

**UNIVERSITY POLYMER
RESEARCH PARK
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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REDEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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I. CONDITIONS

A. Purpose of This Report

This report is to outline the conditions that substantially impair development of, and plans and activities scheduled for the area described as the University Polymer Research Park. The need for urban redevelopment tax increment funds, under provisions of the Ohio Revised Code, §5709.41 – §5709.43 to finance significant public investment needed to abate the above conditions, is set forth.

B. Description of Project

1. Location and Boundary Description of Redevelopment Area (See Maps 1 and 2.)

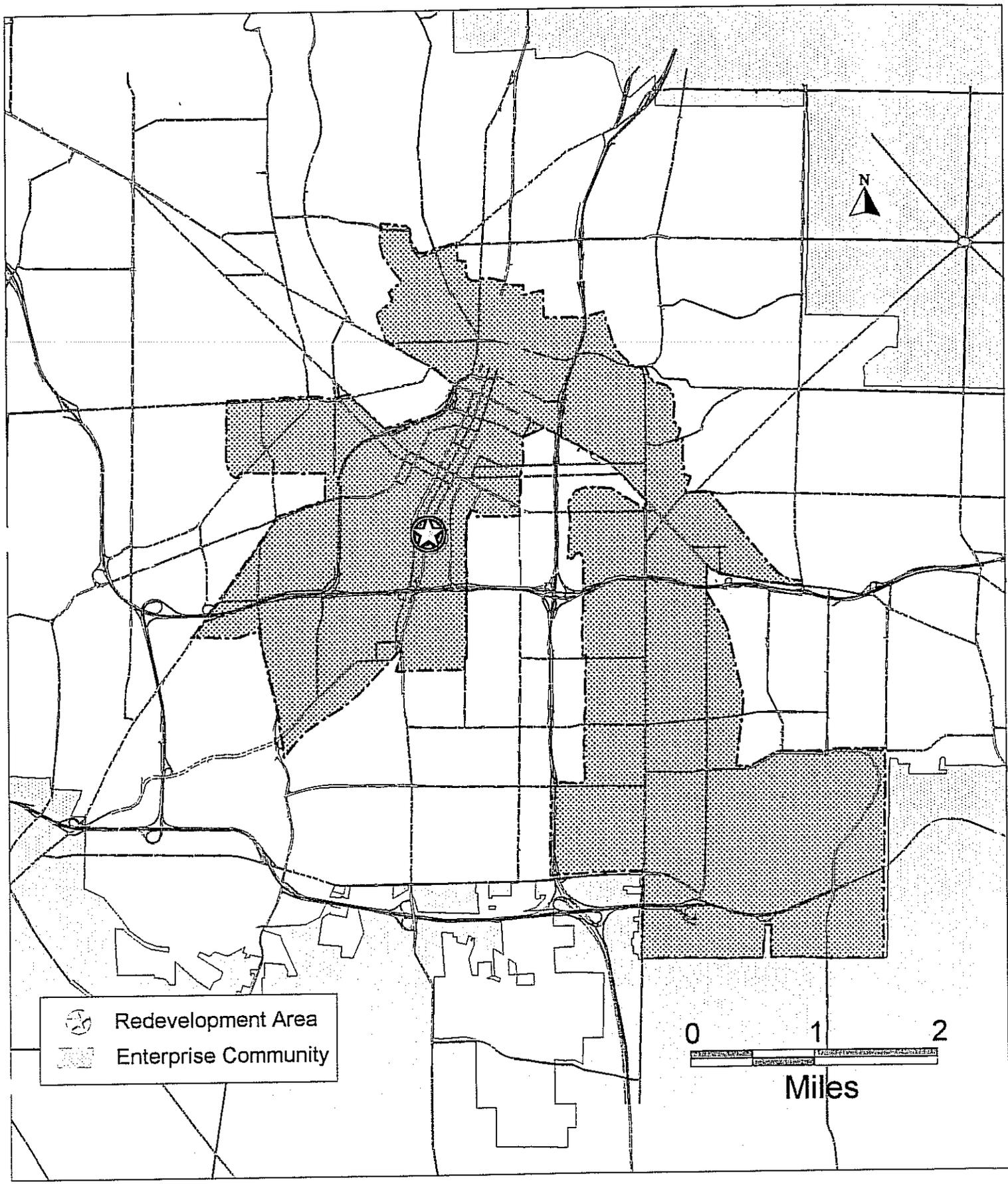
Located in the City of Akron, County of Summit, State of Ohio, and bounded generally as set forth in Exhibit 1.

The parcel parallels the CSX mainline tracks which connect Cleveland to Canton and points south.

- **North** of the site is Akron's Central Business District and government center. The site is less than one mile from the center of Akron, the intersection of Market and Main Streets.
- **South** of the site on South Broadway is access to I76, with connections to I77 and other state routes. The University Polymer Research Park is positioned to become a gateway to the central business district from the south.
- **West** of the site is the Opportunity Park Urban Renewal Area, featuring the headquarters building of GoJo Industries, the adaptive reuse of the former B.F. Goodrich manufacturing facility as Canal Place, the Tell Building site of Advanced Elastomer Systems, and extensive light industrial and residential redevelopment.
- **East** of the site is the University of Akron, including its Polymer Science Center and the Grant-Washington Urban Renewal Area. Also on the east edge is the rail spur connecting the site to the CSX railroad.

Map 1

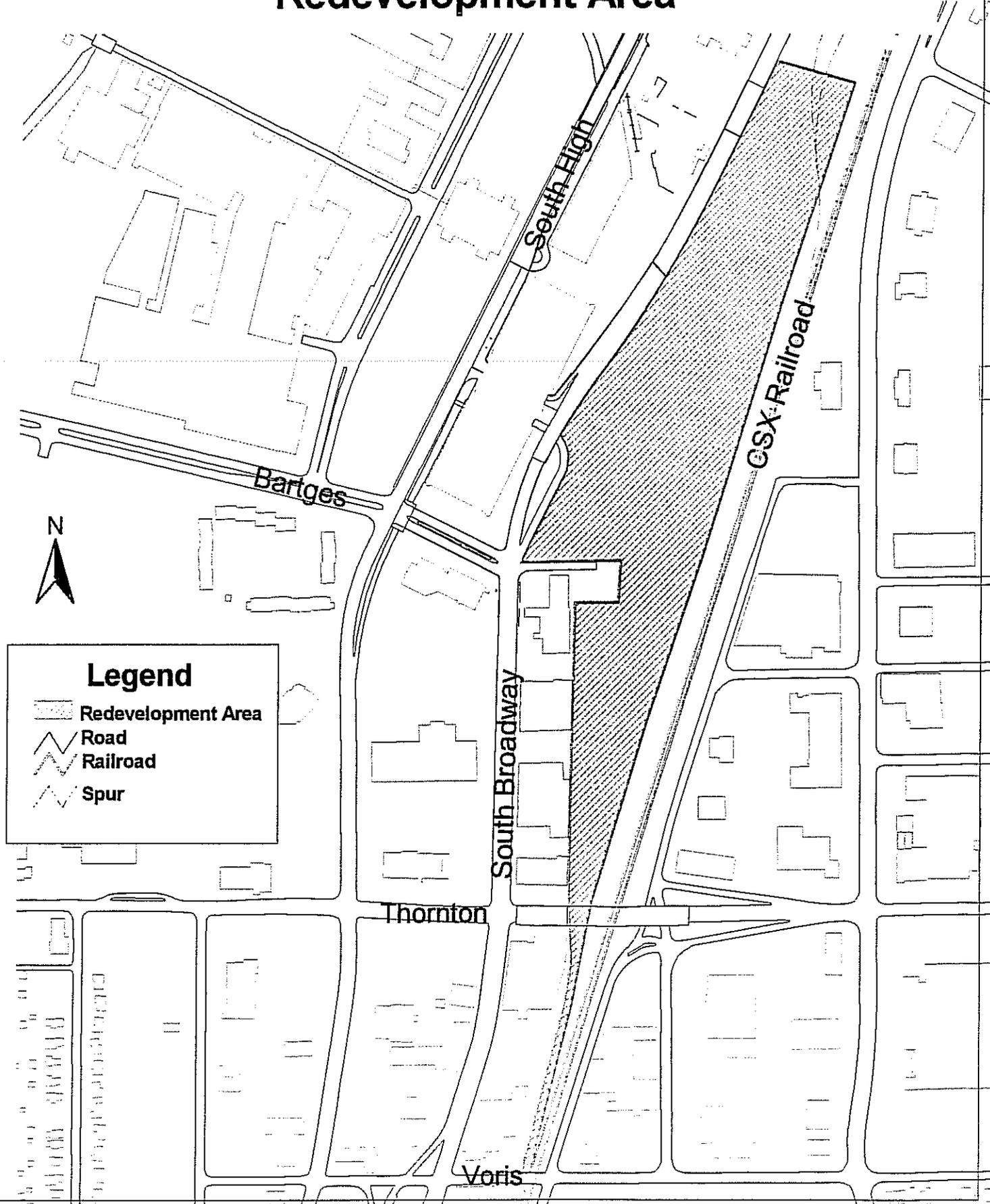
University Polymer Research Park Redevelopment Area Location



	Redevelopment Area
	Enterprise Community

0 1 2
Miles

Map 2 University Polymer Research Park Redevelopment Area



C. Background

In order for the City of Akron to remain a vital community and continue to deliver a high quality of service to residents and businesses, the City must retain industrial jobs and the corresponding tax revenues. Existing firms in the City of Akron face significant constraints in expanding their operations, including finding available sites suitable for development. The City actively seeks to retain firms seeking to expand by providing room for expansion.

To this end, in 1995, the City of Akron acquired 26.52 acres of unused railroad right-of-way, approximately one mile long, formerly owned by Consolidated Rail Corporation.

New commercial and industrial development has been occurring outside of Akron for decades, drawing residents and businesses from the City's tax base. Only 2% of Akron's approximately 62 square mile area is vacant land. Based on current market data and real estate reports, the shortage of available industrial buildings in the Akron area is severe.

It has been demonstrated that expanding and new businesses will locate within Akron, if appropriate sites are available. The Opportunity Park Urban Renewal Area, Ascot Industrial Park, the Airport Development Area and the Akron Square Business Park all demonstrate Akron's capability to promote new industrial development. Akron will market approximately 15 acres in the University Polymer Research Park for industrial redevelopment.

Within close proximity to the University Polymer Research Park site is the University of Akron Polymer Science center, recognized as a world class research facility. There are also several very successful industrial/commercial redevelopment projects in the vicinity. The site is within the Akron Enterprise Community, and just west of the Grant-Washington Urban Renewal area. It is also adjacent to the Opportunity Park renewal area, which includes the award winning industrial reuse project Canal Place, the headquarters for Advanced Elastomer Systems (AES) and GoJo Industries, and the city-owned Industrial Incubator.

Akron has planned several major investments in the area immediately surrounding the development site, including removal of the Broadway and High Street viaducts, and replacement of the Opportunity Park

parking deck. Recent private sector investments in the area include redevelopment and expansion activities by the Akron Beacon Journal.

The area has been found to be blighted due to abandonment and neglect.

- Noxious weeds and overgrown areas are potential habitat for rodents and a threat to health.
- The isolated yet accessible site is prone to illegal dumping and other hazards.
- Several hundred feet of retaining walls, which had supported a rail line at a four foot higher elevation at the east side of the site, are crumbling.

The area is the last remaining instance of neglect surrounded by redevelopment on all sides. The parcel extends for one mile along an arterial road from the city center to the Interstate. The north end meets the Opportunity Park Renewal Area, and the landscaped property of the Akron Area Board of Realtors.

Access to the Redevelopment Area has been limited for several reasons. First, while the railroad was in operation, use was restricted to freight transportation purposes. Second, the construction on the Broadway viaduct limited access points along the west side of the area. Third, the active railroad line and the change in grade to the east further restricts access to the site.

1. Types of Proposed Redevelopment Actions

The City of Akron proposes to redevelop this vacant property into an economically productive industrial park, creating opportunities to attract and retain commercial and light industrial manufacturing jobs in the City.

The site may be subdivided into 2 to 4.5 acre parcels, suitable for 6 to 8 industrial/commercial facilities. The City will sell the parcels to project developers at below market rates, in order to stimulate development.

2. Relationship to the General Plan of the City of Akron

The planned redevelopment of the University Polymer Research Park area is consistent with the overall development strategy for the City of Akron.

Increasing the availability of suitable land for commercial and industrial development is an essential element of the City's efforts to sustain a robust income and tax base. Reuse of vacant, usable land is one of the best tools available for industrial sector development.

In 1996, *Site Selection Magazine* ranked Akron 20th of 323 American cities for locating new manufacturing plants. Among manufacturing businesses located in Akron, 82% employ fewer than 50 workers, indicating the significance of small to medium sized businesses in the local economy.

II. REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

A. Land Use and Zoning

1. Land Use Plan

a. Land Use (See Map 3.)

The site is within a designated industrial use area in the City's Land Use Development Guide Plan. The existing use is vacant industrial land.

b. Land Use Provisions

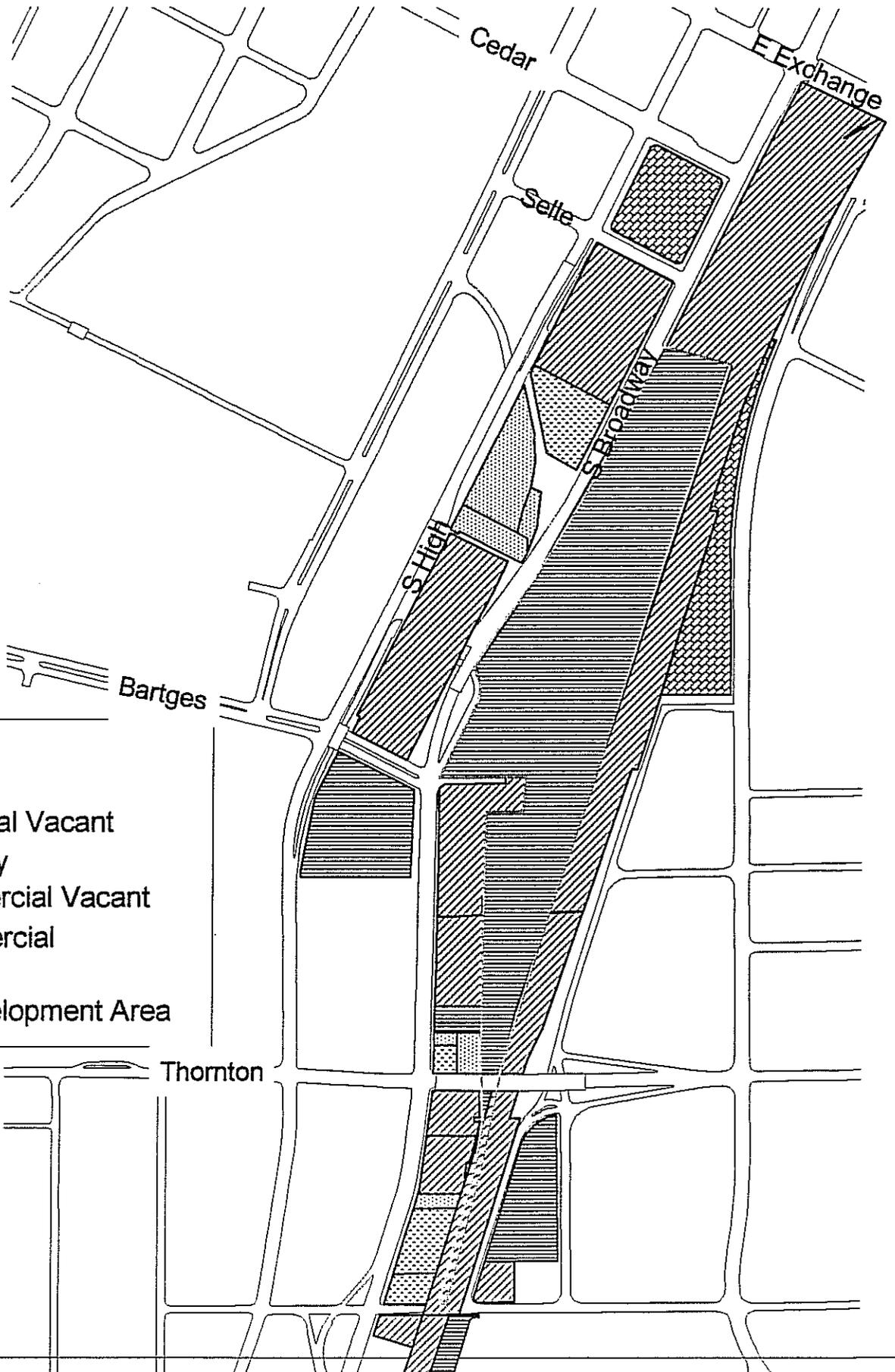
Objectives under the Land Use Development Guide Plan include: a) actively promoting Akron's vacant land for use by the City's existing industries as well as new manufacturers that desire to relocate in Akron; b) developing industrial parks that provide attractive sites, landscaping, building setbacks, and coverage controls to attract desirable industrial development; and c) redevelop blighted commercial/industrial areas by public and private means.

2. Zoning

a. Existing Zoning (See Map 4.)

This area is zoned U5 Ordinary Industry. The site is within height district H3, permitting no structure in excess of 75 feet in height.

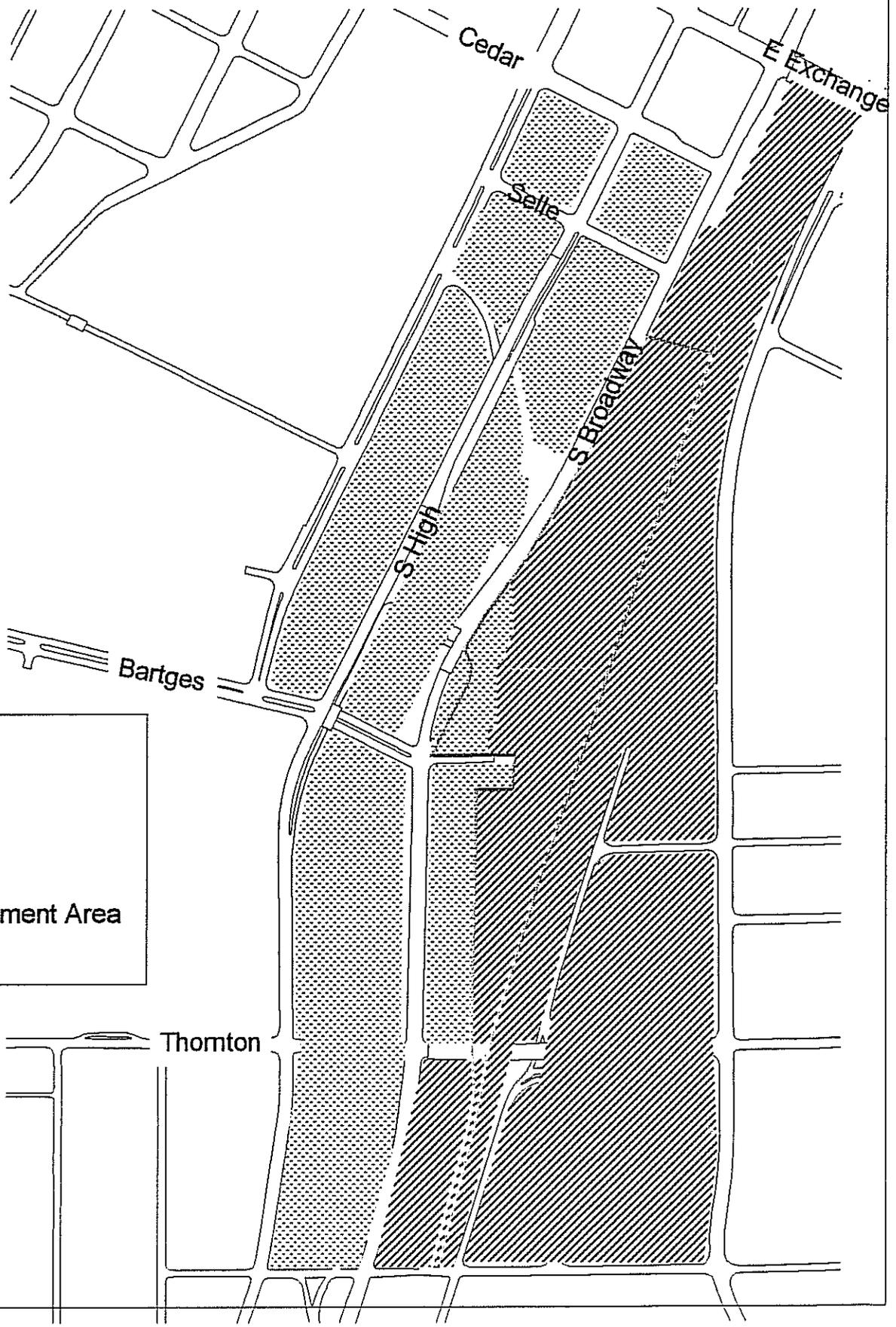
Map 3 University Polymer Research Park Current Land Use



Legend

-  Industrial Vacant
-  Industry
-  Commercial Vacant
-  Commercial
-  Office
-  Redevelopment Area

Map 4 University Polymer Research Park Current Zoning



Legend

-  Industrial
-  UR-R-89
-  Redevelopment Area

b. Proposed Zoning

Zoning for the University Polymer Research park will be unchanged.

B. Statement of Development Objectives

1. Land Use Objectives

- a. To enhance the viability of the project area by promoting development that is compatible with the character of the area and vicinity, and develops the fullest potential of the district.
- b. To prohibit uses that are incompatible with the area and vicinity, and would detract from overall redevelopment of the area.
- c. To prescribe high development standards to improve the usefulness and appearance of the area. To be conducive to new business investment and to attract new employment to the area.
- d. To complement ongoing development in Opportunity Park, the Grant-Washington Urban Renewal area and the University of Akron.

2. Environmental Objectives

- a. To eliminate substandard physical conditions, environmental hazards and unsanitary conditions that exist within the project area.
- b. To correct problems within the project area that may threaten health and safety.
- c. To improve the functional, physical and aesthetic condition of the project area.

3. Public Improvement Objectives

- a. To correct deficiencies in existing physical conditions on or serving the redevelopment area.

- b. To upgrade the condition of the streetscape of South Broadway and to enhance the utility and appearance of the area to suit redevelopment.
- c. To plan public improvements needed to facilitate redevelopment.

4. Economic Objectives

- a. To maintain or increase employment opportunities within the City of Akron.
- b. To enhance property tax revenues through new construction within the redevelopment area.
- c. To undertake redevelopment activities demonstrating investment and confidence in the area, and to encourage additional public and private sector investment.
- d. To encourage the reuse of underutilized vacant land.

C. Project Proposals

1. Land Acquisition

The City of Akron acquired the 26.52 acres to be redeveloped from the Consolidated Rail Corporation in 1995.

2. Rehabilitation and Conservation

a. *Rail Spur Relocation*

An active railroad switch previously located at the southern portion of the parcel has been relocated to the north to create a more usable development area.

b. *Remediation of environmental contaminants*

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was conducted on this site in 1995, and a Phase II assessment in 1997. Subsequent remediation activities recommended by those studies are limited to soil testing and groundwater

monitoring wells. Spot remediation is scheduled for the year 2000.

c. Roadway access and infrastructure

Redevelopment will require the extension of McCoy Street approximately 250 feet further east into the parcel, ending in a cul-de-sac. The 32 foot wide curbed roadway will be built within a 60 foot right-of-way, containing water, sewer, gas, underground electric and telephone lines to meet industrial and commercial service requirements.

d. Broadway and High Street viaduct replacement.

The City of Akron will invest an estimated \$9.6 million to demolish the Broadway and High Street viaducts, and build at grade roadways with full utilities. Access to the central portion of the redevelopment area will be via S. Broadway, after the year 2002. Engineering studies are already underway, with the work scheduled to begin in 2001. New utility extensions along the length of Broadway will service the redevelopment area.

D. Redeveloper's Obligations

1. Developers will be obligated to construct and maintain the structures and facilities in accordance with all codes and ordinances of the City of Akron, and must abide by the development standards prepared for the area.
2. Construction upon land sold or leased by the City shall be in accordance with all the terms and conditions of a Redevelopment Agreement executed by the City of Akron and the project developer. Such Redevelopment Agreement shall contain the requirement that all building plans shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and the Akron City Planning Commission prior to conveyance of the redevelopment property.

E. Development Standards

1. All development shall conform to the standards as established in the subchapter on Development and Area district

Requirements at §153.285 et seq. of the *Akron Zoning Code*, except where other standards are noted in this document.

2. All manufacturing, processing, crating and uncrating service and repair operations shall be conducted within completely enclosed buildings.
3. All outdoor storage areas and loading or unloading bay areas shall be screened from view by solid walls or solid fences or landscaping at least six feet in height. Such fencing and screening material shall be reviewed and approved by the Department of Planning and Urban Development (DPUD).
4. Sewers must be provided for the area prior to construction, and these sewers must be subject to the approval of the City Sewer Engineer and the Ohio EPA.
5. The minimum building line shall conform to §153.297(D), but shall be a minimum of 25 feet and need not be more than 75 feet. Each building site shall have a minimum of 30% green space, landscaped according to standards in the *Akron Development Guide*. The minimum setback from property lines shall be 10 feet. The side and rear yards must conform with §153.287(B) 1 and 2, but shall be a minimum of 10 feet. These areas are to be landscaped according to standards found in *the Akron Development Guide* and shall require approval of the DPUD.
6. All sides of buildings shall be faced with brick, stone, split rock or other similar approved facing material. Common block is not permitted. Color shall be integral to the building product. Construction materials for exterior surfaces are subject to approval of the DPUD.
7. Off street parking areas shall extend no closer to the street line or any property line than 10 feet. Interior parking lot landscaping shall consist of shade trees in curbed islands and an approximate spacing of 100 feet. Parking lot and site lighting standards shall not exceed 35 feet in height. The area between the parking area and the street line shall be landscaped according to standards found in *the Akron Development Guide* and shall require approval of the DPUD. All parking and drives shall be paved to Bureau of Engineering

standards. Perimeter of lots and interior islands shall be curbed with full-depth, poured in place concrete curb.

8. All signs shall comply with the subchapter on On-Premises Exterior Signs at §153.305 et seq., with the additional provision that only flush mounted signs or ground signs less than 5 feet in height will be permitted. Ground signs shall be a minimum 10 feet behind the right of way, and materials shall resemble and be compatible with building material. Information on signs shall be limited to business or project identification, logo and address. Multiple signs shall not be permitted for multi-tenant buildings. The design, size of lettering and lighting of all signs shall be submitted for review and approval by the Department of Planning and Urban Development.

F. Duration of Controls

This Redevelopment Plan shall be in force and effect for a period of 30 years from the date of original approval by the City of Akron.

G. Other Provisions Necessary to Meet State and Local Requirements

1. Relationship to Local Objectives

The objectives and proposals of this Redevelopment Plan conform with the Land Use Development Guide Plan for the City of Akron.

2. Provision for Amending Plan

This Redevelopment Plan may be amended upon approval by the City Planning Commission and City Council. Any amendment which does not expand the project boundary shall not require further notice or hearing.

**BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION
UNIVERSITY POLYMER RESEARCH PARK**

Situated in the City of Akron, County of Summit and State of Ohio and known as being a part of Lot 2 and Lot 5, Tract 8 formerly Portage Township, and being land formerly owned by Consolidated Rail Corporation (formerly Erie-Lackawanna Railroad, McCoy Street Yards) more fully described as follows:

Beginning at a monument in box assembly found at the intersection of the centerline of South Broadway Street (99' R/W) with the centerline of Selle Street (66' R/W) as recorded in Blocks C-1 & C-2, Opportunity Park Allotment (Plat Book 98, Page 52-53); thence southeasterly along the easterly projection of the centerline of Selle Street, S-63°09'19"-E (bearings referenced to the Ohio Coordinate System, North Zone, NAD 1927), 49.50 feet to a rebar found on the easterly line of South Broadway Street at the southwesterly corner of land owned by Knight Newspaper Inc. (Deed Volume 6299, Pages 583 to 599) and being the True Place of Beginning for the land hereinafter described;

Thence southeasterly along the southerly line of said land, S-63°03'19"-E, approximately 206 feet to the most westerly set of mainline rails, owned by CSX Transportation, Inc.

Thence southwesterly and being 18.00 feet westerly from said rails and along the arc of a circle curving to the left (central angle = 10°02'52", radius = 3495.42', chord = 612.19', chord bearing = S-22°35'42"-W) 612.97 feet to a number five rebar set at a point of tangency;

Thence southwesterly and being 18.00 feet westerly from said rails and crossing over the rights-of-way of Thornton Street to the northerly line of Voris Street.

Thence southwesterly along the northerly line of Voris to a number five rebar set at the southeasterly corner of the Thornton Allotment.

Thence northeasterly along the easterly line of said Thornton Allotment, N-17°34'06"-E, 461.20 feet to a number five rebar set;

Thence, N-10°37'21"-E, 53.23 feet to a number five rebar set;

Thence, N-15°40'15"-E, 149.10 feet to a number five rebar set;

Thence, N-89°20'40"-W, 19.37 feet to a point;

Thence, N-7°20'57"-E, 15.47 feet to a point;

Thence, S-89°20'40"-E, 14.85 feet to a point;

Thence, N-7°07'22"-E, 44.34 feet to a number five rebar set;

Thence, N-3°15'37"-W, 49.94 feet to a number five rebar set at the southerly line of Thornton Street;

Thence, N-0°56'16"-E, 30.00 feet to the center line of Thornton Street;

Thence northwesterly along said centerline, N-89°03'44"-W, 1.79 feet to a point;

Thence, N-0°56'16"-E, 30.00 feet to a number five rebar set at the northerly line of Thornton Street;

Thence northeasterly along the easterly line of the Thornton Allotment (Plat Book 2, Page 22), N-1°15'17"-E, 900.80 feet to the centerline of a vacated alley in the McCoy Allotment (Plat Book 2, Page 19);

Thence southwesterly along said centerline, S-89°50'11"-W, 27.34 feet to a point;

Thence northeasterly along the westerly line of Lot 11 of said McCoy Allotment, N-0°15'29"-E, 101.14 feet to the southerly line of McCoy Street;

Thence, northeasterly along the easterly line of the High-Broadway Viaduct, approximately 1,900 feet to a number five rebar set;

Thence, to a number five rebar set on the easterly line of Broadway Street;

Thence northeasterly along said easterly line, N-27°08'54"-E, 33.00 feet to the southwesterly corner of land owned by The Akron Beacon Journal (Deed Volume 6299, Pages 583 to 599) and the True Place of Beginning for the land hereinbefore described (which is encompassed within the street rights-of-way of South Street, Thornton Street, McCoy Street, Bartges Street and East Exchange Street).