



Highway 117 Corridor Improvements Plan

## Downtown District

The Colfax downtown serves as the core or the heart of Colfax. Visitors to Colfax truly feel they have arrived once they reach downtown. It is important to give this place special consideration in the design process; the potential project areas for this corridor are displayed in the map above.

### Connections to Highway 117

North of the railroad tracks along Highway 117, there are numerous access drives as well as large expansive openings for traffic to enter and exit the roadway. This situation is potentially unsafe because people can enter and exit the roadway too freely. Eliminating a few of these driveways/openings would provide a much safer scenario for motorists and pedestrians while still offering more than adequate space for traffic of all types. The map above shows a more focused delineation of where these driveways can be located. The reduction of additional driveways is a definite possibility, but the overall traffic patterns for the adjacent properties need to be studied to understand their needs and desires. There are currently ornamental trees planted in this zone, which is a nice beautification effort that was completed years ago. With the elimination of a few driveways, additional ornamental trees can be planted in this area to continue the theme that has already been established. In areas where there are no overhead powerlines, larger canopy trees could be planted in lieu of the shorter ornamental trees.

In addition to the improved driveway scenarios shown above, added sidewalks/trail connections would be an important enhancement to this area. As shown in board

#8, a sidewalk/trail connection is planned on the east side of Highway 117, across the South Skunk River bridge and further north to Quarry Springs Park. Another sidewalk on the west side of Highway 117 could lead to a path that connects to the fairgrounds along the embankment south of the river.

### Streetscape Improvements

Drivers going south on Highway 117, cross the railroad tracks just before entering Colfax's historic downtown. The streetscape of the downtown, which includes the vehicular travel lanes, sidewalks, planting areas, parking lanes, crosswalks, etc., has the potential to be much more pedestrian-friendly and inviting than it currently is. For more information on the streetscape-specific improvements, please see board #10.



Downtown at Walnut and Division Street, looking north



Before

# Colfax

## Downtown Enhancements (1/2)

Landscape Architect and Intern: RDG Planning & Design - Bruce Niedermyer, PLA and Sara Davids

Iowa Department of Transportation

Trees Forever

ISU Landscape Architecture Extension

ISU Extension Community and Economic Development

IOWA'S  
LIVING  
ROADWAYS

Summer 2016