit for corridor (see discussion on next page).







What art and enhancements would be successful along Route 3?

Both the advisory committee and attendees at the open house were asked the question "Based on this sampling of projects from across the country... Of these projects, which ones do you think are visually interesting and represent the type of art and enhancement you think would be successful along Route 3?"

Open house attendees had the opportunity to do a dot voting excercise to choose their preferences. Advisory Committee members voted via an online survey earlier in the Spring. Preferences were very similar between the two groups.

Landscape (Especially Native Landscaping)

Landscaping, particularly native landscaping, was a popular enhancement. This includes support for IDOT's existing "Operation Habitat" program, which restores and maintains native grasses and forbs. Native landscaping is seen as a strong opportunity along the Route 3 corridor due to the availability of large right-of-way areas and the potential for lower-cost maintenance.

Murals

Murals were well-received by both groups, although preferences varied slightly. The Advisory Committee favored themes reflecting rural and agricultural character.

Sculpture

Both groups expressed interest in large-scale sculptures, citing the Enchanted Highway in North Dakota as an inspiring example.

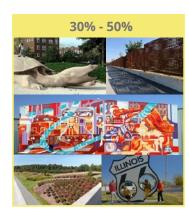
Bridge and Infrastructure Enhancements

Open House attendees responded more positively to bridge and infrastructure enhancements than the Advisory Committee. This may be due to the Committee's more detailed understanding of the limited opportunities for infrastructure improvements. However, both groups agreed that the new bridge at Route 3 and Interstate 270 presents a key opportunity for enhancements and could serve as a gateway to Route 3, Madison County, and Illinois









Less than 30%



Above Top: Photo of dot voting at the Open House #2 for preferred art and enhancements.

Above Bottom: Results of Advisory Committee voting from earlier in the Spring about preferred art and enhancements.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

An advisory committee that includes representatives of Route 3 businesses and property owners, community members, elected officials, and regional stakeholders from the transportation, economic development, and tourism sectors are working with the planning team to help guide the process.

The advisory committee includes more than twenty-five members, listed in the acknowledgments. The committee meets regularly, and meetings to date have included:

- July 11, 2024
- October 10, 2024
- January 23, 2025
- April 17, 2025
- August 12, 2025





ENHANCEMENT AND ART MASTER PLAN

- Introduction and Overview
 - Why Art And Enhancements Are Important
 - Goals And Principles For Route 3
 - Existing (And Scheduled) Art Installations
- Organization Options
- Criteria For Site Evaluation
- Opportunity Areas
- Other Corridor Aesthetics

Introduction

The section of Route 3 for this art and enhancement master plan stretches from the McKinley Bridge in the south to Interstate 270 in the north. For many, it is simply a pass-through space — a stretch of roadway connecting point A to point B — primarily used by commuters and commercial vehicles. But for others, it is a critical gateway to the communities of Venice, Madison, and Granite City; to the businesses that are vital to the region's economic health and growth; to America's Central Port and its extensive transportation network; and to the natural and recreational spaces of the American Bottoms.

In this way, Route 3 serves as the community's front door. Art, along with enhancements such as improved landscaping and thoughtful infrastructure design, can elevate the experience of traveling Route 3 to reflect the vital role it plays in supporting the health and prosperity of the communities it connects and the businesses it serves. It can also celebrate what makes these places unique: communities with their own stories of people and events, past and present; the industry and infrastructure that drive the region; and the remarkable natural environment along the banks of the Mississippi River.

Vision

Future art and design enhancement on Route 3 should:

- Enhance the image of Route 3 and set the corridor apart from other parts of the region.
- Demonstrate the vitality of the Route 3 corridor to encourage investment by new and existing businesses.
- Welcome visitors and tourists to the communities along the Route 3 corridor.

The vision was developed through conversations with the Route 3 Advisory Committee, the Art Working Committee, and during community engagement sessions, focusing on how art and design enhancements should shape the experience of the corridor.

Mission

This vision will be accomplished through the concerted efforts of stakeholders along Route 3, including:

- Maintaining the corridor as a place that is clean, safe, and well cared for.
- Displaying art that celebrates the unique qualities of the area, including its community, industry, natural environment, and history.
- Incorporating design enhancements into roadway infrastructure that further develops the character of the corridor.
- Promoting the corridor as a destination for people traversing the Metro East.

Existing (and Scheduled) Art Installations

- Salute to Steel, John Celuch
- Wake of the Flood, Scott Ross
- Wayfinder, Noah Kirby
- Oculus, Noah Kirby
- Intermodal Powerhouse No.1, Noah Kirby

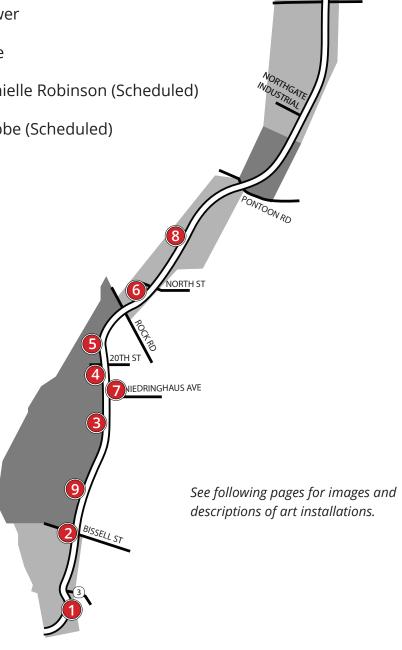


Rusty, Mark Cline

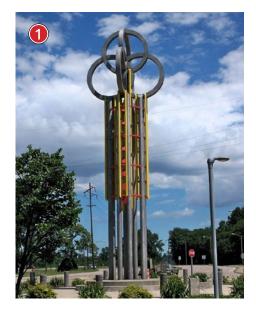
Land Bridge, Danielle Robinson (Scheduled)

Aspire, Tom Wobbe (Scheduled)





CHAIN OF ROCKS



Salute to Steel, John Celuch Funder: It Starts Here Foundation

Salute to Steel It serves as a tribute to the steel manufacturing that has historically taken place in the local communities of Granite City, Madison and Venice. The sculpture's three rings represent the three communities, with the vertical elements representing a steel pour. It serves as both a civic monument

and a reminder of the community's

resilience and hard work.



Wake of the Flood, Scott Ross Funder: America's Central Port

America's Central Port, located along the Chain of Rocks Canal, is protected by a 500-year U.S. Army Corps of Engineers levee. Prior to the levee, the region would flood when the Mississippi River would rise. The artist's inspiration for this particular piece was to create something that made reference to what's left behind after a flood. When the water recedes, the high water mark leaves behind this jumble of linear elements (typically trees) on the bank of the river. It is a narrow and horizontally positioned piece by design, meant to complement the vertical nature of the surrounding space, including the various tall buildings and structures, trees, phone poles, and other infrastructure elements.



Wayfinder, Noah Kirby Funder: America's Central Port

The *Wayfinder* sculpture was designed to address three areas of interest to America's Central Port. The use of steel as a primary material signifies the relationship between the Port and the local community and captures the significance of the Mississippi River. The boundaries of America's Central Port property span the communities of Madison, Venice, and Granite City. When the composition of these three elements come together it creates a whole that interacts and interrelates with one another in a way that is visually dynamic. The choice to paint the piece red is in reference to a theme found in river navigation. "Red right returning" is a phrase used to help remember how the system of navigational aids works in way-finding.



Oculus, Noah Kirby Funder: America's Central Port

The piece was designed to highlight the significance and creativity within the manufacturing process of steel, which is prevalent throughout the region. The overall design incorporates multiple references to the surrounding landscape and river elements. The form makes reference to riverboat paddle wheels, locally manufactured steel coils, the wheels and tires of the trucks that move along IL Route 3, as well as being a sort of wild flower within the landscape. The title "Oculus" came about in reference to the idea that these things are critically significant parts of the Ports activity. They are a sort of lens through which to see the region and to bring into focus the Port's role as a valued participant.



Intermodal Powerhouse No.1, Noah Kirby

Funder: America's Central Port

The focal point of design for this piece are the two 20' tall smoke stacks that were salvaged from the boilers of the former Granite City Army Depot power plant on property at the Port. The theme of this piece revolves around the nature of the Port as an economic engine and powerhouse of sorts. The stacks were the focal point of the design, along with the use of a grain silo and structures that make reference to shipping containers and the curved tops as seen on various Mississippi River barges. The color scheme was chosen to align with the green and blue accents of America's Central Port logo, where the color blue represents the river, green represents the road, and grey represents access to six Class-1 railroads.



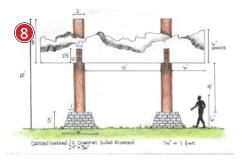
Tracy, Jeffie Brewer Funder: Agency for Community Transit

Tracy is part of Madison County Transit's (MCT) "Trail Critter" program of sculptures along the MCT Trails, as part of the recently launched "Art on the Trails" initiative. The mission of the initiative is to enhance the visual appeal of the MCT Trails while fostering a sense of playfulness and creativity. The whimsical sculptures are strategically placed in highly visible locations, providing a delightful contrast to the natural greens and browns of the MCT Trails. The triceratops is a playful reference to the tri-city area of Granite City, Madison, and Venice.



Rusty, Mark Cline Funder: Granite City (Grant from Great Rivers and Routes)

Celebrating the "roadside attractions" of route 66 and the history of the workers in the historic Lincoln Place neighborhood of Granite City. Rusty could work on the barges or railroads, or at the steel mill. He is a celebration of the immigrant workers that helped form this community.



Land Bridge, Danielle Robinson (Scheduled) Funder: America's Central Port

Land Bridge is a sculpture that utilizes salvaged bridge parts from the recently rebuilt Merchants Rail Bridge. The intention is to create large scale sculptures that reflect some aspect of the impact of the rail and shipping industry within the region. Kansas sculptor Danielle Robinson's design "Land bridge" was selected due to its focus on the landscape of the "American Bottoms" and how the land and the railroad connect this region to the rest of the country and world.

Aspire, Tom Wobbe (Sched- ouled)



Aspire, concept design by Tom Wobbe utilizes salvaged parts from the recently rebuilt Merchants Rail Bridge. The intention of this project is to create large scale sculptures that reflect some aspect of the impact of the rail and shipping industry within the region. His design creates an aspirational composition of salvaged materials moving and growing upwards from its past.

Organization Options

Beyond this planning process, there is a need to have an entity that leads the charge. The successful implementation of the Route 3 Transportation Improvements, along with the art and design enhancements, will require ongoing involvement of stakeholders, and the focused attention of paid staff.

There are several types of skill sets and activities that may be needed to ensure the ongoing success of this initiative.

Advocacy: Working with IDOT to ensure that the infrastructure improvements are implemented in the spirit of this plan; keeping corridor stakeholders, including government partners and property owners, informed and connected to infrastructure and enhancement projects.

Fundraising: Seeking funding from stakeholders, writing grants, and seeking philanthropic contributions.

Acquisition and Ownership: Owning artwork and, potentially, the parcels of land that the work sits on.

Maintenance and Conservation: Overseeing the additional mowing, landscaping and trash removal along the corridor; maintaining and conserving artwork.

Curation: Facilitating the selection of artwork in conjunction with project stakeholders; working with artists through the design, fabrication and installation of artwork.

Promotion: Getting the word out about art, design and other enhancements, as well as progress on general infrastructure and safety improvements. Connecting with tourism and other efforts to promote the area.



Above: The aRT3 Planning Study Advisory Committee has successfully brought together more than 25 stakeholders from the Route 3 corridor including elected officials, business and property owners, regional agencies, and other organizations to provide input on this plan. While the Advisory Committee will continue to play a crucial role during future implementation, a dedicated organization will be needed to manage the day-to-day aspects of carrying out the plan.

Organization Options

There are several options for bringing together expertise and focused attention.

Option A: New Nonprofit Organization Leads

A new, nonprofit organization could be formed that has the ongoing responsibility for stewardship of the Route 3 corridor. This nonprofit would have a board comprised of corridor stakeholders,. The organization should have paid staff to facilitate initiatives.

Pros:

- Independence from any one government agency or stakeholder.
- Organization's visibility creates the potential for greater visibility for the improvements and enhancements Route 3.
- More attractive for some grant makers and philanthropic donors.

Cons:

- Requires resources for staffing
- Takes time and resources to maintain nonprofit status
- Requires long-term commitment to sustain over time

Option B: Decentralized Working Group or Committee

Transitioning the current Route 3 Advisory Committee into an ongoing Working Group. Each member of the Working Group brings different expertise and resources.

Pros:

 Utilizes expertise of people already doing work in and around the corridor.

Cons:

 Decentralized responsibilities may create challenges for coordination and followthrough.

Option C: Utilize Existing "It Starts Here Foundation"

The "It Starts Here Foundation" was spearheaded by the Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County in 2005. Through the Foundation, the Chamber worked with local businesses to raise funds to initiate Route 3 cleanup program, which adopted this portion of Route 3 to clean, beautify and change the perception of the area; and to commission the "Salute to Steel" sculpture. The Foundation currently has an active board, but no permanent staff.

Pros:

- A track record as a convener and leader among stakeholders in the region.
- Experience commissioning artwork and spearheading clean-up and beautification efforts.
- The Foundation's existing 501c3 and track record allows for fundraising and other work to begin immediately.

Cons:

Lack of dedicated staff.

Recommendation

A dedicated organization with the capacity to advocate, fund raise, and manage projects will be necessary to see through the recommendation in this plan. The existing "It Starts Here Foundation" is well-positioned to be this organization and take the lead.

The initiative also will require a dedicated staff person to work with the Advisory Committee to keep things on track. It may take a few years of fundraising before the "It Starts Here Foundation" has the resources to hire staff. In the interim, America's Central Port could act as a contractor to provide staff support. The Port has also been a key a leader in art and design enhancements, and with this planning process, and has experienced and engaged staff that can, on a limited-time basis (3-5 years) manage the work and get the Foundation to a place where it can hire its own staff.

Criteria For Site Evaluation

Many ideas for public art and design enhancements are outlined in this plan, and more will continue to emerge. While the plan recommends a list of priority initiatives, there will be an ongoing need to prioritize fundraising and support as projects are completed or new ideas come forward. The following criteria provide key considerations for evaluating opportunities. Although they can be applied to each specific opportunity, they do not all necessarily carry the same weight or apply to every project.

Location

When reviewing an opportunity, it will be important to evaluate the site's appropriateness for art or design enhancements.

- The site lends itself to an artwork or design enhancement where people could safely park/walk up the work and interact with it.
- The site lends itself to an artwork or design enhancement that can be experienced from multiple vantage points.
- An artwork or design enhancement at the site would complement or enhance current and potentially future site uses.
- The area does not already have artwork and design enhancements in the vicinity.

Resources

Some priorities may take a higher priority or need to be timed to take into consideration community interest, the availability of funding, staff resources, volunteer time, and partnerships.

- There is a high level of community buy-in for art or enhancements at the site.
- The site owner is a willing partner and shares the vision for the site's use and approach to art and design enhancement OR there is the ability to acquire the site.
- There are partnerships, funding opportunities, volunteers, etc. that could strengthen the outcomes of the project.
- There is a construction project at the site that could allow for site integration and/or leveraging of resources.
- Art or a design intervention at the site supports other local plans and initiatives.
- There are sufficient resources to introduce an artwork or design enhancement that would be of an appropriate quality, durability, scale, and duration for the site.
- There is someone able to manage the project and any related engagement and programming.

Technical

Each site will have its own technical needs in terms of site work, infrastructure, safety, and future use. Before proceeding with a site, technical needs should be evaluated.

- The site does not pose concerns related to traffic or public safety.
- Future development will not change the appropriates of the site for an artwork or design enhancement.
- The site does not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- There is access to power for lighting and the ability to meter/pay for it.

Art and Design Inspiration

As efforts to enhance the Route 3 corridor began in the early 2000s, area leaders focused on how to create an authentic sense of place and engage visitors in what makes the Route 3 corridor unique – its history and the industries that sustain the community. These ideas helped inspire the design for *Salute to Steel*, which is a tribute to the steel manufacturing that has historically taken place in Granite City, Madison and Venice.

Building on those ideas, the engagement for aRT3 asked participants to comment on what ideas should inspire future art and design. In addition to history and industry, ideas surfaced around highlighting the unique natural environment that can be accessed from the corridor, and the celebrating the communities it passes through.

History: This area, located in the American Bottom, has a rich history, with connections to important people and events that have impacted the nation. From the Native Americans that inhabited this land back to the Mississippian era, to Camp River Dubois where Lewis and Clark prepared for their journey into the Louisiana Purchase, to an being important stop on the Underground Railroad at the Mary Meachum Freedom Crossing, these lands have been at the nexus of our nation's evolution.

Industry: The Route 3 corridor is an important economic driver for the region, with strengths in both agriculture and manufacturing, and a transportation network, including America's Port, that ships and receives goods and materials across the globe via the Mississippi River, as well as a robust rail and roadway network.

Community: Route 3 is not just a commercial corridor. It is also a gateway to the communities of Venice, Madison and Granite City. Art and design enhancement can draw attention to these hard-working, multicultural communities and reflect the pride people have in the place that they call home.

Natural Environment: The environment of the American Bottom is shaped by its connection to the Mississippi River and the flooding that has shaped the land over centuries. As part of the Mississippi Flyway, it has the greatest concentration of bird species in Illinois. Chouteau Island, the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge and Park, and the MCT Confluence Trail provide access to natural areas along the Mississippi for hiking, biking, fishing, and birdwatching.



Above: At Open House #1, attendees discussed what they perceived as the identity of Route 3. Inspiration for future art and design includes themes of history, industry, community, and the natural environment.



Enhancement and Art Opportunities



Mural



Parcel or Right-of-Way

These areas could be one or more of several types of opportunities, including:



Landscape



Art / Sculpture



Infrastructure



Residential Edge

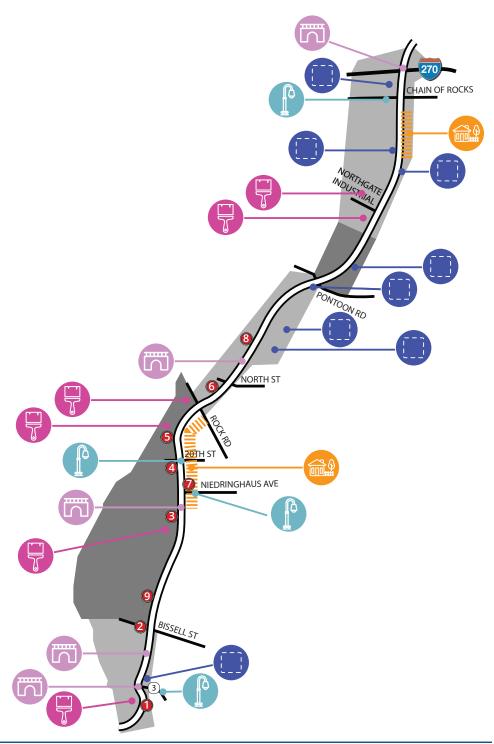


Streetscape



Existing (or Scheduled) Sculpture

The Enhancement and Art Opportunities map on this page serves as the master plan for the corridor. The following pages highlight the priority art and enhancement initiatives, along with detailed descriptions of each opportunity site.

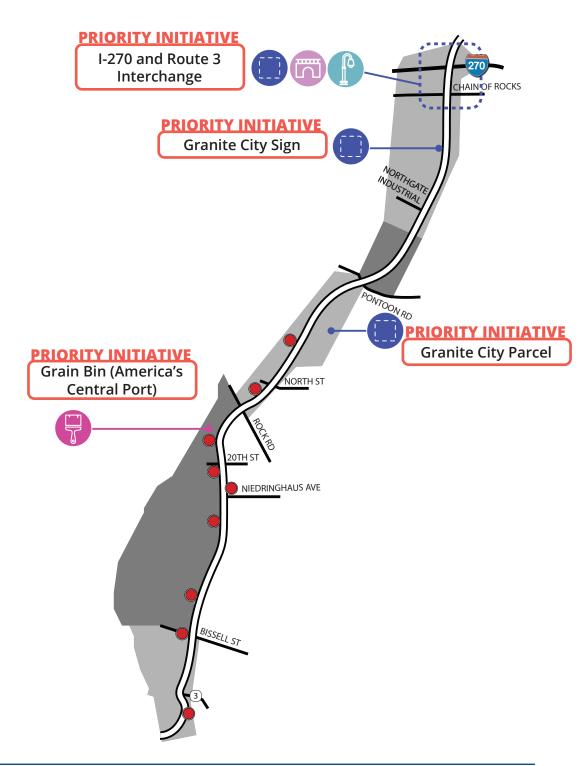


Enhancement and Art Opportunities:

PRIORITY INITIATIVES

- I-270 and Route 3 Interchange
- **Granite City Sign**
- **Granite City Parcel**
- **Grain Bin (America's Central Port)**
- Corridor Landscape Stewardship

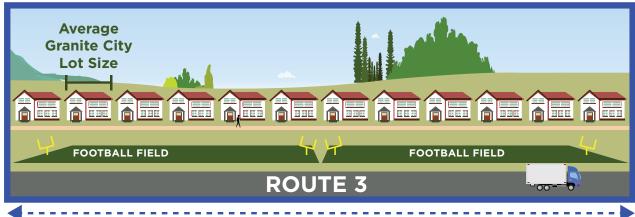
The priority initiatives are highlighted on the following page descriptions of each opportunity area. The Corridor Landscape Stewardship is included as its own section later in the document.



Understanding Corridor Hierarchy

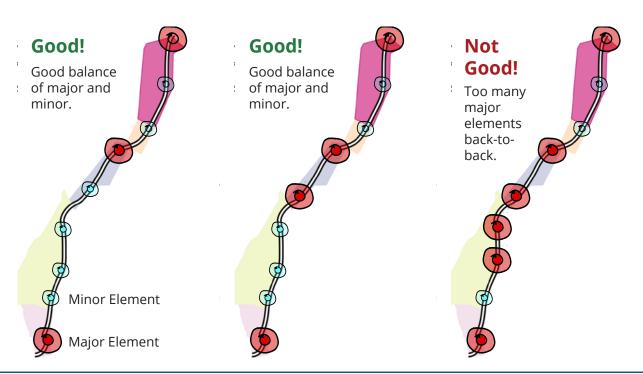
There is no scientific formula for determining the frequency, distance, or scale of art and enhancements. Like many aspects of aesthetics, beauty is in the eye of the beholder. However, it is important to understand scale and the speed at which travelers along Route 3 will experience these elements.

The diagram to the right illustrates that someone driving 45 - 55 mph will cover in ten seconds the equivalent of two football fields — or about the length of twelve houses. This means drivers will pass by quickly and may not notice many details in that short span.



Drive Time: 10 seconds at 45-55 mph

The Route 3 diagrams to the right illustrate that art and enhancements should follow a rhythm of "major" and "minor" elements. While there shouldn't be a strict template dictating the placement of these elements, since site opportunities often determine the potential scale, an overall hierarchy should be kept in mind as future art and enhancement projects are implemented.





MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES: I-270 / Route 3 Intersection

Visibility

Ownership

High Medium Low

Private Public IDOT



Project Goals

- Create a gateway into Illinois and Madison County as the first Illinois exit from I-270.
- Create a sense of arrival into the tri-city area.
- Make this interchange distinct from others in the region through enhanced design and elements that reflect a sense of place.

Timing

- Design of enhancements should take place in conjunction with overall design of interchange improvements.
- Stand-alone sculpture could be added later, but the siting and any needed infrastructure for sculpture should be considered during the interchange design and construction.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Ensure that art and enhancements do not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.

Stakeholders

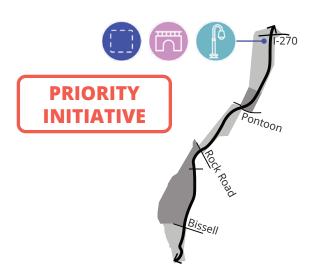
IDOT, City of Granite City, Great Rivers and Routes, Madison County, MCT, Chouteau Township, and businesses along Chain of Rocks Road.









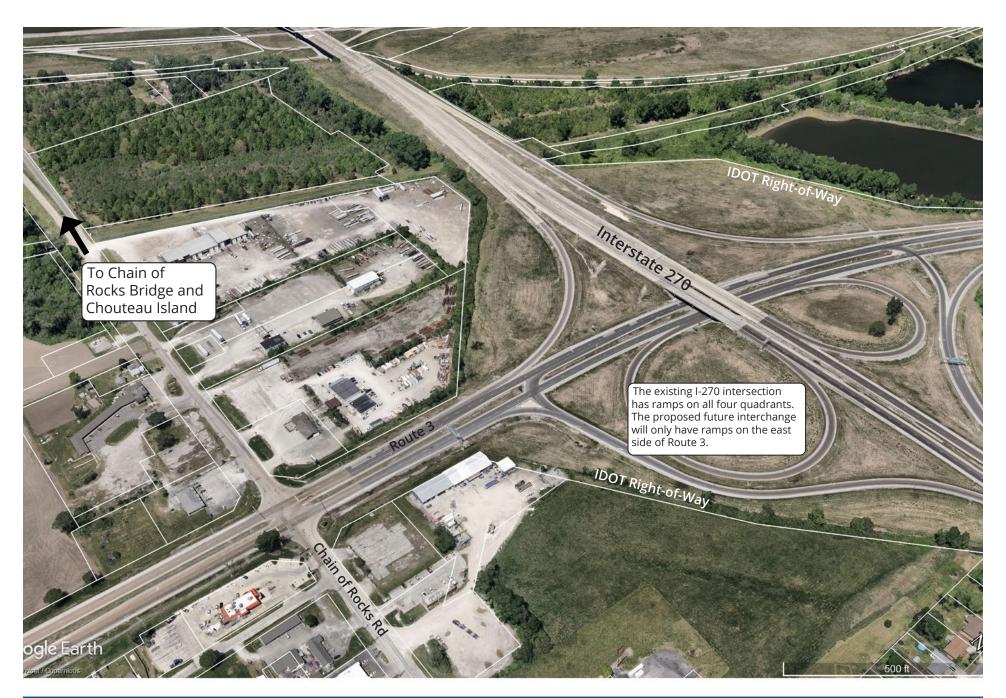


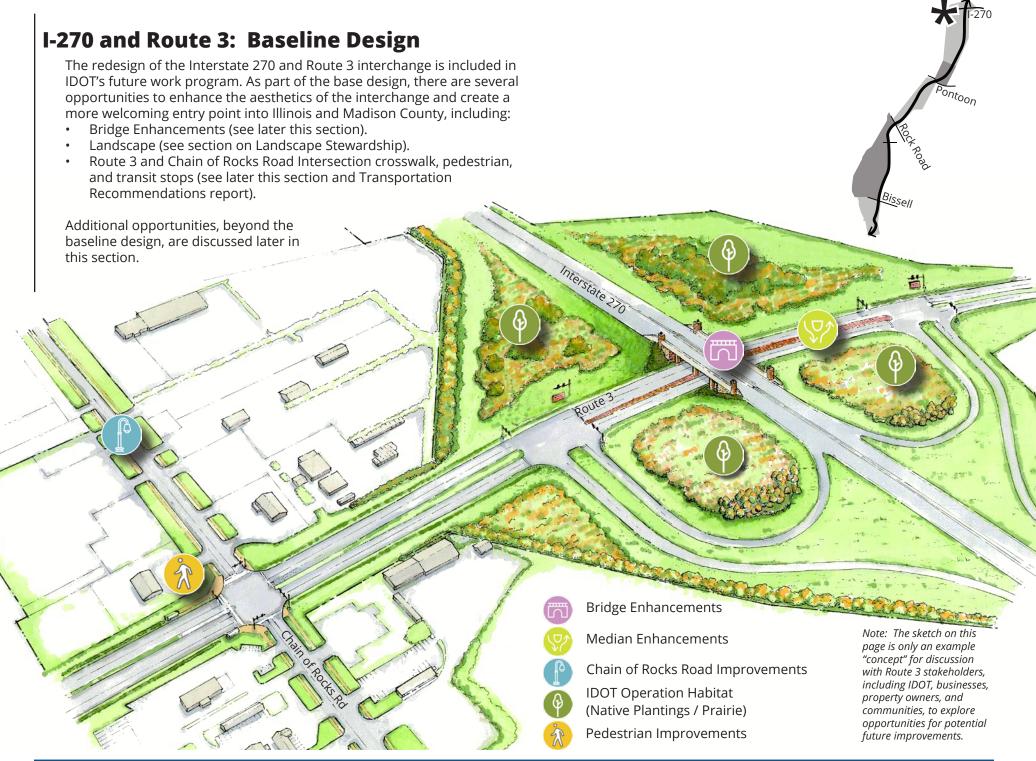






I-270 / Route 3 Intersection: Existing Site Area







I-270 and Route 3: With Visitor Center

The intersection of Interstate 270 and Route 3 serves as the first entry point into Illinois for visitors from the west, making it a key gateway to Illinois, Madison County, Granite City, and the Route 3 corridor.

A visitor center at this intersection would provide a welcoming entrance to Illinois and Madison County while highlighting the Route 3 corridor as an important tourism destination.





I-270 and Route 3: With Visitor Center

The intersection of Interstate 270 and Route 3 serves as the first entry point into Illinois for visitors from the west, making it a key gateway to Illinois, Madison County, Granite City, and the Route 3 corridor.

A visitor center at this intersection would provide a welcoming entrance to Illinois and Madison County while highlighting the Route 3 corridor as an important tourism destination.



Note: The sketch on this page is only an example "concept" for discussion with Route 3 stakeholders, including IDOT, businesses, property owners, and communities, to explore opportunities for potential future improvements.







I-270 and Route 3: With Visitor Center (Alternate Location)

An alternative location for the visitor center is at the intersection of Chain of Rocks Road. While not visible from the interstate, a site along Chain of Rocks Road could serve as a gateway, anchoring the intersection and enhancing the sense of arrival to Chain of Rocks Bridge and Chouteau Island. (The 2001 Chouteau Island Master Plan recommended a visitor center closer to the Chain of Rocks Bridge.)

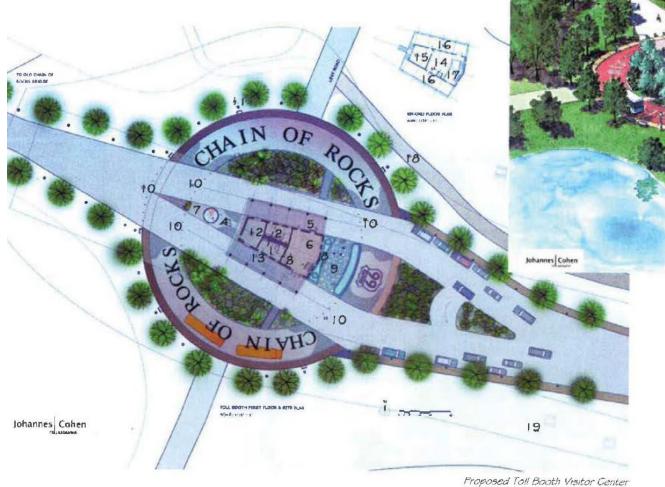
A key factor in site availability. A minimum of five to six acres would be needed, and the existing property along Chain of Rocks Road is privately owned. While this concept envisions the visitor center at the southwest corner, the other corners could also be suitable if property becomes available.



An Opportunity to Implement Portions of Chouteau Island Master Plan

The 2002 Chouteau Island Master Plan proposed a Chain of Rocks visitor center near the eastern end of the Chain of Rocks Bridge. A key advantage of locating a "Welcome to Illinois" visitor center near the intersection of Route 3 and Chain of Rocks Road is that it could serve a dual purpose: acting as both a gateway to Illinois along the I-270 corridor and as an entrance to Chouteau Island and the Chain of Rocks Bridge. This would help fulfill one of the goals outlined in the 2002 Chouteau Island Master Plan.

This page includes two of the renderings of the proposed visitor center from the 2002 plan.





I-270 and Route 3: Intersection Sculpture

A sculpture at the interchange would create a gateway into Illinois and Madison County as it marks the first Illinois exit from I-270. It would also establish a sense of arrival into the tri-city area. The sculpture should be positioned to ensure visibility from the Interstate, Route 3, and the exit and on-ramps.





I-270 and Route 3: Intersection Sculpture

The scale of the sculpture will need to be sufficient to ensure it is prominently visible at the interchange. The proposed interchange is fairly expansive, covering nearly 50 acres. The precedent images below are intended to illustrate examples of sculptures that are monumental in scale.











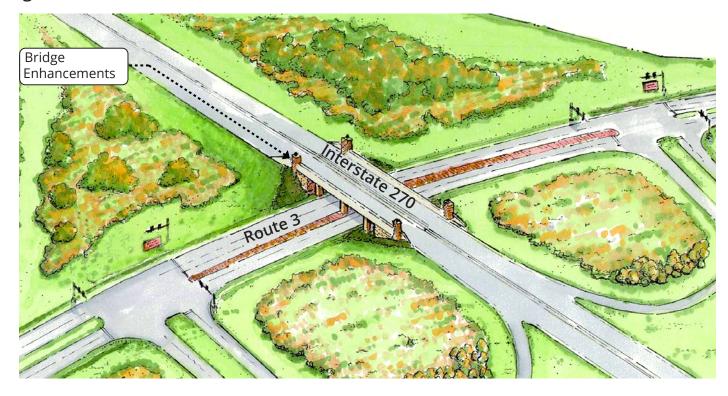


I-270 and Route 3: Bridge Enhancements

The intersection of Interstate 270 and Route 3 serves as the first entry point into Illinois for visitors from the west, making it a key gateway to Illinois, Madison County, Granite City, and the Route 3 corridor.

The design aesthetics of the I-270 bridge over Route 3 is an opportunity to create a welcoming entry into Madison County.

The images below show precedent examples of bridge enhancements from other locations along Illinois interstates.









Bridge Enhancements: Regional Precedent - Interstate 255







The bridges along Interstate 255 in Madison and St. Clair counties provide a good precedent for how IDOT bridges can incorporate enhancements.

Left: Sign supports along I-255 have the same earth tone color as the bridge girders.



Bridge Enhancements: Illinois Precedent - Interstate 57 near Champaign









Bridge Enhancements: Illinois Precedent - Interstate 55 near Bollingbrook









I-270 and Route 3: Pedestrian Crossing and Bus Shelters

The existing bus stops at the Chain of Rocks intersection are frequently used, however, the existing intersection lacks crosswalks, pedestrian signals, and sidewalks. Future improvements should include crosswalks, pedestrian signals, sidewalks, and new bus shelters.

New pedestrian New bus stops on crossings (minimum each side of Route 3 three legs of with sidewalk from intersection). intersection.

Bottom Left and Center: The existing bus stops at the Chain of Rocks intersection are frequently used. However, the intersection lacks existing crosswalks and the bus stops must be accessed using the shoulder of Route 3.

Bottom Right: Example of an enhanced bus stop.









I-270 and Route 3: Importance of Native Plantings

A native landscape strategy, such as IDOT's Operation Habitat, is recommended for the I-270 and Route 3 interchange due to the scale of the interchange. The concept plan includes nearly 50 acres of greenspace. Compared to other high-profile interchanges in the St. Louis region, the I-270 and Route 3 interchange will include significantly more greenspace to maintain. While Boone's Crossing and Olive Boulevard are often cited as examples of attractive interchange landscaping, their footprints are much smaller by comparison.

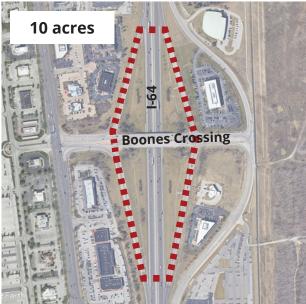
I-270 & Route 3 (Future)



48 acres

I-64 & Boones Crossing





I-270 & Olive Blvd







MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES: Pontoon Rd and Missouri Ave

Visibility

Ownership

High

Medium Low

Private

Public

IDOT

Project Goals

- Create a destination location for travelers to have a unique experience along the corridor i.e. a selfie site or small roadside park.
- Sculpture or significant native planting and landscaping.
- Contribute to creating a sense of place with an artwork that reflects local history, nature, industry and/or community.

Timing

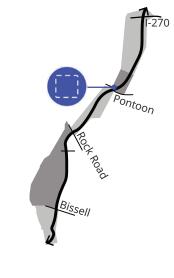
Stand-alone sculpture could be added at any time, depending on the location (proposed transportation changes to Pontoon Road and Missouri Ave will impact timing). Landscaping and infrastructure for sculpture should be considered during the interchange design.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Ensure that art and enhancements do not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- An artwork should be scaled appropriately within the site.
- Designs should take into consideration other signage that will be on the site.

Stakeholders

IDOT, City of Granite City, Weber Chevrolet, and businesses at intersection.









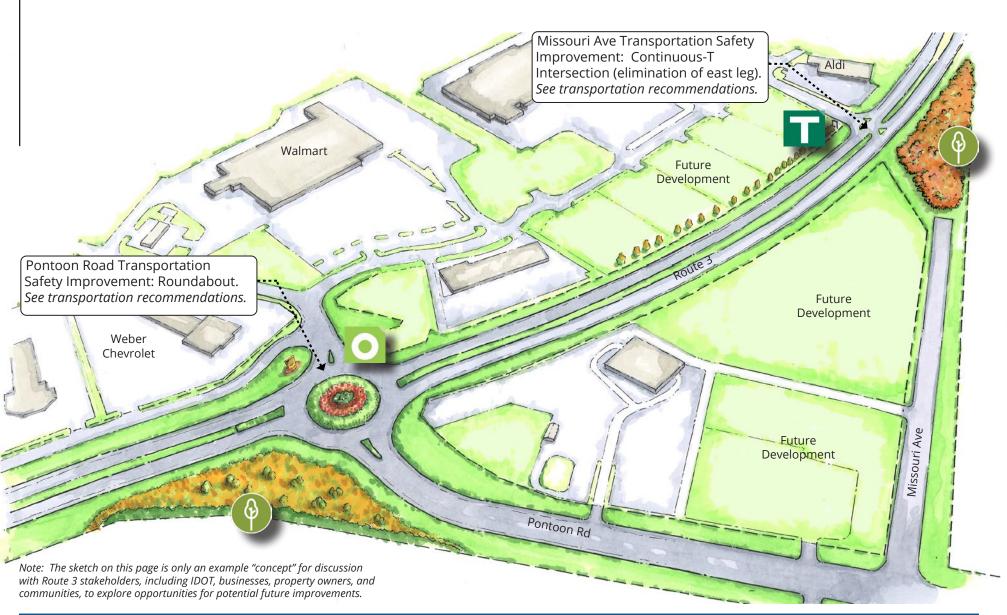




Pontoon Rd and Missouri Ave: Existing Site Area

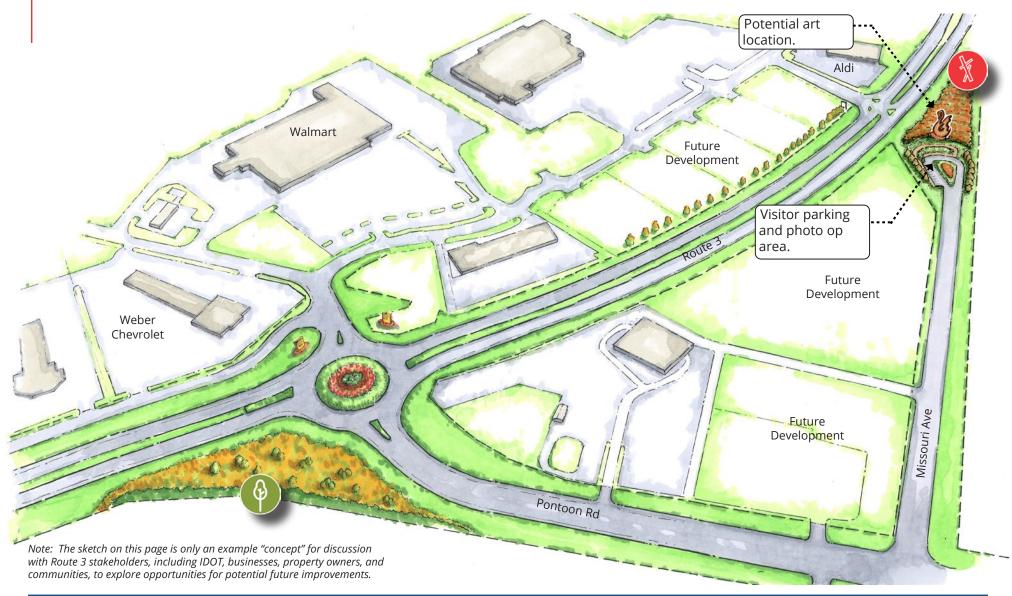


Pontoon Road and Missouri Avenue





Pontoon Road and Missouri Avenue: Sculpture





Pontoon Road and Missouri Avenue: Sculpture

This location is an opportunity to have a visitor parking area for visitors and tourists to get photos with the sculpture.

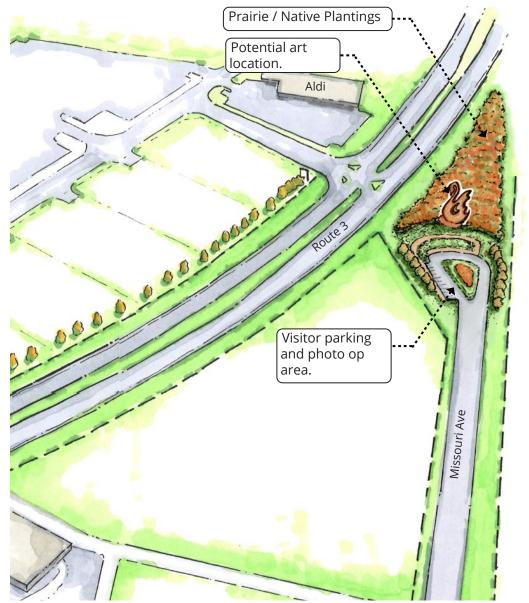
The photos below are from the Enchanted Highway in North Dakota which includes a series of large sculptures along 32 miles of Highway 21. The sculpture locations are popular with visitors for photos and "selfies."













MULTIPLE OPPORTUNITIES: Route 3 / Broadway Intersection



Ownership

High Medium Low





Project Goals

- Create an iconic, signature image for the Route 3 corridor.
- Contribute to creating a sense of place with an artwork that reflects local history, nature, industry and/or community.

Timing

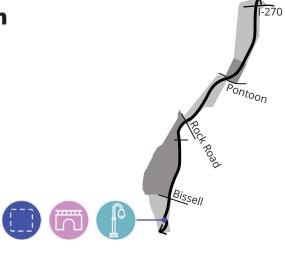
An artwork should be commissioned in conjunction with the design and construction of the roundabout so that it can be fully integrated into the site.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Ensure that art and enhancements do not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- An artwork should be scaled appropriately within the site.
- Designs should take into consideration other signage that will be on the site.

Stakeholders

IDOT, City of Venice, Beelman Trucking, and MCT.













Route 3 / Broadway Intersection: Existing Site Area



Broadway Avenue

The proposed roundabout at Broadway will facilitate the opportunity for a shared use path that will help connect the MCT Confluence Trail with the heart of Venice and the Schoolhouse Trail (Connecting the Confluence Trail and the Schoolhouse Trail is a regional trail priority).

Note: The sketch on this page is only an example "concept" for discussion with Route 3 stakeholders, including IDOT, businesses, property owners, and communities, to explore opportunities for potential future improvements.





Broadway Interchange: Native Plantings

The Broadway interchange area includes large expanses of right-of-way that would be ideal for native plantings (such as those promoted by IDOT's Operation Habitat) offering benefits like attractive roadsides and reduced mowing needs.

Note: The sketch on this page is only an example "concept" for discussion with Route 3 stakeholders, including IDOT, businesses, property owners, and communities, to explore opportunities for potential future improvements.







INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITY: Broadway Ave Railroad Trestle

Visibility

Infrastructure Ownership

High Medium Low

Private Public IDOT

Project Goals

- Enhance the appearance of the existing railroad infrastructure.
- Create a welcoming gateway to the Venice community.
- Honor the role of the railroad in the history and economy of the region.

Timing

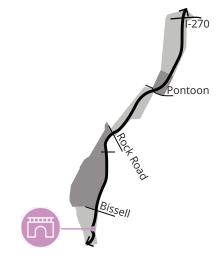
Could be implemented at any time, with consent of the railroad.

Technical Considerations

- Technical needs for the railroad in terms of safety and inspection should be adhered to.
- Designs should take into consideration safety for passing motorists.
- Artwork could be on the bridge over Broadway Avenue and/or the concrete embankment.
- For the bridge, materials could include paint or a vinyl appropriate for outdoor application.
- For painted murals, see technical considerations for murals (see 'Murals' section).

Stakeholders

Norfolk Southern Railroad, CN Railroad, IDOT, and City of Venice.













Broadway Ave Railroad Trestle: Existing Site Area



Broadway Ave Railroad Trestle: Existing Photos

Looking east toward the Route 3 and Broadway intersection.



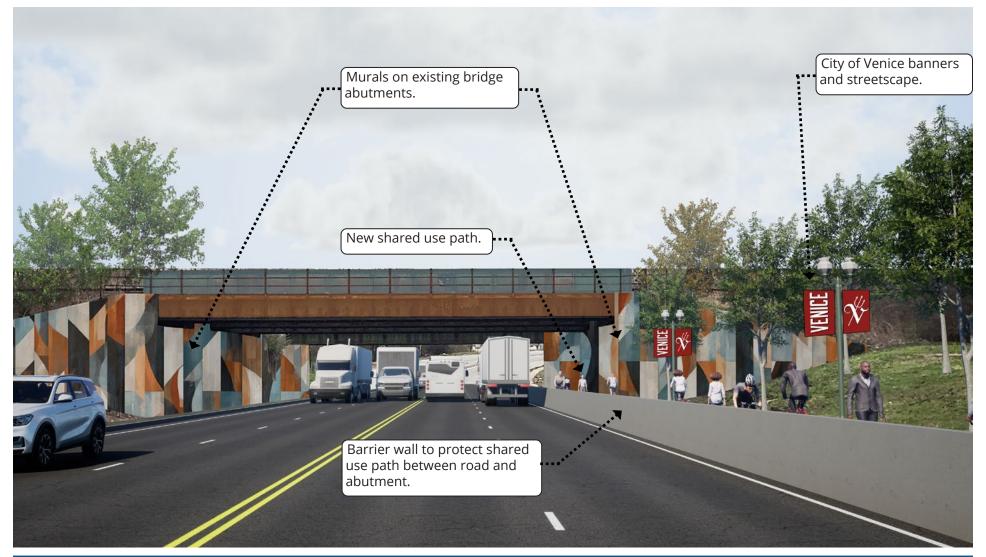
Close up of the underneath the railroad trestle, looking east toward the Route 3 and Broadway intersection.

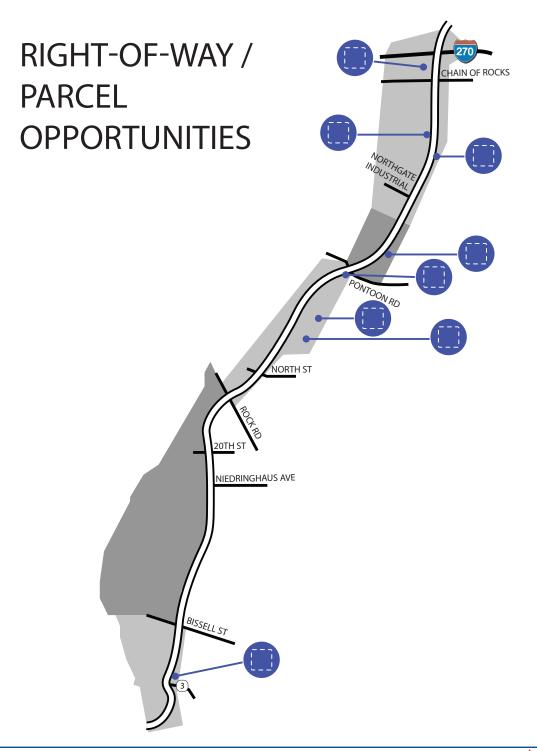


Broadway Ave Railroad Trestle: Concept Rendering

The transportation recommendations include reconfiguring Broadway to accommodate four lanes of traffic and a shared-use path between the existing bridge abutments. The rendering below illustrates this concept, which also features an opportunity for murals on the bridge abutments and enhanced streetscape elements that create a welcoming entry into the City of Venice.

Note: The sketch on this page is only an example "concept" for discussion with Route 3 stakeholders, including IDOT, businesses, property owners, and communities, to explore opportunities for potential future improvements.







RIGHT-OF-WAY / PARCEL OPPORTUNITY: Granite City Welcome Sign

Visibility

Parcel Ownership

High Medium Low

Private Public IDOT

Project Goals

- Elevate the visibility of the existing welcome sign through an artwork that introduces scale, color, lighting, and/or landscape.
- Welcome people to Granite City with a work of art that reflects the unique character of the community.

Timing

• Any time. Not contingent on external construction projects.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Enhancement and artwork should be scaled to be visible from a moving vehicle.
- Ensure that the siting does not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- Consideration should be given to access to electrical for lighting.

Stakeholders

IDOT, property owner, and City of Granite City.











Welcome Sign Area: Existing Site Area



Welcome Sign Area: Existing Photos

Looking south at the existing Granite City sign and surrounding area.







RIGHT-OF-WAY / PARCEL OPPORTUNITY: St. Thomas Road Right-of-Way

Visibility

Parcel Ownership

High Medium

Private Public **IDOT**

Project Goals

Create a sense of entry into a small pocket of housing.

Low

Contribute to creating a sense of place with an artwork that reflects local history, nature, industry and/or community.

Timing

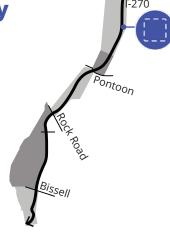
Any time. Not contingent on external construction projects.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Enhancement and artwork should be scaled to be visible from a moving vehicle.
- Ensure that the siting does not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- Consideration should be given to access to electrical for lighting.

Stakeholders

IDOT and nearby residents.





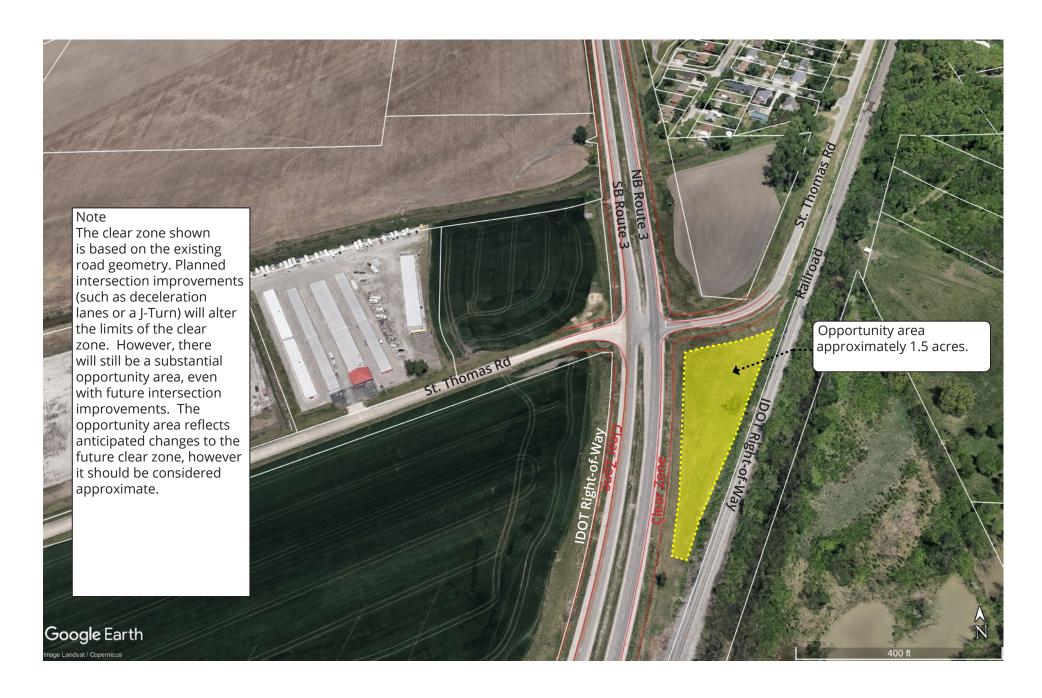








St. Thomas Road Right-of-Way: Existing Site Area



St. Thomas Road Right-of-Way: Existing Photos

Looking north along Route 3 (the moving van is on St. Thomas Road) with the opportunity area to the right. The existing railroad tracks are screened by existing vegetation.



Looking east from St. Thomas Road intersection (west side) toward the opportunity area.





RIGHT-OF-WAY / PARCEL OPPORTUNITY: Granite City Parcel (South of Pontoon Rd)

Visibility

Parcel Ownership

High Medium Low

Private **Public** IDOT

Project Goals

- Rotating sculpture installation that can change in response to calls for art.
- Bring color and visual interest to the Route 3 corridor.
- Capture the spirit of the Route 3 corridor and the communities it passes through, including its history, nature, and industry.

Timing

• Any time. Not contingent on external construction projects.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Enhancement and artwork should be scaled to be visible from a moving vehicle.
- Ensure that the siting does not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- Consideration should be given to access to electrical for lighting.
- Parcel may have existing stormwater infrastructure whose location would need to be verified (stormwater from west of Route 3 is piped to the east side of Route 3).

Stakeholders

IDOT and City of Granite City.

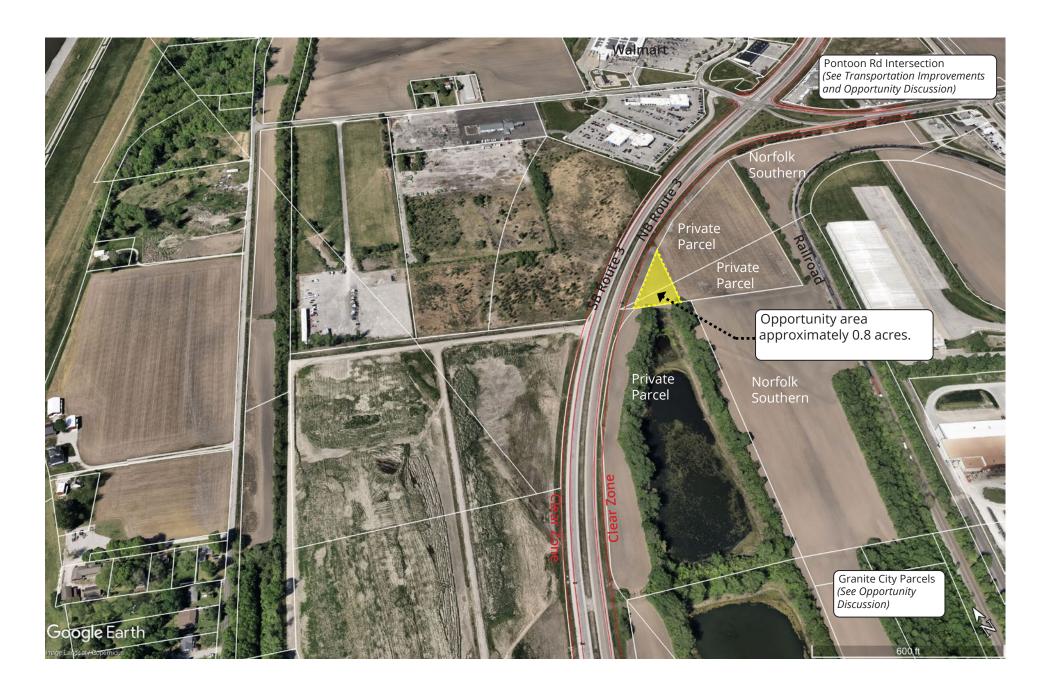








Granite City Parcel (South of Pontoon Rd): Existing Site Area



Granite City Parcel (South of Pontoon Rd): Existing Photos

Looking north along Route 3. The City of Granite City parcels are adjacent to several parcels that are all being farmed.



Looking south along Route 3.





RIGHT-OF-WAY / PARCEL OPPORTUNITY: Granite City Parcel (North of Railroad)

Visibility

Parcel Ownership

High **Medium**

Private **Public** IDOT

Project Goals

• Experimental Sculpture Park and Nature Site.

Low

Sculpture installations from students at regional universities.

Projects can change in response to interest from students.

Ad hoc projects.

Self funded by artists or local stakeholder.

Sculptures created from Granite City Public Works salvaged materials i.e. cut trees, storm debris, landfill materials.

- Landscape Design projects.
 - Projects that explore experiments in landscaping design. Pathways. Landscape modifications created from Granite City Public Works materials.
- Capture the spirit of the Route 3 corridor and the communities it passes through, including its history, nature, and industry.
- Creating a "park like" environment that allows for informal access and use of space.

Timing: As resources present themselves and as Granite City improves the site and lake.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet safety requirements.
- Enhancement and artwork should be scaled to be visible from walking or highway scale.
- Ensure that the siting does not pose significant concerns related to access for maintenance.
- · Consideration should be given to access to electrical for lighting

Stakeholders: IDOT, City of Granite City, and local universities.



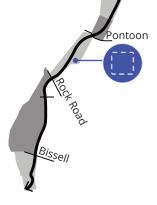












Granite City Parcel (North of Railroad): Existing Site Area



Granite City Parcel (North of Railroad): Existing Photos

Looking north along Route 3 just past the bridge. At this point, Route 3 is significantly higher than the parcel, thus the visibility of the parcel is low. The existing vegetation is within IDOT's right-ofway on the road slope.



Looking north along Route 3 near the north end of the opportunity parcel.





INFRASTRUCTURE OPPORTUNITY: Terminal Railroad Trestle

Visibility

Infrastructure Ownership

High Medium Low

Private Public IDOT

Project Goals

- Enhance the appearance of the existing railroad infrastructure.
- Honor the role of the railroad in the history and economy of the region.
- Create a welcoming gateway and landmark along Route 3.

Timing

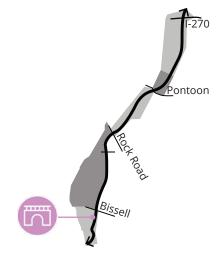
• Could be implemented at any time, with consent of the railroad.

Technical Considerations

- Technical needs for the railroad in terms of safety and inspection should be adhered to.
- Designs should take into consideration safety for passing motorists.
- Artwork could be on the bridge and/or incorporate lighting of the stone bridge supports.
- For the bridge, materials could include paint or a vinyl appropriate for outdoor application.
- Any enhancements should include clearing up the planted areas around the bridge supports.

Stakeholders

IDOT and Terminal Railroad Association.











Terminal Railroad Trestle: Existing Site Area



Terminal Railroad Trestle: Existing Photos

Looking south along Route 3 toward the railroad trestle. The trestle expands Route 3 and four railroad tracks to the east. The trestle includes 4 piers.



Looking north along Route 3 toward the railroad trestle.





MURAL OPPORTUNITIES: Multiple Locations

Visibility

Building/Structure Ownership

High Medium Low

Public **Private**

Project Goals

- Bring color and visual interest to the Route 3 corridor.
- Capture the spirit of the Route 3 corridor and the communities it passes through, including its history, nature, and industry.

Timing

Projects can proceed at any time. Murals can generally not be painted when it is below 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Technical Considerations

- The wall(s) should be sound with no visible water seepage, stains, rust or peeling paint.
- There should a safe area where an artist can work, with level ground, away from traffic and other potentially dangerous adjacent activity.
- Ensure there are not there overhead wires or other obstacles that would interfere with painting.
- In addition to paint, other materials such as vinyl or painted polytab could be considered.

Stakeholders

Private property / building owners.

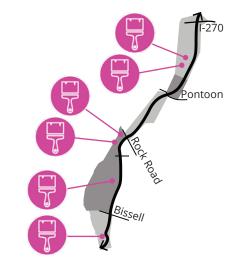
Precedent Images











Existing Buildings (Potential Opportunities)



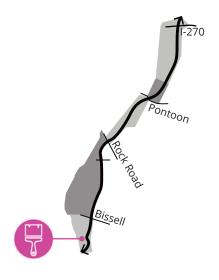










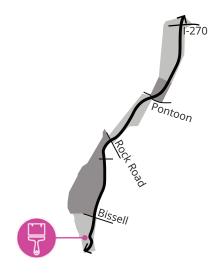










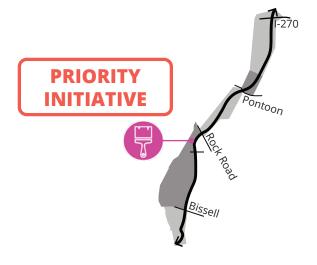


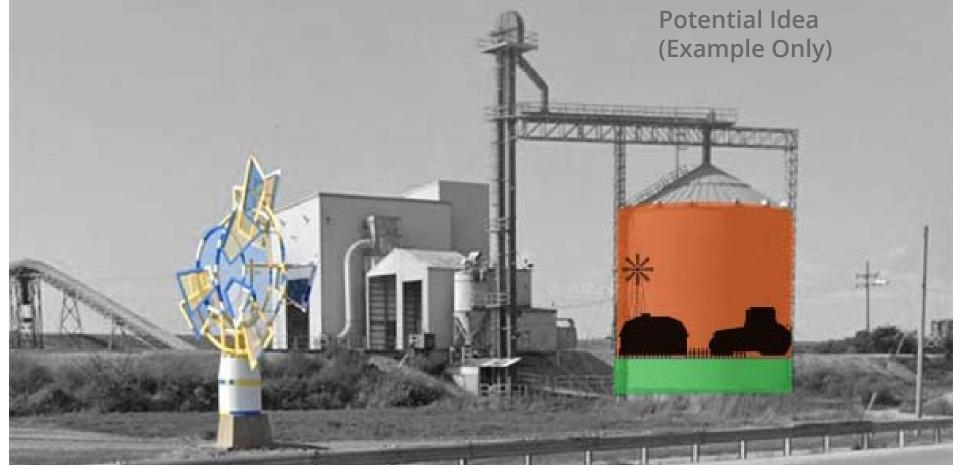








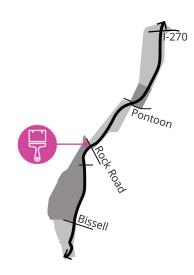


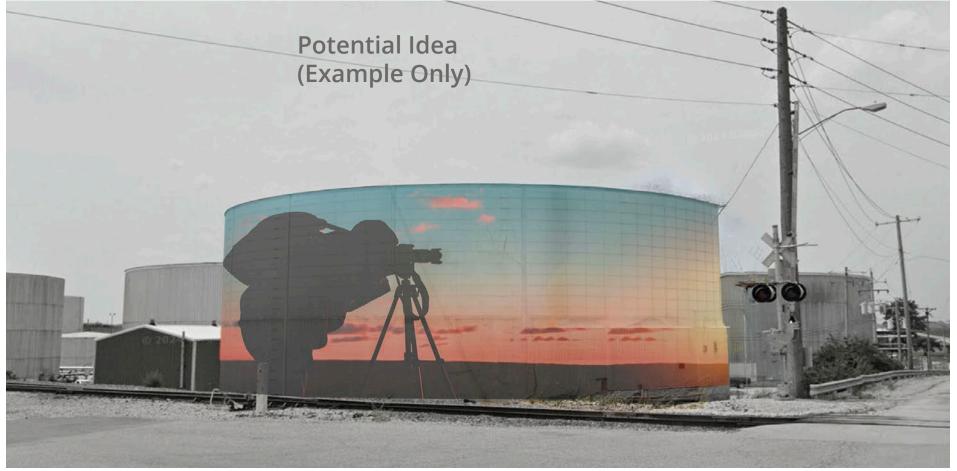








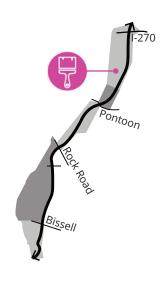










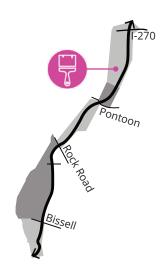
















RESIDENTIAL EDGE: Multiple Locations

Visibility

Ownership

High Medium Low **Private** Public **IDOT** Unless required by IDOT criteria (soundwalls, etc.) that will be on IDOT right-of-way, other edge treatments will be on private (homeowner) property.

Project Goals

Utilize landscaping and artistic barriers to create an aesthetically pleasing edge. Provide a clear separation between the Route 3 corridor and adjacent residential and community spaces.

Timing

Consider the visual and sound barriers as part of overall Route 3 infrastructure improvements.

Technical Considerations

- Enhancements and artwork should meet all IDOT safety requirements.
- Access for maintenance on both sides of the edge.

Stakeholders

IDOT and residents / property owners.













RESIDENTIAL EDGE: North of Niedringhaus



Looking northeast along residential edge.



RESIDENTIAL EDGE: Near Harding Ave



Looking northeast along residential edge. The property north of Harding Avenue has an existing privacy fence.



RESIDENTIAL EDGE: Near Harding Ave



Looking northeast along residential edge.



Landscape Stewardship



The appearance of the Route 3 corridor has consistently been identified by the Advisory Committee and community members as a top priority. This concern is often voiced in terms of wanting a "clean" corridor - meaning a roadway free of trash, litter, and overgrown or uncut grass.

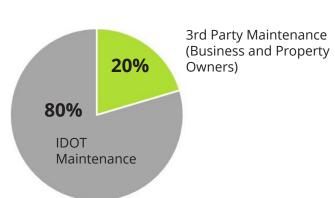
A key consideration in addressing this issue is the limited capacity of the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to maintain the corridor to the level expected by local stakeholders. With thousands of miles of roadway and right-of-way to manage across the state, IDOT faces significant resource constraints. This challenge is not unique to Illinois; departments of transportation across the country grapple with similar issues. In many places, volunteer efforts and partnerships (such as Adopt-a-Highway programs) have helped bridge the gap.

Fortunately, along this section of Route 3, a significant portion of the right-of-way is already being maintained by adjacent businesses and property owners. It is estimated that approximately 20% of the right-of-way from the McKinley Bridge to Interstate 270 is maintained in this way. This reflects the strong commitment of local stakeholders to enhancing the appearance and identity of the Route 3 corridor.

This section includes recommendations for an overall landscape stewardship strategy, including:

- 1. Focus on Interchanges (and simplify the landscape at the interchanges).
- 2. Focus on clean edges between the interchanges.
- 3. Utilize IDOT's existing Operation Habitat program at select locations.

Pride among Route 3
businesses is evident
in the fact that over
20% of the Route 3
right-of-way is already
being maintained by
adjacent business and
property owners!







Above: These two precedent images of roadside landscapes were both highly rated by the Advisory Committee and community members as opportunities to enhance the Route 3 corridor. The top image, is an existing IDOT program (Operation Habitat). Operation Habitat was a statewide initiative launched by IDOT in 2017 to investigate opportunities to create, preserve or protect habitat areas on its rights-of-way. The bottom image is a sunflower program by the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy: Focus on Interchanges (and simplify the landscape at the interchanges).

As traffic slows or stops at interchanges, the landscape and right-of-way become much more visible. Mowing and litter removal should therefore be prioritized in these areas. The extent of high-frequency mowing should be guided by existing development and third-party maintenance efforts.

This page presents two mowing frequency approaches using the Pontoon Road interchange as an example. On the west side of Route 3, Weber Chevrolet already maintains an extensive length of the right-of-way.

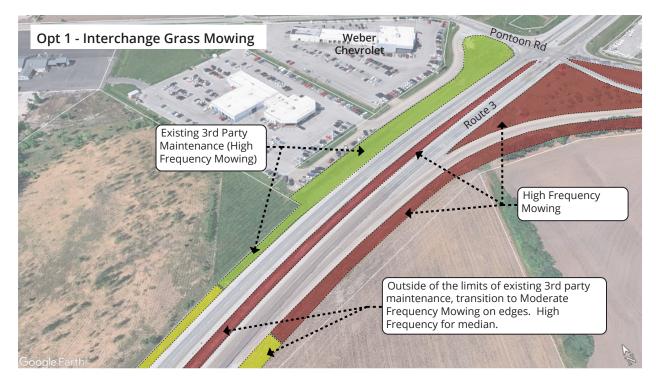
Option 1

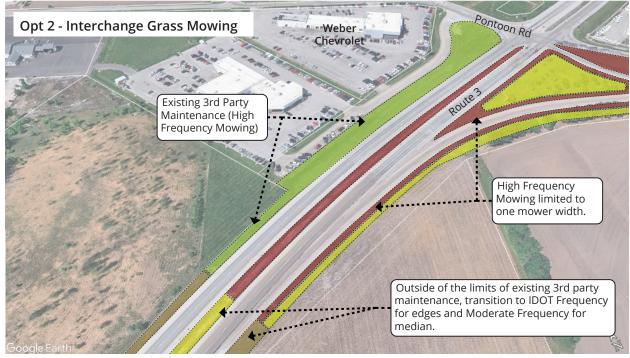
- The east side of Route 3 is mowed at a high frequency, matching the limits and treatment of the west side.
- The median along the entire length of Route 3 is also mowed at a high frequency.

Option 2

- Instead of mowing the entire east side at a high frequency as in Option 1, only a single mower width (10–15 feet) along the pavement edge is maintained at a high frequency. Beyond this strip, mowing is done at a moderate or IDOT standard frequency.
- Within the interchange, the median is mowed at a high frequency. Outside the interchange limits, median mowing is reduced to a moderate frequency.

Legend Existing 3rd Party Maintenance (High Frequency Mowing) High Frequency Mowing Areas Moderate Frequency Mowing Areas IDOT Frequency Mowing Areas





Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy: Focus on Interchanges (and simplify the landscape at the interchanges).

For most intersections along Route 3, a simplified landscape, consisting of grass and trees, is recommended to reduce maintenance needs. While many intersections currently have perennial or shrub beds, these are often too small in scale to be clearly visible to passing vehicles.

At intersections with pedestrian accommodations (such as Niedringhaus Avenue, 20th Street, or Chain of Rocks Road) perennial or shrub beds may be appropriate due to their value at the pedestrian scale. However, maintenance responsibilities must be clearly defined. These beds require additional upkeep, including hand-weeding, and can complicate mowing operations by introducing obstacles that reduce efficiency.

This simplified approach should also be considered for the area around 'Salute to Steel' sculpture. A ground plane of lawn will have a cleaner look than the existing narrow band of plantings around the base of the sculpture pad.



Existing



ProposedA transition to a simplified ground plane of lawn will have a cleaner look and reduce maintenance costs.



Existing



Proposed
A transition to a simplified ground plane of lawn will have a cleaner look and reduce maintenance costs.

Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy:

Focus on clean edges between the interchanges.

High-frequency mowing of the entire right-of-way is unnecessary to achieve a clean, well-maintained appearance. Instead of mowing the entire area, maintaining a mowed edge—typically one mower width (10–14 feet), can provide a neat, intentional look. This approach is especially effective between intersections where traffic speeds are higher (45–55 mph), and detailed roadside vegetation is less noticeable.

Benefits of focusing mowing on the edges at a high frequency include:

- Looks intentional: A clean, mowed edge signals active management while allowing a more natural landscape beyond.
- Reduced maintenance cost: Fewer acres to mow means lower maintenance costs.
- **Improved water quality and stormwater management:** Taller, deeper-rooted vegetation beyond the edge helps filter and absorb stormwater runoff.
- **Supports conservation:** Where appropriate, wider areas of naturalized vegetation provide critical habitat and food sources for bees, butterflies, birds, and other small wildlife essential to local ecosystems.

Litter removal should be coordinated with high-frequency edge mowing. If not removed, litter and debris can accumulate along the transition between mowed and unmowed areas, creating an unsightly appearance and complicating maintenance. Aligning litter cleanup with mowing ensures a cleaner, more intentional corridor.



Below: Existing mowing along Route 3.





Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy:

Utilize IDOT's existing Operation Habitat program at select locations.

Operation Habitat is a statewide initiative launched by IDOT in 2017 to create, preserve, and protect habitat areas within its rights-of-way. Along the Route 3 study corridor, at least five locations have been identified as strong candidates for Operation Habitat. These areas feature more extensive available right-of-way, as native habitats benefit from larger, continuous tracts of land.

Importantly, Operation Habitat is more than simply not mowing. Participating areas should include a mix of native grasses and forbs (wildflowers) to establish functioning native ecosystems. Many of the candidate areas currently contain non-native, cool-season fescue grasses. A key component of habitat stewardship will be transitioning these areas from non-native vegetation to native plant communities.

The benefits of this approach include enhanced aesthetics, improved wildlife habitat, better water quality, and reduced stormwater runoff.

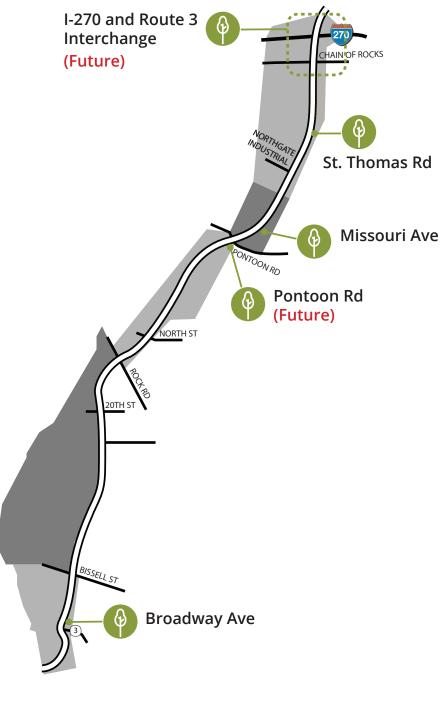
Among the opportunity areas shown on the map on this page, two are dependent on future transportation infrastructure improvements:

- The I-270 and Route 3 interchange, which is part of IDOT's upcoming work program.
- The Pontoon Road intersection, where recommended alternatives (a roundabout or realignment) would result in larger, contiguous right-of-way suitable for habitat restoration.

See the previous section on Enhancements for more details on these two locations.

The remaining areas (St. Thomas Road, Missouri Avenue, and Broadway Avenue) represent current opportunities for Operation Habitat implementation. See the following pages for a discussion of the Broadway, Missouri Avenue, and St. Thomas Road areas.



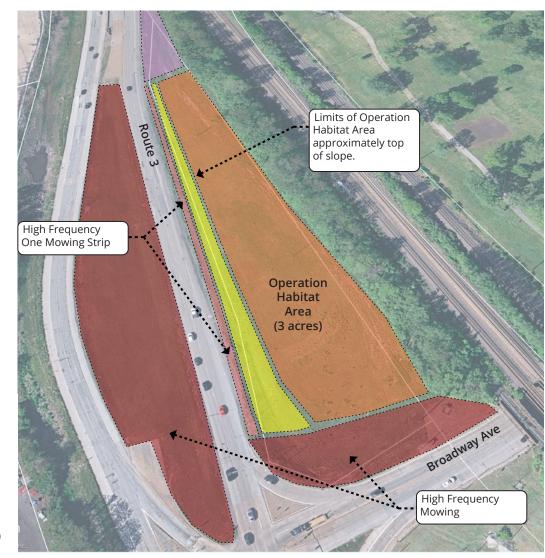


Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy: *Utilize IDOT's existing Operation Habitat program at select locations.*

Location: Broadway Intersection

The map on this page shows the recommended Operation Habitat area located in the northeast quadrant of the Route 3 and Broadway Avenue intersection. Native landscaping in this area would be buffered from Route 3 by a high-frequency mowed edge along the roadway, transitioning to a zone with moderate-frequency mowing.

The proposed Operation Habitat area encompasses approximately three (3) acres. The site is large enough to accommodate not only native grasses and forbs, but also native canopy tree species such as oaks.



High Frequency - One Strip of Mowing

Moderate Frequency Mowing Areas IDOT Frequency Mowing Areas

Operation Habitat (Native Restoration)

Legend

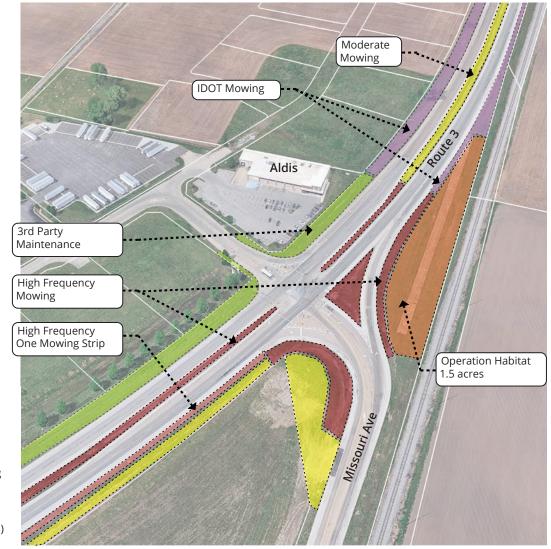
Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy: *Utilize IDOT's existing Operation Habitat program at select locations.*

Location: Missouri Avenue

The map on this page shows the recommended Operation Habitat area located in the northeast quadrant of the Missouri Avenue intersection. Native landscaping in this area would be buffered from Route 3 by a high-frequency mowed edge along the roadway.

The proposed Operation Habitat area encompasses approximately 1.5 acres.

The Missouri Avenue intersection is recommended for design improvements (see Transportation Recommendations); however, the Operation Habitat area could be initiated prior to any transportation work. If future intersection improvements disturb any portion of the habitat area, it can be restored or replanted. Additionally, the existing pavement segment within the right-ofway should be removed as part of either the Operation Habitat project or the future intersection improvements.



Moderate Frequency Mowing Areas IDOT Frequency Mowing Areas

Legend

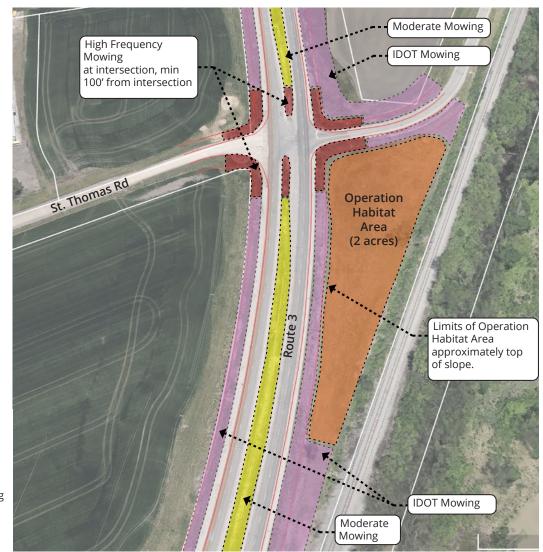
Overall Landscape Stewardship Strategy: *Utilize IDOT's existing Operation Habitat program at select locations.*

Location: St. Thomas Road

The map on this page shows the recommended Operation Habitat area located in the southeast quadrant of the St. Thomas Road intersection. Native landscaping in this area would be buffered from Route 3 by a high-frequency mowed edge at the intersection and regular IDOT mowing further away from the intersection.

The proposed Operation Habitat area encompasses approximately two (2) acres.

The St. Thomas Road intersection is recommended for design improvements (see Transportation Recommendations); however, the Operation Habitat area could be initiated prior to any transportation work. If future intersection improvements disturb any portion of the habitat area, it can be restored or replanted.



Legend Existing 3rd Party Maintenance (High Frequency Mowing) High Frequency Mowing Areas High Frequency - One Strip of Mowing Moderate Frequency Mowing Areas IDOT Frequency Mowing Areas

Litter

An important corollary to the landscape stewardship strategy is litter pick-up along Route 3. The importance of corridor cleanliness, frequently mentioned during public engagement, reflects concern about both mowing and litter removal.

Litter is not just a Route 3 issue. In 2023, IDOT estimated it spent approximately \$7 million statewide on litter and large debris pick-up.

The plan recommends incorporating litter removal into the enhanced mowing strategy discussed earlier in this section. Litter removal is often included in mowing contracts. However, while this may improve conditions in enhanced mowing areas, litter is still likely to accumulate in other parts of the right-of-way or along the edges of mowed areas.

Review of Litter Removal Strategies

Adopt-a-Highway

Illinois has a well-established Adopt-A-Highway program that engages citizen volunteers in partnership with IDOT to pick up trash and maintain clean roadsides. IDOT estimates that more than 10,000 volunteers have participated statewide. However, the program may have limitations along Route 3. The corridor's high traffic volumes and vehicle speeds may pose safety risks for volunteers, and the lack of adjacent constituencies may limit the pool of potential participants. While some businesses and property owners currently maintain their frontages, expanding these efforts may be challenging.

Sponsor-a-Highway

In the Chicago region, IDOT offers a Sponsor-a-Highway program, where businesses fund litter and landscaping maintenance, typically facilitated by a nonprofit that contracts with private maintenance providers. However, this program is currently not available statewide. MoDOT piloted a similar initiative in the St. Louis area, but the administrative effort to recruit sponsors and oversee long-term maintenance can be significant.

Education

Education and outreach are essential to ensuring travelers understand that littering is unacceptable. This issue extends beyond Route 3. Regional and statewide campaigns should include educational components focused on reducing roadside litter.

Enforcement

Enforcement of anti-littering regulations is another tool to prevent and deter littering. Like education, enforcement should be addressed through local, regional, and state initiatives that evaluate existing laws and their application.





Above: Along Chicago expressways, the Sponsor-A-Highway program allows businesses to sponsor roadway segments for landscape maintenance and litter removal

Below: Examples of litter education programs, including public advertising campaigns and school poster contests.



Signage / Wayfinding

This segment of Route 3 is home to 4,500 jobs and nearly 20% of all manufacturing jobs in Madison County, according to 2021 Census data. As a hub for employment and manufacturing, wayfinding to businesses—for visitors, clients, and shipping—is especially important. For many businesses, clients and visitors may be arriving from outside the region, making first impressions of both the corridor and each business's site signage critical.

With the rise of electronic wayfinding, some question whether traditional signage is still necessary. Why invest in physical signs and graphics? Despite technological advances, there are still several compelling reasons for a community to invest in a coordinated wayfinding system:

Sense of Pride by Businesses

Consistently branded signage signals that businesses and the broader community are investing in the public realm. However, signage should not stand alone—it should complement broader investments such as land use improvements, streetscape enhancements, and public infrastructure upgrades.

Confidence for Visitors

While visitors and tourists often rely on electronic navigation, physical signage adds an extra layer of assurance. Just as importantly, a wayfinding system communicates that visitors are welcome in the community and at its businesses.

Information Beyond Electronic Maps

A well-designed wayfinding system can convey contextual and interpretive information not easily replicated by digital maps, such as identifying business districts, cultural destinations, or historic areas.

While excessive signage can create visual clutter and distractions, the current level of signage along the Route 3 corridor is relatively minimal. A key question moving forward is whether future signage should be regulated to prevent clutter as the corridor develops. Most of the corridor falls within Granite City's jurisdiction, where signage is already regulated through zoning.













Granite City should consider updating its zoning to include modern sign regulations that reduce visual clutter along Route 3 while preserving opportunities for murals and supporting a business-friendly environment.

To avoid First Amendment challenges, sign regulations must clearly differentiate between murals (expressive art) and signage (commercial speech). A mural should be defined as artwork that does not advertise a specific product, service, or business. Sign regulations should be based not on content, but on size, location, materials, and purpose. Given Granite City's strong track record of promoting murals, particularly downtown, extending this policy along Route 3 is a logical next step.

Another consideration is whether the corridor should be branded as the "aRT3 Corridor" through signage, wayfinding, and related programs. While branding the art and enhancement **initiative** is appropriate, **physical** displays of the aRT3 brand throughout the corridor may be unnecessary and could conflict with other established brands. For example, America's Central Port already features branded signage at entrances spanning North Street to Bissell Street. Additionally, a large area of undeveloped land under single ownership in the northern part of the corridor may eventually be branded as a unified development. Lastly, given Route 3's importance as a regional tourism corridor, regional tourism agencies could consider incorporating Route 3 into a broader branded wayfinding initiative.







Above: Some branding options for the aRT3 program. While the art and enhancement **program** should be branded, physical expression of the brand in the corridor (banners, signs, etc) is not recommended so as not to conflict with other current and future branding.

Examples of program branding are:

- Website overview of the program and art installations.
- Annual reports and publications.
- Organizational branding.