

What if we preserve the best features of our communities and region for generations to come, trying to accommodate growth without changing what we value in the region?

Fairmont is a small community in unincorporated Will County nestled between Historic Lockport and the City of Joliet. The community has grown along the eastern edge of State Street, the main arterial leading to Fairmont. The developed part of town has remained small and walkable, stretching only about five blocks deep from State Street. While there are some auto dealerships and small businesses along the west side of State Street, there is no neighborhood retail in Fairmont to meet the needs of the community. This small working class community has seen very little public or private investment in recent years, and basic needs like sidewalks and neighborhood amenities are missing.

Yet there is great potential here for this small community to carve out a very unique identity for themselves in the 21st Century.

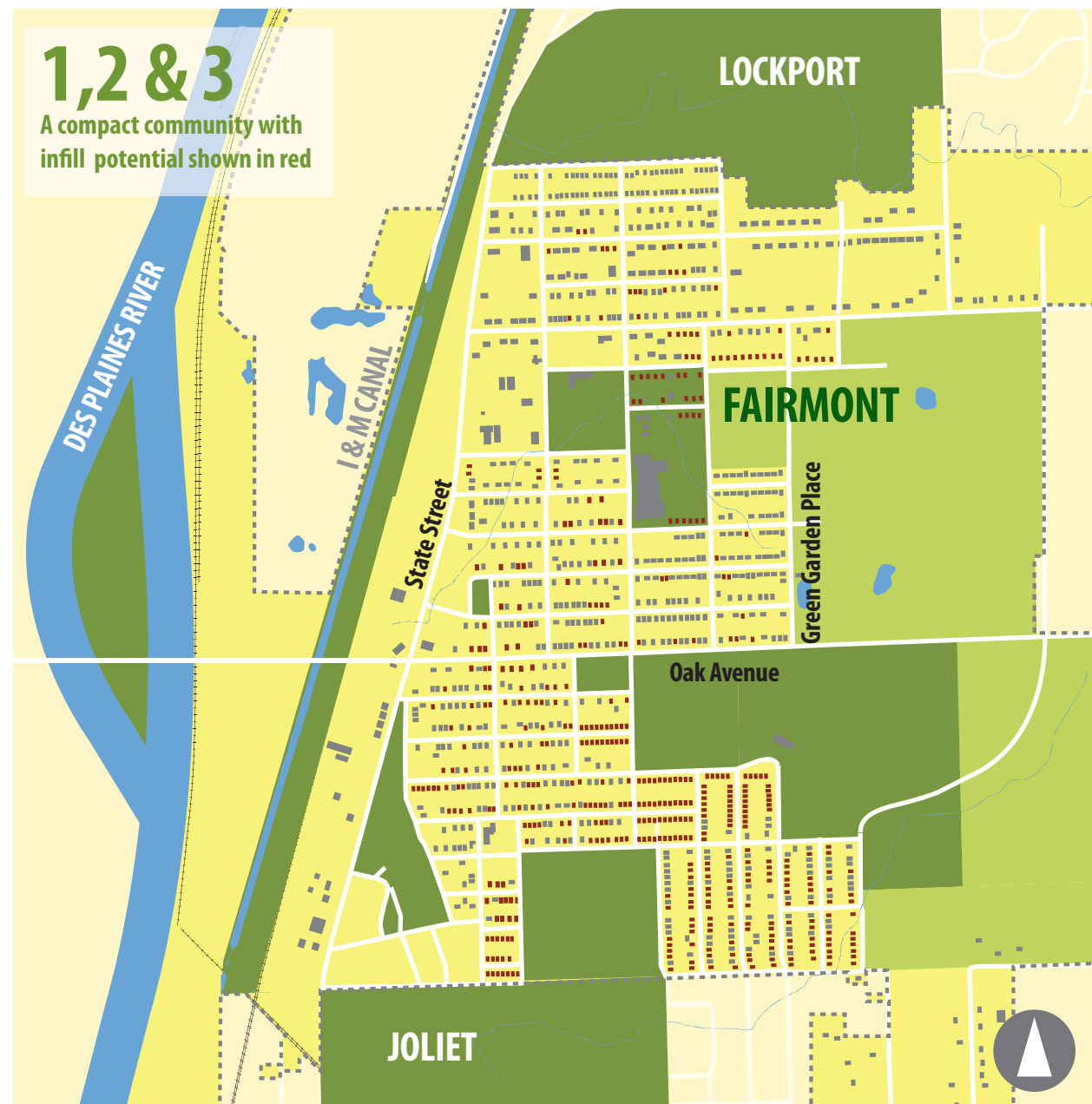
Instead of being an in-between place between Lockport and Joliet, Fairmont could be known as a great livable neighborhood that has not been damaged by the sprawling subdivisions of the post war decades. Here, the blocks are still small and walkable, homes are modest and affordable, and the community center, the school and churches are only a few blocks from each home. Most importantly, there are wonderful natural resources and open spaces all around – the Des Plaines River, the I & M Canal, Dellwood Park, creeks and farmland.

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Some assets of Fairmont today: the community center, small homes and Dellwood Park - all within walking distance from each home

PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF A SMALL WALKABLE COMMUNITY



NESTLED BETWEEN TWO URBAN AREAS

The PRESERVE scenario showcases these possibilities for the Fairmont Community:

- 1 Preserve the **COMPACTNESS** and **WALKABLE** size of the community by restricting new growth into the green field sites
- 2 Promote **INFILL DEVELOPMENT** and **NEW HOMES** on the existing blocks without investing in expanding infrastructure
- 3 Invest in the **EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE** – add sidewalks, trees, crosswalks and landscaping to all neighborhood streets



State Street today



4 State Street as a gateway boulevard

4 Improve **State Street as GREEN GATEWAY** to Fairmont with a landscaped boulevard and sidewalks / bike trails

5 Improve **Green Garden Place** as the main neighborhood street that connects all parts of the community – the homes, Dellwood Park, the school and the community center. Add sidewalks, street trees, lighting, crosswalks and landscaping to make this a safe pedestrian street for all ages

6 Invest in building a **CIVIC CORE** around the **COMMUNITY CENTER** to offer basic community needs within walking distance of each home



Green Garden today



5 Green Garden as pedestrian friendly, green street

What if we reinvested in our existing communities, by rebuilding current infrastructure to support growth and development?

Instead of developing in areas that have never had development before, we could focus growth in existing communities that already have roads, water and sewer lines to support them. Homes and businesses could be more compact, near to transportation stations, and within walking distance of commercial districts. We could invest in rebuilding and improving our roads, rail lines, and other infrastructure to support growth and overall economic development.

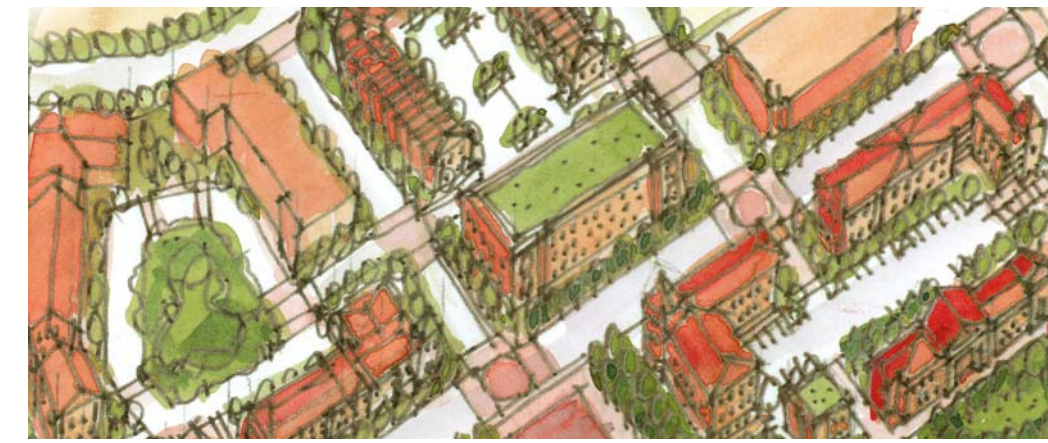
While this small working class community has seen very little public or private investment in recent years, there are great opportunities for reinvestment. Reinvestment strategies could include:

EXPAND AND CONNECT TO THE WEST, ACROSS STATE STREET, TO THE RIVER AND THE ISLAND.

LIMIT EXPANSION AND SPRAWL TOWARDS THE FARMLAND TO THE EAST.

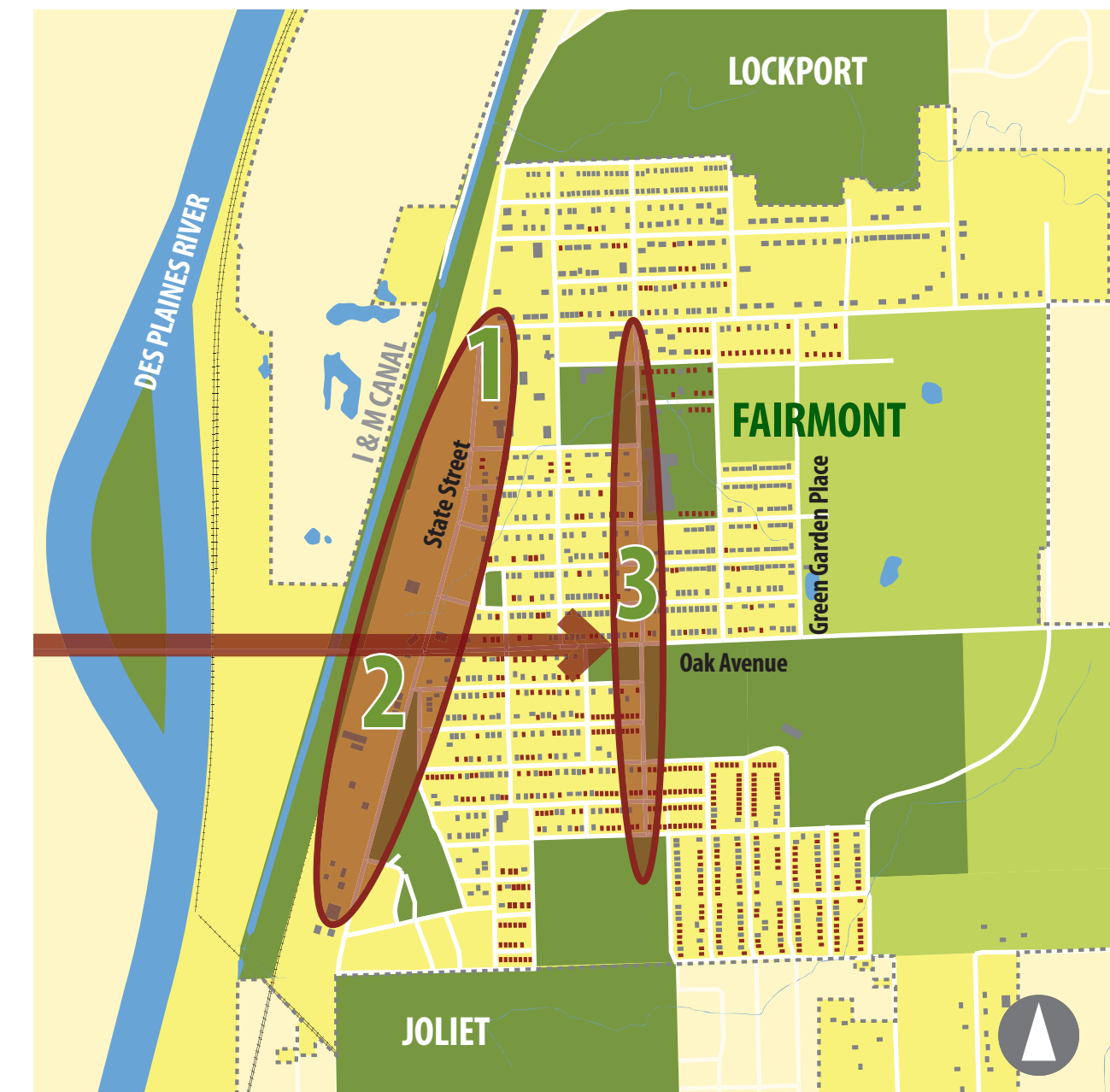
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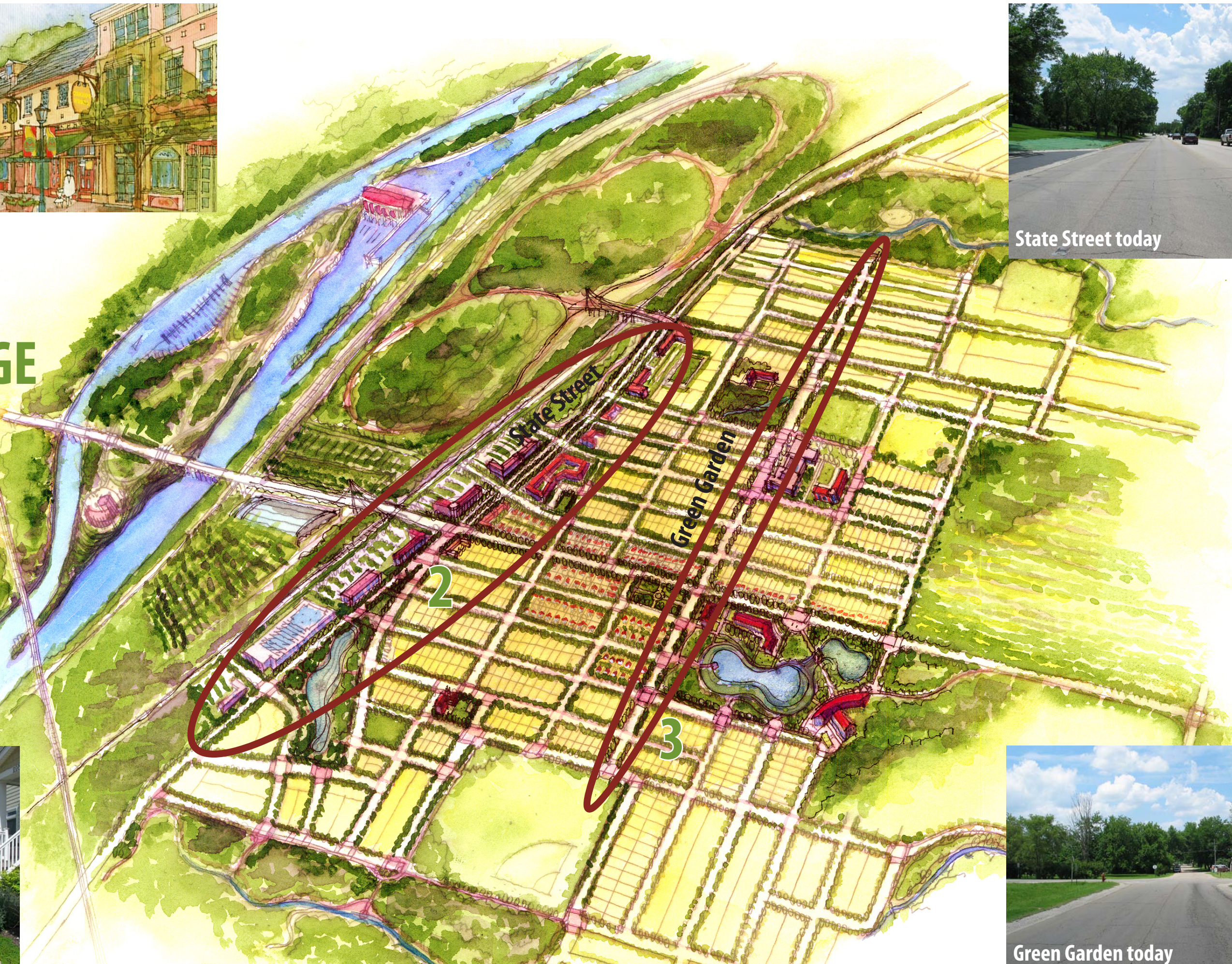
Oak and State today and reinvestment opportunities

REINVESTMENT ALONG THE STATE STREET CORRIDOR WITH AN EMPLOYMENT HUB AT THE NEW OAK AVENUE BRIDGE



HUB AT THE NEW OAK AVENUE BRIDGE

- 1 State Street is not an **EDGE** for the community - instead, the community can grow across the street by bringing a variety of mixed use projects and neighborhood retail in a **PEDESTRIAN FRIENDLY BOULEVARD**
- 2 Create a **LOCAL EMPLOYMENT BASE** at State Street and the new Oak Avenue bridge as a gateway to Fairmont from the west
- 3 Reinvest along **GREEN GARDEN PLACE** with multifamily units to bring more people close to the civic core



State Street today



2 State Street as a vibrant neighborhood commercial corridor



3 Green Garden Place as a great address for new homes



Green Garden today

What if we rely on innovation and technological improvements to make our region better?

Fairmont does not have a train station within walking distance. The nearest Metra stations are at Lockport and Joliet. Residents do rely on the bus service, but there are no bus shelters along the roads. Roads do not have sidewalks for people to walk safely to the buses. While the community is surrounded by unique open spaces, there are no bike trails in the community.

To address these issues, this INNOVATE scenario is based on a simple premise:

All residents in Fairmont should be able to walk safely to bus shelters along shaded streets with sidewalks, lighting and signage. The community should be part of a larger bike trail system that connects to the river, the canals and the parks. In the future, perhaps State Street can evolve into a trolley corridor that can take residents to the Joliet and Lockport stations.

Better transit access can create the opportunity of BRINGING GREEN JOBS to the community. The island, river and canals can also be a revenue generating recreational destinations on a regional bike trail system.

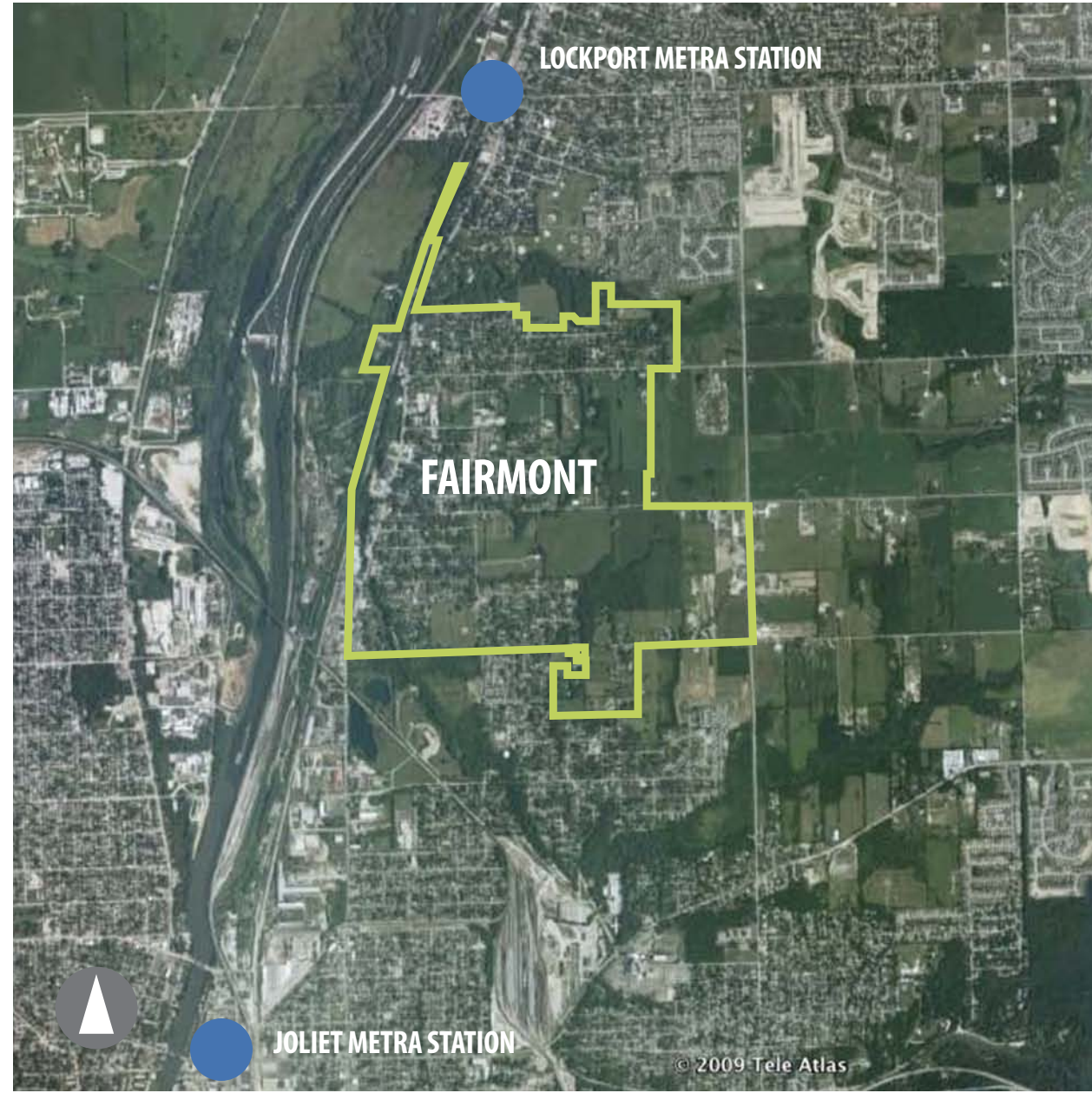
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Regional recreational opportunities along the canal and river

Tree nurseries and restored woodlands

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO TRANSIT, AGRICULTURE AND GREEN JOBS AS A FOUNDATION FOR THE LOCAL ECONOMY



The INNOVATE scenario showcases these possibilities for the Fairmont Community:

- 1 An efficient **BUS TRANSIT LOOP** along Oak, Green Garden and Bruce that is within walking distance of every home
- 2 Potential **TROLLEY / LIGHT RAIL** connection on the State Street median to connect to Lockport and Joliet
- 3 Regional **BIKE TRAIL and BRIDGE** to connect to the river to the west
- 4 Agricultural preservation and **LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION**
- 5 **GREEN INDUSTRY** as a local and regional economic engine
- 6 **ISLAND & CANAL** as regional recreation attractions and revenue generators for the local economy

