



SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN

Grand Rapids, Michigan

FINAL PLAN
October, 2019

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....iv

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....1

2. MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT.....13

3. COMMUNITY IDENTITY.....35

4. DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT.....49

5. ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.....71

6. HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE85

7. TRANSPORTATION.....97

8. FOCUS AREA VISIONING.....109

9. IMPLEMENTATION.....147

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT SCORECARD.....156

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX.....160



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The South Division Corridor Planning Team would like to acknowledge the residents, stakeholders and partners who participated in this planning process. In particular, we would like to thank the Steering Committee for their valuable knowledge and guidance during the process and the Community Ambassadors, whose dedication and persistence made this initiative a success.

STEERING COMMITTEE

- » Angelica Velazquez, La Casa de la Cobija
- » Bill Paxton, Exalta Health
- » Conrad Venema, The Rapid
- » Chris Beckering, Pioneer Construction
- » Fran Dalton, Garfield Park Neighborhood Association / Alternate – Jesus Solis, GPNA
- » Guillermo Cisneros, Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- » Hanna Schulze, Resident / Local First
- » Henry Peña, Boost Mobile (Division/Burton)
- » Jennifer Spiller, Healthy Homes Coalition
- » Johana Rodriguez, Literacy Center of West Michigan
- » Zaira Vicario-Begien, KSSN Community Coordinator for Burton Elementary
- » Jon Shaner, Kroc Center
- » Ken Miguel-Cipriano, Resident / Chairman - S. Division/Grandville Ave Corridor Improvement Authority
- » Leonard VanDrunen, Commercial Property Owner / Calvin College
- » Leslee Rohs, Frey Foundation
- » Lorena Aguayo-Márquez, Grand Rapids Community College
- » Marcus Ringnalda, Four Star Theater
- » Mary Dengerink, Resident
- » Paula Woods, Brown Hutcherson Ministries
- » Ricardo Tavaréz, Resident / En Vivo Church
- » Stephanie Gingerich, LINC UP
- » Synia Jordan, Grandville Business Assn / Realtor/ Grranddaughter of displaced resident & business owner
- » Kurt Reppart (City Commissioner)
- » Walter Brame (Planning Commission)
- » Courtney Magaluk (Staff / Project Manager)
- » Layla Aslani (Staff / Project Manager)
- » Suzanne Schulz (Staff / Planning Director)
- » Bryan Blakely (Staff / Advisory)
- » Hank Kelley (Staff / Advisory)

WORKING GROUP MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to more than 15 private citizens, the Working Groups included representatives of the following organizations.

- » Access of West Michigan
- » Alpha Women’s Center
- » Bethany Christian Services
- » Brown Hutcherson Ministries / Ward 3 Commissioner
- » Cherry Health
- » City Life Church
- » City of Grand Rapids Community Development Department
- » City of Grand Rapids Development Services / Planning
- » City of Grand Rapids Engineering / Vital Streets
- » City of Grand Rapids Environmental Services
- » City of Grand Rapids Mobile GR and Parking Services Department
- » Disability Advocates
- » El Vocero
- » En Vivo Church

- » Exalta Health
- » Fifth Third Bank
- » Friends of GR Parks
- » Garfield Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)
- » Grand Rapids Housing Commission
- » Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department
- » Grand Valley Metro / Planning Commission
- » Grand Rapids Police Department (GRPD)
- » GRPD – CPTED Coordinator.
- » Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS)
- » Habitat for Humanity
- » Health Homes
- » Healthy Homes Coalition
- » Home Repair Services
- » Homes for All
- » Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF)
- » Kent County Health Department
- » Kent County Health Department
- » Kroc Center
- » LINC UP
- » MDHHS / Michigan Climate Change

- » Michigan Department of Transportation
- » Micah Center
- » MobileGR
- » New Hope Church
- » Orion Construction
- » Our Communities Children
- » Project Green
- » Rockford Construction
- » Spectrum Health
- » The Rapid
- » Urban Roots
- » West Michigan Fair Housing Center
- » West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT)





01.

Executive Summary

This Chapter includes an overview of the contents of the South Division Corridor Plan, including:

- An **Introduction** to the Plan and the process that shaped it
- The **Key Plan Principles** that framed this effort
- A short explanation of the **Priority Projects** that will help to carry out the goals of the plan
- A short explanation of the **Community-Supported Catalyst Projects** that are most central to this initiative

INTRODUCTION

The South Division Corridor Plan was created through a community-led, collaborative effort. It is a visionary guiding document that sets forth a strategic direction for revitalization by building upon significant assets and addressing the root causes of the issues that have led to its decline.

The South Division Corridor planning area is situated on the south side of Grand Rapids. South Division Avenue is the “spine” of the planning area, connecting multiple neighborhoods, including Downtown, South Hills, South East, the Madison Area, Burton Heights and Garfield Park. The Corridor stretches for three miles from Wealthy Street on the north to 28th Street SE on the south. These collective community areas are home to more than 28,000 people representing a diverse mix of nationalities, races and ethnic origins (including African-American, Latino and Dutch-American communities). South Division is a high traffic corridor, with more than 2,000 bus riders and 15,000 vehicles per day. The Silver Line Bus Rapid Transit line runs along Division and represents a significant portion of the daily bus ridership. The line was completed in 2014 and utilizes enhanced bus stops to provide service to residents every 10 minutes during peak times. The Corridor has a wide range of land uses, with many locally owned and operated businesses, a mix of residential types, industrial buildings and non-profit organizations. There are both areas of relative vitality and areas of decline, with significant portions of the Corridor available for potential development or redevelopment opportunities.



Even though the Corridor is rich in businesses, parks and cultural amenities, the community feels disjointed and inequitable to visitors and residents alike. An understanding of the history and present state of the Corridor neighborhoods is critical to understanding how the community can position itself for an equitable and prosperous future.

This Plan encourages the creation and maintenance of an economically and socially diverse community that will stabilize over the long term. The values guiding the planning process and its results go beyond simply improving the neighborhood for economic gain. The Plan focuses on the people who form the South Division community and the history and values of that community. The engagement of residents, developers, officials and interest groups in creating strategies to address or avoid the adverse consequences of neighborhood change while supporting the goals of an equitable plan, have increased the probability that the Corridor will become a strong, economically diverse place.



RESIDENTS DISCUSSING THE SOUTH DIVISION & HALL FOCUS AREA AT COMMUNITY MEETING 2

This equitable vision is intended to promote the following:

- » New investment directly benefits low- and middle-income residents who have largely been left out of the City's prosperity.
- » Public subsidies are used to encourage private investment where it can best provide opportunities for all neighborhood residents.
- » Everyone who is affected by the Plan has had an opportunity to have their voices heard and their interests represented in the decision-making process.
- » Economic development policies, plans and projects are quantifiable and measure the impacts on residents.
- » Non-discrimination policies are bolstered while affirmatively furthering fair and equal housing and business opportunities for all.

The Corridor Plan creates a framework for improving the quality of life of area residents, while identifying investments that can be strategically implemented throughout the neighborhood. This document is designed as an action plan, building directly upon community-defined goals and strategies to create specific projects for near, medium and long-term implementation. These projects are intended to be catalytic in nature and include recommended public and private investments. The South Division Corridor will be unified through new

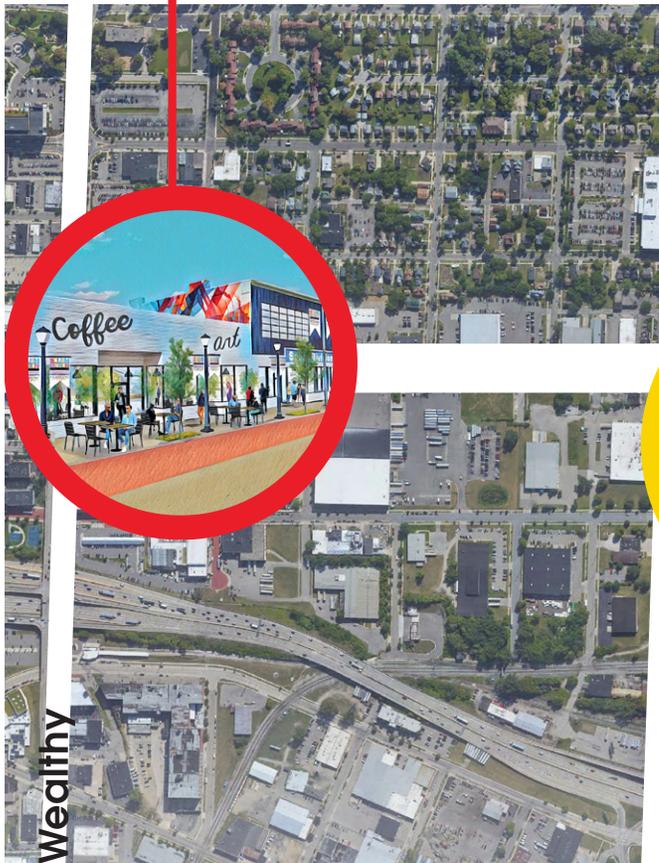
programs and improvements, while individual Focus Areas will be defined by their unique characteristics. The Silver Line bus rapid transit service will support businesses and residential development along the Corridor while connecting residents to other areas of opportunity within the City. The South Division Corridor will include a sustainable mix of housing, services and institutions, with an improved overall quality of life for long-time, new and future residents.

This effort has taken significant planning and will require patience and persistence to see the South Division Corridor Plan through to successful implementation. The Plan has involved the combined efforts of local residents, business owners, land owners, the City of Grand Rapids and other stakeholders to envision and fulfill the promise of what South Division Avenue can be.



Focus Area 1

S. Division &
Wealthy



Focus Area 3

S. Division &
Hall



Focus Area 2

S. Division &
Campau Park



Focus Area 4

S. Division &
Cottage Grove

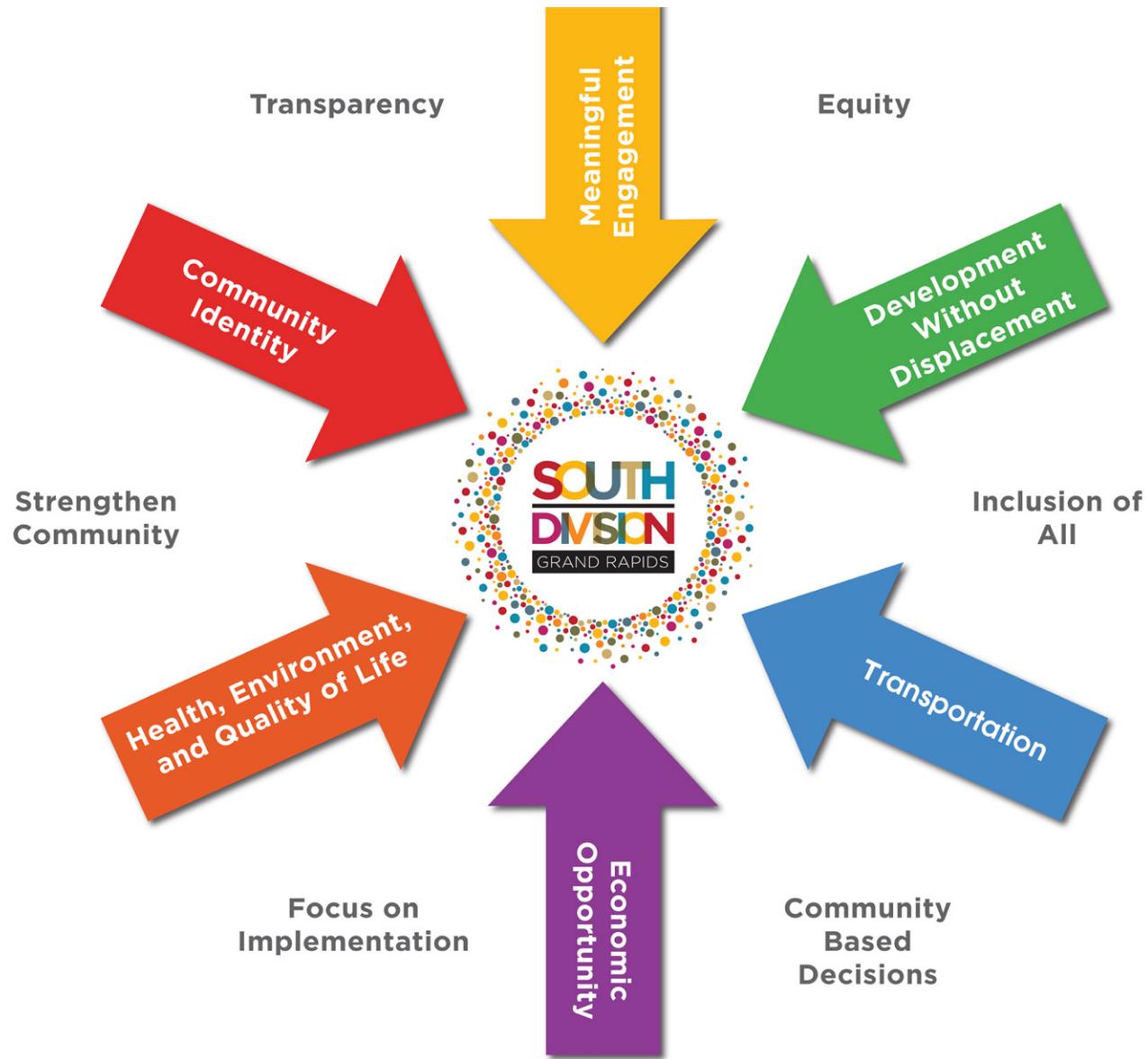
Focus Area 5

S. Division & Burton



Focus Area 6

S. Division & Plaster Creek



THE SIX KEY PRINCIPLES OF THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN

KEY PLAN PRINCIPLES

The South Division Corridor Planning Team has sought to improve the neighborhood through efforts aimed at revitalizing, improving and investing in the community. The Plan is an “Area Specific Plan” incorporated as part of the City’s Master Plan and is based on six Key Principles:

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

Meaningful Engagement means engaging members of the community in a way that leads to tangible results. Meaningful Engagement involves both the process of creating the Plan and identifying how the Plan will be carried forward to ensure a local voice in future development and change. Existing local groups have been engaged and are tasked with assisting the planning process. The planning process valued local community participation and leadership in decision-making to reflect a diversity of voices including historically marginalized communities. The process was intended to build cultural competence and responsiveness among all stakeholders, while structuring planning activities to be clear, accessible and engaging.

BUILD AND PRESERVE COMMUNITY IDENTITY

Build and Preserve Community Identity means the Plan takes steps to ensure that the community does not lose its core characteristics after implementation. Strategies are intended to help maintain South Division’s status as a tight-knit, well-connected, cultural destination for generations to come. This has been done by ensuring a full understanding of the local context, including respect for local community

character, cultural diversity and values. The Plan seeks to preserve and strengthen intact neighborhoods, while building upon their local assets and resources.

DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

Development without Displacement means ensuring that any future growth the South Division Corridor experiences will not lead to current residents being “priced out,” or otherwise displaced from the community. This will be done with the overall goal of creating stable and resilient neighborhoods and maintaining healthy, safe and affordable housing for all income levels in the neighborhood. Strategies are also focused on the need to ensure that viable small businesses that serve community needs remain in place. The Plan also identifies how new development and investments in the built environment are accessible and welcoming to people regardless of age, physical condition or language.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Economic Opportunity was a major consideration over the course of the planning process. Opportunities for residents to obtain jobs and financial resources are crucial to the success of the South Division Corridor. The Plan seeks to improve the local business environment and advance economic opportunity while closing racial disparities in business and individual success. The Plan promotes local economic development and entrepreneurship opportunities while enhancing community-serving establishments and improving access

to quality living wage jobs. A special emphasis is placed on opportunities in growing industries and initiatives that support an eco-friendly, green community for all residents.

HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Health, Environment and Quality of Life is of paramount importance to the South Division Corridor Plan. Access to green space, clean air and various types of recreation will allow community members to lead active and fulfilling lives. The Plan seeks to strengthen the health and well-being of residents through the expansion of quality health care services, improved connections to a more resilient urban environment and incorporating a community-based approach to safety and security.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is recognized as an integral component in improving connectivity to surrounding communities and furthering economic prosperity. The Plan prioritizes an effective and affordable public transportation network that supports transit-dependent communities and provides equitable access to core services and amenities, including employment, education and health/social services. The Silver Line is a point of focus in the South Division Corridor Plan. Special emphasis is placed on the potential for transit-oriented development while promoting broader mobility and connectivity, including bicycling, walking and driving.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

This Plan includes projects that are intended to be led by the City and other community partners to promote progress for implementation. These projects vary widely in size and scope but all are strategic in their purpose to bring positive change. The Plan recommends 15 priority projects to serve as stimuli for creating positive activity through the interconnection of new services and uses for the South Division Corridor and surrounding community. These are projects that have the potential to stimulate the revitalization of the area and trigger positive momentum for quality improvements and renewal. The Priority Projects were developed through substantial engagement and organized by Key Principles of the Plan. A fully detailed description of all Priority Projects is provided in Chapters 8 through 12 of the Plan.

KEY PRINCIPLES AND THEIR PRIORITY PROJECTS



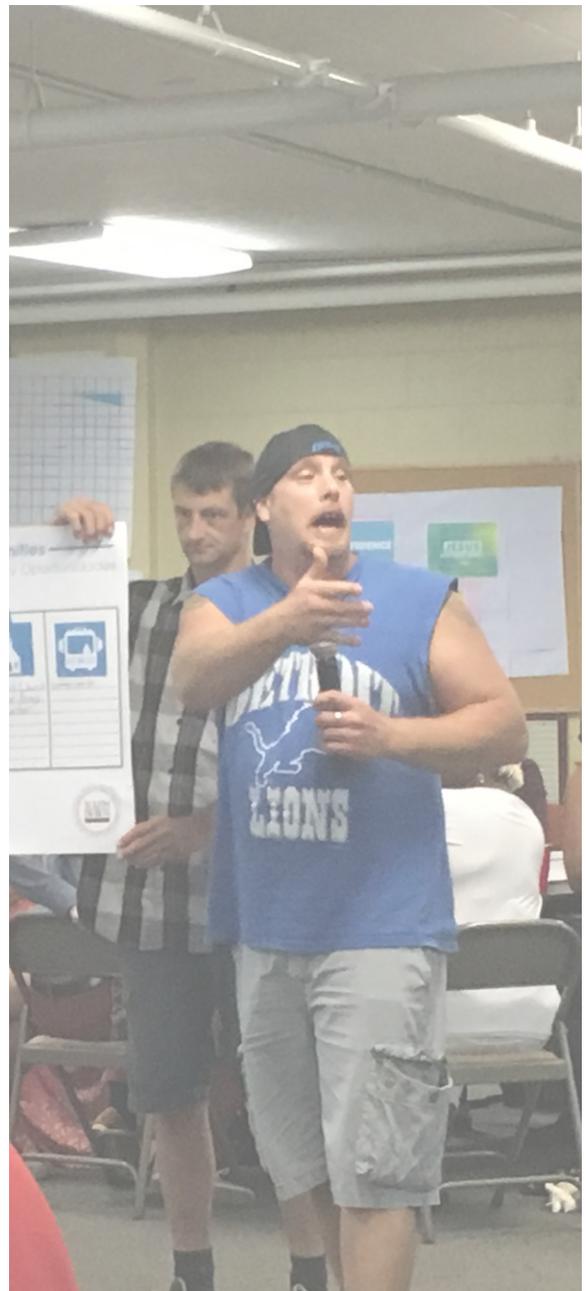
COMMUNITY IDENTITY

1. Develop a Storefront Improvement Program
2. Develop and Support a Variety Of Community Events
3. Develop a Streetscape Improvement Program



DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

1. Facilitate Home Repair and Improvements
2. Advocate For Changes to City and State Development Policy
3. Expand Financial Accessibility for the Community





ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

1. Recruit a Credit Union or Minority-Owned Bank
2. Foster the Creation and Growth of Job Training Programs
3. Create a Business Support Network



HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT QUALITY OF LIFE

1. Foster Neighborhood Initiatives for Beautification and Safety
2. Support Access to Fresh and Affordable Food
3. Recruit Health and Family Services to the Corridor



TRANSPORTATION

1. Promote Traffic Calming Measures
2. Encourage Transit-Oriented Development
3. Improve Snow Removal



COMMUNITY-SUPPORTED CATALYST PROJECTS

Community Meeting 4 offered the opportunity for attendees to evaluate the 15 priority projects and use “Division Bucks” to “fund” the projects they thought were most important to the future of the Corridor. Over 50 attendees helped to select and order these projects. Of the 15 Priority Projects, five have been identified as Community-Supported Catalyst Projects and are given special attention and detail in the Implementation Section of the Plan. These projects are outlined in order of community priority:



Develop a program that focuses on façade improvements for new and existing businesses, as well as, window programs and other efforts to mitigate the appearance of vacant storefronts. This program should be done in tandem with actionable items to help current business tenants secure and purchase their own spaces to prevent displacement and ensure they can fully benefit from aesthetic improvements to the Corridor.



Facilitate home repair and improvements through education, services and model programs. Create a clearinghouse of home repair and financial education services and take steps to empower home owners.



RECRUIT A CREDIT UNION OR MINORITY-OWNED BANK



Recruit a credit union or minority-owned bank as a new asset to the community. Consider financial incentives and other approaches to attract an institution that could provide necessary financial resources to area residents.



DEVELOP AND SUPPORT A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY EVENTS



Support the creation of events open to all ages that emphasize diversity and encourage unity and togetherness within the South Division neighborhoods.



ADVOCATE FOR CHANGES TO CITY AND STATE POLICY



Advocate for changes to City and State Policy that align with the outcomes of the Plan and that maximize eligibility of South Division properties for incentive programs.



SOUTH DIVISION South Division & Wealthy

MARK THE 3 IMAGES That Best Represent Your Vision For this portion of South Division

any other ideas you have for Division & Wealthy below!

extension of Downtown? Or the beginning of a new South Division District?

What could go into the Topside Square development?

ADDRESS THE HOMELESSNESS ISSUES

TIME FOR PEDESTRIANS TO CROSS STREET

OUT HOMELESS SHelters

ACTIVITIES FOR KIDS

ARCADÉ IMPROVEMENTS

MINI POLICE STATION

IMPROVE/MAINTAIN PARKING LOTS

IMPROVE/MAINTAIN SIDEWALKS

IMPROVE/MAINTAIN BIKE LANE

IMPROVE/MAINTAIN STREET LIGHTS



02.

Meaningful Engagement

This Chapter includes an overview of the public input process that was used to develop the South Division Corridor Plan. This includes:

- A general **overview** of the planning process
- The **process phasing** that was utilized, including the *Listening, Visioning and Concept Development* phases
- A short explanation of the **Early Action Projects** that were carried out during the planning process
- A short explanation of the **implementation strategy** that was developed during the engagement process

PROCESS OVERVIEW

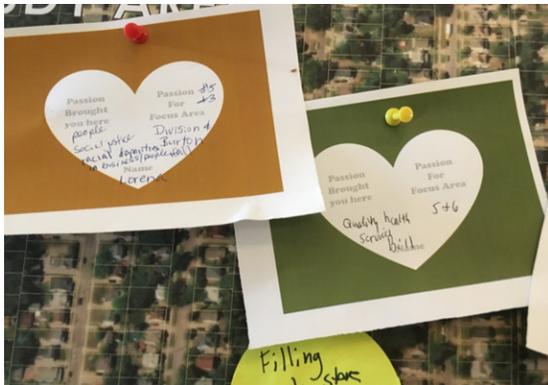
The South Division Corridor Plan was designed around a thoughtful and strategic process of meaningful resident and stakeholder engagement to make sure the final Plan is socially equitable and representative of the interests of the community. One of the greatest strengths of the South Division Corridor is a connected and engaged network of residents from a variety of backgrounds. Residents have been heavily involved in the planning process from the start in order to ensure a community-driven effort; not a City or consultant-driven Plan.

Efforts related to the South Division Corridor Plan have been underway since March 2017, led by an Advisory Group of area residents, business owners and other stakeholders. This early participation was initiated due to a recognized need for a deeper level of engagement and relationship building with the surrounding community prior to formal launch of the Corridor Plan effort. There were clear challenges at the onset in achieving meaningful engagement of residents. For persons in the African American community there is a historical precedent of exclusion from communal decision-making processes as a result of past institutionally racist efforts such as red-lining, improper use of eminent domain and other serious injustices. Additionally, other residents (particularly from Latino and other immigrant communities) have rarely been given the opportunity to affect change in local government policy for the benefit of their neighborhood. These deep historic divisions have resulted in a high level of skepticism and distrust among residents that continues today.





In order to address these challenges directly, the planning process was created to involve that local community members most affected, especially low-income residents, people of color, neighborhood groups, community organizations, people living with disabilities and new immigrants. The process was designed to build cultural competence and responsiveness among all stakeholders, with planning activities structured to be clear, accessible and engaging.



In addition to personal and cultural barriers to participation, there were also initial organizational challenges. Portions of the Corridor function at much different levels of capacity in terms of formal and informal leadership structure. The northern portion of the Corridor, in particular, lacks an active neighborhood association, nor does the business association for the South Division Corridor have an active leadership structure. Conversely, other portions of the corridor are represented by the Garfield Park Neighborhood Association, which has a well-organized leadership group and an engaged neighborhood base. Two Corridor Improvement Districts (CIDs) have been created in parallel to the Corridor Plan effort to form an organized outlet for business voice. The Steering Committee initiated a process of early education and engagement to introduce topics that helped to define Key Plan Principles.

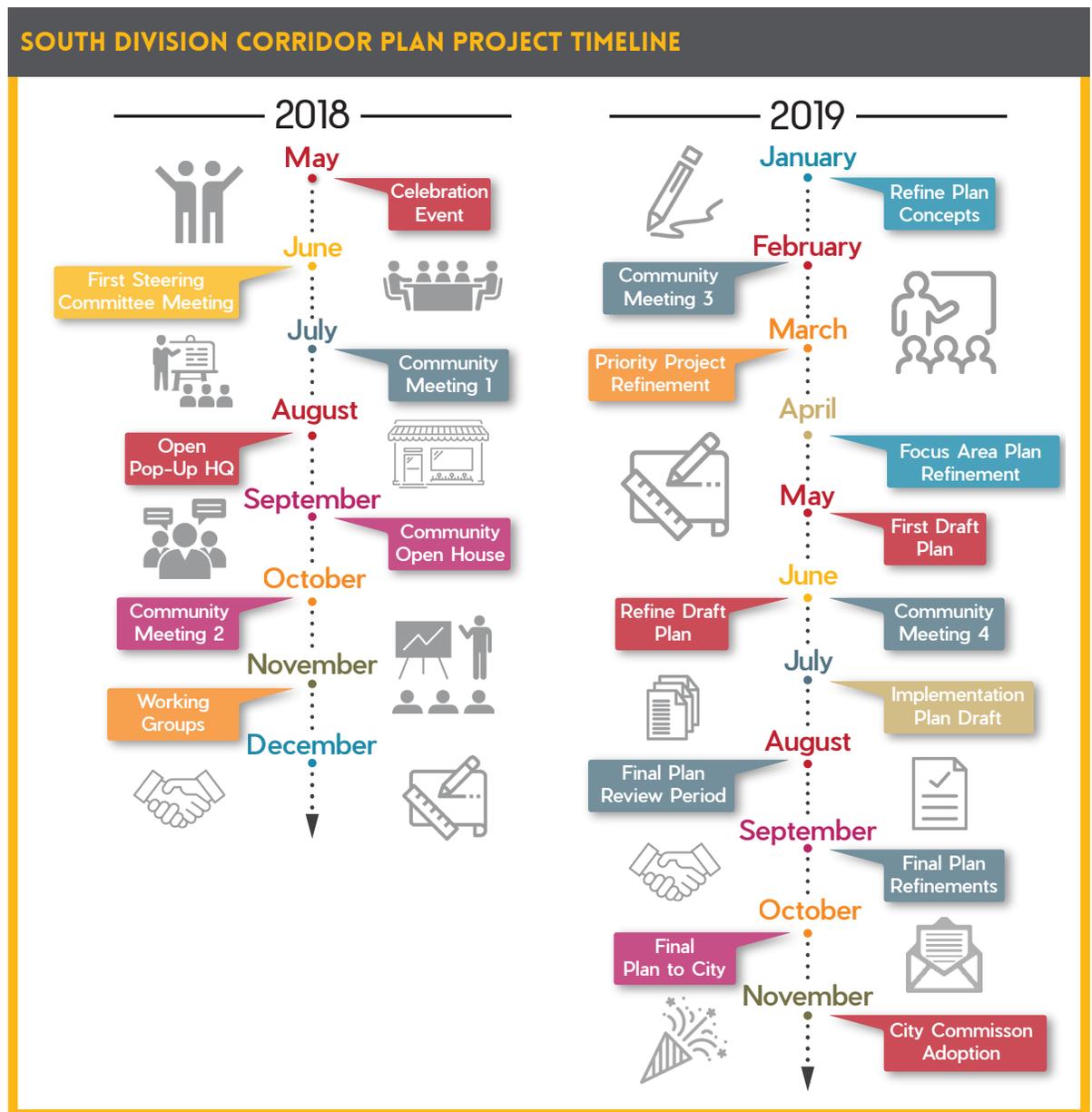
In March 2018, the Advisory Group transitioned into a full Steering Committee. In May 2018, a Celebration Event that attracted more than 1,000 people kicked off the formal planning process. Since then, the neighborhood has been the biggest driving force behind the Plan with residents regularly attending meetings in high numbers. Additionally, the City and the Plan's Community Ambassadors formed partnerships with multiple local organizations and businesses to distribute information regarding the Plan and leverage interest among less-connected members of the community.

The result has been an open and transparent planning process that reflects the diverse interests of the community. The project was facilitated and organized by the Planning Team, which is made up of representatives of the City and selected consultants, led by Camiros, Ltd. and supported by Borderless Studio, Blacks in Green, SB Friedman and Williams & Works. The Planning Team utilized a variety of engagement tools to connect with residents and encourage productive conversation. Planning meetings involved the use of interactive dot maps, storyboarding of assets and challenges and voting on both visual elements and project ideas. These tools helped the Plan have a solid foundation of ideas that were both creative and in the best interest of the community. The project Facebook page and project website (www.sdivisionplan.com) gave residents access to official Plan materials and the opportunity to reach out to the Planning Team with questions and comments.

The planning process was built around a schedule of community meetings, working group meetings, youth engagement events, business mixers and communal resident events. Most community meetings were held in the South Division Corridor Pop-Up Headquarters at 2009 S. Division Avenue and in other high profile locations throughout the Corridor.

Advisory Committee

The role of the Advisory Committee was designed so that the community, City staff, consultants and other participants approached the community engagement process and the plan development phase in an equitable manner. The Advisory Committee included local experts who used their knowledge of the community to formulate a meaningful process reflecting the core values and vision of South Division while seeking opportunities to empower stakeholders. The Committee provided input throughout the planning process including the development of the Plan's Key Principles and their respective catalyst projects, potential partners, action steps and recommendations. The Committee also worked to develop the overall scope of work outlined in the City's Request for Proposals and was directly involved in the consultant selection process.



Community Ambassadors

To help facilitate the planning process, a planning aide and six community ambassadors were hired by the City of Grand Rapids Planning Department. The Community Ambassador position was created for people who work, own businesses or live in nearby neighborhoods along the South Division Corridor and wanted to take an active role in the planning process. They were integral to the overall planning effort, making it both transparent and effective. The Community Ambassadors acted as an extension of the Project Team and assisted in outreach efforts over the course of the community engagement process. The Ambassadors hosted small meetings that took the engagement process into places where people already meet and engage from church study groups to soccer fields. Additional work included knocking on doors, surveying and providing facilitation support at larger community meetings. Most notably, they planned two large events: the Taste on Division and the South Division Comeback Fashion Show. Their dedication and persistence was critical to achieving Meaningful Engagement and lay the groundwork for an engaged citizenry to help implement the Plan.



EDGAR AGUILAR

Edgar Aguilar is a 22 year old senior at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Edgar is originally from Honduras and moved to Grand Rapids four years ago to pursue an education in International Relations and Economics. He is interested in processes that foster cooperation and promote both economic development and justice. He began living in the South Division area during the summer of 2018, around the time that he got involved as a Community Ambassador with the South Division Corridor Development Plan project. During his time as a community ambassador he has striven to engage with his neighbors and gather input from the community, especially from Latino residents in the area. He hopes that this process will lay the foundation for a business-support network in the community.



KYLE GLINKA

Kyle Glinka is a recent Calvin College graduate (2018) with a Bachelor's in Public Health and Sociology. Kyle moved to Grand Rapids in 2014 from his hometown of Flint, Michigan. After he moved to Grand Rapids, Kyle developed a longing to get involved and serve his new community. In the spring of 2015, he started and ran a youth outreach group at Clancy Street Ministries called "The Fam." At "The Fam," Kyle, alongside volunteers from Calvin College, mentored middle school youth by providing field trips, workshops and a safe place to express their emotions. "The Fam" operated for three years and concluded as volunteers graduated. Kyle is a current AmeriCorps member serving at Cherry Health's Southside Health Center doing outreach and enrollment into healthcare for underserved populations. Over the course of his life he has learned that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, that service to one's community develops humility and the importance of challenging systems of power when you see injustice being perpetrated.



TIM BRACEY

Tim Bracey is a native Grand Raptidian and current resident of Grand Rapids. Tim made the decision to serve as a Community Ambassador because he wanted to give back to the community and the neighborhoods that he grew up in. Tim's commitment to community, diversity and inclusion and policy stems from his concern for people and community.



SIFA GRACE

Sifa is a resident of Grand Rapids and is very passionate about the revitalization of the South Division Corridor. She decided to serve as a community ambassador to make a difference in a community that she loves. Sifa is committed to community outreach, inclusion and diversity in Grand Rapids. She has been honored to serve the South Division Corridor residents as an ambassador.



DIVINE BOOKER

Born and raised in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Divine Booker is a community activist/organizer in the Western Michigan area. Divine is a “solutionary” value creator and the community development director for 360 Movement. The 360 Movement was created as a solutionary approach to the many problems that affect us all with the goal of raising our overall quality of life for a better tomorrow, especially among historically oppressed and disadvantaged populations. As an integral member of the 5% Nation, Mr. Booker is better known at home and abroad using his righteous name “Divine Reality,” which he earned as a five percenter. Through his extensive research, life experiences with a dysfunctional family and time served in prison, Divine has learned many lessons worth teaching. His stated goal is to “turn our ‘hoods back into neighborhoods.”



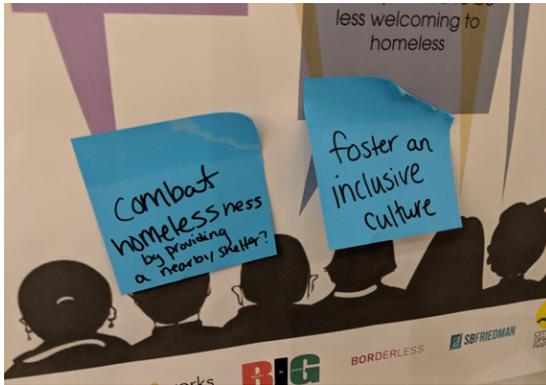
CAROL NASH

In May 1972, Carol moved to Grand Rapids from Chicago, IL. She has been a homeowner in the South Division Corridor since 1977. Carol has three daughters and two grandsons. In 1997, Carol graduated from Davenport Business College with an Associate of Science and Accounting. She began working at the United States Postal Service in 1985 and retired in 2017. After retirement, Carol became a foster parent, a community connector for the MLK project, a tax aide volunteer through the AARP Foundation, a volunteer with the Mel Trotter Mission and a Community Ambassador for the South Division Corridor Plan.



JOSE NIETES

Jose is a Chicago native who graduated from Calvin College in May 2018 with a Bachelors of Arts in Business Finance with a minor in Accounting. His study abroad experiences took him to Kenya and different states in India. Jose has spent the majority of his professional work experience in the non-profit/government sector working in community development. However, his passion for business and helping others brought him to the Financial Advisor Development Program program at Merrill Lynch. Throughout the South Division Corridor planning process, Jose worked to coordinate the efforts of the Community Ambassadors with those of the rest of the Planning Team.



Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is made up of more than 20 members representing the City of Grand Rapids, local organizations, neighborhood businesses and the community at large. This Steering Committee included a majority of the Advisory Group members, as well as other residents, business owners and key stakeholders identified by that group. Throughout the process, an open door was maintained to invite other individuals identified throughout community engagement. The Steering Committee has acted as advisors and decision makers throughout the Plan development process to help to create a framework for future development that is rooted in the community's vision for equity. Committee members have helped represent the thoughts and goals of the community, offered their expertise and made themselves readily available as often as possible. They regularly attended public and private meetings, events at the Pop-Up Headquarters and participated in Working Groups meetings(see page 27 for explanation) .

The role of a Steering Committee member has been to

- » Identify resources or provide information regarding conditions within the neighborhood.
- » Assist in promoting larger Community Meetings to a broad range of community members.
- » Provide information about agencies, businesses or other entities that could assist in neighborhood improvement.

- » Reflect concerns and issues from neighborhood and citywide residents, businesses and stakeholders.
- » Generate and vet ideas in order to prioritize the strategies and projects that merit consideration for inclusion in the Corridor Plan.
- » Review deliverables and provide comments and feedback before they go to the larger community.
- » Help identify potential partners and guide post Plan implementation.

Pop-Up Headquarters

In August 2018, the Planning Team established a "Pop-Up Headquarters" (HQ) at 2009 South Division for use during the planning process. The space was provided to the Planning Team by Steering Committee member Leonard Van Drunen, who recently rehabbed the building. Although the space was not suitable for a formal business at the time, the site location, unfinished plywood floor and wide-open floor plan was a perfect backdrop for many public engagement activities. The space was both big enough to accommodate large meetings with more than 100 people and intimate enough to allow for presentations or group conversation. The HQ was stocked with couches, tables, a 20 foot-long corridor map and a giant project calendar. The storefront featured a large South Division logo that drew in passing residents and visitors.

The corridor map was covered in pins, stickers and notes from residents showing their home,

their favorite places along the corridor and specific areas of the corridor they wanted to change or improve. Finally, ten poster boards informed residents on everything they needed to know about the planning process including the project timeline, the Planning Team members, past and future events information, identified assets and challenges of the neighborhood, existing zoning and land use in the corridor and major neighborhood character areas.

Events held in the HQ included community meetings, working group meetings, neighborhood open houses, business mixers, the Taste on Division Early Action Project (see page 30 for explanation) and a variety of other community-focused events. These activities gave residents and stakeholders an opportunity to provide the Planning Team with feedback on their neighborhood and what they thought should be included in the Plan. The space was constantly transforming over the course of the process and proved to be a very effective tool in gathering Plan feedback while reinforcing the strong sense of community among residents of the corridor.

Website and Social Media

Some of the most integral tools in the community engagement process were the SDCP Tuesday Newsday email newsletter, the official project Facebook page and the project website: www.sdivisionplan.com. Shortly after the Kick-Off event in May 2018, the Planning Team established the project website, which provided invitations to upcoming Plan events

Circa 1938

2007 Division was built in 1915 when Burton Heights was developing into a bustling retail area, and being surrounded by well-populated residential neighborhoods. 2007/2009 Division operated as Smitter's household goods store for many years. The owner of the store was an immigrant to the United States, Egbert J. Smitter.

1976

During the 1970's with highways, malls and suburbanization, Burton Heights experienced significant disinvestment. Mainstream retailers left the neighborhood. Other types of establishments looking for less expensive space filled in the gaps. Residents of Burton Heights had fewer places to shop and socialize. In 1973 the façade and interior of 2007/2009 Division were modified to become Esquire Health Spa, an adult massage parlor.

1990

By 1990 the north side of 2007/2009 Division was re-purposed as a porn store.

2017

Until 2017, 2007/2009 Division was owned and operated as a massage parlor and porn store, with the façade as shown.

**THE NEW 2007/2009 DIVISION
THE NEW SOUTH DIVISION**

THE POP-UP SPACE

2007 / 2009 Division Ave South was built in 1915 when Burton Heights was developing into a bustling retail area and being surrounded by well-populated residential neighborhoods. 2007/2009 Division Ave South operated as Smitter's household goods store for many years. The owner of the store was an immigrant to the United States, Egbert J. Smitter. During the 1970's with highways, malls and suburbanization, Burton Heights experienced significant disinvestment. Mainstream retailers left the neighborhood and other types of establishments looking for less expensive space filled in the gaps. Residents of Burton Heights had fewer places to shop and socialize.

In 1973 the façade and interior of 2007/2009 Division Ave South were modified to become Esquire Health Spa, an adult massage parlor. By 1990 the north side of 2007/2009 Division Ave South had been repurposed into an adult-oriented business and was owned and operated as such until 2017 when it was sold to Mr. Van Drunen. In 2018, 2007/2009 Division Ave South got a new façade and a completely renovated interior. The 2nd floor is now occupied by office tenants and the first floor will hopefully be occupied soon with one or two retailers that will be a great asset to the neighborhood.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR



INTERACTIVE MAP



DISPLAY + BOARDS



FLEXIBLE MEET/WORK SPACE



BOARDS/STORIES

CONCEPT ILLUSTRATION OF THE POP-UP COMMUNITY SPACE

and initiatives, downloadable versions of presentations, materials, further information about the Plan and how to become more involved. To complement the website, a Facebook page was maintained to offer residents another communication channel to connect to the Plan. The Planning Team regularly sent out an e-newsletter to share happenings related to the South Division Corridor Plan including news, announcements and future events. The newsletter was an effective tool in keeping the Steering Committee and the broader community involved in the process. The variety of digital outreach tools extended our reach to interested residents and resulted in a more effective engagement process overall.

The engagement process was organized into three major phases: 1) Listening; 2) Visioning; and 3) Concept Development. The Listening phase was designed to create energy for the Plan and allow for the Planning Team to learn as much about the Corridor as possible without preconceptions. The Visioning phase of the process laid the groundwork for the main components of the Plan and provided a new direction for the South Division Corridor. The Concept Development phase built upon previous efforts to formulate the contents of the Plan while obtaining continued feedback from residents.

PLAN PHASES

LISTENING PHASE

Kick-Off Celebration

The Kick-Off Celebration was held on May, 20th 2018 at Garfield Park in Southern Grand Rapids. With 1,000-plus attendees, this event became the City's largest and most diverse planning-related community engagement event in history. The key goal of the Celebration was to kick off the project with energy, enthusiasm and openness while generating excitement among residents to be part of the process. The event featured a variety of food, games, music and dancing elements provided by neighborhood businesses and stakeholders. Engagement-focused activities included stations designed around the Key Plan Principles, providing residents with an opportunity to give the Planning Team some initial thoughts on their neighborhood. Activities included:

- » Maps for attendees to indicate where they live, go to work/school and spend their free time
- » Timelines asking how long attendees have lived in the community
- » Bingo games built around "green" community goals
- » "Share your skill" cards
- » A "meet your neighbors" scavenger hunt
- » Games like "giant Jenga" that related to development without displacement





Responses were varied and insightful into the social and physical fabric of the community around South Division Avenue. Organizers and attendees deemed the event a major success.

Logo Selection

Several logo options for the planning process were formulated by the Planning Team to symbolically represent the Plan and guide the design language of all future planning documents. Options were presented to residents at the Celebration Event and voted on with multi-colored stickers. The option with large colored, block text was by far the most popular. Residents loved the look of the colored voting dots around the text so they were added to the final logo to represent the diversity of the community.

Key Person Interviews

On July 24, 2018, the Planning Team conducted a variety of interviews with community residents and stakeholders in order to continue to listen and learn about the past, present and future of the neighborhood.

In addition to connecting multiple stakeholders to the South Division planning process, the interviews allowed the Planning Team to gain a much stronger understanding of the neighborhood that went beyond maps and demographic reports. Interviewees were able to provide insight that they had attained as both area residents and representatives of

their organizations. They discussed matters such as the need for a safer community with more job access, neighborhood growth without exploitation and the importance of grocery stores, low-income housing and other factors in planning for the future. The information gathered in the key person interview process and Community Meeting 1 informed the concepts that were ultimately formed in the next stage of the process: Visioning.

Community Meeting 1

The first Community Meeting was held the evening of July 24, 2018 at the New Hope Baptist Church on Delaware Street. The intent of the meeting was for residents to reflect on their community by listing the assets and challenges they face. The Planning Team brought activity materials to the meeting including blank “storyboards,” and icon cards depicting potential assets and challenges. The meeting gave residents an opportunity to illustrate and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their community. The result was an evening of thoughtful and original conversations that set a positive precedent for future community engagement events.

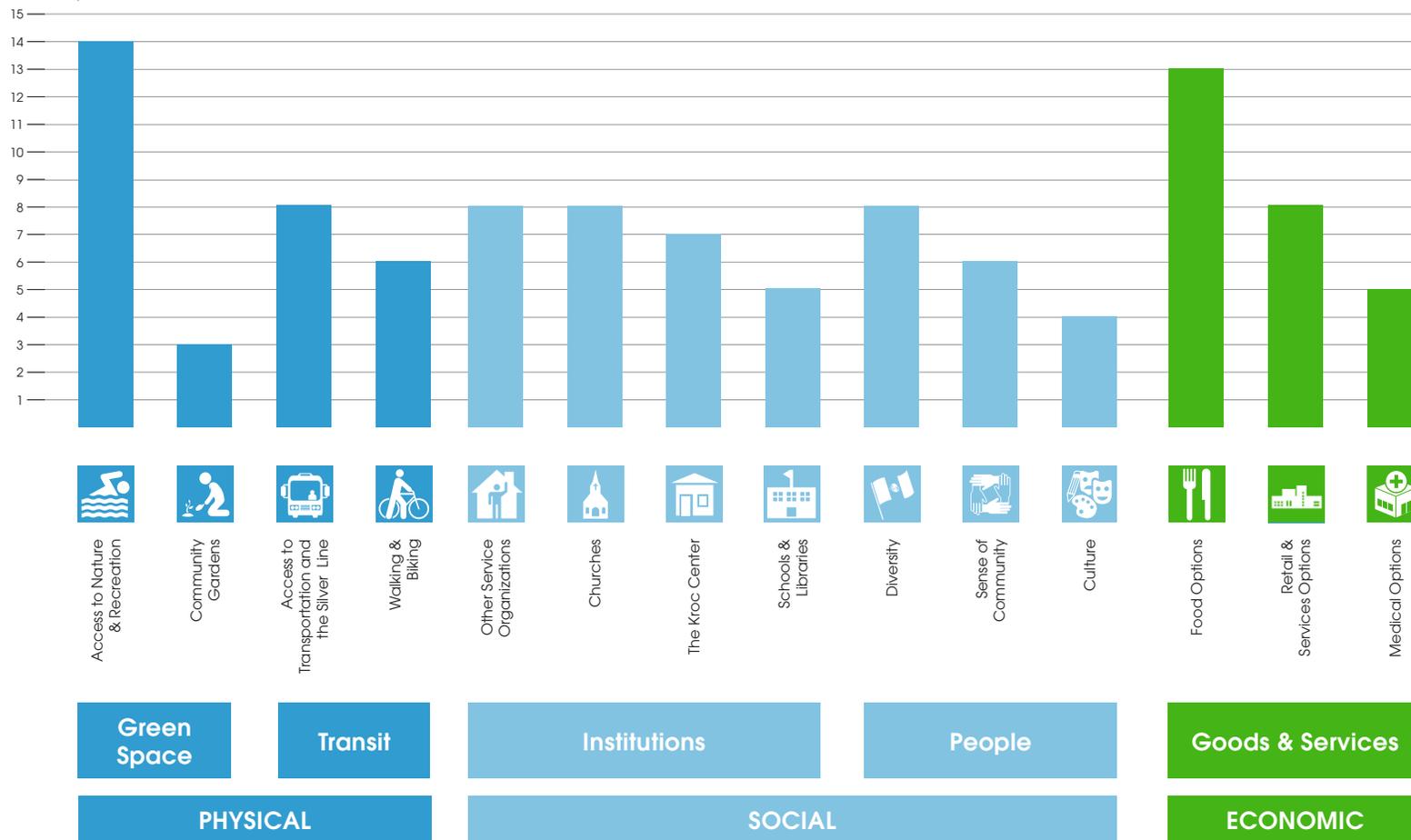
The most significant takeaways included an appreciation among residents for some of the high quality facilities in the neighborhood such as the Salvation Army Kroc Center and recognition of the need for growth and adaptation on South Division.



Community Assets: Physical, Social, Economic

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN | SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN

At Community Meeting 1, neighborhood residents and stakeholders identified physical, social, and economic assets that currently exist in the community. The bars indicate the number of individuals that identified a particular asset.

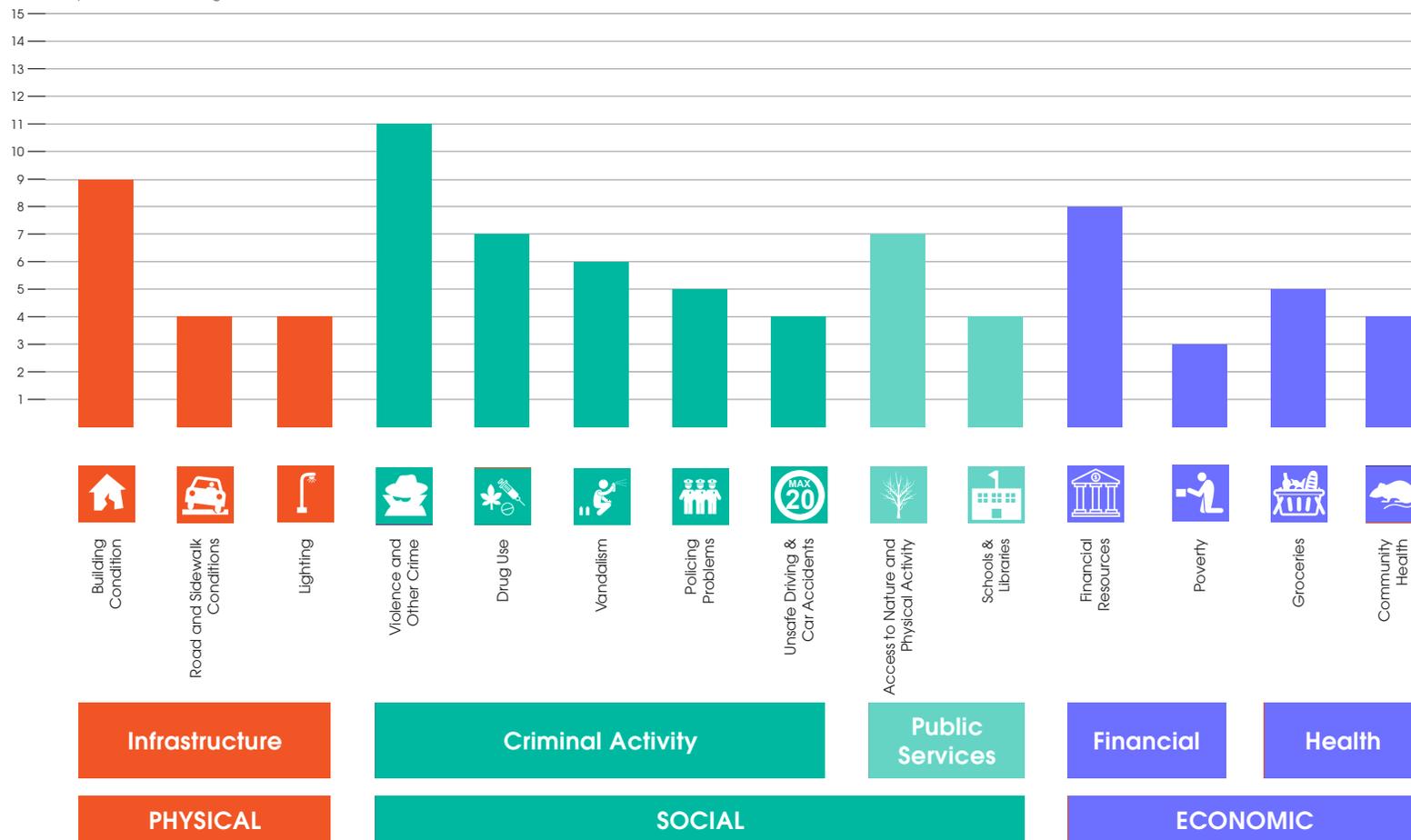




Community Challenges: Physical, Social, Economic

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN | SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN

At Community Meeting 1, neighborhood residents and stakeholders identified physical, social and economic challenges that currently exist in the community. The bars indicate the number of tables that identified a particular challenge.



VISIONING PHASE

Neighborhood Open House

The Neighborhood Open House event was held on September 19, 2018 in the newly opened South Division Pop-Up HQ. The evening was organized in an open format so residents could come and go anytime during the event. The newly completed informational big boards were on display, encouraging residents to read and learn about the planning effort at their own pace. Complimentary food and refreshments were provided.

The Planning Team designed the Open House to be a “lite” community meeting in that it was structured to solicit comments on work that had been completed to date. The evening increased awareness of the planning effort and gave residents a chance to form new connections with the Steering Committee, Planning Team and other Open House attendees.

Business Breakfast Mixer

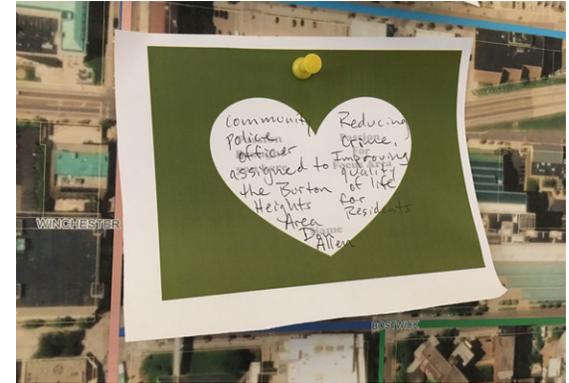
The Breakfast Mixer provided an opportunity for business owners to meet and network with fellow owners while also including the ability to learn about the ongoing planning process including the Retail Market Study. Members of the Planning Team and the Community Ambassadors were present to facilitate the event, which was held in the Pop-Up HQ. Market consultant, SB Friedman, informed business owners on the findings of the newest version of the market study, encouraging business owners to stay up to date with the direction of the Plan and to participate in the process.

Community Meeting 2

On Wednesday October 17, 2018, the Planning Team hosted residents of the South Division Corridor area neighborhoods to discuss the future of the community. This meeting had a large group of residents who were divided into six groups of 5-10 people each. Together, they completed a visioning activity that encouraged them to provide ideas on how several “focus areas” of the Corridor could be improved. Photo posters were created to give residents an opportunity to provide feedback on the six focus areas defined by the Steering Committee:

- » Division & Wealthy
- » Division & Campau Park
- » Division & Hall
- » Division & Cottage Grove
- » Division & Burton
- » Division & Plaster Creek

The posters included maps, aerial and street views and offered examples of improvements that could potentially take place in each focus area. For example, multiple people indicated that a new grocery store would be a major asset to residents of the area around Division and Wealthy Street at the north end of the corridor. Groups wrote comments on each poster to voice any other ideas that they might have for the focus areas. Each group of residents gave substantial feedback and offered high quality insight into their neighborhood and how it could potentially change and grow. The outcomes of





Community Meeting 2 informed the Focus Area Plans that make up an important element of this document.

Youth Engagement Meeting 1

Often times young people are left out of the planning process, but the Planning Team considered the perspectives of youth as valuable as those of adults since they are, in many ways, the future of their neighborhood. Children and teenagers typically offer a unique perspective on their community because they experience it in different ways. Young people are often thinking about their future, where they would like to go to college and where they would like to live after they graduate. The youth of the Corridor will need to be retained as residents for the long-term health of the community, so the opportunity to engage with them is invaluable.

The first Youth Engagement Meeting was held on October 17, 2018 at the Seidmen Boys & Girls Club of Grand Rapids. There were 17 youth attendees and they utilized live keypad polling to give their opinions on a number of issues related to the neighborhood. 47% of participants indicated that they bike or skate to get around. 24% felt fairly or very unsafe in the neighborhood, 44% cited stray animals as the biggest social challenge.

Youth Engagement Meeting 2

The second youth engagement event was held on April 29, 2019 at Buchanan Elementary School. The event was attended by 32 fifth graders who shared with the Planning Team what they thought makes a successful community, through the exploration of all five senses. The Planning Team then asked the children to draw a picture of their experience on South Division today and then 10-20 years in the future.

Many children drew homes or streetscapes with litter, broken windows and dilapidated homes in the current conditions drawing. Several also discussed and drew pictures of traffic and cars. To illustrate the future, many of the participants drew fixed up homes, clean streets, recycling systems, new sidewalks, flowers and safer streets. One child drew a picture of “free homes for newcomers” and there was an understanding by the 5th graders that new residents are always coming into the city and often, their classrooms. They discussed their classmate from Uganda who speaks little English and it was apparent the impact she had on the children. One particularly inspiring student drew a picture of himself walking to a store today and for the future depicted himself as an older man, owning the business.

Youth Engagement Meeting 3

On Saturday, May 22, 2019, Community Ambassadors Carol Nash and Sifa Grace set up a Corridor Plan booth at the Kids Fun in Parks Day. The Ambassadors engaged youth through fun games and prizes to share information with kids and parents alike about the Corridor Plan. Smaller meetings such as this have been effective in promoting the Plan and engaging more people in conversation who would typically not attend formal meetings.

Working Group Meeting 1

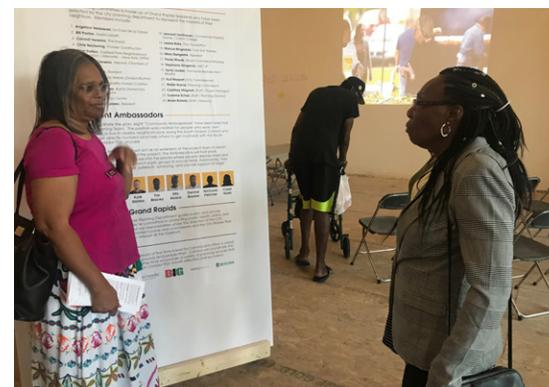
The Working Group program involved a series of meetings with representatives from a number of local organizations that have a connection with the South Division Corridor and Grand Rapids as a whole. The goal of the program was to create productive discourse that went a step beyond that of a community meeting. With Meaningful Engagement at its core, the Planning Team structured the meetings around the other five planning principles – 1) Development Without Displacement; 2) Economic Opportunity; 3) Health, Environment and Quality of life; 4) Transportation; and 5) Community Identity. The first Working Group meeting was held on the afternoon of November 6, 2018 in the South Division Pop-Up space. After an introductory presentation, attendees broke into small groups. The primary goal of the first meeting was to identify the core desired outcomes of the Plan as well as potential measures of success. The outcomes identified by each group were to be related to each group's assigned principle. The

meeting laid the groundwork for the subsequent Working Group meetings where members would identify and detail specific projects that would help accomplish the priority outcomes.

Working Group Meeting 2

The second Working Group meeting took place on November 28, 2018 at the South Division Pop-Up Headquarters. The main goal of the meeting was to begin to identify projects and action items to achieve the priority outcomes identified in the first Working Group meeting. The Planning Team shared a variety of case studies that provided a point of reference for their Working Group project ideas.

The meeting resulted in eight to ten project ideas for each planning principle that were general in scope but offered a direction that could be refined in subsequent stages of the planning process.





CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Community Meeting 3

With the information gathered during the learning and visioning phases, the Planning Team created several plan concepts for the focus areas that were presented to residents in Community Meeting 3. The Meeting was held on the evening of February 5, 2019 at the South Division Pop-Up Headquarters.

While the second community meeting was designed to give residents an opportunity to envision the future of the South Division Corridor, Community Meeting 3 was heavily focused on obtaining feedback from residents on the Draft Focus Area Plans and the Priority Projects identified by the Working Groups. Attendees were encouraged to leave written comments on the Focus Area Plans and to discuss their thoughts on the Plans with Planning Team members. Posters with the working group project ideas were positioned around the room and worksheets were handed out so attendees could vote on their favored project ideas. After the meeting, the votes were tabulated by the Project Team and the top three projects in each category were selected for the Working Group members to refine.

Working Group Meeting 3

The third Working Group meeting was organized so participants could work out the details of the three Priority Projects voted on by residents at

Community Meeting 3. The meeting was held on February 6, 2019 at The City of Grand Rapids Planning Department office. Over the course of two days, the Planning Team facilitated rigorous meetings with the Working Groups, to identify key details, potential partners and a timeline for implementation. By working through the projects one item at a time, the Working Groups were able to have productive conversations that covered everything from possible methods of physical corridor improvement to strategies for courting a minority-owned bank or financial institution. The Priority Project outcomes were substantive and would go on to form an important piece of the Plan.

Final Working Group Meeting

The fourth and final working group meeting was held on May 8, 2019 at the Pop-Up Headquarters. The Planning Team presented an updated draft of the Priority Projects based on the content the Working Groups had generated in the third meeting. In this meeting, participants worked together as a larger group to critique and refine the projects. This format served the dual focus of updating all of the Working Group members on the latest versions of the Priority Projects, while giving the Planning Team a chance to receive feedback from everyone and fill any gaps that may have been missed. After the meeting, the project sheets were updated and then integrated into the first draft of the Plan.

Community Meeting 4

Community Meeting 4 was held on Wednesday, June 12, 2019 and previewed the South Division Corridor Plan to the community. There were approximately 50 attendees, including several first-time participants. After a brief presentation, an open house format was used so that attendees could consider key elements of the Draft Plan. In reviewing the 15 Priority Projects, each participant received \$10,000 in “Division Bucks” to fund their favorite project ideas. The top five projects identified have been designated as Community-supported Catalyst Projects in the Plan.

EARLY ACTION PROJECTS

“Early Action Projects” are often referred to as “planning while doing” because they allow a community to invest in tangible initiatives before the planning process is concluded. A key element of the South Division Corridor Plan approach was the development of community-focused Early Action Projects to create momentum for the larger plan initiatives and strategies.

The South Division Corridor Planning Team chose to focus Early Action Projects around large community events that gave people an opportunity to build connections, learn about their community and learn about the Plan. Additionally, the events gave Corridor businesses and organizations a platform to connect with local residents and stakeholders. The Community Ambassadors organized and led projects which included the Taste on Division restaurant event, the South Division Comeback Fashion Show event featuring local clothing designers, and a College Discussion evening that gave local teens an opportunity to learn about colleges and universities in Western Michigan and speak with admissions staff. Additional projects include the signage and wayfinding program and capacity building in the formation of the Epic Community Development Corporation.

College Discussion Open House

On Wednesday, April 17, 2019, at the Pop-Up Headquarters, the Project Team invited multiple Western Michigan Colleges and Universities to give local youth an opportunity to understand





FEATURED EARLY ACTION PROJECT: TASTE ON DIVISION

Taste on Division was held at the Pop-Up Headquarters on Wednesday, October 31, 2018 (Halloween). The event drew more than 300 people. The Community Ambassadors worked for months to assemble the nine participating restaurants and get the word out about the event. Families on trick-or-treating routes stopped by the Pop-Up HQ in costume. Attendees sampled food from the corridor restaurants and mingled with each other, the Planning Team and area stakeholders. The Visioning Survey was being conducted in the fall of 2018 so the team made copies available to residents. The event illustrated wide range of unique food offerings available on the corridor.

some of the options available to them after they graduate high school. Attending institutions included Kuyper College, Albion College, Calvin College, Ferris State University, Cornerstone University, Grand Rapids Community College, Western Michigan University, Grand Valley State University and the University of Michigan, as well as representatives from West Michigan Center for Arts & Technology (WMCAT), Literacy Center of West Michigan and Grand Rapids Public Schools. The event created a comfortable and intentional environment for adults and students to learn about educational opportunities that are available to them as they take the next step in their lives.

Signage and Wayfinding Strategy

In the fall of 2018, as part of the Cities of Tomorrow pilot program, the Planning Team outlined a strategy for a trial wayfinding system for the South Division Corridor. The system is designed to be simple, but to also break down barriers to navigation and increase connections in the community.

The system will rely heavily on symbols and icons that can be understood by users of all backgrounds along with mapping and digital applications that can be translated to multiple languages and regularly updated with new information. In addition, the signage will:

- » Act as a gateway for individual neighborhood areas along the corridor.
- » Emphasize and promote the bus system

and the Silver Line in particular.

- » Highlight the history of different locations along the corridor.
- » Unify the branding of the corridor to further position South Division as a destination for the region and beyond.
- » Identify where nearby public and private amenities, such as parks and businesses, are located.
- » Be bilingual to allow members of both the English and Spanish speaking communities to benefit from the program.
- » Integrate technology that involves connecting a digital interface with scannable QR codes or simple website direct that would offer pertinent information.
- » Be designed so that it could potentially be adapted as a model for other neighborhoods in Grand Rapids.

Creation of Economic Partnerships Initiatives Coalition (EPIC)

A group of Steering Committee members, Community Ambassadors and other concerned citizens began meeting during the Plan process to focus on their vision to help drive equity and advance home and business ownership for black constituents. This discussion has evolved into the creation of a new 501(c)(3) not-for-profit that can



**FEATURED EARLY ACTION PROJECT:
THE SOUTH DIVISION “COMEBACK” FASHION SHOW**

The second large Early Action event was held on Saturday, March 30, 2019 at The Salvation Army Kroc Center in the South Division & Plaster Creek Focus Area. The Community Ambassadors made the decision to title the event the “Comeback” Fashion Show because it celebrated the rich cultural tradition in the Corridor and showcased the bright future that lay ahead. They wanted to highlight the history, present and the future potential of South Division, while giving local garment designers an opportunity to showcase

their work. Six local retailers participated in the event along with multiple musical performers.

The Community Ambassadors reached out to all of the participating retailers, contacted the models and conducted a comprehensive advertising campaign that included appearances on local TV and Radio talk shows. The event sold more than 200 tickets and created positive momentum for the forthcoming planning initiatives.



bring a strategic focus to equity, engagement and intentionally inclusive economic development, all leading to improved quality of life outcomes in the South Division Corridor communities. EPIC is now in position to act as a key partner in implementation of the South Division Corridor Plan. For more information on this coalition and its mission, please see the Implementation chapter.

Burton Heights Business Association Revitalization

The Burton Heights Business Association was formed in the early 2000s to represent business owners within the district. The Association eventually tapered off due to a lack of participating businesses and the loss of support resources. When the South Division Corridor Plan effort began, a handful of business owners were once again meeting informally to discuss development plans for the area. Through efforts of key Steering Committee members, Community Ambassador events and the work of the South Division Grandville CID this group of interested businesses has grown and momentum is building to reinvigorate the Burton Heights Business Association as a formal entity. Next steps include establishing a regular meeting schedule, updating bylaws and preparing to take on an active role in connecting businesses to the projects and resources needed for equitable economic development.

Beyond Burton Heights, there has also been discussion of creation of a Business Association for the northern portion of the Corridor. This effort has not formally kicked off, although it is

anticipated the CIDs, EPIC or other organizations could partner to assist in support of this work. Many events of the Corridor Plan have been oriented towards business support, beginning with the Business Breakfast Mixer. Taste on South Division and the South Division “Comeback” Fashion Show were also intended as ways to promote businesses along the corridor, while demonstrating to business owners the values of collective marketing and coordination.

To cement these concepts and begin implementation of Economic Opportunity goals identified through the process, the Ambassador team hosted an event entitled “From Vision to Reality: Foundations for A Business Network in South Division Event” on May 30, 2019. This event brought together business owners and business support resources for a shared discussion around the creation of a plan for the growth of businesses in South Division. Participating organizations shared helpful information and resources and also engaged businesses on focused discussions regarding their specific needs and goals. The event was intended to lay the foundation for the creation of spaces that allow frequent interaction among different business owners and organizations in the area.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT IN IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation Strategy outlined in the Plan builds directly off of these public participation, leadership and capacity building efforts to establish an organizational structure that will be responsible for long-term action and advocacy. This Strategy recognizes that following Plan adoption, changes will not happen overnight and a sustained effort will be needed to make progress. The City is dedicated to providing resources and building local partnerships to implement the Plan. In order to ensure that Meaningful Engagement continues moving forward, the Plan recommends the identification or establishment of a local entity that will act as the Implementation Lead, working in close collaboration with the City. The mission of this entity will be to support sustainable growth in the South Division area through strategic investments in housing, infrastructure, education/workforce development, economic development, multimodal transportation, social services, health programs, recreation, environment and public safety.





03.

Community Identity

This Chapter provides a description of how the South Division Corridor Plan intends to address issues of neighborhood perception and how the neighborhood will maintain its unique identity in the future. This includes:

- An overview of the **existing conditions and residential demographics** of the South Division neighborhoods
- A **vision and set of objectives** to foster Community Identity
- A short explanation of the **Priority Projects** that will help carry out the goals of the plan
- **Case Studies** explaining relevant projects in Grand Rapids and beyond

OVERVIEW

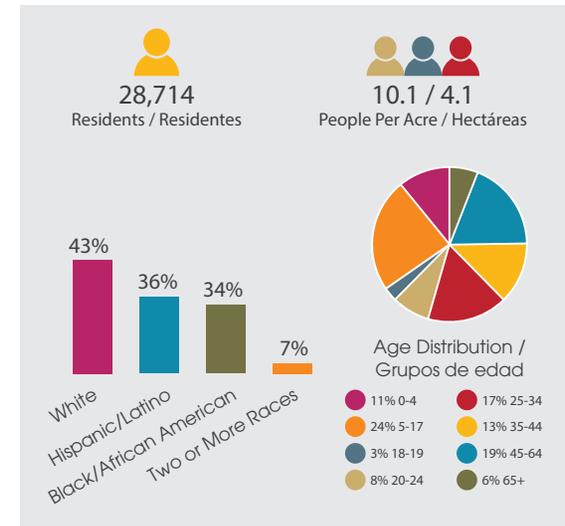
The South Division Corridor has long suffered from a poor identity. Ask any long-time Grand Rapids resident about South Division Avenue and invariably you will find a negative response that includes crime, ethnic conflicts, blight and other perceived or real concerns.

Building and preserving community identity means the Plan must take steps so that the community does not lose its core positive characteristics after implementation. The Project Team will continue to work to maintain South Division's status as a tight-knit, well-connected, cultural destination for generations to come.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Population

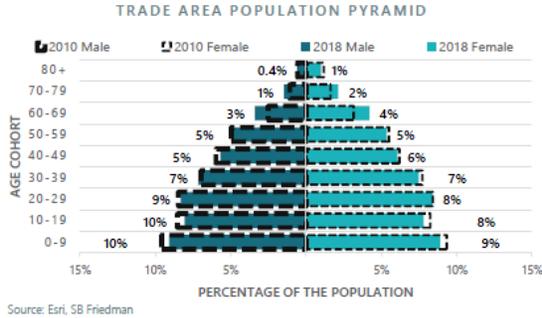
According to the 2016 American Community Survey (ACS), the nine census tracts of the South Division Corridor were home to approximately 28,714 residents and 9,758 households. Between 2000 and 2010 the population of the South Division Corridor declined by approximately 4.9%. However, between 2010 and 2016 the population increased by approximately 2%, suggesting the population of the Corridor neighborhoods has bottomed out and is beginning to increase again. The South Division Corridor is densely populated with 10.1 people per acre, compared with Grand Rapids' overall population density of 4.1 people per acre. Over the next 5 years, the population is expected to increase by approximately 4.5%. This anticipated population growth represents an opportunity to support economic activity within



HISTORY AND CULTURE

Prior to the advent of the interstate highway system, Division Avenue was a main route for anyone traveling into the heart of Grand Rapids. As a result, businesses flourished, new homes were built just off the main road and tight-knit neighborhoods were created. However, once US 131 was constructed, Division Avenue was no longer the principal or preferred route. With the rise of highways and automobiles, many retailers moved to suburban mall locations and no longer preferred local urban neighborhoods. In recent decades, retail evolved to national chains and eventually to online stores. Once thriving businesses began to suffer, home values dropped and disinvestment was rife, particularly in areas north of 28th Street, outside the thriving suburban communities of Kentwood and Wyoming. This decline continued through the 1970s until early in this century. In the early 1980's, the City officials of Grand Rapids undertook eminent domain along the South Division corridor on several streets between Wealthy and Franklin causing displacement and the loss of legacy for many African Americans, including both businesses and homeowners. Eminent domain was utilized to assist a single company, currently utilizing less than half of the land obtained, in establishing a location within the corridor and is a symbol of the inequities that have affected many local residents. Today, though, there are signs of progress, led by the neighborhood leaders, institutions and businesses that have a huge stake in seeing the South Division come alive again. While there is hope, there are areas where much work is still needed.





the Corridor (Esri, US Census Bureau, ACS). In 2016, Grand Rapids was home to 196,445 people and 79,719 households. Between 2000 and 2010 the City's population experienced a population drop of approximately 4.8%, mirroring that of the South Division Corridor (4.9%). The city rebounded between 2010 and 2016, growing 4.4%, a growth rate double that of the South Division Corridor. This suggests that the South Division neighborhoods have not been sharing in the post-recession growth that the rest of the City has been experiencing (US Census Bureau, 2016 ACS).

Population by Age

The population of the South Division Corridor skews young with a median age of 29.7. Approximately 50% of the population is under the age of 30. In many ways this is a good sign for the future of the Corridor, but it is critical that the community takes steps to retain these younger residents.

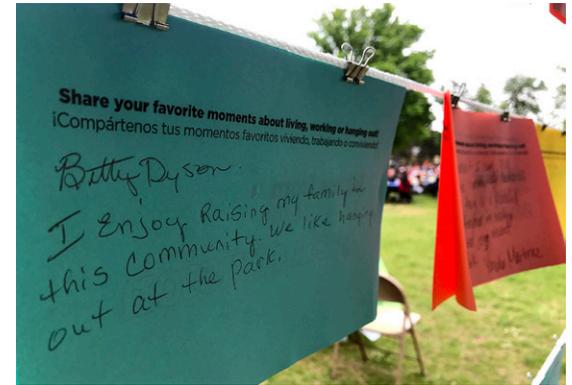
Population by Race

The planning area is one of the most diverse in Grand Rapids with a majority of residents identifying themselves as a minority. The area breaks down with 36% identifying as Hispanic/Latin(x), 34% as Black/African American, 7% as two or more races and 43% identifying as White. In contrast, the city of Grand Rapids is majority white with 68% identifying as such, 20% identify as Black/African American, 15.6% as Hispanic/Latin(x) and 4.7% as two or more races.

Unique Features and Favorite Places

When asked what makes South Division unique, attendees at the Community Kickoff Meeting cited the following:

- » Diversity of People
- » Diversity of Businesses
- » Old and New
- » Multiple Types
- » Variety of Food Options
- » International
- » Bodegas and Taquerias
- » Beautiful Buildings
- » Safe
- » Center of Community Activity
- » Schools







When asked what their favorite place in the community is, Community Kickoff Meeting respondents identified the following places:

- » Garfield Park
- » Plaster Creek
- » Markets
- » School
- » Church
- » Library
- » YMCA
- » Kroc Center

Community Connections

When asked how often and how do you meet with your neighbors and what do you do, Community Kickoff Meeting attendees cited the following elements:

- » Regularly
- » During Walks
- » Bike Rides
- » Visiting the Park
- » Story Time in the Park
- » Playing Sports Like Soccer
- » Block Parties
- » Backyard Parties and Cookouts
- » While Playing with Dogs
- » At Church
- » Kroc Playground
- » Holiday Parties and Events

VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The following Value Statement, Desired Outcomes and Priority Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement, led by the Community Identity Working Group and filtered through larger community meetings and the South Division Steering Committee.

VALUE STATEMENT

Celebrate individual community character, cultural diversity and values while cultivating a sense of unity and shared identity within the South Division community.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- » The community instills great pride among local residents.
- » Diverse groups come together to improve the larger neighborhood through proactive actions.
- » Schools and churches are leveraged as community hubs and continue to provide important programs to local families.
- » New programs, events and activities are provided by local partners, geared towards all ages and races.
- » The buildings of the South Division Corridor are attractively designed with transparent windows, good lighting and attractive signage, free of vandalism and graffiti. Neighborhood gateways, signage and public art make the community more inviting and attractive.



Secondary Outcomes

Secondary outcomes include ensuring that the community has an up-and-coming impression to regional residents and that history is researched, documented and promoted as a way to enhance community identity. In addition, the Four Star Theater is renovated and established as a focal point for the community and the restaurants of South Division are recognized by residents of the entire region in offering unique and diverse fare. There is no longer a culture of fear within the local immigrant population.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

The following Priority Projects are intended to be led by the City and other community partners to help promote progress. These projects vary widely in size and scope but all are strategic in their purpose to effect positive change. The Plan recommends that the community consider three projects as the highest priorities for the Community Identity implementation agenda. The Priority Projects were designed and specifically selected as catalysts for creating positive activity through interconnection of new services and uses for the South Division Corridor and surrounding community. These are projects that have the potential to stimulate the revitalization of the area and trigger positive momentum for quality improvements and renewal. The Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement and prioritized through voting from community members, the Steering Committee and the Community Identity Working Group. The following pages include detailed descriptions of the Priority Projects:

- » **Develop A Storefront Improvement Program**
- » **Develop And Support A Variety Of Community Events**
- » **Develop A Streetscape Improvement Program**



PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Develop a storefront improvement program that focuses on both façade improvements for new and existing businesses and window programs and other efforts to mitigate the appearance of vacant storefronts.

- Ensure new storefronts have adequate ratios of glass and hard surface to ensure safety, decrease loitering and improve interactions between businesses and pedestrians
- Capitalize on the existing City of Grand Rapids Environmental Design Initiative to improve crime prevention along the South Division Corridor
- Utilize murals and green walls to improve large, unattractive facades where appropriate
- Emphasize the preservation of historic buildings and facades where appropriate

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Kendall School of Art and Design
- Kroc Center
- AMR Ambulance Service
- Home Improvement Services
- CIDs
- McDonald’s Corporate Office - to sponsor a program
- Green Infrastructure experts such as David Yocca of Bio-Habitats
- Family Outreach Center
- GR Baking Company
- South Division property owners that could benefit and assist with improvements
- City of Grand Rapids code enforcement
- Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts
- ArtPrize
- Exalta Health
- City of Grand Rapids Economic Development and

Community Development Departments

- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - › Identify all potential storefronts that are in district
 - › Develop specifications for improvement. Examples include identifying specific materials, architectural elements, and awning types for facades to utilize
 - › Hold “Pop-up” events in vacant storefronts to create momentum for improvement and activate underutilized spaces
 - › In addition to facade development, improve current signage regulations to encourage more attractive signage, specifying standards
 - › Commit to at least one large community art project every year
 - › Use historic photos and resources to show potential of storefronts that could be restored to their original architectural quality
 - › Establish small grant program to assist business owners in improvements, researching similar programs and templates
 - › Utilize money the City is currently looking to spend in the 1st Ward for improvements
 - › Connect improvement programs to community events such as clean-ups and painting days
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - › Develop a community-based mural program along South Division. Consider working with organizations such as Kendall College to bring expertise and assist residents in mural development
 - › Enumerate basic improvements with a price range for each
 - › Develop a Facade Improvement Program with a special emphasis on the preservation of historical

building frontages

- › Invest in planters and other forms of greenery along the street to complement facade improvements and visually unify neighborhood areas along the corridor

- **Long-term (3+ years)**

- › Continue to pursue improvements that begin within the first 3 years

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Small grant programs, \$1,000-\$5,000
- City of Grand Rapids
- CIDs
- Home-improvement, hardware and landscape stores (paint donation, etc.)

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED

THE WORKING GROUPS:

- The community instills great pride among local residents.
- Diverse groups come together to improve the larger neighborhood through proactive actions.
- Schools and places of worship are leveraged as community hubs and continue to provide important programs to local families.
- New programs, events and activities are provided by local partners, geared towards all ages and races.
- The buildings of the South Division Corridor are attractively designed with transparent windows, good lighting, and attractive signage, free of vandalism and graffiti. Neighborhood gateways, signage and public art make the community more inviting and attractive.





INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

The Southtown Corridor Improvement District (CID) has developed a draft Façade Improvement Program that will apply to properties north of Hall Street, but can also serve as a model for the entire length of the Corridor. Once finalized, the Plan recommends that the South Division / Grandville Corridor Improvement District (CID) mirror this program to provide coverage and consistency along the entire Corridor.

The Draft Southtown Façade Improvement Program was created by the Southtown CID Business Development Committee along with the Corridor Manager. During the budgeting process for Fiscal Year 2020, the Southtown Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) Board allocated \$100,000 to the Façade Improvement Program.

More information can be found at the following link: https://grandrapidscitymi.iqm2.com/Citizens/Detail_Legifile.

FUNDING

Approved projects are eligible for reimbursement of up to 50 percent of project costs for eligible project elements (i.e. upgrades or alterations to building exteriors), up to \$10,000. Funding is provided on a competitive basis.

EVALUATION

Any building located in the South Division/ Grandville Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) boundary is eligible for the South Division/ Grandville CIA Business Façade Improvement Program. Submitted applications will be evaluated to determine their ability to advance the goals of the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Development Plan, with a specific focus on commercial buildings. The South Division/

Grandville CIA will fund project elements and enhancements in addition to what is required by the City of Grand Rapids, and which are deemed to be privately owned. Applications will be reviewed by the Façade Committee appointed by the South Division/Grandville CIA board. The Façade Committee will recommend projects to the board for approval. On an annual basis, the South Division/Grandville CIA Board will review the Program Guidelines to determine if changes are required to meet the ever-evolving needs of South Division/Grandville.

REQUIREMENTS

- Property must be located within the Southtown CIA boundary.
- Property must contain an active commercial business or be undergoing renovations for the opening of a business within six months.
- Applicants must be current on City of Grand Rapids taxes and must not owe other City fees prior to filing an application.

ELIGIBILITY

- The installation of a new façade.
- Major enhancement to an existing façade.
- Business owners leasing space can apply with written permission from the property owner; Property should not be targeted for redevelopment.
- General maintenance and upkeep of existing exterior is NOT included in this program.

PROGRAM PROCESS

- Submit application with required attachments
- CIA Façade Improvement Committee reviews application to confirm project eligibility and

make recommendations to the board.

- Agreement executed following CIA Board approval.
- Project completed.
- Itemized receipts and proof of payment provided by applicant to Corridor Manager.
- Façade Improvement committee presents update to CIA Board at regular monthly meeting.
- Reimbursement issued.

Applications will be reviewed monthly by the Façade Improvement Committee. Funding is provided on a competitive, first come, first served basis based on the CIA fiscal year and program budget. Approved projects are eligible for reimbursement of up to 50 percent of project costs for eligible project elements (i.e. upgrades or alterations to building exteriors) up to \$10,000.





DEVELOP AND SUPPORT A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY EVENTS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Develop and support a variety of community events that emphasize diversity and appeal to all ages.

- Encourage coordinated development and promotion in a way that enhances overall community identity and recognition beyond the individual event
- Examples of possible events could include: Multicultural Fairs, a Business Expo/Celebration, Career Days, a 5K Walk/Run, Youth Sports Tournaments, Community Sales, Walking Tours, Community Clean-Up Events, Police Relations Events, a Speaker Series, etc.
- Diversity of both event types and attendees should emphasize unity and togetherness.
- Potential events should be connected to new and existing spaces in the community such as area theaters, parks and an African American History Museum
- Connect events to schools and places of worship when possible

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Successful and famous current or former residents
- Schools, Places of Worship
- Garfield Park Neighborhood Association
- City of Grand Rapids
- City of Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Department
- Kroc Center
- Boys & Girls Club
- Grand Rapids Public Schools (GRPS)
- LINC UP
- Community Ambassadors
- Hispanic Center
- The Grand Rapids Drive
- Large employers already in the corridor
- Experience Grand Rapids

- Grand Rapids Community College
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Grand Valley State University
- Kendall College
- Grand Rapids Symphony
- Epic CDC
- 4 Star Theater!
- Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- ArtPrize

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - Continue existing successful event programming
 - Study events that have already taken place to determine what will be successful in the future
 - Develop at least 1-2 large events per year as a starting point
 - Reach out to potential media partners such as the Grand Rapids Times and local news organizations to promote potential events
 - Connect to existing city-wide events and leverage them to attract attendees to future events
 - Develop a "special asking strategy" to ensure there is funding for priority events from major partners
 - Formulate a robust finance strategy to create event budgets and form fundraising models
- Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - Investigate and develop a "festival season" to build upon existing seasonal events
- Long-term (3+ years)**
 - Continue to develop programming to maintain viability and success of future events

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Large employers already in the corridor that could potentially sponsor events

- Philanthropic and advocacy organizations such as The Urban League, NAACP, The Kellogg Foundation and others
- The South Division Community Ambassadors who have already developed multiple community events such as Taste of South Division and a Fashion Show

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- The community instills great pride among local residents.
- Diverse groups come together to improve the larger neighborhood through proactive actions.
- Schools and places of worship are leveraged as community hubs and continue to provide important programs to local families.
- New programs, events and activities are provided by local partners, geared towards all ages and races.
- The buildings of the South Division Corridor are attractively designed with transparent windows, good lighting, and attractive signage, free of vandalism and graffiti. Neighborhood gateways, signage and public art make the community more inviting and attractive.



COMMUNITY IDENTITY





DEVELOP AND SUPPORT A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY EVENTS

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Recognizing that South Division is a colorful, vibrant and diverse community, the Plan recommends that the implementation team foster the establishment of multi-generational festivals and community gatherings to promote the neighborhood and to bring people together.

ASSESSMENT OF RECENT EVENTS

Any new events planned in the Corridor should build directly upon of recent activities including the South Division Corridor Plan Community Kickoff, the Taste on South Division and South Division Comeback Fashion Show to further opportunities to showcase local businesses and talents while bringing people together. Prior to preparing for a new community event or festival, the implementation team should create an assessment of these recent events in order to identify outreach and operational successes, challenges and ways that they could have been improved. This assessment will help to provide data and direction in planning future activities.

SOUTH DIVISION FEST

Holding an annual South Division Fest could help to celebrate the neighborhood while highlighting a variety of cultural and ethnic groups, showcasing local cuisine along with artistic performances of traditional music and dance. By utilizing the strength of arts and culture available in the Corridor, the event could help to foster greater community-building and economic prosperity. Holding a successful community festival requires significant planning and organization. Early in the planning process, it is important to include people who have local connections and can help organize and implement tasks related to the event. A clear goal for the festival should be established in order to effectively promote the event. The festival should also be organized around a specific theme, which should be carried through in the design, decoration, events and activities that will be available. The festival location should have some relation to the type of event that is being planned. A community open space such as Garfield or Campau Park will offer many amenities, such as restrooms and shade trees. In order to comply with local regulations, project leaders should check with City Hall to obtain necessary permits and approvals. Many neighborhood festivals can be put together through donations and do-it-yourself production, along with recruiting local community organizations who may want to help in sponsoring the event.





DEVELOP A STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Develop a streetscape improvement program to address lighting, wayfinding, signage, and transportation improvements, while promoting a neighborhood brand and identity (history, points of interest, etc.).

- Signage should be tied directly to focus areas and emphasize “gateways” to neighborhood areas
- Signage should be multilingual and improvements should reduce barriers to access
- Signage should match the quality of other Grand Rapids neighborhoods such as Eastown
- Lighting should improve the sense of safety along the corridor
- Investments in green infrastructure and street trees should be made to improve the sustainability and quality of life along the South Division Corridor
- Improvements should be aligned with local CID Plans

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- City of Grand Rapids
 - » Department of Forestry
 - » Dept. Of Energy, Lighting and Communications
 - » Mobile GR
 - » Parking Services Department
- The Rapid
- Consumer Energy
- Disability Advocates of Kent County
- The Steering Committee of this planning effort (for History and Culture resources)
- West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC)
- Friends of Grand Rapids Parks
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- West Michigan Center for Arts and Technology (WMCAT)

- Kroc Center
- Local Muralists

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

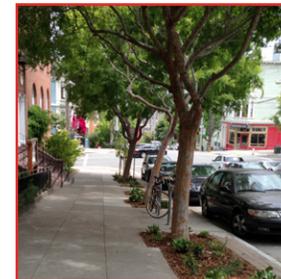
- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Emphasize community through wayfinding, signage, banners and neighborhood gateways
 - » Begin work on new brand identity for South Division
 - » Should include snow removal improvements
 - » Identify locations for tree plantings
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Install lighting improvements
 - » Initiate investment in sidewalk improvements
 - » Invest in green infrastructure improvements
 - » Identify where light improvements should be made
 - » Install public trash cans
 - » Install public art
 - » Improve tree canopy through tree planting programs

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Federal Transit Administration Transit-Oriented Development Grant recently awarded to The Rapid
- CIDs
- City Capital Improvement projects
- Other future grant programs

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- The community instills great pride among local residents.
- Diverse groups come together to improve the larger neighborhood through proactive actions.
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- New programs, events and activities are provided by local partners, geared towards all ages and races.
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COMMUNITY IDENTITY





CASE STUDY: UICA OUTSIDE - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts (UICA) Outside expands the organization's impact city-wide and connects visitors to the vibrant neighborhoods that surround downtown Grand Rapids. Featuring five public projects in three different neighborhoods, UICA Outside draws together diverse artists, property owners and Grand Rapids stakeholders to create artworks that are exciting and accessible to all. Each neighborhood features large-scale works created by artists who reside and engage within their respective community or who have designed artworks with neighborhood input and a focus on representation and expression. These public works activate what were once quiet and overlooked areas into powerful reflections of our neighbors and create

welcoming corridors and gathering places. The dynamic exhibition is an expansion of UICA's current initiative the Exit Space Project, which connects art with public spaces year-round and strengthens UICA's mission to support a creative community.

Source: www.uica.org/exhibitions/uica-outside

SUPPORTING PROJECTS

In addition to the three Priority Projects, several other ideas and actions were discussed by the Working Group and should be considered for medium to long-term implementation. These projects are summarized below:

- » **Create a neighborhood calendar and community directory.** The directory should include key resources such as churches and schools and points of contact for community information. The format could include online, print copy, a physical community information board or combination. Materials should be designed to maximize accessibility to all residents, including translation into multiple languages.
- » **Ensure all residents are represented through an active neighborhood association.** Emphasis should be on residents who are within the previous SECA boundaries or who have never been historically covered by an association.
- » **Support arts programs and public art development within the South Division Corridor.** Specifically, develop a mural development program to highlight community identity, resident history (i.e. wall of fame) and future vision. Encourage program partnership between the Kroc Center, GRPS, ArtPrize and other organizations. Focus on youth engagement, development of local artists and community unification are strongly desired.

- » **Explore opportunities for the development of a new cultural / community center space.** The intent of a cultural center is to serve as a collective point of resources and services for the community and other programming needs identified by residents. Potential options include development of an African American Center (similar to the Hispanic Center), renovation of the Four Star Theatre or other focus/locations to be identified.
- » **Create a youth committee / board to foster understanding of the community and improve youth engagement.** Purposes of the board would include engaging students in planning and design efforts to create a sense of community ownership among youth and their families, provide connections to community service activities that benefit local organizations and residents, and sponsorship of youth engagement activities.
- » **Develop a coordinated marketing program for South Division businesses.** This program should both promote local businesses and market the area to attract new businesses that serve the needs and preferences of the community. Coordinated business activities with community events (i.e. stop and shop, walking tour, etc.) and incentive programs (i.e. resident discount card) should be included.



CASE STUDY: UPTOWN DISTRICT – GRAND RAPIDS, MI

The Uptown commercial district—comprised of East Fulton, East Hills, Eastown and Wealthy St.—has seen an incredible boom in development and popularity since its establishment in 2003. Uptown has its own Business Improvement District (BID) and Corridor Improvement Districts (CID) and is one of the most thriving communities in Grand Rapids. For the past ten years the four business districts of Uptown have been working cooperatively to sustain and support locally owned businesses and commercial properties. In 2013 Uptown business and property owners approved the implementation of a special assessment to help maintain these improvements and to provide additional services that could not be funded by tax-increment financing.

During this time the organization’s main focus was on reversing deterioration in and attracting investment to the neighborhood business districts.

Much of Uptown’s success over the past 10 years is due to the dedication and hard work of nearby neighborhood associations and the residents who work, shop and play there. To build on these relationships and plan for the future, a new nonprofit organization called Uptown Grand Rapids Inc. was created in May 2018.

Source: www.theimageshoppe.com/blog/entry/uptown-guide; www.uptowngr.com/



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04.

Development Without Displacement

This Chapter provides a description of how the South Division Corridor Plan intends to prevent displacement of its lower income residents and business owners and create more opportunities for affordable housing. This includes:

- An overview of the **existing conditions and housing demographics** in the South Division neighborhoods
- A **vision and set of objectives** to foster Development without Displacement
- A short explanation of the **Priority Projects** that will help carry out the goals of the plan
- **Case Studies** explaining relevant projects in Grand Rapids and beyond

OVERVIEW

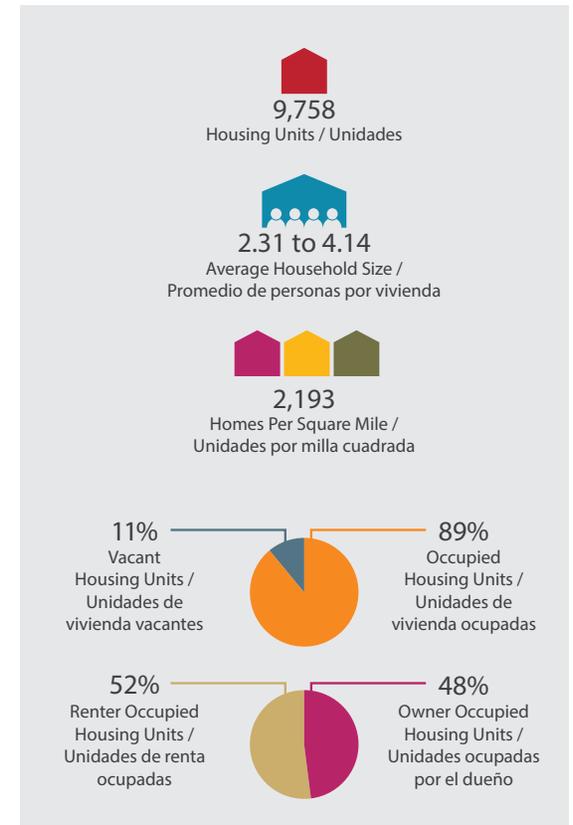
Development without Displacement means ensuring that any future growth that the South Division Corridor experiences will not lead to current residents or businesses being “priced out” or otherwise displaced from the community.

Displacement is defined as the involuntary relocation of existing residents or businesses from their current location. This is a different phenomenon than when property owners voluntarily sell their interests to capture an increase in value. Physical displacement can be the result of eviction, acquisition, rehabilitation or demolition of property or the expiration of covenants on rent- or income-restricted housing. Economic displacement occurs when residents and businesses can no longer afford escalating rents or property taxes. The Plan recognizes that in order to create an economically vibrant environment, a mixture of existing and new businesses should be pursued and sustained.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Housing

There are 9,867 housing units in the corridor compared with 79,785 in the City of Grand Rapids. The South Division Corridor is denser than Grand Rapids as a whole with 2,193 homes per square mile in the corridor census tracts. In comparison, there are 1,761 homes per square mile in the city overall. Even though the Corridor is more densely populated than the city, based on the overall size of the project area there is room to add additional units. In urban environments, population density is one of the strongest indicators of socially and economically





vibrant spaces, so the relative density of the South Division neighborhoods should be an asset to the community as it moves forward. There are multiple vacant and underutilized lots along the corridor that offer opportunities for commercial and residential infill development. These opportunities are addressed in the Focus Area Plans and will be a vital element of proposed transit-oriented developments.



Of the 9,867 homes in the South Division Corridor neighborhoods, 64% are detached single-family units. This is somewhat higher than for Grand Rapids overall with 58% single-family detached units. The single-family homes and significant population density are statistics that would seem to contradict each other, but could be attributed to the age of the housing stock. Approximately 51.8% of the housing in the South Division Corridor neighborhoods was built in 1939 or earlier, compared with 37% of housing in the city as a whole. This 15% difference in quantity of pre-war buildings is not overly significant in terms of the day-to-day experience of residents. However, it is enough to impact the density of the corridor neighborhoods since buildings built before 1939 tend to be smaller and located on more tightly packed lots.

The overall vacancy rate in the South Division Corridor (11%) is marginally higher than in Grand Rapids. Nationally, the residential vacancy rate was approximately 7% in 2016 for rental units and 1.7% for owner occupied units. (While the census data shows a vacancy rate of 11%, the market study published August 2018 for a new

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit development - 1975 Jefferson - showed that of the 226 LIHTC and 92 public housing units in the corridor, there were zero vacant units). Although a higher vacancy rate is often characterized as an impediment to neighborhood quality of life, it is also an opportunity for the neighborhood. The vacant, typically low cost housing units could represent an opportunity to retain and attract new residents to the corridor as the cost of housing rises in other neighborhoods such as nearby Downtown Grand Rapids.

The rate of renter occupied housing is higher in the South Division Corridor at 52%, compared to 46% in the City. In the Corridor neighborhoods, the median gross monthly rent is approximately \$828, which is not far below that of the city which stands at \$854. However, according to the US Census Bureau, Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income (GRAPI) index, approximately 55% of residents pay over 35% of their gross monthly income in rent. This is higher than that of the city which stands at approximately 46%. With more than half of corridor residents paying more than 35% of their monthly income in rent, much of the population of the South Division Corridor struggles with less disposable income than the rest of Grand Rapids and is more vulnerable to economic hardship.

Existing Zoning

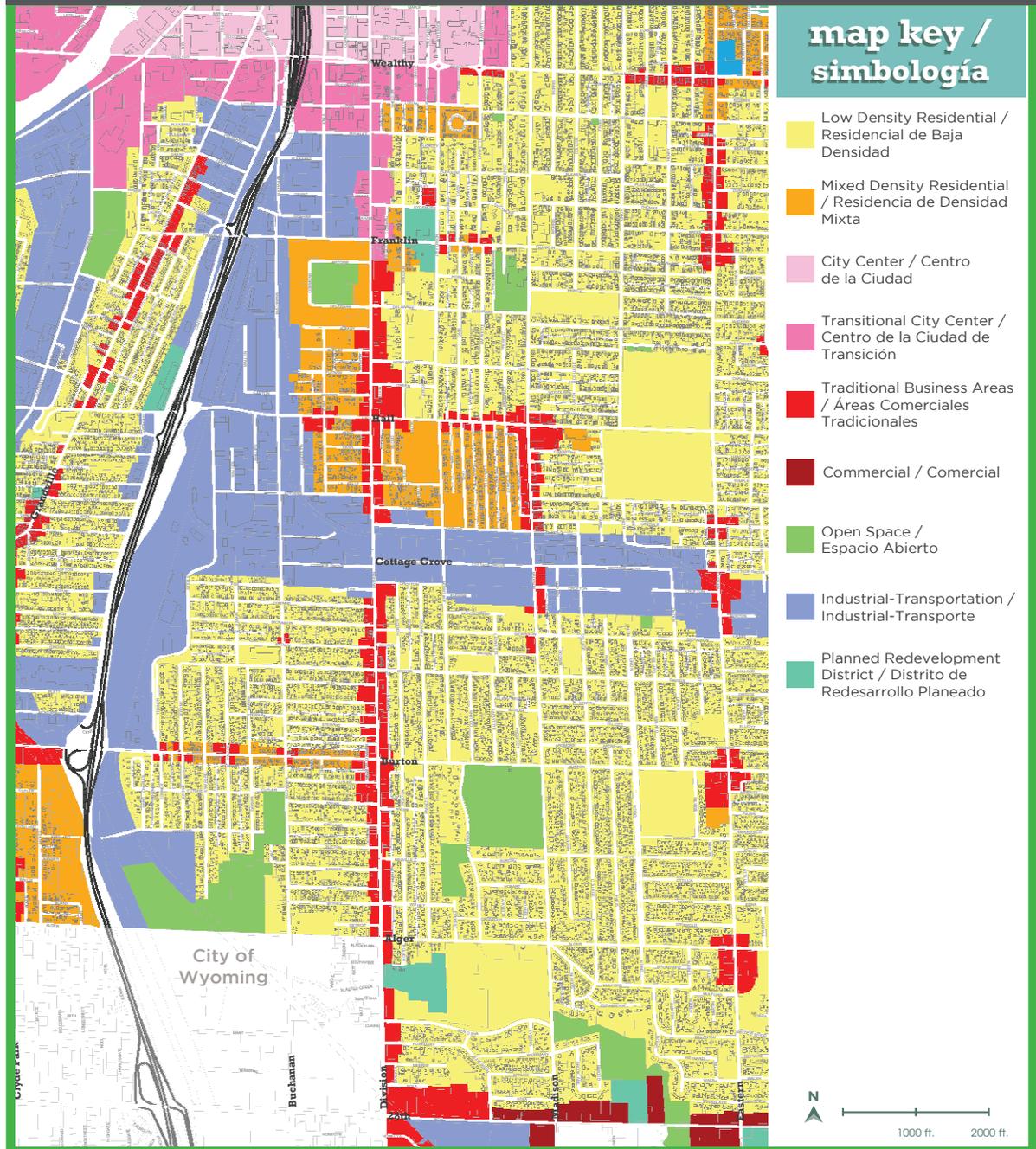
In the South Division Avenue study area, most of the parcels abutting the street frontages are zoned “TN-TBA, Traditional Neighborhood—Traditional Business Area Zone District,” as of the City Zoning Ordinance, last amended on December 18, 2018. The designation is explained in the ordinance as follows:

“The TN-TBA Zone District is designed to reinforce a pedestrian and transit friendly environment in a compact area characterized by a mix of uses. New development on primary and secondary street frontages shall be compatible in use and scale with surrounding, existing uses and structures.”

Additionally, the Corridor planning area is made up of:

- » Traditional City Center (shown in pink in the north end of the corridor)
- » Mixed-Density residential (shown in orange in the center portion of the corridor)
- » Industrial-Transportation (shown in purple in the center portion of the corridor)
- » Low-Density Residential (Shown in yellow along much of the periphery of the study area)

EXISTING ZONING MAP







VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The Corridor Plan seeks to promote development without displacement by taking into account past history and current conditions to meet the needs of marginalized populations and to reduce disparities so that quality of life outcomes such as access to quality education, employment, a healthy environment, affordable housing and transportation, are equitably distributed for the people currently living and working in the neighborhood, as well as for potential new residents.

Displacement and Priorities

Based on a survey conducted by the Planning Team, the top three reasons existing residents may move out of the neighborhood are (n=222):

- » Safety (41%)
- » Unable to purchase a home/get financing (37%)
- » Affordability and increasing costs (35%)

With respect to revitalization of the Corridor, survey respondents prioritized:

- » Maintaining housing affordability (67%)
- » Identifying programs to help people stay in their homes (67%).

While these priorities are key goals driving the South Division planning process, attracting higher-income households will also be integral to retail revitalization. Increasing the number of higher-income households will aid in attracting neighborhood-serving retail desired by current and future residents. It will be critical to implement comprehensive policies that attract new residents and investment to the South

Division Corridor and mitigate displacement due to rising housing costs.

The following Value Statement, Desired Outcomes and Priority Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement, led by the Development Without Displacement Working Group and filtered through larger community meetings and the South Division Steering Committee.

VALUE STATEMENT

Create stable and resilient neighborhoods. Create and maintain healthy, safe and affordable housing for all income levels in the neighborhood. Discourage displacement of viable small businesses that serve community needs. Ensure that new development and investments in the built environment are accessible and welcoming to people regardless of age, physical condition or language.

HOUSING DEFINITIONS

Extremely Low-Income Housing – Generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent to households earning 30% or below the area median income (AMI). For Grand Rapids, this is \$0 – \$20,970 for a three person household.

Very Low-Income Housing – Generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent to households earning between 31% and 50% of the area median income (AMI). For Grand Rapids, this is \$20,970 – \$34,950 for a three person household.

Low-Income Housing - Generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between 51% and 80% of the area median income (AMI). For Grand Rapids, this is \$34,950 – \$55,920 for a three person household.

Workforce Housing - Generally recognized as subsidized housing that is available for rent or purchase to households earning between 80% - 120% AMI. For Grand Rapids, this is \$55,920 – \$83,880 for a three person household.

(Source U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development FY2018 Income Limits)

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- » Assurances that both renters and homeowners can remain in the neighborhood as it improves.
- » Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized property by responsible developers who work holistically with the community.
- » Existing residents can access public funding and other capital to purchase or maintain their homes.
- » Community Land Trusts are established to develop and manage affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces and other assets on behalf of the community.
- » Development of new housing is occurring at all of the income ranges shown to the left, with emphasis on filling extremely-low, very-low and market rate gaps.

Secondary Outcomes

Secondary outcomes include ensuring that residents and stakeholders acknowledge and understand the impacts of past residential patterns including red-lining, white flight, racism and immigration and its effect on neighborhoods along the corridor. Residents and business owners must understand their options before they are approached with opportunities to sell while Fair housing laws are enforced throughout the corridor and the City as a whole. Homeless residents without a living wage can find adequate housing to help them get on their feet and the number of vacant homes are greatly reduced.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY ASSESSMENT

The Planning Team conducted a Housing Affordability Assessment to estimate the number of households in the Corridor that are currently burdened by housing costs. The full Assessment is located in the Appendices. Households were evaluated in aggregate, by housing tenure (renter-or owner-occupied) and by income level. The analysis sourced data from the 2016 5-year American Community Survey and involved the cross-tabulation of multiple data points, including:

- » Number of households
- » Household tenure (renter-or owner-occupied)
- » Household incomes
- » Housing cost estimates
- » Mortgage status

The resulting analysis estimates the number of households that are Cost-Burdened, defined as spending 30-50% of household income on housing costs and Severely Cost-Burdened, defined as spending 50%+ of household income on housing costs.

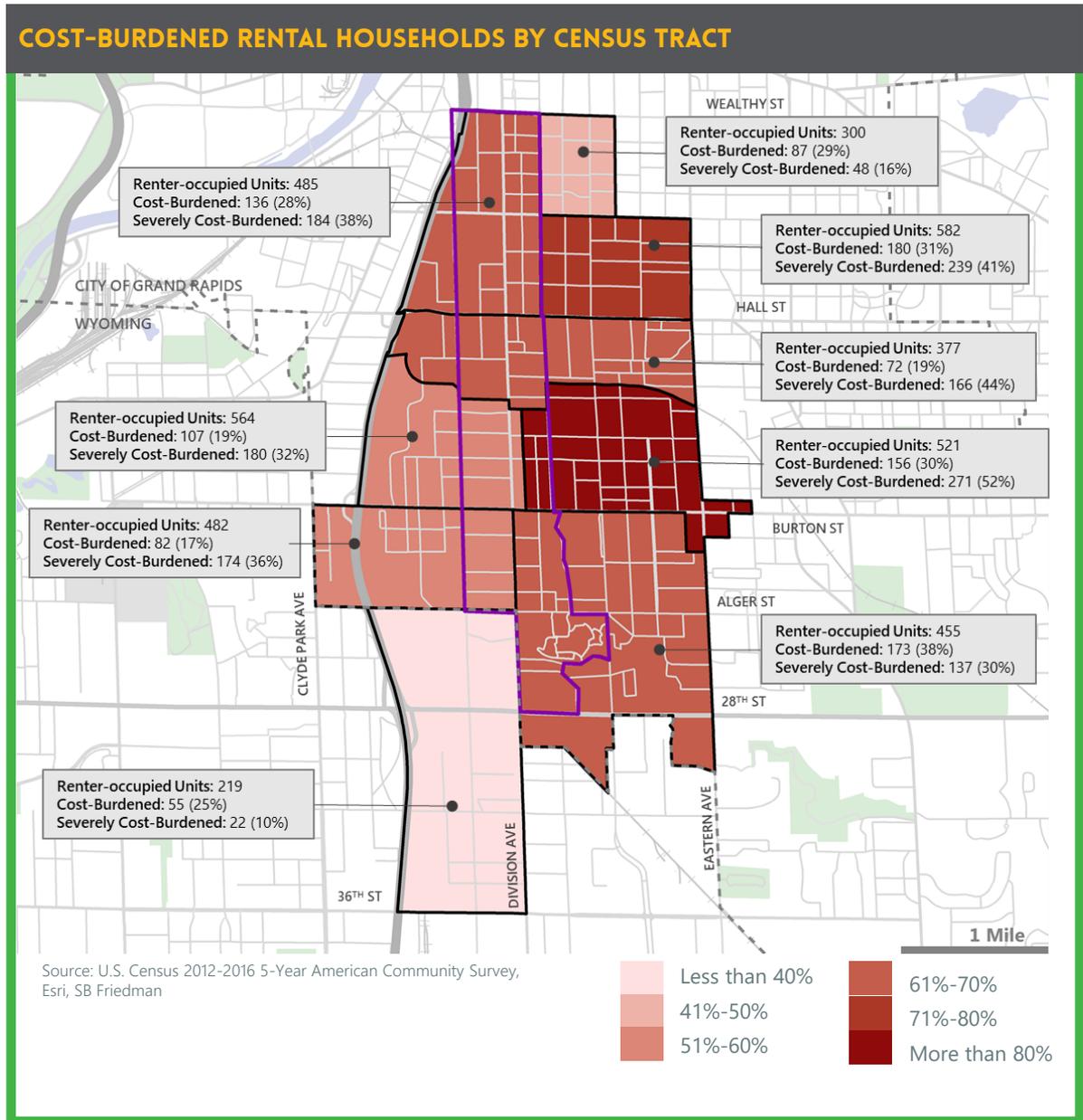
The analysis also estimates the number of households within each income cohort and the number of housing units affordable to those cohorts. The mismatch between incomes and housing costs is indicative of housing affordability and the demand for additional housing units.

Rental-Occupied Housing Affordability

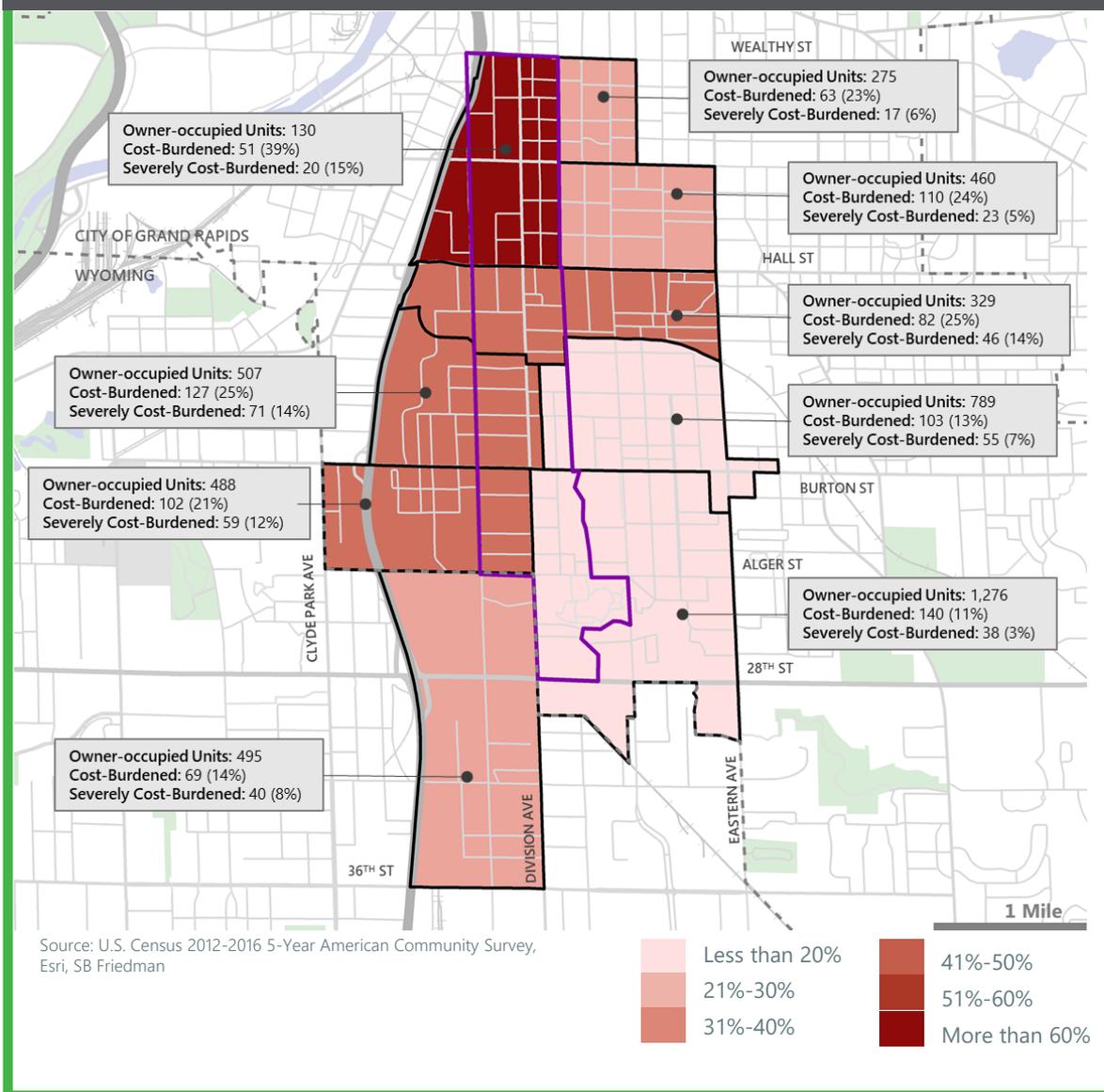
Approximately 62% of rental households in the South Division Corridor planning area are burdened by housing costs. The distribution of cost-burdened rental households is presented below. Households throughout the Corridor experience high rates of affordability challenges, with the greatest concentration located east of Division Avenue.

The Planning Team evaluated the number of number of households within each income cohort and the number of housing units affordable to those cohorts, as presented below:

- » **Households Earning \$15,000 or Less.** The biggest mismatch between household income and housing costs occurs for households earning \$15,000 or less. There are approximately 1,200 households within this income cohort and only 500 housing units affordable to these households. This is indicative of demand for an additional 715 residential units to serve households earning \$15,000/year or less. Affordable rents for this cohort are below \$375/month.
- » **Households Earning Between \$15,000 and \$50,000.** There are a greater number of housing units affordable at this income cohort than households. This is indicative of two things: 1) households in lower income cohorts are cost-burdened and spending more than 30% on housing costs and 2) higher income cohorts are spending less.



COST-BURDENED OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSEHOLDS BY CENSUS TRACT



» **Households Earning \$50,000 or More.** The number of households at these income cohorts exceed the number of housing units available. However, this is likely indicative of higher-income households spending less than 30% of their income on housing costs.

Owner-Occupied Housing Affordability

Approximately 26% of owner-occupied households in the South Division Corridor are burdened by housing costs. The distribution of cost-burdened, owner-occupied households is shown on the map to the left. Areas at the north end of the Corridor experience the highest rate of affordability challenges.

Housing-Related Issues

» **Housing market dynamics limit the availability of quality affordable housing.** Local housing market trends make it difficult for residents to find well-maintained and affordable rental or owner-occupied housing options. Discussions with housing brokers indicate that the area has a high demand for rental units, such that new investors and building owners may not feel a need to invest in improvements. Additionally, market-rate downtown housing development exerts pressure on the northern end of the Corridor, especially the South Division and Wealthy Focus Area and may extend to other areas along South Division in the future.

- » **Need to address exploitative investment practices.** Several key informants noted the prevalence of transactions wherein long-time homeowners sold their homes for well under market value to outside investors. Interviewees and community members expressed interest in initiatives to assist long-time homeowners in evaluating options to sell their homes, including the opportunity to build equity as the local housing market strengthens.
- » **Continue to leverage low-income housing development incentives for new development.** The financial feasibility of

new housing development in the South Division Corridor may be challenging, as 76% of respondents preferred monthly housing costs of \$899 or less, which is unlikely to support new construction. According to key informants, there has been limited residential investment; however, several successful affordable housing projects have been developed in the area within the last 10 years. The ability to competitively pursue city, state and federal housing development incentives, such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), will be critical to constructing

new housing with monthly housing costs affordable to residents.

RETAIL MARKET POTENTIAL

The Planning Team conducted a Retail Market Assessment to identify demand, categories and locations for new commercial development within the South Division Corridor. The full Assessment is located in the Appendices. Based on total captured demand, including both demand from projected population growth, retail leakage and demand from local workers, the South Division Corridor could support an

RETAIL MARKET ASSESSMENT (LEFT) AND ALTERNATE RETAIL DEMAND FORECAST (RIGHT)

		Total Trade Area Unmet Demand (Millions)	Sales Per SF	Total Supportable Square Feet
General merchandise stores		\$10.6	\$270	39,100
Food services & drinking places		\$7.4	\$540	13,700
Sporting goods, hobby, book, & music stores		\$1.4	\$200	6,800
Furniture & home furnishings stores		\$1.5	\$260	5,700
Health & personal care stores		\$2.2	\$500	4,500
Electronics & appliance stores		\$1.9	\$660	2,900
Miscellaneous store retailers		\$0.5	\$180	2,800
Clothing & clothing accessories stores		\$0.7	\$390	1,700
Storefront office space				19,300
TOTAL		\$26.1		96,500

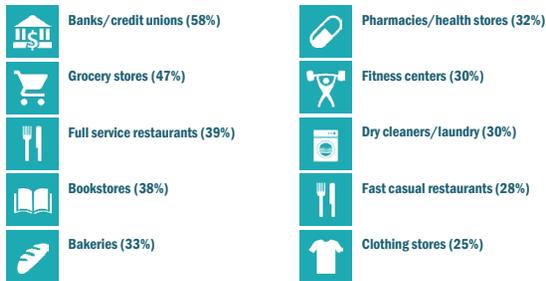
■ Total Demand from Leakage
 ■ Total Demand from Workers
 ■ Total Demand from Population Growth

Source: CoStar, Esri, LEHD OnTheMap; ICSC Research; SB Friedman

		Total Trade Area Unmet Demand (Millions)	Sales Per SF	Total Supportable Square Feet
General merchandise stores		\$11.4	\$270	42,300
Food services & drinking places		\$9.0	\$540	16,700
Sporting goods, hobby, book, & music stores		\$1.5	\$200	7,700
Furniture & home furnishings stores		\$1.7	\$260	6,600
Health & personal care stores		\$3.0	\$500	6,000
Electronics & appliance stores		\$2.2	\$660	3,300
Miscellaneous store retailers		\$0.6	\$180	3,300
Clothing & clothing accessories stores		\$0.9	\$390	2,400
Storefront office space				22,400
TOTAL		\$30.3		111,900

■ Total Demand from Leakage
 ■ Total Demand from Workers
 ■ Total Demand from Envisioned Population Growth

Source: CoStar, Esri, LEHD OnTheMap; ICSC Research; SB Friedman



additional **96,500 SF** of commercial space over the next five years. This demand is summarized in the table on the previous page.

The Retail Market Assessment also includes an Alternative Retail Demand forecast. This forecast includes approximately 1,000 new housing units envisioned as part of the planning effort, as well as demand for retail leakage, workers and projected population growth. Using this model, the South Division Corridor could support an additional **111,900 SF** of commercial space over the next five years. This demand is summarized in the table on the previous page.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, the Planning Team conducted a Retail Preferences Survey. Respondents indicated demand for the retail uses to the left (n=233):

Retail Tenanting Strategy

An analysis of demand indicators and consumer retail trends and preferences revealed the following key retail opportunities and challenges in the South Division Corridor:

- » **Pharmacy with selection of general merchandise store.** A health and personal care/general merchandise store, which typically averages between 10,000 -15,000 SF, could capture up to approximately \$2.2 million in unmet demand. Given the spatial distribution of competitive stores, development of this type would likely be most feasible on the northern end of the planning area, where a pharmacy retailer

could draw convenience-focused customers from a wider area. It is important for convenience retailers to be located in an area with good access and strong visibility.

- » **Additional general merchandise retailer.**

An additional general merchandise store could capture some of the \$10.6 million in unmet demand for these types of goods. Given that the South Division Corridor already includes several discount general merchandise retailers, any additional general merchandise retailers would likely need to offer a more varied product line to be successful. There is also the potential that existing retailers could be encouraged to expand their offerings to include additional general merchandise products.

- » **Food services and drinking places.**

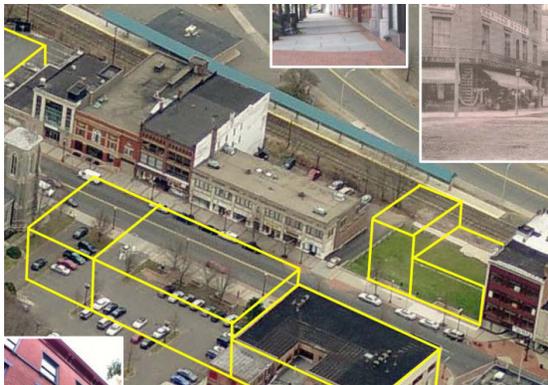
The South Division Corridor already includes a number of successful restaurants. The market analysis and survey indicated demand for several additional dining options (3-6 restaurants, depending on the size and scale). Restaurants within the planning area could capture up to a total of \$7.4 million in unmet demand for food services. Given that restaurants prefer to cluster, we recommend that this type of development be focused in two areas: in the South Division & Wealthy Focus Area, which is already a food destination with the nearby Downtown Market and in the South Division & Burton Focus Area where there is already a cluster of restaurants and the building stock lends itself to more experiential retail. Tenants may include sit-

down or fast-casual restaurants or coffee shops. Marketing is very important when working to develop dining destinations.

- » **Specialty retailers.** Demand may exist for a limited number of specialty retailers, such as sporting goods, hobby, book & music stores; furniture & home furnishing stores; and electronics and appliance stores, which could capture up to approximately \$1.4 million in unmet demand. Given that demand appears to be limited, it is important to cluster specialty retailers to achieve a cohesive shopping destination that benefits from the co-tenancies and achieves critical mass. It is important for specialty destination retailers to be located in an area.
- » **Storefront office space.** Brokers and key informants indicated that demand exists for street-level office and service uses. However, one broker indicated that the special land use permitting process and fees for these uses is onerous and may be contributing factors to excess vacancies in the Corridor. Based on the Planning Team's case study research, healthy commercial nodes frequently include upwards of 25% storefront office space for such tenants as financial institutions, insurance agents and other community and neighborhood service providers. Modifications to the permit process may facilitate street-level revitalization in key areas. Assuming a 25% share of storefront office space, the South Division Corridor could likely support 19,300 SF of space.

- » **Grocery.** Nearly 50% of survey respondents expressed interest in additional grocery options; however, given the existing demographics and competitive supply, additional grocery development does not appear to be feasible in the near-term. Further residential development within the planning area could drive demand for additional grocery options over the long-term.
- » **Financial institutions.** Banks and credit unions were the commercial use most requested through the Retail Preferences survey. Evaluating market potential for financial institutions can be challenging as companies consider several market characteristics when determining locations, including proximity to existing account holders and opportunities for growth in market share. Several survey respondents requested local or community banking institutions, while others requested banks that focus on the African-American and Hispanic populations. One key informant indicated that access to capital and banks is a challenge to undocumented populations. There may be an opportunity to partner with a mission-driven institution to bring banking back to the planning area. Members of the community also expressed the desire for an institution that offers personal finance education and credit counseling. This recommendation is further described in the Economic Opportunity Chapter.





Priority Redevelopment Areas

Given demand projections, it does not appear that the retail market can sustain redevelopment along the full three-mile length of the South Division Corridor. Therefore, the Plan recommends condensing retail uses into key areas where critical mass could be achieved, namely the South Division & Wealthy and South Division & Burton Focus Areas. A secondary node should also be located within the South Division & Hall Focus Area. These three Focus Areas include stops along the Silver Line BRT and benefit from strong site visibility, connectivity and access from the regional transportation system.

- » **The South Division & Burton Focus Area** would be suitable for development of one or more general merchandise stores or several restaurants, given the location's status as a food destination and ability to draw customers from a wider Trade Area. This area contains approximately 11,800 SF of vacant retail space; however, vacant spaces are small, ranging from 1,000 –1,200 SF and are either Class B or Class C space. Additional retail uses in the Focus Area, particularly general merchandise stores, would likely require new construction space.
- » **The South Division & Hall Focus Area** would be suitable for development of community-or neighborhood-serving convenience retail. The intersections experience daily traffic counts of 14,000

and 16,000, respectively and are accessible from US-131.

- » **The South Division & Burton Focus Area** can be strengthened as a walkable retail node. Burton Heights contains 78,000 SF of vacant retail space, which range from 1,200 to 6,000 SF and is either Class B or Class C space. These historic properties may require significant rehabilitation; however, the building stock lends itself to more experiential retail.

The City may want to consider use (i.e. industrial, residential) changes for areas within the Corridor that are currently zoned commercial and located outside of these key nodes (i.e., midblock locations, less visible/accessible intersections) and limit ground-floor commercial space in any new mixed-use projects to areas with the greatest retail market potential.

Other Retail Tenanting Considerations

Other key retail tenanting considerations, identified through the Retail Preferences Survey, community input sessions and key stakeholder interviews, include:

- » **Community preferences for small, minority and locally-owned businesses.** In facilitating revitalization of the Corridor, survey respondents prioritized: (1) maintaining/growing existing small businesses (n=143 | 64%) and (2) providing opportunity for new local and/or minority-owned businesses (n=153 | 68%). Attracting new name-brand retail businesses received

the least number of votes, which reaffirms the neighborhood's desire to foster local, community-based businesses.

- » **Need for retailers to cater to diverse populations to be successful.** Discussions with retail brokers active in the Trade Area indicated that, to be successful, any new retailers would need to align their retail goods and services with the needs of neighborhood populations, such as the African American community in the South Division & Wealthy and South Division & Hall Focus Areas and the Hispanic population in the South Division & Burton Focus Area.
- » **Need to overcome economic challenges to revitalization.** Key informants identified occupancy and tenant build-out costs as key challenges to realizing retail revitalization. Several brokers indicated that reducing start-up and ongoing expenses for new businesses is critical to mitigating some of the risk associated with testing a new concept in a new market.
- » **Need to overcome physical challenges to revitalization.** Key informants and community members indicated that the appearance of commercial nodes in the Corridor may be negatively impacting marketability. The most-referenced challenges include the homeless population, general cleanliness and the perception of crime.



CASE STUDY: PROUD GROUND - PORTLAND OR

Proud Ground was founded by the City of Portland in 1999 with technical and funding assistance from the Institute of Community Economics. Proud Ground is a community land trust offering homeownership opportunities to lower-income, first time buyers in the Portland region. Proud ground provides first-time home buyer grants, develops affordable units and works with public and private entities to add additional homes to the Land Trust using a shared appreciation model to ensure homes remain affordable over the long term, while allowing homeowners to gain equity. Proud Ground employs income eligibility requirements and resale restrictions to provide affordable homeownership options for lower-income households. Buyers cannot

earn more than 80% of AMI and must have a household income greater than \$30,000. Homeowners receive 25% of their home's appreciation.

Source: www.proudground.org/



PRIORITY PROJECTS

The following Priority Projects are intended to be led by the City and other community partners to help promote progress. These projects vary in size and scope but all are strategic in their purpose to effect positive change. The Plan recommends that the community consider three projects as the highest priorities for the Development Without Displacement implementation agenda. The Priority Projects were designed and specifically selected as catalysts for creating positive activity through interconnection of new services and uses for the South Division Corridor and surrounding community. These are projects that have the potential to stimulate the revitalization of the area and trigger positive momentum for quality improvements and renewal. The Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement and were prioritized through the voting of community members, the Steering Committee and the Development Without Displacement Working Group. The following pages include detailed descriptions of the Priority Projects:

- » **Facilitate Home Repair And Improvements**
- » **Advocate For Changes To City And State Policy**
- » **Expand Financial Accessibility For The Community**

CASE STUDY: CASS TINY HOMES - DETROIT, MI

Cass Community Social Services is a Detroit-based agency dedicated to providing food, housing, health services and job programs. Cass is in the process of building 25 different Tiny Homes (250-400sf) in Detroit, MI. Each home will be on its own lot (roughly 30 x 100 feet) and will rest on a concrete foundation. Most will have a front porch or rear deck to increase the living space. Residents will come from a variety of backgrounds (formerly homeless people, senior citizens, college students and a few Cass staff members) and all will qualify as low-income. Properties are developed with a rent-to-own financing mechanism to help impoverished Detroiters become owners. People earning just \$10,000 a year can buy property through

the program. Anyone who remains for seven years will be given the opportunity to own the home and property. Tiny Homes Detroit are being built by both professional tradespeople (under the supervision of a general contractor) and volunteer teams who will manage the finishing jobs – tiling, drywalling, painting, gardening, building decks and erecting fences.

Source: www.curbed.com/2018/3/29/17163676/tiny-house-detroit-cass-community;
www.casscommunity.org/tinyhomes/;
www.bu.edu/today/2018/tiny-homes-detroit/



PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Facilitate home repair and improvements through education, services, and model programs.

- Create a clearinghouse of home repair and financial education services available to existing residents to maintain their home and ownership
- Create greater awareness of existing programs
- Working with local neighborhood partners, pilot a home rehabilitation program focused on:
 - » A “model block improvement” approach
 - » Historic model house rehab project
 - » Other similar model that is both highly visible in terms of immediate return and can be easily replicated throughout the neighborhood
- Work to create an investment ripple effect in area
- Address existing lead hazards in community
- Utilize minority contractors in home repairs

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Students
- Next Step of West Michigan
- Rental Property Owners Association
- Grand Rapids Public Schools
- Large Landscape Companies
- Habitat for Humanity
- Dwelling Place
- ABC – National Construction Trade Organization
- Larger developers dedicated to doing work in neighborhood – voluntary equity agreements
- ICCF - developing revolving home repair program
- Create a consortium of suppliers
- Home Repair Services (HRS)
- Amplify GR - existing partnership with HRS
- Well House
- Grand Rapid Community College
- Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce

- Healthy Homes
- Seeds of Promise
- City of Grand Rapids Housing Rehabilitation Program (Under City Community Development Department)
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Area Financial Institutions
- Youth Build
- Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women (GROW)
- Home Loan Bank
- Local owners of target properties

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Create awareness campaigns to improve resident knowledge of existing programs
 - » Conduct in-home lead testing
 - » Identify target population for improvement
 - » Identify number of renters and owners and the specific needs of each homeowner
 - » Create a public portal of partners and resources
 - » Reach out to potential partners that have expertise in redevelopment initiatives such as ICCF or Habitat for Humanity
 - » Review funding programs to identify gaps that can be filled with new programs. Currently there are few for “curb-appeal” funding, among other gaps
 - » Streamline application processes for property owners to implement improvements
 - » Connect with student groups interested in giving back to the community and those in need of service hours to assist in repairs and improvements
 - » Hold a block “makeover” project
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Form classes for youth and adults that teach a variety of rehab techniques, building upon HRS

- » Fully address lead issues in corridor
- » Investigate and implement a “Model-Block Program” approach to development
- » Assemble resources for a tool lending “library” to assist owners in their efforts, building upon HRS
- » Form a collaborative to house a tool lending library and other community resources
- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - » Continue to implement the aforementioned programs for long-term viability

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Area vendors who can provide prizes or in-kind materials for rehabilitation on an individual and block-level
- Federal Housing Administration rehab program
- The *Get The Lead Out* program
- Home owner improvement grant programs

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Assurances that both renters and homeowners can remain in the neighborhood as it improves.
- Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized property by responsible developers who work holistically with the community.
- Existing residents can access public funding and other capital to purchase or maintain their homes.
- Community Land Trusts are established to develop and manage affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces and other assets on behalf of the community.
- Development of new housing is occurring at all income ranges, with emphasis on filling extremely-low, very-low and market rate gaps.

DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT





INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

HOME AND YARD FIX UP COMPETITION

Many community meeting attendees throughout the process stated that a top physical issue with their neighborhood was related to exterior home, landscape and property maintenance. As a result, the Plan recommends that the implementation team organize a before/after home and yard fix up competition to recognize residents who are making improvements to their properties. In tandem with this event, the City could work with local residents and partners to organize a neighborhood clean-up of public spaces, alleys, and vacant property. The goal is to improve the overall appearance and identity of the South Division Corridor.

The competition should include a start-up gift card for participants, education on home, yard and landscape maintenance from local partners, and prizes and hangable plaques for winning entries. Categories could include outstanding historic preservation, sustainable retrofitting, building reuse and landscaping.

DISTRIBUTE GUIDE TO EXISTING PROGRAMS

In tandem with the Home and Yard Fix Up Competition, the Plan recommends that the implementation team distribute the Michigan Resource Guide to Single-family Home Repair Programs, developed by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. This resource guide, available at <https://www.miplace.org/globalassets/documents/cdbg/resources/single-family-home-repair-programs-resource-guide.pdf>, provides an overview of single family housing rehabilitation programs offered by a variety of organizations (local and national). The Guide identifies programs that individuals, families, public, and non-profit organizations may access to preserve or improve existing single family housing.





PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Advocate for changes to City and State Policy that align with the outcomes of the Plan and that maximize eligibility of South Division properties for incentive programs.

- Possible examples include:
 - › Adjustments to LIHTC scoring
 - › Adjustments to Opportunity Zone boundaries
 - › Increases in Section 8 vouchers
 - › Changes to Michigan State Housing Development Authority Qualified Allocation Plans
 - › Changes to brownfield and property rehab deferral periods
 - › Changes in state statute to allow rent-control initiatives
 - › Changes in state statute to allow affordable/mixed-income requirements
- As an enticement to invest on South Division, market the available package of incentives first to local residents (particularly minorities), then to developers
- Work to build local home and business ownership
- Set a precedent for housing practices that can be utilized throughout the entire city

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Homes For All
- City Commissioners
- Neighborhood Block Clubs
- Fair Housing Center of West Michigan
- Local Places of Worship
- Habitat for Humanity
- LINC UP
- Inner City Christian Federation (ICCF)
- Cinnaire
- Opportunity Resource Fund
- KConnect

- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Epic CDC

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - › Engage with residents and stakeholders (area businesses, Project Green, Dream Center, LINC UP, ICCF, etc.) to develop a list of housing program goals
 - › Identify target population for policy changes
 - › Identify number of renters and owners and barriers that exist to permanent residency
 - › Connect with other existing initiatives such as the Housing Now recommendations
 - › Research pursuing CID funding for rental assistance
 - › Develop an advocacy committee or organization to advocate for beneficial housing practices. Potentially working with Coalition to End Homelessness
 - › Investigate possible housing programs in other cities, such as the rent control program in Washington DC
 - › Organize meetings, trainings and “roundtables” that update residents on upcoming programs to ensure transparency and understanding
 - › Organize a “lobby day” to give people a chance to go to the statehouse as a group and advocate for equitable housing programs
 - › Create a community benefits agreement to ensure potential development benefits residents
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - › Continue to develop programs that advocate for equitable housing practices
 - › Collaborate with local housing stakeholders to directly address identified barriers (providing data to Corridor Improvement Authority)

Long-term (3+ years)

- › Ensure programs are maintained and funded into the future for the long-term welfare of residents

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Local foundations with interests in advocacy
- City of Grand Rapids
- Housing lobbyist groups

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- ✓ Assurances that both renters and homeowners can remain in the neighborhood as it improves.
- ✓ Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized property by responsible developers who work holistically with the community.
- ✓ Existing residents can access public funding and other capital to purchase or maintain their homes.
- ✓ Community Land Trusts are established to develop and manage affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces and other assets on behalf of the community.
- ✓ Development of new housing is occurring at all income ranges, with emphasis on filling extremely-low, very-low and market rate gaps.



DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT





ADVOCATE FOR CHANGES TO CITY AND STATE POLICY

INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Utilizing the Corridor Plan as a guide and a resource, the implementation team should work directly with local housing advocates to create an agenda for change.

FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF WEST MICHIGAN

The Plan recommends that the implementation team meet with leaders from the Fair Housing Center of West Michigan to coordinate an approach for advocacy and outreach. The Fair Housing Center of West Michigan is a private, non-profit fair housing organization committed to providing comprehensive fair housing services, including education, outreach, research, advocacy and enforcement. The Fair Housing Center is the front door to housing choice, ensuring that everyone in the community has equal opportunity to choose housing that's right for them. Through education, research and advocacy, they prevent housing discrimination, remove barriers that allow it to persist, and restore housing choice when discrimination happens.

The Fair Housing Center works with tenants, homeowners, and home seekers as well as professionals, companies, and social service agencies related to housing. These include landlords, realtors, lending institutions, insurance agents, and more. Their mission is to prevent and eliminate illegal housing discrimination, to ensure equal housing opportunity, and to promote inclusive communities. Their vision is that each individual in West Michigan is treated with respect in their housing choices and is not illegally hindered or prevented from living in any dwelling.

Source: <http://www.fhcnw.org>

HOUSING NOW INITIATIVE

The Plan recommends that the implementation team coordinate broader City and State policy changes with the City of Grand Rapid's Housing Now Initiative. Housing Now has created a framework for advocacy and promotion of affordable housing and living. Through this initiative, the City has partnered with residents and housing developers to recommend progressive housing solutions with the goal to create housing choices and opportunities for all. Significant progress has been made since the program began in 2015, including:

- » Construction and rehabilitation of new rental and ownership homes
- » Provision of rent and/or utility assistance to residents
- » A PILOT City Ordinance allowing developers to pay a service fee payment in lieu of taxes. This resulted in the creation of significant rental units.
- » Additional modifications to the Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ) program placing a greater emphasis on affordable housing development
- » New policy for Voluntary Equitable Development Agreements, between the City, developer and a community-based organization. Each party will commit to joint goals and interests at the outset of significant development projects
- » Amended City ordinance to decrease service fees (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) as further incentive to build affordable rental units
- » Amended the City's Homebuyer Assistance (HAF) program to increase homeownership rates and housing choice
- » Established an Eviction Prevention Program in the 61st District Court
- » Modified the Neighborhood Enterprise Zone (NEZ), Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Act (OPRA), and

Brownfield Redevelopment programs' policies to encourage and incentivize affordable housing development and mixed-income neighborhoods

- » Amended the City's Zoning Ordinance
- » Through Housing Now, the City is currently considering the following additional policy changes:
 - » Additional City Zoning Ordinance changes to create incentives for small scale housing development and increasing housing supply through density bonuses and by-right development activities
 - » Residential Rental Application ordinance

Source: <https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/Housing-NOW>





EXPAND FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE COMMUNITY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Seek out or develop alternative financial institutions/partnerships in order to expand financial accessibility for the community.

- Include both direct financial services for individuals and businesses as well as educational opportunities.
- Alternative financial tools that have greater accessibility to low-income, minority, and low-leveraged businesses are critical, including a focus on:
 - » Alternative lending criteria
 - » Micro-lending
 - » Mission-driven community investment.
- Educational components should include credit repair counseling, down payment assistance, process guidance, etc.

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Opportunity Resource Funds
- Larger Institutions such as Fifth/Third
- West Michigan Community Reinvestment Act Association – conduit for multiple organizations
 - » Treetops Collective – Immigrant advocacy
 - » Score Small Business Development
- Project Green
- Home Repair Services – Foreclosure Counseling
- City Community Development Department
- Accion – partner for educational elements of project
- GROW (Grand Rapids Opportunity for Women)
- Northern Initiatives – Micro Lending
- AARP Foundation – Housing Council
- West Michigan Area Agency on Aging
- Realism is Loyalty
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- ICCF

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Promote and create greater awareness of existing financial programs
 - » Create a map and chart of public incentives that people can use to research resources for their own properties (West Michigan CRA Association is working on a collaborative project now)
 - » Identify financial needs of target residents
 - » Collaborate with Corridor Improvement Authorities to utilize CRA grant funding to empower economic growth at the household level
 - » Connect with the CRA Association to develop project ideas
 - » Work to bring a loan pool to neighborhoods from outlets like Opportunity Resource Fund
 - » Involve Institutions like Fifth/Third that are interested in greater community outreach
 - » Establish group savings and lending model
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Create credit repair guidance courses and financial literacy courses targeted towards individuals and business owners
 - » Encourage banks and financial institutions to open branches in target neighborhood areas to help more people have access to non-predatory banking
 - » Tapping into large employers, create custom individual developer accounts
- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - » Continue to expand and build upon financial accessibility initiatives

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- West Michigan CRA Association
- IFF Financial Consulting Services

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Assurances that both renters and homeowners can remain in the neighborhood as it improves.
- Redevelopment of vacant or underutilized property by responsible developers who work holistically with the community.
- Existing residents can access public funding and other capital to purchase or maintain their homes.
- Community Land Trusts are established to develop and manage affordable housing, community gardens, civic buildings, commercial spaces and other assets on behalf of the community.
- Development of new housing is occurring at all income ranges, with emphasis on filling extremely-low, very-low and market rate gaps.



DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT





SUPPORTING PROJECTS

In addition to the three Priority Projects, several other ideas and actions were discussed by the Working Group and should be considered for medium to long term implementation. These projects are summarized below:

- » **Create a roadmap for development** in the community which: (1) helps residents to understand the development process and become involved; (2) helps developers to package incentives, understand community expectations, earn approval and have implementation guidance; (3) creates a measurable scorecard to which the community can evaluate and recognize progress. Encourage or require Community Benefit Agreements for new infill and redevelopment projects. Ensure that there are community structures in place that can facilitate neighborhood involvement in the development process.
- » **Identify publicly owned properties that can be developed to help meet community needs** (mixed-income housing, supportive retail, civic uses, etc.) and require Community Benefit Agreements as a part of the sale/development approval process. Potential properties may include the City-owned parking lot at Burton and South Division, South Field and the Fire Station at Brown and South Division.
- » **Explore alternative housing models, including co-housing and tiny homes.** Develop a tiny homes model, including prototypes such as courtyard clusters

CASE STUDY: EAST LAKE - PURPOSE BUILT COMMUNITIES - ATLANTA, GA

The Purpose Built Communities vision guides neighborhood revitalization by creating pathways out of poverty for the lowest-income residents and building strong, economically diverse communities. Founded in 1995, the East Lake Foundation was established to help transform the East Lake neighborhood and create new opportunities for the families living there. Working with neighborhood residents and expert public and private partners, the Foundation developed a new community on the site of a former public housing project. Since that time, violent crime has dropped in the neighborhood by 97%. Residents are engaged in health and wellness programs and many are becoming homeowners. The East Lake Foundation helps families at the Villages of East Lake

and Charles R. Drew Charter School build better lives and reach their highest potential through its holistic approach to community revitalization incorporating mixed-income housing, cradle-to-college education and community wellness.

A key element of the Purpose Built model includes the establishment of a single purpose non-profit Community Quarterback to provide the leadership of a strong, visionary team capable of bringing diverse entities together to work effectively towards a common goal.

Source: www.purposebuiltcommunities.org/our-network/atlanta-east-lake/

or accessory dwelling units. Identify appropriate vacant properties for its implementation. Consider needs for permanent supportive housing. Seek Zoning Ordinance amendments as necessary to allow these alternative models.

- » **Identify privately owned lands which may be appropriate for infill development, at multiple scales.** Identify locations for mixed-use development at/ near major intersections and BRT transit stops that are appropriate for mixed-use development and/or mixed-income apartments. Identify other underutilized properties along the corridor which could be aggregated in order to incentivize development. Create an inventory of vacant residential properties within three blocks of South Division which may be appropriate for small-scale residential infill development.
- » **Develop a strong connection between local employers and the available workforce within the neighborhood.** Create and retain jobs with opportunity for training and advancement, particularly within the Cottage Grove area. Aggressively market workforce training programs to residents. Encourage employers to connect to the surrounding community through community partner programs, alternative transit incentives, employee housing models or other programs that can help them to retain a stable, local workforce.

- » **Seek out alternative developer models that increase opportunities to local business owners, minority investors and other community-focused individuals.** Create financing vehicles that support mission-driven developers to acquire and maintain affordable units and vacant property. Encourage public-private investment through a Community Land Trust, a Neighbor-Developer Academy for technical small-scale development assistance, faith-community backed development and similar models.





05. Economic Opportunity

This Chapter provides a description of how the South Division Corridor Plan intends to improve the local business environment and advance economic opportunities for historically marginalized communities. This includes:

- An overview of the **existing economic conditions** in the South Division neighborhoods
- A **vision and set of objectives** to foster Economic Opportunity
- A short explanation of the **Priority Projects** that will help to carry out the goals of the plan
- **Case Studies** explaining relevant projects in Grand Rapids and beyond

OVERVIEW

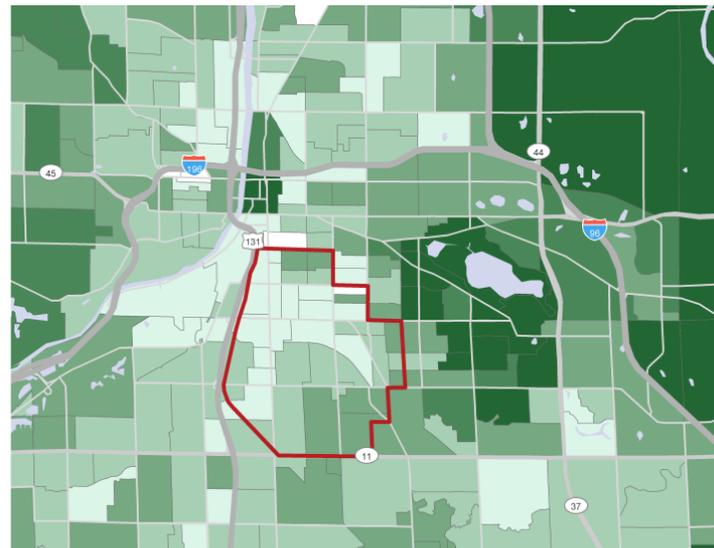
Economic Opportunity was a major consideration throughout the planning process. Opportunities for residents to obtain jobs and financial resources are crucial to successful communities and the South Division Corridor is no exception.

In the fall of 2017, the City of Grand Rapids Planning Department was in the preliminary stages of the South Division planning process and held a meeting to discuss economic opportunity in South Division. They asked what is holding residents back economically and how South Division could be improved and better serve residents? Meeting attendees brought up a number of important factors such as social capital, the ability for residents to “climb” out of negative situations and the historic systematic oppression of people of color to generate wealth.

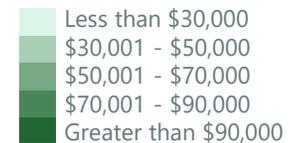
Income

The per capita income of the nine project area census tracts ranges from \$8,673 - \$26,188 and the median household income in each - of the nine project area census tracts ranges from \$18,994 to \$55,669. The map below, created by SB Friedman, outlines the median income levels of the Corridor neighborhoods. The red outline represents the Corridor’s “Trade Area.”

Incomes are highest in the northern portion and the southeast areas near downtown and the Garfield Park neighborhood respectively. This snapshot matches the historical concentrations of wealth in Grand Rapids. Garfield Park benefits from a high quality housing stock within close proximity to parks and other recreational green spaces. Downtown has historically been the center of commercial activity in Grand Rapids and has recently benefited from significant public and private investment, leading to an influx of new housing and businesses.



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



MHI BY GEOGRAPHY

TRADE AREA	\$38,100
CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS	\$42,000
KENT COUNTY	\$54,700



While the aforementioned neighborhood areas maintain a relatively positive economic outlook, the areas directly adjacent to South Division Avenue have suffered from a lack of investment in recent decades and the impact on both income levels and property values is apparent. Development in the corridor has generally favored automobile-centric businesses such as auto-repair garages and fast food establishments. To further complicate the economic outlook of the community, the area around the intersection of Division and Cottage Grove has historically been industrial; yet, almost all of the workers live outside the community. As a result, the South Division neighborhoods absorb the negative impacts of the industrial facilities (noise, environmental impact, community aesthetics), without receiving many of the economic benefits. In total, these factors have been extremely detrimental to both residential property values and income distribution, suppressing the economic mobility and wealth generation of longtime residents.

Employment

The unemployment rate in the South Division Corridor is high relative to city, state and national estimates. In 2016, the unemployment rate was approximately 11.7%, compared with 8.5% in Grand Rapids, 5.0% in Michigan and 4.9% in the United States as a whole.

As of 2015, there were 4,006 people employed in the project area. Approximately 2,764 (67.6%) of them work in the manufacturing and wholesale trading sectors. The majority of these

businesses are centrally located in the corridor near the intersection of Division and Cottage Grove. This contrasts with the City of Grand Rapids which is more economically diverse. In the city as a whole, 17.2% of jobs are in the manufacturing and wholesale trading sectors. The largest single jobs sector in Grand Rapids is health care and social assistance with 31,182 (25.6%) jobs. Of these workers, 220 (5.4%) live in the project area.

Despite the presence of a regional employment center and a variety of businesses in the Corridor, very few corridor residents actually work in the corridor. Based on 2015 data, out of 4,088 people working in the South Division Corridor 4,006 people (98%) live outside the Corridor and only 82 people (2%) live inside the Corridor.

Conversely, out of the 2,851 working people living in the Corridor, 2,769 of them (97.1%) work in another area. Only the remaining 82 working residents (2.9%) actually live and work near South Division Avenue.

Of the South Division working residents, the most significant single sector of employment is manufacturing with 671 people (23.5%). While there are industrial jobs in the Corridor, as previously described only 2% of residents (82 workers) work in the Corridor; therefore, existing industrial businesses are not drawing workers from Corridor neighborhoods despite existing residents having the skills necessary to succeed and be productive.

Other employment sectors for South Division residents include:

- » Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation (418 people/ 14.7%)
- » Health Care and Social Assistance (386 people/ 13.5%)
- » Retail Trade (232 people/ 8.1%)
- » Accommodation and Food Services (223 people/ 7.8%)

Minority Business Ownership

In order to gain more insight on minority business ownership within the Corridor, the Community Ambassadors went door-to-door to conduct a survey, which is summarized below. The data collected reflects business ownership and not the property ownership of the real estate. Overall, 81 businesses were reached by the Ambassadors.

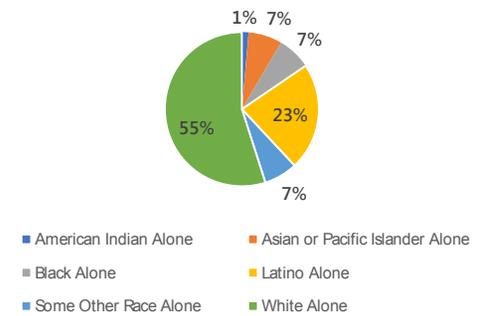
The data collected reflects a disproportionate percentage of businesses owned by Whites (55%), relative to their neighborhood population (43%), while Black-owned businesses (7%) are much less than their percentage of the population (34%). This data reflects the need for specific initiatives to help foster minority-owned businesses, especially African American, to the Corridor.

Business Operation Years

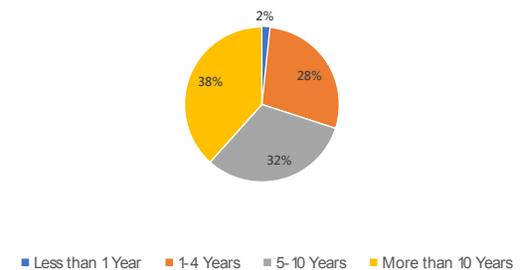
In addition to racial ownership patterns, the survey examines the length of operation for surveyed businesses. A slight majority (38%) have been in operation for more than 10 years, while 30% have been in operation for 0-4 years. This data shows a healthy mix of long-standing and recently-owned businesses in the Corridor.

Of the 71 businesses surveyed, 89% were considered retail businesses. Of these businesses, Neighborhood Goods and Services (43%) was the highest percentage. The Plan has focused on continuing to grow these retail offerings, especially Food and Beverage Uses and Neighborhood Goods and Services, such as a pharmacy.

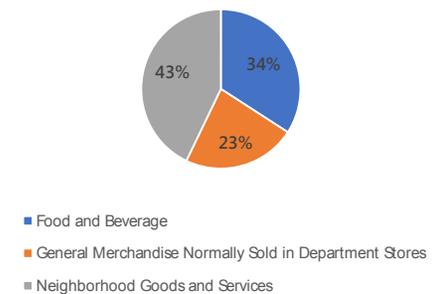
Business Owner Race



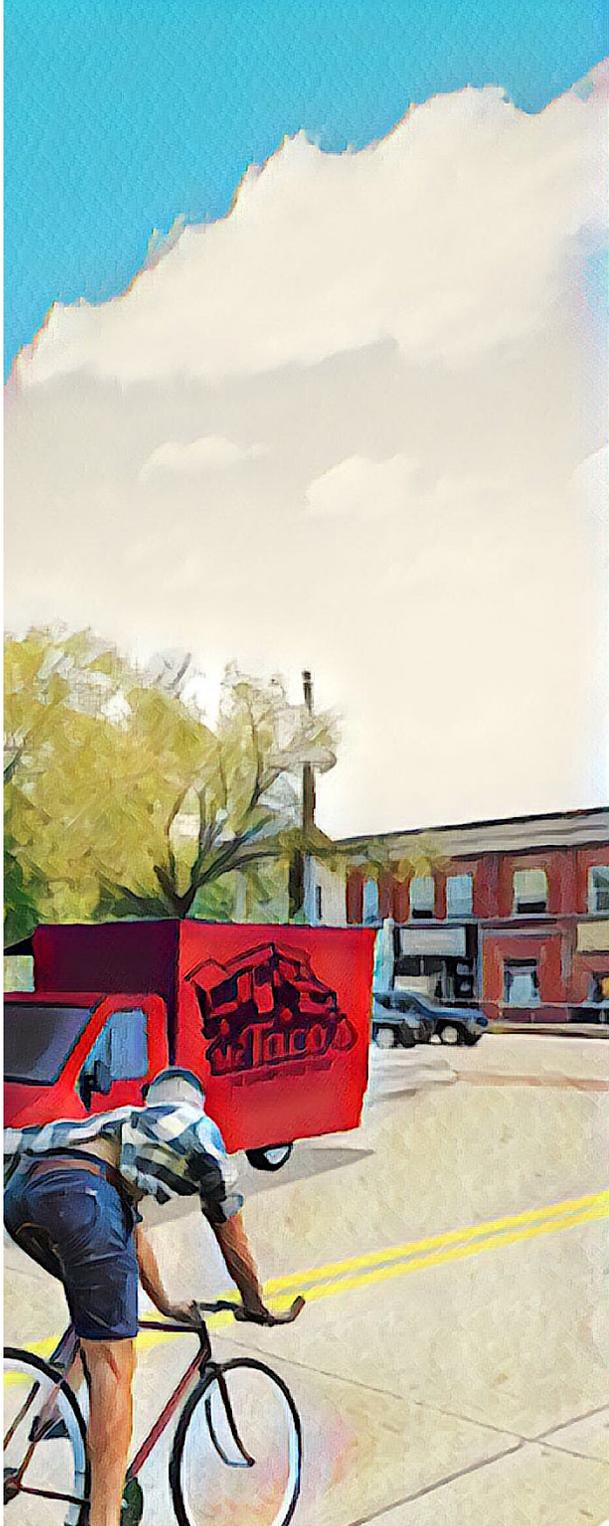
Operation Years



Retail Category







VISION AND OBJECTIVES

There are several major economic opportunity goals that shaped the content of this Plan. (1) One of the most important goals is two-pronged: to encourage ownership of assets and property among people of color and low-income residents, as well as ownership of their community and (2) the conversation on their collective future. This concept of empowering residents to take control of their neighborhood from outside interests is central to the South Division Corridor Plan and will be critical to the future success of the neighborhood.

When asked what economic opportunity means to them, attendees at the Community Kickoff Meeting cited the following elements:

- » Education
- » Jobs and Careers
- » Job Training
- » Health
- » Transportation
- » Financing Assistance

Opportunity to Give Back to the Community

The following Value Statement, Desired Outcomes and Priority Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement, led by the Economic Opportunity Working Group and filtered through larger community meetings and the South Division Steering Committee.



VALUE STATEMENT

Improve the local business environment and advance economic opportunity. Close racial disparities in business and individual success. Promote local economic development and entrepreneurial opportunities, enhance community-serving establishments and improve access to quality living wage jobs.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- » Resources are fully identified and mapped, allowing greater utilization by local residents and business owners.
- » A greater number of businesses and properties owned by people of color within the neighborhood.
- » Minority-owned businesses have been incubated, fostered and are successful in serving residents.
- » Local and minority-owned businesses are fully connected organized and promoted to serve the larger Grand Rapids community.
- » Alternative financing options are available and secured by local entrepreneurs and business owners.

Secondary Outcomes

Secondary outcomes include ensuring that the local Corridor Improvement Districts (CIDs) are fully aligned with the goals of the Plan and able to bring resources to the community. To ensure that local businesses benefit from revitalization,

developers and other large providers should be committed to utilizing local businesses for a variety of services, as well as establishing and implementing community benefits agreements on proposed projects. Businesses should also be supported with training in accounting and lending skills. Lastly, programs for ex-offenders need to be in place to help them reintegrate into society and find a living wage.

PRIORITY PROJECTS

The following Priority Projects are intended to be led by the City and other community partners to help promote progress. These projects vary in size and scope but all are strategic in their purpose to affect positive change. The Plan recommends that the community consider three projects as the highest priorities for the Economic Opportunity implementation agenda. The Priority Projects were designed and specifically selected as catalysts for creating positive activity through interconnection of new services and uses for the South Division Corridor and surrounding community. These are projects that have the potential to stimulate the revitalization of the area and trigger positive momentum for quality improvements and renewal. The Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement and prioritized through the voting of community members, the Steering Committee and the Economic Opportunity Working Group. The following pages include detailed descriptions of the Priority Projects:

- » **Recruit A Credit Union Or Minority-Owned Bank**
- » **Foster The Creation And Growth Of Job Training Programs**
- » **Create A Business Support Network**



CASE STUDY: BOSTON IMPACT INITIATIVE FUND – BOSTON, MA

The Boston Impact Initiative (BII) is a place-based, impact investment fund that partners with businesses and organizations throughout the region to create systemic shifts in opportunities for urban communities. They are committed to creating a better future for those communities who have been impacted by racial, social and economic inequality.

According to a 2015 Federal Reserve Bank of Boston report, there is an increasingly startling gap between the asset base of white and non-white households. The median net worth of white families in the Boston metropolitan area is \$247,500, while the median net

worth of U.S.-born black families is only \$8. Nearly twice as many black Bostonians are unemployed, their homeownership rate is less than half and nearly four times as many black families are not served by a bank or similar financial institution.

BII works to provide low-income entrepreneurs with an opportunity to build credit, access capital, receive mentoring and technical support and leverage social networks beyond their own neighborhoods. Their goal is to create a robust ecosystem of support for these entrepreneurs.

Source: www.bostonimpact.org/



PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Recruit a credit union or minority-owned bank to the Corridor.

- Focus on the importance of a bank or credit union as an asset to the community
 - » Weigh benefits of both local and national institutions: a local institution could be more closely affiliated with the community, but a national institution could have greater tolerance for risk
- Consider financial incentives that could attract a financial institution, such as commitment from local business owners to open accounts
- Potentially connect with an existing business or retail partner
- Consider partnerships with other local organizations as a benefit for membership with a new financial institutions
- Examine the feasibility of a community development credit union that is more flexible than a bank and can strengthen the development environment.
 - » In addition to working with community, they offer micro-loans similar to a CDFI
 - » Ensure that there is understanding of this model among community members
- City of GR could transfer funds into institutions on South Division to anchor a potential institution – something often necessary to attract larger institutions

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Huntington Bank
- My Personal Credit Union
- A Food Co-op willing to offer food access benefits
- Local Businesses
- ICCF
- LINC UP
- GRPS
- Notions
- Butterball

- Van Eerden
- Pridgeon & Clay
- City of Grand Rapids
- Other Local Credit Unions around Western Michigan
- The Ford Foundation
- Mercantile Bank
- The Right Place
- Lake Michigan Credit Union
- Urban League of West Michigan
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Reach out to the business community to gauge interest and attract potential investors. Look at the *My Personal Credit Union* model of outreach and research potential incentives that other institutions have offered
 - » Dedicate effort to increasing access and opening new accounts with local financial institutions
 - » Research other options such as a Self-Help Federal Credit Union
 - » Develop a list of incentives to approach an institution with
 - » Research interest in a Community Development Credit Union and develop incentives to approach institutions with
- Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Reach out to organizations such as a local food co-op to partner in the initiative – offering possible food benefits
 - » Look into a shared branching Institution that has locations outside GR to ease transition of new residents from outside the city
 - » Approach businesses to make a 5-year commitment into an institution and seed funds in the community

- Long-term (3+ years)**
 - » Continue to expand and build upon initiatives

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Partnerships with aforementioned organizations

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Resources are fully identified and mapped allowing greater utilization by local residents and business owners.
- A greater number of minority-owned businesses own their own property within the neighborhood.
- Minority-owned businesses have been incubated, fostered and are successful in serving residents.
- Local and minority-owned businesses are fully connected, organized and promoted to serve the larger Grand Rapids community.
- Alternative financing options are available to and secured by local entrepreneurs and business owners.





INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

As an initial action for this project, the Plan recommends that the implementation team fully evaluate tools provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to both gauge interest and attract potential investors. In addition, the Plan recommends potentially utilizing the My Personal Credit Union (MPCU) model of outreach while researching potential incentives that other institutions have offered.

MINORITY DEPOSITORY INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM

The FDIC includes a Minority Depository Institutions (MDI) Program, with an MDI defined as any depository institution where 51 percent or more of the stock is owned by one or more "socially and economically disadvantaged individuals." Many MDIs are based in communities that have unique needs for accessing financial services. The FDIC embraces its statutory responsibility to preserve and promote the health of MDIs, understanding that the vitality of these banks is critical given their role in the economic well-being of the minority and traditionally underserved communities many MDIs serve.

The FDIC has a number of initiatives currently underway to support MDIs:

- » The FDIC is committed to continuing to provide technical assistance to groups seeking to organize new MDIs, and to existing MDIs to support their efforts to acquire failing institutions. These assistance efforts include regional roundtables, webinars and workshops at MDI and Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) conferences.
- » In June of 2019, they hosted the first of several roundtables between MDIs and other

FDIC-supervised institutions to share expertise and to promote possible collaborative opportunities, including direct investments and deposits in MDIs.

- » In June of 2019, the FDIC published a research study on MDIs and hosted the 2019 Interagency MDI and Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) Bank Conference.
- » In fall 2019, the FDIC will establish a new MDI subcommittee on the Community Banking Advisory Committee (CBAC) to both highlight the MDIs' efforts in their communities and to provide a platform for MDIs to exchange best practices.

The FDIC's Minority Depository Institutions program supports a statutory goal to promote and encourage creation of new MDIs. To meet this goal, FDIC officials meet periodically with trade groups representing MDIs. In addition, FDIC staff provides technical assistance for groups interested in organizing new institutions and applying for deposit insurance. These depository institutions are often referred to as de novos. The FDIC is committed to working with groups interested in organizing a de novo institution. New institutions with sound business plans, experienced leadership at the board and management levels, and appropriate capital support can play a vital role in serving the deposit and credit needs of their communities. The FDIC website provides access to the information and resources important to the application process. Applying for Deposit Insurance – A Handbook for Organizers of De Novo Institutions, in particular, provides a practical and plain language guide to help organizers navigate the application process and successfully form a de novo institution.

Source: <https://www.fdic.gov/regulations/resources/minority/mdi.html>

MY PERSONAL CREDIT UNION

My Personal Credit Union (MPCU) is a not-for-profit credit union that has been serving West Michigan families for 65 years. It is currently open to anyone who lives, works or worships in Kent, Ottawa, Muskegon, or Allegan counties. MPCU provides customers with everything from credit cards and mortgages to small business loans and retirement accounts. MPCU offer financial planning services through their wholly-owned subsidiary, Financial Resource Advisors, LLC.

As a not-for-profit financial cooperative, MPCU is owned by its members. When you become a member of MPCU, you become an owner in an organization that is supervised by a democratically-elected board of directors. They are unpaid volunteers who represent the interests of their fellow members, as opposed to commercial banks who are obligated to act in the best interests of their shareholders. MPCU hosts, sponsors and attends many community events throughout the year, including car shows, cultural festivals, community shred days, and holiday events. MPCU's Board of Directors also award four yearly \$1,500 Scholarships to eligible our member-students in the West Michigan area.

Source: <https://www.mpcu.org/>





FOSTER THE CREATION AND GROWTH OF JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Foster the creation and growth of job training programs that link local employers with local residents.

- In addition to addressing immediate job demand and opportunities, programs should also be provided to help prepare youth for future career opportunities through early training and mentoring programs.
 - » Potential opportunities have been identified around food systems, such as a training partnership between local food suppliers (Van Eerden, Butterball, the Downtown Market, local restaurants, and urban agriculture programs.)
- Work to create jobs for both low-income individuals and the previously incarcerated
- Work to create sustainable jobs that encourage income security
- Connect people to up and coming industries while building upon the major employers already in the area
- Consider 3 major strategies for job creation:
 - » Opportunities focused on the green economy
 - » Opportunities with large employers such as Meijer that already have a jobs pipeline
 - » The growing marijuana industry (close to CID)

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- City of Grand Rapids
- West Michigan Works
- SpringGR
- Treetops Collective
- Next Step of West Michigan
- GR Baking Company
- Essential Needs Task Force (ENTF – affiliate of the United Way)
- GRCC Public Works Academy – Economic Needs Task Force
- LINC UP
- Public Works Academy

- The Salvation Army
- Realism is Loyalty
- Downtown Market
- Kent Intermediate School District
- Kent Career Training Center
- Talent 2025
- Bethany Christian Services
- Bureau of Apprenticeship Training
- Grand Rapids Job Corps
- Boys & Girls Club
- Cooley Law School
- Urban League of West Michigan
- Epic CDC
- Next Step of West Michigan
- Kent County
- Women’s Resource Center
- Grand Rapids Community College
- Ross Medical Education Center
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Take steps to research business retention solutions
 - » Take steps to research job retention strategies
 - » Identify residents that are in need of careers/job training
 - » Unify current workforce development programs under one portal for residents
 - » Establish connections and partnerships with organizations that work with individuals with a criminal history
 - » Research opportunities for certifications and make the community aware of opportunities, with a special emphasis on opportunities with low barriers

- to entry
 - » Research models of job creation that allow people to first participate in the “gig economy” to build a cash flow, before launching into a more permanent career
 - » Create an inventory of training programs and organizations

■ Mid-term (1-3 years)

- » Create a hiring fair and employer meet-and-greet that is specifically geared toward low-income individuals as well as the previously incarcerated
- » Develop an Expungement Clinic for ex-felons

■ Long-term (3+ years)

- » Continue to build upon initiatives and work towards job creation goals

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Partnerships with aforementioned organizations

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Resources are fully identified and mapped, allowing greater utilization by local residents and business owners.
- A greater number of minority-owned businesses own their own property within the neighborhood.
- Minority-owned businesses have been incubated, fostered and are successful in serving residents.
- Local and minority-owned businesses are fully connected, organized and promoted to serve the larger Grand Rapids community.
- Alternative financing options are available to and secured by local entrepreneurs and business owners.

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY





CREATE A BUSINESS SUPPORT NETWORK

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Create a business support network focused on the support and education of existing and emerging businesses along the corridor.

- Target services could include educational opportunities, assistance with business plan development, access to partner organizations, and access to pooled resources or buying opportunities.
- With long term success, a group could also transition to collateral support programs, micro-loans, or other revolving fund opportunities.
- Work to create opportunities for businesses to join small business organizations by starting out with an initial community project and then keeping connections in a formal organization. Such an organization could offer:
 - » Regular Meetings at appropriate times
 - » Networking
 - » Resource Awareness
 - » A pool of money for potential initiatives
 - » Maintenance of shared facilities
- Create collective corridor branding
- Collaboration could occur with the nearby South Division Business Association that currently operates south of 28th street

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Start Garden
- Grand Rapids Area Black Businesses (GRABB)
- Entrepreneurial Support Organizations (ESO)
- Grand Rapids Neighborhood Business Association
- South Division Business Association (28th-44th streets)
- West Michigan Hispanic Chamber
- Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women (GROW)
- LINC UP
- Neighborhood Business Alliance

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Create an event for small businesses along the corridor that will lay the foundation for an organization and future meetings
 - » Hold networking events
 - » Research collaborative branding and develop with input from local businesses
 - » Identify the needs of different business types, organizing tools, resources, and potential partners by business type to create a centralized portal of these resources
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Continue to build connections between businesses and work to secure collective funding for potential initiatives such as branding and events
- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - » Ensure the organization is funded long-term and does not dissolve as previous initiatives have

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Federal Transit Administration Rapid TOD Grant
- Membership dues from local businesses
- Potential new CID
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

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ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY





CASE STUDY: GROW'S MICROLENDING LENDING PROGRAM – GRAND RAPIDS, MI

Grand Rapids Opportunities for Women (GROW) is a non-profit organization focused on entrepreneurs at various stages of business ownership. By offering entrepreneurial training, business counseling and networking opportunities, GROW empowers women (and men) entrepreneurs to launch, advance and sustain their businesses. Whether the topic is finance, management, marketing or strategic planning, GROW offers professional, high-quality training and business counseling. GROW is one of only 110 certified Women's Business Centers in the nation and one of three in the State of Michigan, all in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration. Success stories range from builders to manufacturers, farmers to restaurant owners,

salon owners to dog walkers and health care providers to graphic designers.

GROW's microlending program is intended for small businesses that are struggling to secure traditional bank financing. The program provides loans of \$1,000 to \$50,000, although the average loan is \$21,000. Small businesses in the nine-county West Michigan region (Allegan, Ionia, Kalamazoo, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Ottawa and VanBuren) are eligible to apply. Interest rates range from 7.75% to 8.5%, depending on the loan amount.

Source: www.growbusiness.org

SUPPORTING PROJECTS

In addition to the three Priority Projects, several other ideas and actions were discussed by the Working Group and should be considered for medium- to long-term implementation. These projects are summarized below:

- » **Reestablish a strong business association.** The intent of the association is to provide representation for businesses along the entire corridor to foster a supportive business atmosphere. Collaboration should occur with the South Division Grandville Corridor Improvement District, the Southtown Corridor Improvement District and other organizations to identify shared goals and funding opportunities.
- » **Develop a business incubator space along the South Division Corridor.** This incubator could provide some form of a creative co-working space along with an on-site café/coffee shop. It could also provide rotating locations, creating temporary pop-up retail spaces in vacant storefronts. Coordination with existing informal incubators, such as local flea markets and home-based businesses, could also support the business development pipeline. Person of color/local preference is encouraged. (The 2009 South Division space was identified as a potential location.)
- » **Create an inventory of investment opportunities.** Create and maintain an

inventory of vacant properties along the corridor, including ownership information. Leverage the list to create both short-term opportunities (such as pop-up uses) and long-term opportunities for investment by local businesses or developers.

- » **Require Community Benefit Agreements with larger developers**, including a requirement to community a portion of project costs (3% suggested) to foster start-up businesses.
- » **Utilize and upgrade the 28th Street Mega Mall** on Madison and 28th to serve as a more robust incubator space for local entrepreneurs. In doing so, develop a pipeline for growing businesses to transition out of the Mega Mall building and into vacant retail storefronts along S Division.



Kind to one and other

News Safety

Put more volleyball in a park

2 MICHAEL FOOTBALL

Everyday Talk about life

Be More Kindness

I love Sp my Time in the Park every summer!

We like to play Soccer with my friends

Talk about your day

Talk about your day

we go to events we go to events

each others dogs!

Talk about your day

06.

Health, Environment, and Quality of Life

This Chapter provides a description of how the South Division Corridor Plan intends to strengthen the health, safety, and well-being of neighborhood residents. This includes:

- An overview of the **existing quality of life conditions and opportunities** in the South Division neighborhoods
- A **vision and set of objectives** to improve Health, Environment, and Quality of Life outcomes
- A short explanation of the **Priority Projects** that will help carry out the goals of the plan
- **Case Studies** explaining relevant projects in Grand Rapids and beyond

OVERVIEW

Health, Environment and Quality of Life is of paramount importance to the South Division Corridor Plan. Access to green space, clean air and all types of recreation allow community members to lead active and fulfilling lives.

Parks and Schools

There are multiple parks and schools in the South Division Corridor neighborhoods that, in many ways, embody the social heart and soul of the South Division neighborhoods and Southern Grand Rapids as a whole. One of the most popular parks in the city is Garfield Park, located in the southeast corner of the Corridor. Garfield Park often holds large community events ranging from the Plan's Kick-off Celebration and disk golf tournaments to smaller events like Little League baseball games and Storytime in the Park. Campau Park at the northern end of the Corridor is also a prominent green space. Although it is not as frequently used as Garfield Park, it is conveniently located along South Division and has significant potential to be a more effective and well-used amenity. These green spaces encourage active lifestyles and give people a chance to both socialize and exercise in one place. These reasons, among others, are why residents cited parks in their neighborhood as the single strongest asset of the community. Yet, for the size of the planning area and its large residential population, the area is still in need of additional parks, recreational facilities and other forms of active green space.

In Community Meeting 1, multiple residents stated their concern for the health of the



Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

I have lived in the area for 7 years
Love the Community Events, the park (Garfield)
is always clean and well kept.
thanks for everything

Rolanda
Swaely

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

Conbibir con la familia
X conose jente P buena como los
que estan ahorita aqui que ponan de su tiempo para
que esto sea posible. Me gustaria poder ayudarlos en
otra ocacion
Matteo Daviz I

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

We raised 3 kids in this neighborhood.
We love the diversity and proximity to downtown
Look forward to what future could bring to
area. Also like the SilverLine!

Blawinski

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

A favorite moment I can recall
would be there community parks.
I have found there is a peaceful
and family atmopher in visiting
and an ideal sternal jog around
Grand Rapids Park. Yerecia Martinez

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

Betty Dyson
I enjoy raising my family in
this community. We like hanging
out at the park.

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

me gusta soy vecinda de esta
comunidad y me gusta como trabaja
muy divistido
maria Posner

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

Una de mis cosas favoritas que
disfruto en mi barrio es mi
Iglesia San Francisco Javier y Nuestra
Señora de Guadalupe.
Gladys Paez

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

Play with my friend ~~or~~ with her sister that
had surgery on her leg.
Ewo Delgado Bani

Share your favorite moments about living, working or hanging out!
¡Compártenos tus momentos favoritos viviendo, trabajando o conviviendo!

walking, biking, + bussing
meeting people + discover
new food + stores

RESIDENT FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY MEETING 1

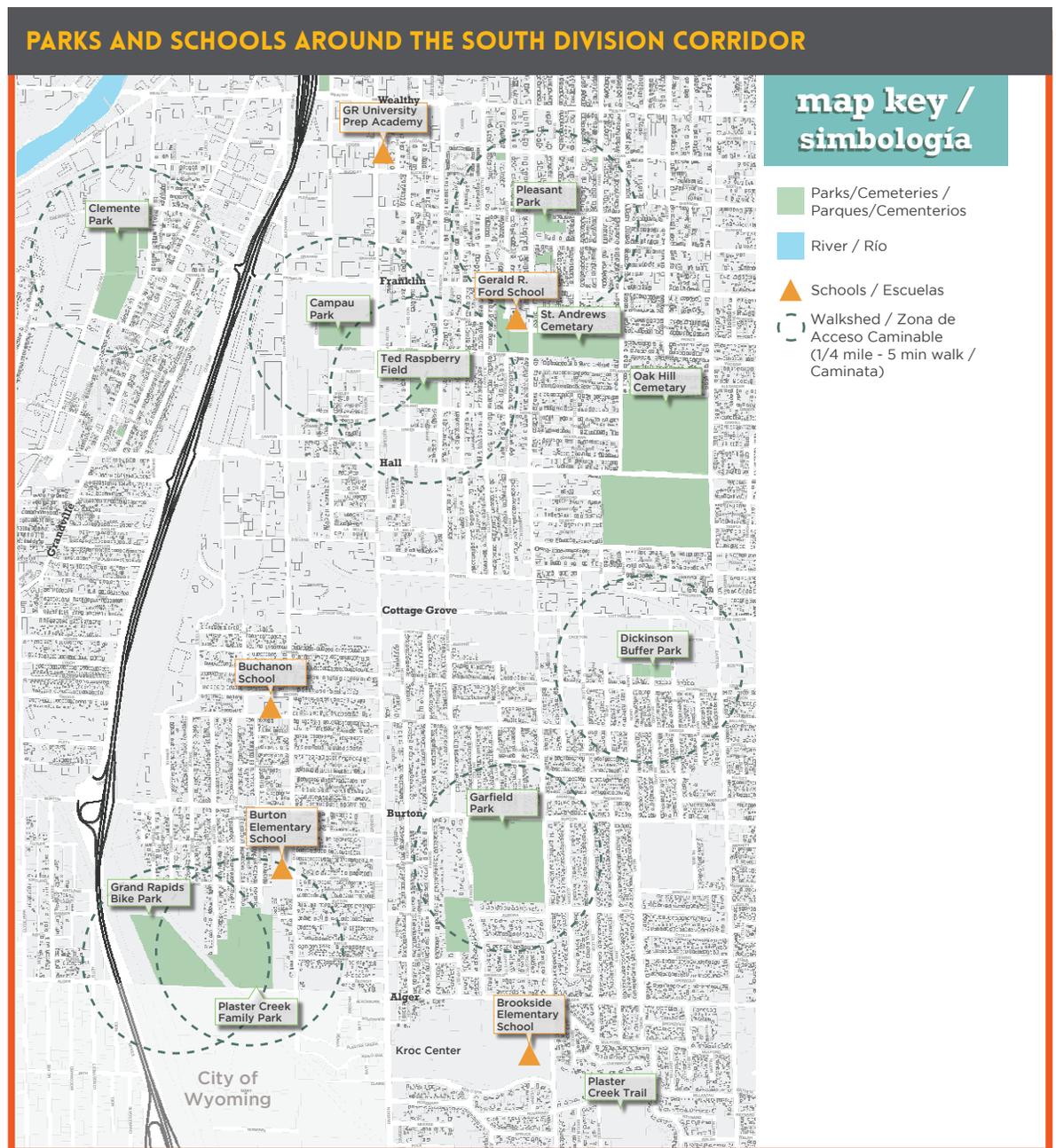
neighborhood population. Not only were food and healthcare options cited by residents, lack of adequate exercise facilities was an issue as well. Investment in all types of green space is a straightforward and common-sense approach to this problem.

There are multiple schools in the area including the Gerald R. Ford School and Burton Elementary. Residents have indicated that these institutions are integral to the community, and could benefit from updated facilities and curriculum. In addition to educating the children of South Division, these schools facilitate connections between families throughout the neighborhood. The space in these institutions is used for both education and community purposes. Despite reasonable concerns over the state of the school system, it is hard to overstate their value to the community as a nexus of social interaction.

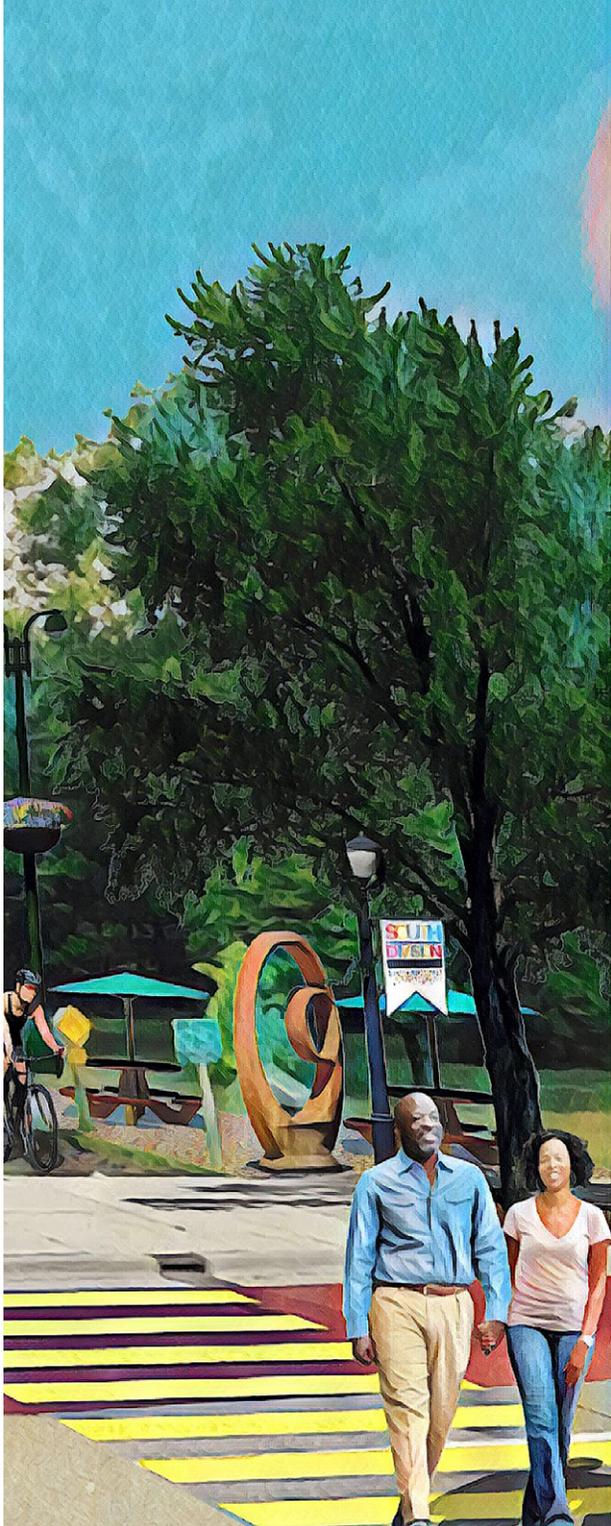
Recreation

When asked what they do for recreation and where, attendees at the Community Kickoff Meeting cited the following:

- » Play in Garfield Park and Other City Parks
- » Sports and Activities in Parks
- » Soccer, Baseball, Volleyball
- » Dog Walking
- » Hiking
- » Kroc Center
- » Children’s Museum
- » Community Gardening







VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The following Value Statement, Desired Outcomes and Priority Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement, led by the Quality of Life Working Group, and filtered through larger community meetings and the South Division Steering Committee.

VALUE STATEMENT

Strengthen the health and well-being of residents through the expansion of quality health care services, connection to a healthy and resilient environment, and community-based approach to safety and security.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- » Local residents can easily access fresh food from local groceries, farms, community gardens and other affordable sources.
- » Environmental issues, including brownfields, have been remediated, providing additional space for both recreation and new development.
- » Older homes are free of lead, asbestos and other harmful issues. Homeowners are supported in addressing these concerns and landlords are accountable to provide their residents safe, attractive and affordable housing.
- » All residents, including refugees and the Spanish-speaking population, are aware of, and able to access affordable local resources. New immigrants feel safe and secure as they become community members in the neighborhood.

- » Safety is greatly improved through better lighting, improved policing and better traffic enforcement. Police are focused on significant issues related to drugs and prostitution.

Secondary outcomes include making sure that health indicators of the local community are continuously improved. Ensuring local resources including a pharmacy and financial institution are available on the corridor as well as improved playgrounds and recreational areas that are easy to access for local families. In addition, Plaster Creek is enhanced and well utilized as a natural open space corridor and connections to the Grand River are greatly strengthened.



PRIORITY PROJECTS

The following Priority Projects are intended to be led by the City and other community partners to help promote progress. These projects vary widely in size and scope but all are strategic in their purpose to effect positive change. The Plan recommends that the community consider three projects as the highest priorities for the Health, Environment and Quality of Life implementation agenda. The Priority Projects were designed and specifically selected as catalysts for creating positive activity through interconnection of new services and uses for the South Division Corridor and surrounding community. These are projects that have the potential to stimulate the revitalization of the area and trigger positive momentum for quality improvements and renewal. The Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement and prioritized through the voting of community members, the Steering Committee and the Quality of Life Working Group. The following pages include detailed descriptions of the Priority Projects:

- » **Foster Neighborhood Initiatives for Beautification and Safety**
- » **Support Access to Fresh and Affordable Food**
- » **Recruit Health and Family Services to the Corridor**



FOSTER NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES FOR BEAUTIFICATION AND SAFETY

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Foster neighborhood initiatives that address both beautification and safety.

- Examples include:
 - » A community porch lighting program
 - » Community-based peace/violence prevention programs
 - » Coordinated neighborhood cleanup and maintenance programs
- Encourage youth participation to satisfy required community service hours
- Encourage partnerships, opportunities and events that build positive relations with the community-based Police and Fire representatives.
- Encourage businesses to play a greater role in safety in beautification initiatives, potentially as an effort of a future business association
- Work to prevent human trafficking
- Foster careers in horticulture and arboriculture, particularly among low-income and minority groups
- Investigate environmental design measures that can increase safety in the community

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Consumers Energy
- ITC Holdings – lighting program
- GRPD – set aside funds for community relations
 - » Community Engagement Unit
- Friends of GR Parks
- Ludema’s Nursery
- Amplify GR
- Exalta Health
- LINC UP
- Wedgwood
- Calvin College Plaster Creek Stewards
- Dispute Resolution Center of West Michigan

- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Local neighborhood associations

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Connect South Division to the community porch lighting program that Consumers Energy facilitates
 - » Promote and encourage youth and young adults to sign up for GRPD Youth Police Academies
 - » Research urban design measures that increase “eyes on the street” to improve social connections and combat crime in the corridor neighborhoods
 - » Research Community Police Violence Prevention, Cure Violence, and Operation Cease Fire
 - » Collaborate with the Manasseh Project through Wedgwood Christian Services. They have other connections to help with this state wide.
 - » Build relationships between the community and aggressive community actors, mediating between hostile parties
 - » Promote Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Free Safety Assessments, provided for free by the GRPD
 - » Capitalize on the city “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) program
 - » Research impacts and solutions to human trafficking and the economic impact of South Division’s massage businesses
 - » Investigate effectiveness of camera-based crime surveillance programs, taking privacy concerns into account. Possibly encourage businesses to develop their own camera systems and register with the police system
 - » Research air quality monitoring systems and other initiatives to combat pollution
 - » Form a robust working budget for beautification

- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Research and develop a horticultural workforce development program that can beautify the neighborhood, increase safety, and create jobs
 - » Develop a tree program that beautifies the street and prevents crime through environmental design
- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - » Continue to build upon and work towards beautification and safety goals

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- ITC Holdings
- Urban agriculture grant programs
- Aforementioned partner organizations

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Local residents can easily access fresh food from local groceries, farms, community gardens and other affordable sources.
- Environmental issues, including brownfields, have been remediated, providing additional space for both recreation and new development.
- Older homes are free of lead, asbestos and other harmful issues. Homeowners are supported in addressing these concerns and landlords are accountable to provide their residents safe, attractive and affordable housing.
- All residents, including refugees and the Spanish-speaking population, are aware of, and able to access affordable local resources. New immigrants feel safe and secure as they become community members in the neighborhood.
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HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, & QUALITY OF LIFE





SUPPORT ACCESS TO FRESH AND AFFORDABLE FOOD

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Support access to fresh and affordable food along the corridor.

- Work with existing businesses to support the provision of fresh, healthy food and assist in promoting benefits and availability to sustain demand
- Seek out additional outlets for the provision of fresh food, including partnership with local gardens, the Veggie Van Service (YMCA), the Community Food Club, food pantries, or other providers
- Current Community Food Club north of Hall Street is a draw for the neighborhood and beyond. It should be considered an asset going forward
- Work within the framework of existing businesses, making sure not to push out any local grocers
- Create a South Division Farmer’s Market and ensure that the market space is multi-use and accepts FFN Bucks, SNAP and EBT cards. Consider affordable delivery programs or other options to increase availability to access-limited individuals.
- Emphasize local gardens
 - » Connect with school programs
 - » Both neighborhood and back-yard gardens
 - » Target vacant properties
 - » Ensure gardens are permanent
- Potentially build upon the proposed Tapestry Square Development and the start-up food co-op it could bring to the northern end of the corridor
- Investigate Hydroponics Soil Testing Program
- Implement and expand “green roofs” where possible
- Work to empower existing grocery stores along the corridor with a wider variety of foods and services

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Dwelling Place
- City of Grand Rapid Parks and Water Department
- Urban Roots
- Van Eerden

- Treetop Collective
- MSU Extension Agricultural Program
- Life Quest Urban Farming
- The Rapid
- Fair Food Network (FFN)
- Well House
- Community Food Club/HRS
- Spectrum Health
- Kroc Center
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Epic CDC
- YMCA
- The National Healthy Corner Stores Network
- Capital Impact Partners
- Our Kitchen Table

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Investigate services connected to the potential incoming Tapestry Square food co-op, including the food options it will provide and whether they are culturally relevant to the community
 - » Investigate other grocery models
 - » Investigate providing existing grocery stores with a wider variety of food options
 - » Research school programs and vacant sites that could facilitate urban agriculture
 - » Research costs of soil amendment, fencing, etc.
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Form a gardening education program
 - » Build connections with local food distributors such as Van Eerden
 - » Research other fresh food options such as a “Veggie Van” Service

- » Identify how many households want fresh food and will patronize a local grocer. Utilizing government resources to identify market needs

Long-term (3+ years)

- » Continue to work towards fresh food goals

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Nearby universities such as the MSU Extension Agricultural Program
- Grand Rapids Public Works and Water Departments
- Nearby Health Organizations
- Michigan Good Food Fund
- Aforementioned partner organizations

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

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- All residents, including refugees and the Spanish-speaking population, are aware of, and able to access affordable local resources. New immigrants feel safe and secure as they become community members in the neighborhood.
- Safety is greatly improved through better lighting, improved policing and better traffic enforcement. Police are focused on significant issues related to drugs and prostitution.





RECRUIT HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES TO THE CORRIDOR

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Recruit new or expanded health and family services to the corridor.

- Specific needs that have been identified include:
 - › A Pharmacy (already significant market demand)
 - › An urgent care facility
 - › Medical services
 - › Affordable child care
 - › Mental health services
- Explore demand for health-related businesses and services, such as fitness centers
- Improving existing recreational facilities in Campau Park and other spaces along the corridor

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Amplify GR
- Ferris State University
- Boys & Girls Club
- Be Well Center
- Exalta Health
- Get the Lead Out!
- YMCA
- Kroc Center
- Fit for Life
- Madison Square Church/ Paul Phillips Building
- City of Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation
- Spectrum Health Foundation
- Mercy Health Saint Mary's
- Early Learning Neighborhood Collaborative (ELNC)
- The Grand Rapids African American Health Institute (GRAAHI)
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Cherry Health
- National Kidney Foundation

- Family Outreach Center
- Health Net of West Michigan
- Healthy Homes Coalition of West Michigan

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - › Investigate a locally-owned pharmacy; something further north of the Walgreen's on 28th Street
 - › Research connecting a micro-pharmacy model with Exalta, or other large organizations
 - › Identify the ratio of health and family services needed for the corridor
 - › Research the feasibility and potential locations for an affordable fitness facility, to balance out the Kroc Center
 - › Investigate the feasibility of attracting an affordable daycare center
 - › Research methods of lead paint removal and potential programs that could finance the process
 - › Research methods for defraying the costs of risk assessments
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - › Work to find investment dollars for improvements to parks along the corridor such as Campau Park
 - › Develop child-care classes
- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - › Act upon the findings of the investigative stage of the project with the goal of improving health and family services along South Division

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Grand Rapids Parks Department
- Agencies that underwrite the costs of child care
- Public school funding for programs
- Michigan Health Endowment Fund

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

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HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT, & QUALITY OF LIFE





CASE STUDY: LITTLE VILLAGE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ORGANIZATION - CHICAGO, IL

The Little Village Environmental Justice Organization (LVEJO) was founded in 1994 by public school parents who learned about the potential exposure of their children to dangerous particles during school renovations at Joseph E. Gary Elementary. After forcing the school administration to change their plans, these parents turned their attention to other issues of environmental justice in Little Village.

Since then, LVEJO worked with neighborhood youth on local campaigns against polluting factories. LVEJO soon developed a campaign to remediate the Celotex superfund site and developed a strong youth leadership development program. Led by LVEJO and PERRO, another

environmental justice group in Pilsen, the Clean Power Coalition was successful in retiring the Crawford and Fisk plants in 2012, ending Chicago's run as the only major U.S. city with two coal plants operating in its borders. This tremendous community victory represented a resounding example of community power and the necessity of community organizing. In October of 2013, LVEJO's long-standing campaign to re-establish the 31st bus route was also completed, ensuring that the neighborhood has adequate transit access for the first time in years.

Source: www.lvejo.org/about-us/history/

SUPPORTING PROJECTS

In addition to the three Priority Projects, several other ideas and actions were discussed by the Working Group and should be considered for medium- to long-term implementation. These projects are summarized below:

- » **Promote educational partnerships and activities surrounding healthy diets and food.** Examples could include Local Community Meals that partner chefs and local gardens, training to support legalization of cottage food providers, education regarding safe cooking equipment (particularly in relation to lead), and support of safe gardening practices.
- » **Create new opportunities for community gardens and green space within the community.** Establish urban farms on large open spaces along Cottage Grove or other locations, either as interim or permanent uses. Also, encourage home gardening, along with testing soils to ensure lead-free locations. Consider establishing green roof gardens in conjunction with appropriate commercial properties.
- » **Map community brownfields and develop a database of each site's status and what steps will be necessary to remediate.** Support redevelopment through education on DEQ / Brownfield Opportunities, Solar Incentives, and related economic development tools.

- » **Conduct a community-wide Health Impact Assessment to further public health and quality of life goals within the community.** Develop a review checklist for development projects and other programs to determine consistency with community health priorities, particularly in regards to improving equitable health outcomes.
- » **Develop awareness of existing community health and safety resources.** Create multilingual, informational brochures and mailers that map resources along the corridor. Offer a digital version as well.
- » **Encourage continued investment in parks and community centers to serve the neighborhood.** Connect people in the corridor to green space through trails, corridors and other green connections. Ensure parks and community centers provide programming based on resident need.



CASE STUDY: GROW - MEDICAL MILE - GRAND RAPIDS, MI

The Medical Mile began with medical-related development in the Hillside District of Grand Rapids, bordering both sides of Michigan Street. More than a decade later it encompasses an area five times larger, expanding further east down Michigan and north across Interstate 196. To assess potential problems and create solutions relating to the Medical Mile's growth, Grand Rapids City Commissioners agreed on an expansive Corridor Plan. Key issues to be resolved included an increased need for housing, easily accessible public transportation, employment and land use. In addition to The Van Andel Institute and other medical facilities, development in the corridor has included Mid Towne Village, a walkable, campus-like community. It includes a 15,000-square-foot park and more than 200,000 square

feet of building space. There is also more than 100,000 square feet of medical office space, 60,000 square feet of professional office and retail, 40,000 square feet of Chicago-style brownstone condominiums and a hotel.

A mixed-use residential building by 616 Development that includes a four-story building with 54 apartments in the top three floors and retail space on the ground floor. The thousands of people working in health care in Grand Rapids are part of the economic and technological transformation of the city.

Source: www.grbj.com/articles/89654-medical-mile-a-vision-for-change-in-grand-rapids

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07.

Transportation

This Chapter provides a description of how the South Division Corridor Plan intends to expand transportation options, improve walkability, and support an affordable public transportation network. This includes:

- An overview of the **existing transportation network** in the South Division neighborhoods
- A **vision and set of objectives** to improve Transportation mobility
- A short explanation of the **Priority Projects** that will help carry out the goals of the plan
- **Case Studies** explaining relevant projects in Grand Rapids and beyond

OVERVIEW

Transportation is a critical consideration to the final plan. Connectivity to surrounding communities is a crucial element of economic prosperity in modern neighborhoods. The Silver Line BRT is a point of focus in the South Division Corridor Plan and a special emphasis is placed on the potential for transit-oriented development.

Existing Transportation Network

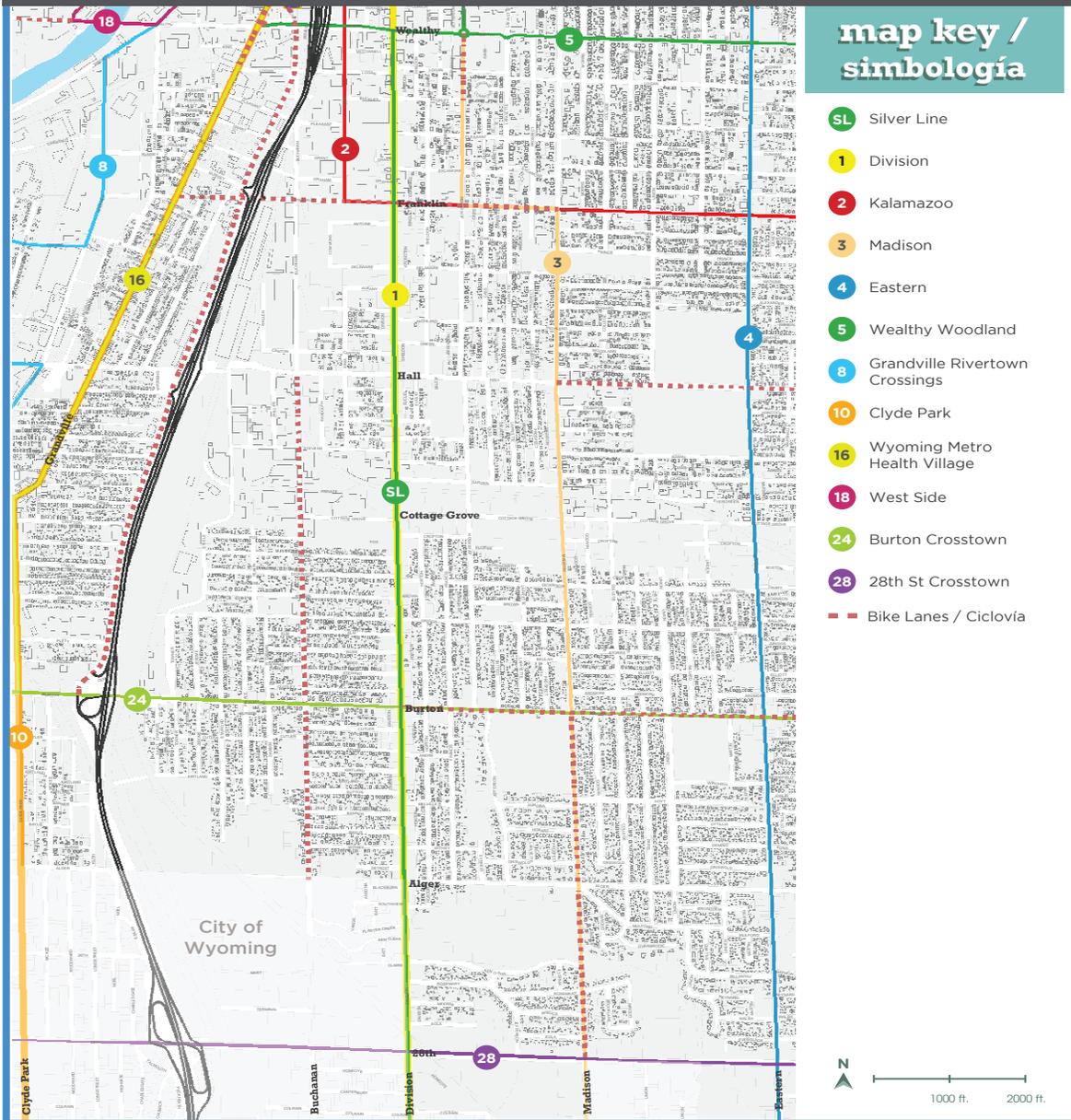
The Corridor is well located within the regional transportation network. Approximately 14,000 vehicles travel on South Division Avenue each day. Wealthy Street, the northern boundary of the Corridor, experiences similar traffic counts: at 13,000 vehicles per day. More heavily traveled corridors are located to the south and west including: 28th Street (37,000 vehicles per day) and US-131 (122,000 vehicles per day). The South Division Corridor is accessible from US-131 via interchanges at Wealthy, Franklin, Hall, Burton and 28th Streets.

The three mile Corridor is bisected by several bus routes including the Number 5, 2, 24 and 28 lines. In addition to the Number 1 line on Division Avenue, the Silver Line, a bus rapid transit (BRT) system, provides public transit along the corridor with daily boardings averaging 2,500 in 2018.

At the Community Kickoff Celebration, when asked how they get to work or school, attendees were evenly split between taking the bus and driving, with only a few mentioning walking, biking or carpooling. The balance between drivers and transit riders meant the meeting



TRANSPORTATION ASSET MAP



would yield fairly balanced and substantive feedback, while the lack of walkers, bikers and carpoolers provided the Planning Team with an opportunity to inquire as to why most residents choose not to utilize these alternative forms of transportation. The framework emphasized several key factors. Residents emphasized improving accessibility to current forms of transportation and establishing a wider range of transportation options. For example, residents called for improving the ability of elderly and disabled residents to attain transportation, as well as improving the timing and usefulness of current bus lines. Secondly, residents stated that the Plan should pay special attention to the needs of pedestrians and residents who do not have cars. For example, residents without cars are particularly concerned about timely snow removal on city sidewalks, the quality and safety of bus stops, and the quality and number of street crossings in the neighborhood.





VISION AND OBJECTIVES

The following Value Statement, Desired Outcomes and Priority Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement, led by the Transportation Working Group, and filtered through larger community meetings and the South Division Steering Committee.

VALUE STATEMENT

Promote broader mobility and connectivity, including transit, bicycling, walking and modes new to Grand Rapids - like carshare. Prioritize an effective and affordable public transportation network that supports transit-dependent communities and provides equitable access to core services and amenities, including employment, education, and health and social services.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

- » Traffic is slowed down on South Division, making it safer for residents and visitors to utilize as a stop-and-shop corridor. This is further enhanced through streetscape improvements, wayfinding and other improvements which contribute to a sense of place.
- » Residents are connected to jobs and services with transportation that can help to level the playing field.
- » The Silver Line is leveraged as a resource for the community. Land use decisions promote transit-oriented development and neighborhood investment. Residents and visitors have overcome the stigma of transit use and the Silver Line continues to see increased ridership.

- » Snow removal, especially on sidewalks, is greatly improved on South Division and local side streets.
- » Parking is well-utilized, conveniently located and priced at a level that is affordable for visitors and residents.

Secondary Outcomes

Secondary outcomes include making sure that there is a high degree of walkability and accessibility (especially for youth) into and throughout the corridor while also promoting bicycling as both a recreational and transportation alternative. Street trees are planted throughout the corridor to enhance aesthetics, create a sense of place, calm traffic, and improve walkability in the neighborhood. Safety, and the perception of safety is greatly improved for all people and residents can easily access services and amenities such as grocery stores.



PRIORITY PROJECTS

The following Priority Projects are intended to be led by the City and other community partners to help promote progress. These projects vary in size and scope but all are strategic in their purpose to effect positive change. The Plan recommends that the community consider three projects as the highest priorities for the Transportation implementation agenda. The Priority Projects were designed and specifically selected as catalysts for creating positive activity through interconnection of new services and uses for the South Division Corridor and surrounding community. These are projects that have the potential to stimulate the revitalization of the area and trigger positive momentum for quality improvements and renewal. The Projects were developed through Meaningful Engagement and were prioritized through the voting of community members, the Steering Committee and the individual Working Group. The following pages include detailed descriptions of the Priority Projects:

- » **Promote Traffic Calming Measures**
- » **Encourage Transit-Oriented Development**
- » **Improve Snow Removal**



PROMOTE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Promote traffic calming measures to slow traffic and make the area more approachable for pedestrians.

- Potential strategies could include:
 - Reduction of turn-lanes in order to establish additional landscaped medians
 - Creation of mid-block pedestrian crossings
 - Installation of bulb-outs on side streets or where they can be accommodated without transit conflicts
 - Street tree programs to slow traffic and visually narrow the corridor
- Currently South Division resembles a highway so a key goal is to encourage residents and visitors to slow down and make the corridor more livable and safe
- Improve safety on the corridor through urban design initiatives that slow traffic, reduce accidents, and encourage "eyes on the street"
- Improve enforcement of Silver Line BRT lane restrictions
- Corridor should feel fairly uniform, but flexible enough to compartmentalize design improvements since residents and business owners in each neighborhood area have different needs and desires
- Reduce center turn lanes where possible to increase the size of potential medians
- Design implementations will need to consider the active trucking route along South Division and a potential relocating route
- To emphasize the walkability of the corridor's commercial cross-streets such as Burton, link this project with the model block program and consider expanding the scope of the implementations
- Leverage the resources of the Federal Transit Administration TOD grant project to perform research and feasibility assessments

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- City of Grand Rapids departments of planning, engineering, forestry, economic development, and Mobile GR

- South Division-Grandville Ave and Southtown CIDs
- The Rapid
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Industrial firms in the South Division neighborhoods
- Businesses in area that require delivery service

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - Engage with residents, businesses and stakeholders about potential street design changes, including those that require delivery service that could be affected by changes to trucking routes
 - Investigate the jurisdictional control of Division and make an action plan for approaching groups with transportation implementations
 - Research the feasibility of truck route relocations, particularly around business areas
 - Improve enforcement of bus lane regulations that prohibit cars from using the lanes in rush hour
 - Research painting bus lanes as a deterrent to drivers and as a visual indication of the Silver Line route
 - Investigate converting South Division bus lanes into full-time transit lanes, instead of only during rush hour
 - Consider expanding bulb-outs into parking lanes, potentially as an alternative to central medians
 - Research pros and cons of paid vs. free parking schemes in corridor business districts
 - Investigate snow melt sidewalks on key parts of South Division such as in the Burton Heights business district
 - Research city forester standards for a potential street tree program
 - Develop a set of transit-focused early-action projects to build momentum

- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - Develop speed bumps on streets feeding into South Division and potentially along South Division in areas that make sense
 - Implement researched options such as the painting of bus lanes, construction of landscaped medians, sidewalk improvements, and street trees
- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - Continue to implement and develop projects

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Federal Transit Administration TOD project funding
- City capital improvement projects
- The South Division Corridor Plan as a tool to lobby for funding

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Traffic is slowed down on South Division, making it a safer stop-and-shop corridor for residents and visitors. This is further enhanced through streetscape improvements, wayfinding and other improvements and contribute to a sense of place.
- Residents are connected to jobs and services with transportation that can help to level the playing field.
- The Silver Line is leveraged as a resource for the community. Land use decisions promote transit-oriented development and neighborhood investment. Residents and visitors have overcome the stigma of transit use and the Silver Line continues to see increased ridership.
- Snow removal, especially on sidewalks, is greatly improved on South Division and local side streets.
- Parking is well-utilized, conveniently located and priced at a level that is affordable for visitors and residents.

TRANSPORTATION





ENCOURAGE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Encourage transit-oriented development adjacent to the Silver Line stops along the South Division Corridor.

- Encourage density around transit stops while being considerate to appropriate locations and scale of development that balances resident and developer needs.
- Proactively work towards goals of mixed-use and mixed-income housing. Support local businesses and economic empowerment of residents from the development process through continued operations from both strong policy and incentives.
- Increase frequency on the Silver Line and its feeder routes.
- Ensure the goals of the plan are not overly punitive of existing businesses
- Perceptions about the bus as a form of transit will need to be changed and a variety of improvements to Silver Line service will go a long way to improving negative views of the system
- In addition to service improvements, new development or initiatives will need to catalyze ridership. For example, an improved Burton Heights Business District and upgrades to the Plaster Creek trail
- Work towards driving reduction programs that ultimately drive transit ridership

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- The City of Grand Rapids, Mobile GR
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- The Rapid

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- **Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - » Begin to work towards pro-TOD initiatives such as removing restrictions that complicate station-area development, including limits on density, excessive parking requirements for special land uses, overly restrictive and/or prescriptive building codes, unpredictable entitlement timelines, excessive development fees and other similar policy changes.
 - » Research the feasibility of reducing parking needs in areas near BRT stops and the potential for establishing TOD overlays
 - » Take advantage of existing parking maximums in areas around Silver Line BRT stops
 - » Research programs and/or policies to encourage developers and employers to offer transit passes
 - » Investigate exiting overlays and the impacts they will have on potential development
 - » Investigate free fare zones in other parts of South Division and the grant funding necessary to achieve such a goal
 - » Look into Transportation Demand Management and driving reduction programs that will encourage transit and the feasibility of such programs along the South Division Corridor
 - » Research potential use of transit funding for workforce development and the placement of employers on bus lines
 - » Advocate for greater community adoption of the *Rapid Wave card*
 - » Identify household-level transit needs
- **Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - » Utilize the FTA planning grant to conduct analysis outside the scope of this planning initiative
 - » Research the potential use of CID funds to upgrade the #1 Division bus route stop areas?

- **Long-term (3+ years)**
 - » Continue to expand and build upon TOD programs along the corridor

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- The Federal Transit Administration TOD Grant
- The Rapid Comprehensive Operational Analysis

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Traffic is slowed down on South Division, making it a safer stop-and-shop corridor for residents and visitors. This is further enhanced through streetscape improvements, wayfinding and other improvements and contribute to a sense of place.
- Residents are connected to jobs and services with transportation that can help to level the playing field.
- The Silver Line is leveraged as a resource for the community. Land use decisions promote transit-oriented development and neighborhood investment. Residents and visitors have overcome the stigma of transit use and the Silver Line continues to see increased ridership.
- Snow removal, especially on sidewalks, is greatly improved on South Division and local side streets.
- Parking is well-utilized, conveniently located and priced at a level that is affordable for visitors and residents.





IMPROVE SNOW REMOVAL

PROJECT DESCRIPTION + GOALS

Improve snow removal on sidewalks, particularly within the business districts and school routes.

- Coordinate with property owners on snow removal improvements including potentially creating bulb-out rain gardens to accommodate accumulated snow.
- Explore the creation of a "snow angels" program to assist residents who are unable to remove snow due to physical limitations or other barriers.

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

- Next Step of West Michigan
- The Rapid
- City of Grand Rapids
 - Mobile GR
 - Public Services Department
- South Division/Grandville and Southtown Corridor Improvement Authorities
- Grand Rapids Area Black Businesses (GRABB)
- Community Youth Board

POTENTIAL ACTION STEPS AND TIMING

- Short-term (0-1 year)**
 - Encourage the City to more consistently and aggressively enforce the existing snow removal code, which requires property owners to promptly remove snow from city sidewalks
 - Assess feasibility of snow melt sidewalks
 - Research how nearby communities remove snow effectively
 - Develop a snow shoveling cooperative in the community funded by a business association or other organization
 - Look into hiring contractors that can shovel entire blocks, instead of individually hired contractors that shovel one small stretch of sidewalk
 - Capitalize on the Public Works Department "Hope Through Work" program that offers people

work experience and pay while also benefiting neighborhood

- Investigate bus stop snow removal policy and who is in charge of removal
- Mid-term (1-3 years)**
 - Continue to implement snow removal projects and ensure they are maintained
- Long-term (3+ years)**
 - Continue to implement snow removal projects and ensure they are maintained

POTENTIAL RESOURCES

- Potential grant for snow removal – The South Division Plan will be a good tool to advocate for grant money

THIS PROJECT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO HELP ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING DESIRED OUTCOMES, DEVELOPED BY THE WORKING GROUPS:

- Traffic is slowed down on South Division, making it a safer stop-and-shop corridor for residents and visitors. This is further enhanced through streetscape improvements, wayfinding and other improvements and contribute to a sense of place.
- Residents are connected to jobs and services with transportation that can help to level the playing field.
- The Silver Line is leveraged as a resource for the community. Land use decisions promote transit-oriented development and neighborhood investment. Residents and visitors have overcome the stigma of transit use and the Silver Line continues to see increased ridership.
- Snow removal, especially on sidewalks, is greatly improved on South Division and local side streets.
- Parking is well-utilized, conveniently located and priced at a level that is affordable for visitors and residents.





CASE STUDY: DIVVY BIKE SHARE – CHICAGO, IL

Divvy is Chicago's bike share system, with 6,000 bikes available at 570+ stations across Chicago and Evanston. Divvy provides residents and visitors with a convenient, fun and affordable transportation option for getting around and exploring Chicago.

Divvy, like other bike share systems, consists of a fleet of specially designed, sturdy and durable bikes that are locked into a network of docking stations throughout the region. The bikes can be unlocked from one station and returned to any other station in the system. People use bike share to explore Chicago, commute to work or school, run errands, get to appointments or social engagements, and more.

The City of Chicago has in recent years taken steps to address Divvy's social equity problem. These have included expanding the coverage area to more African American and Latino communities, and rolling out the Divvy for Everyone (D4E) program, which offers onetime \$5 annual memberships to Chicagoans making \$35,310 or less a year and waives the usual credit card requirement. More than 2,500 residents have enrolled through the program.

Source: www.divvybikes.com/about;
www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/divvy-study-report-bike-share-equity-breaking-down-barriers/Content?oid=27096839

SUPPORTING PROJECTS

In addition to the three Priority Projects, several other ideas and actions were discussed by the Working Group and should be considered for medium- to long-term implementation. These projects are summarized below:

- » **Improve Route 1 through improvements to transit stops and increased frequency.** Enhance high-ridership transit stops through improved shelter and seating for riders. Consider partnering with private property owners to improve stop areas. Evaluate first and last trips to determine demand for expanded bus service frequency, particularly for the high-volume northbound commute.
- » **Increase ridership of the Silver Line through physical improvements and ridership initiatives.** Improve the design and upkeep of the Silver Line stations through increased visibility, and better cleaning and maintenance. Explore changes such as greatly expanding the schedule for 15-minute frequency and the possibility of painted lanes or adding a 24-hour designation to the existing bus lanes to increase awareness and improve bus operations. Address safety concerns around buses and stops. Expand programs to educate riders on using the system via efforts like multilingual travel training in partnership with the community. Promote usage of The Rapid's recently launched Wave card, which has advantages for low-income riders and overall bus operations performance. Encourage partnerships between The Rapid, major employers and

other agencies to offer subsidized Wave card accounts on behalf of employees. Expand payment options and number of local retailers selling Wave cards.

- » **Evaluate the location and design of parking.** The overall desired outcome is for convenient and consistently available parking. On-street parking is often considered a two-prong benefit for a corridor, providing traffic calming measures and convenience to nearby businesses. Evaluate whether traffic calming measures can be improved without removing parking. Examine if there are areas where on-street parking should be removed and investigate changing the cross section of the street. Consider expanding existing pay-by-plate parking management strategies to reduce the need for meters, and analyze the utilization of off-street public parking to arrive at data-driven decisions. Create more opportunities for bicycle parking. Analyze feasible park-and-ride locations to better introduce commuters to the neighborhood and local businesses. Review potential incentives for the provision of publicly accessible parking as part of new commercial and mixed-use development.
- » **Evaluate bike access in the project area and strategically identify priority pedestrian corridors with the goal of improving pedestrian amenities and bus service in these areas.** Where needed, improve bicycle parking. Consider the potential for shared micro-mobility (e.g. bike share) as part of any improvements.



CASE STUDY: ADA VILLAGE – ADA, MI

The Envision Ada 2013 Plan is intended to give the Village of Ada, Michigan an opportunity to unify its commercial areas, celebrate its hidden river, rationalize and calm its streets, lift Ada Drive out of the floodplain, transform M-21 from a highway into a boulevard, and introduce a significant amount of compatible new housing on adjacent properties, further contributing activity to downtown.

The Plan also includes a series of design principles in order to redesign Ada's local streets. These principles are based on the idea that street life is dramatically impacted by the speed of vehicles. Any community that is interested in street life—or human lives—must carefully

consider the speed in which it encourages cars to drive in places where pedestrians are present. Having low speed limits in a village center is important but perhaps needs further consideration since most motorists drive at the speed at which they feel comfortable, not the speed that is marked. For this reason, it is essential that Village streets are engineered safely for their desired speed, including eliminating wider lanes and other inducements to speeding.

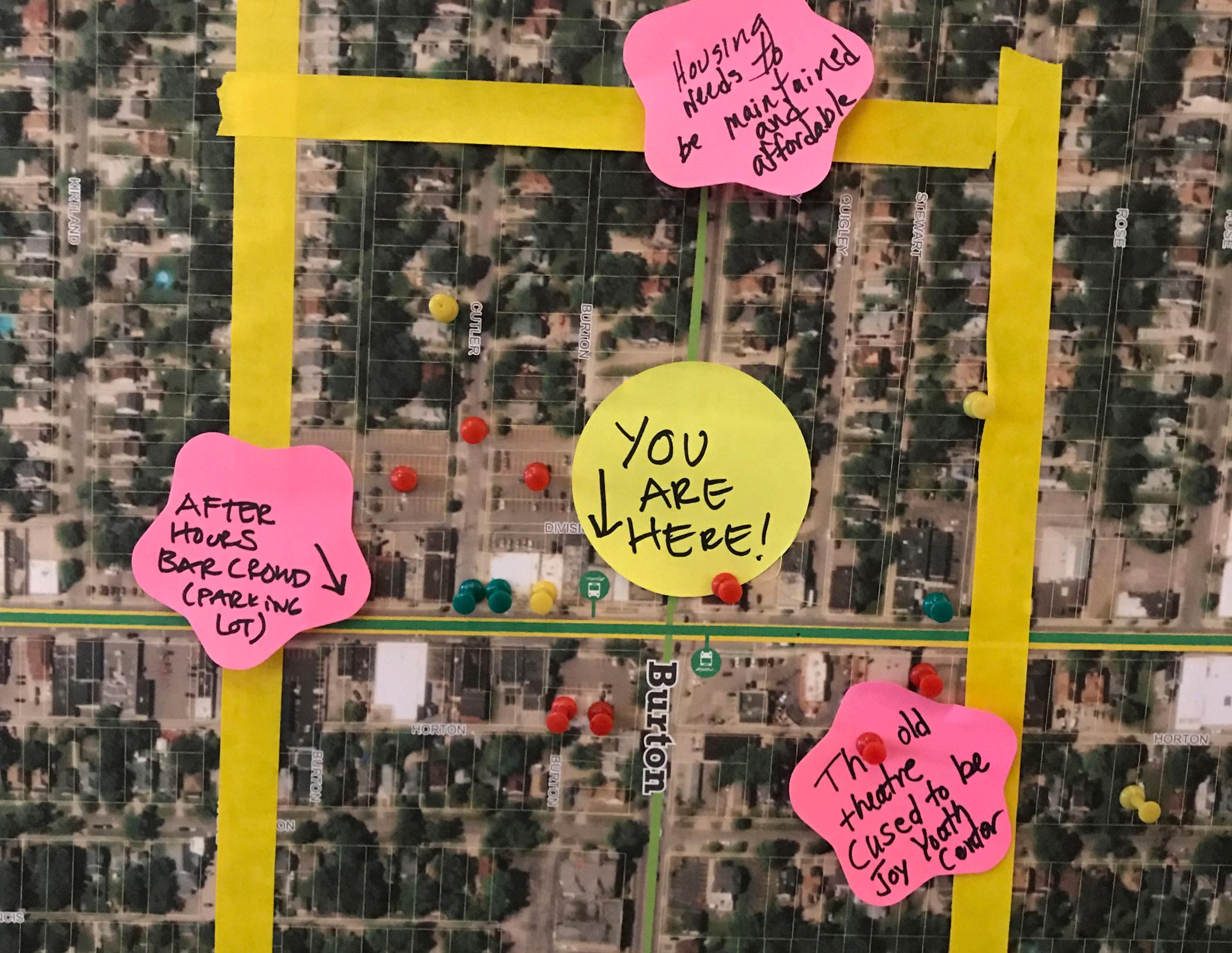
Source: www.adamichigan.org/uploads/township/FormsApplicationsPermits/EnvisionAda-Final-2014-01-13a.pdf

Housing needs to be maintained and affordable

YOU ARE HERE!

AFTER HOURS BAR CROWD (PARKING LOT)

The old theatre used to be Joy Youth Center



08.

Focus Area Visioning

This Chapter provides a description of the South Division Corridor's six Focus Areas for transformation and equitable growth. This includes:

- An overview of the **existing conditions and desired zoning and land uses** in the Six Focus Areas
- An **illustrative rendering, vision statement and diagram** of development opportunities and additional desired elements for each of the six Focus Areas

OVERVIEW

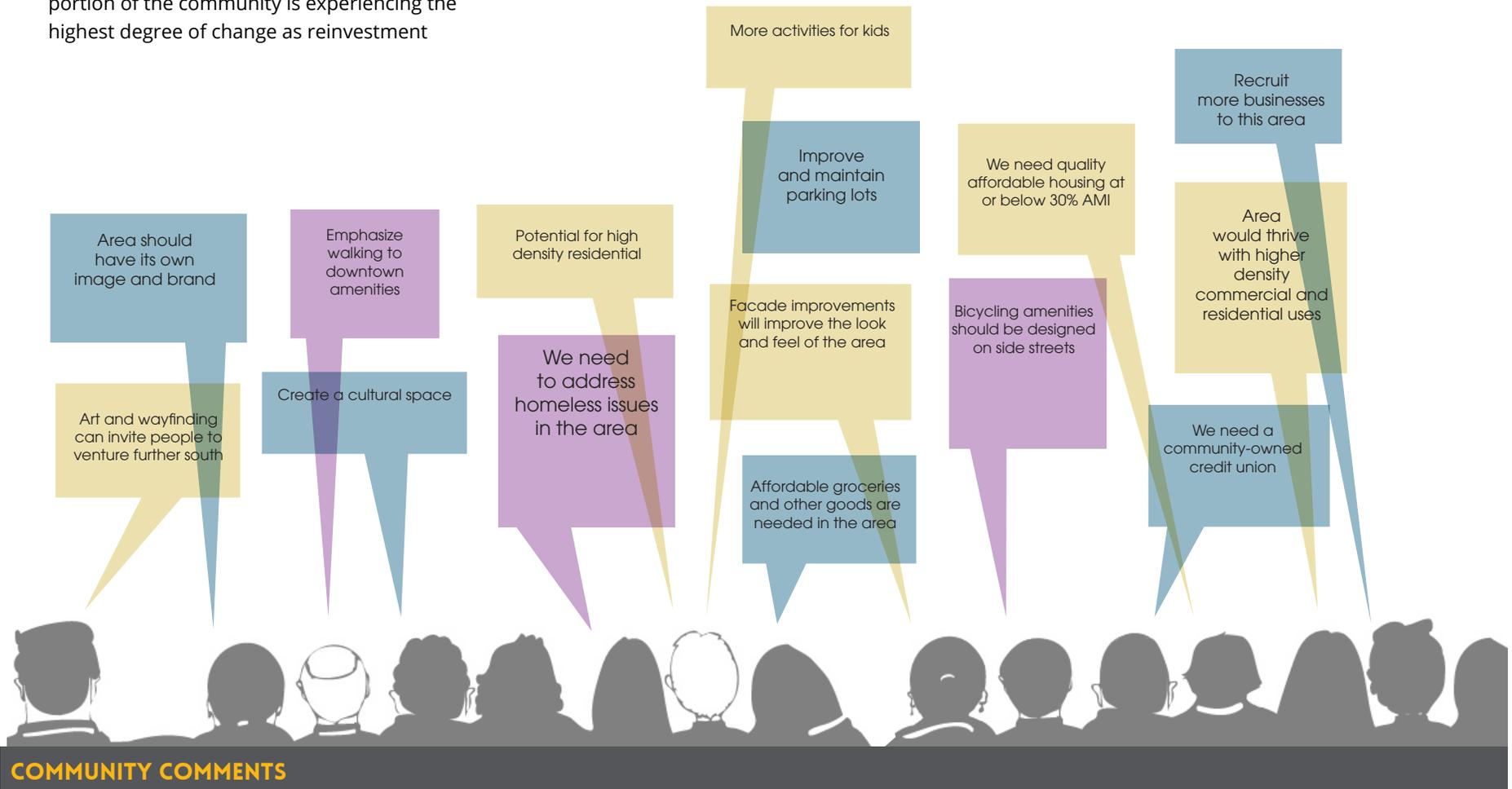
The South Division Corridor Plan is designed as a holistic development plan built around six Key Principles that define the places and people emblematic of South Division. The Corridor is three miles long and very complex, featuring a variety of land uses and development patterns. This complexity has led to an approach that addresses the challenges of the project area very broadly, while also precisely targeting revitalization in six specific Focus Areas. These Focus Areas were defined by the Steering Committee and recognize existing community patterns, such as the established Burton Heights commercial area and the possibility of developing new nodes around major Silver Line BRT stops or other assets that could catalyze new opportunities for the community. Silver Line stops are recognized as important catalysts for redevelopment and community placemaking. While redevelopment should generally fit the surrounding neighborhood context, the Plan recognizes the need for higher intensity development within transit-oriented development (TOD) areas (generally within a ½ mile radius of Silver Line stops) in order to promote a vibrant mixed-use environment. Densities and building heights should be highest immediately adjacent to Silver Line stops, tapering down to the surrounding neighborhood. Parking should be reduced within the TOD areas to promote walkability and transit use. Recommendations for each Focus Area are intended to be utilized in other parts of the Corridor that share similar characteristics. Each of the Focus Areas include vision elements based on the following:

- » **Community Comments:** Specific comments received from community members and stakeholders at meetings and other engagement events.
- » **Future Vision:** An illustrative cross section, including existing and proposed improvements to both public and private property. This figure is intended to be general in nature and reflect the desired overall quality of the built environment.
- » **Reinvestment Opportunities:** A detailed assessment of key opportunity sites and improvements within the Focus Area. Recommendations were developed through community feedback and discussions with key stakeholders to help support the vision. Each opportunity site has been coded to indicate desired future land use, occupancy and whether it could be a large or small developer opportunity. Large developers include regional builders and national real estate investors who would be looking to create significant transformative projects. Small developers include local non-profits, residents interested in real estate development and builders looking to renovate existing structures.
- » **Catalyst Transformation:** A before and after view of an important location within the Focus Area. These illustrations are meant to capture the desired community character of the area while also including public improvements to streetscape and open spaces that could help to unify the corridor and link residents to amenities.

FOCUS AREA 1 - SOUTH DIVISION & WEALTHY

Focus Area 1 includes the area just south of Wealthy Street, the traditional edge of Downtown Grand Rapids. It currently contains several new and planned projects, including the large mixed-use Tapestry Square project and the Downtown Market. The area also contains several important community services including the Grand Rapids University Preparatory Academy, the Grand Rapids Buddhist Temple and Zen Center and City Life Church. Of all the Focus Areas, this portion of the community is experiencing the highest degree of change as reinvestment

from Downtown spreads southward. Focus Area 1 is envisioned as an area well connected to Downtown with spaces for small local entrepreneurs and workforce development within a mix of new and renovated buildings.



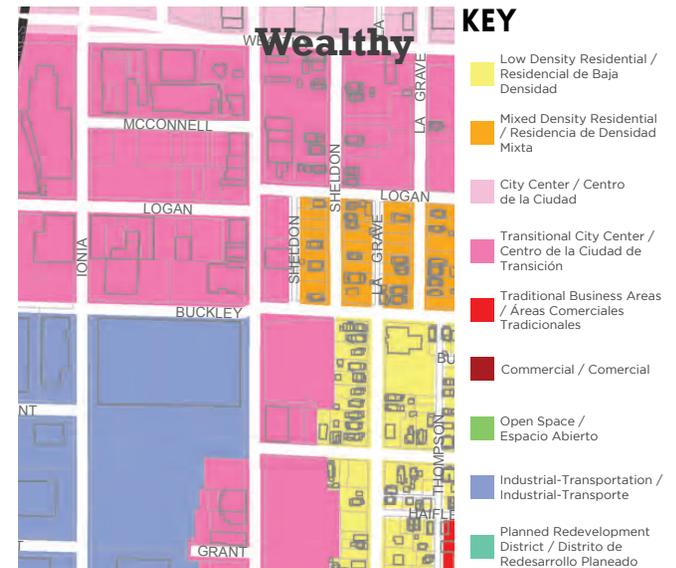
ZONING & LAND USE

Current zoning designations and their land use implications are described below:

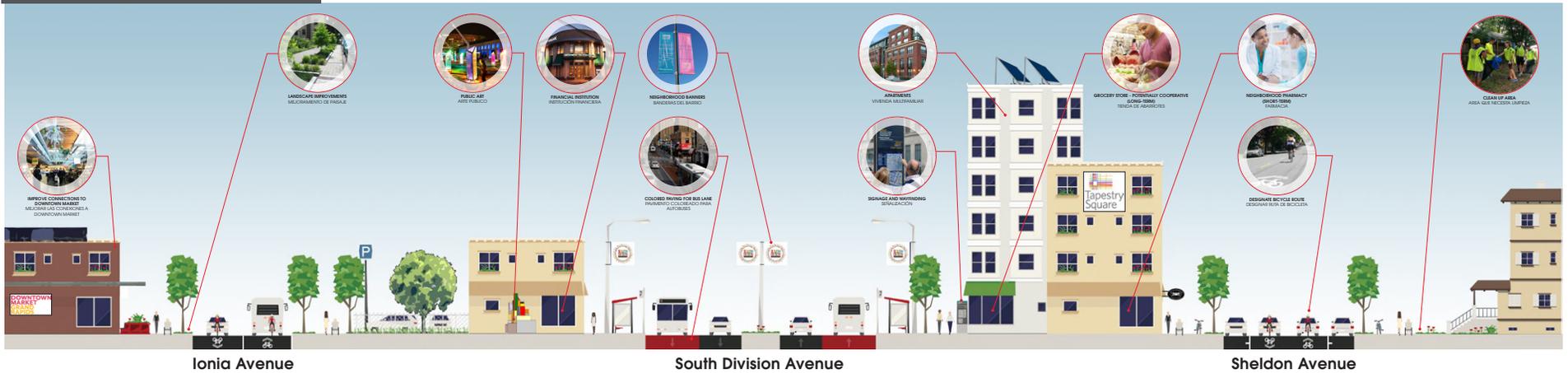
- » The majority of this Focus Area is zoned TCC: Transitional City Center. The Transitional City Center District is the buffer district between the dense City Center Zone District and surrounding near-downtown neighborhoods. This District provides a transition in the intensity of the downtown development pattern for adjacent areas, however, it allows for more development than would ordinarily be allowed in general neighborhood commercial locations.
- » The southeast corner of South Division and Wealthy is designated as TOD: Transit Oriented Development. The TOD District is intended to preserve and create, compact, walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use centers in existing commercial areas by encouraging the clustering of ground floor retail as shopping destinations and other neighborhood activity. The TOD District is located on a transit route and may contain public spaces for shared activities. Building height, density and parking incentives are provided to encourage transit ridership.
- » The southwestern portion of the Focus Area is designated SD-IT: Special District - Industrial Transportation. The Industrial-Transportation Districts (IT) are established to reflect the goals and objectives of the City's Master Plan for a wide range of

light industrial and manufacturing uses, heavy manufacturing and processing of raw materials. Regulated adult uses are included within this Zone District to protect the character and integrity of nearby residential neighborhoods and family-oriented institutions, such as places of worship and recreational facilities. Reasonable protection of adjacent land uses is also an important component of this Special District. Typical light industrial uses are permitted within this Zone District, while typical heavy industrial uses shall be considered as Special Land Uses.

- » A portion of the Focus Area, between Logan and Buckley Streets, is designated TN-MDR: Mixed Density Residential. The TN-MDR District is intended to provide a variety of housing choices in a spatially diverse manner while protecting established development patterns. Mixed-density neighborhoods are generally found along transit routes, near business districts and along major streets. They often act as a transition between lower density residential development and non-residential uses. Redevelopment shall remain consistent with this pattern of development. The redevelopment of former commercial sites is a significant objective through context sensitive architectural designs and features common to the area.
- » The blocks between Buckley and Pleasant Streets are currently designated



RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS



TN-LDR: Low Density Residential. The TN-LDR District is intended to protect established development patterns, consisting predominantly of medium-low density residential development in the form of detached single-family houses and two-family dwellings sited on individual lots. Pockets of medium- to high-density residential development are generally found along transit routes, near business districts and along major streets. The redevelopment of sites shall remain consistent with this pattern of development.

Recommendations

These designations are generally consistent with the vision for the Focus Area. The Plan recommends potentially redesignating the TN-LDR area to TN-MDR to encourage slightly more intense development within close walking distance of Silver Line BRT stops. Over time, portions of the SD-IT: Special District - Industrial

Transportation closest to South Division should be evaluated for redesignation to TCC: Transitional City Center or TOD: Transit Oriented Development.

Potential redevelopment sites were defined through the following criteria in order to align with the goals of the Development Without Displacement Principle:

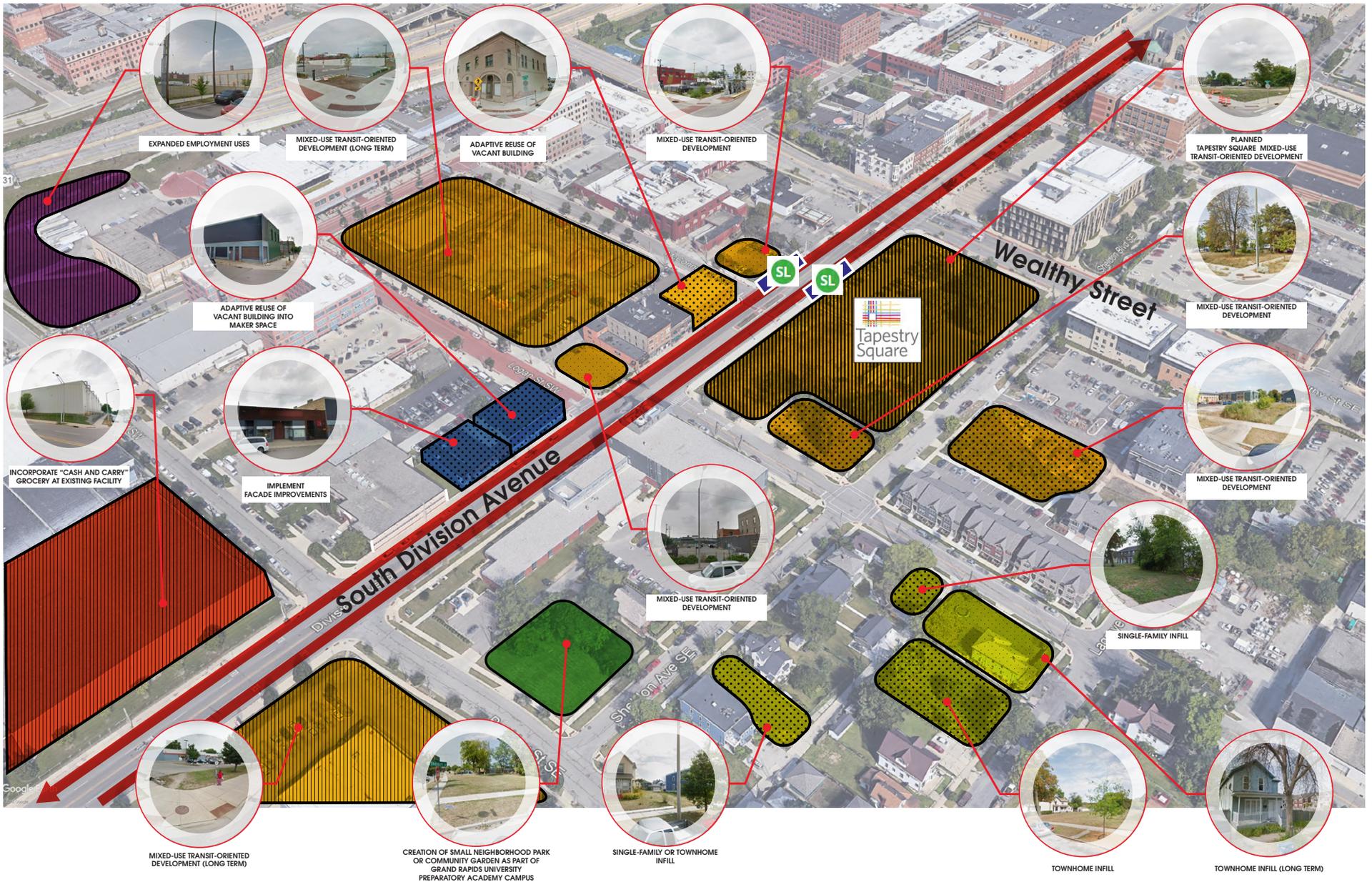
- » Large Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with greater capacities to hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.
- » Small Developer Currently Planned:

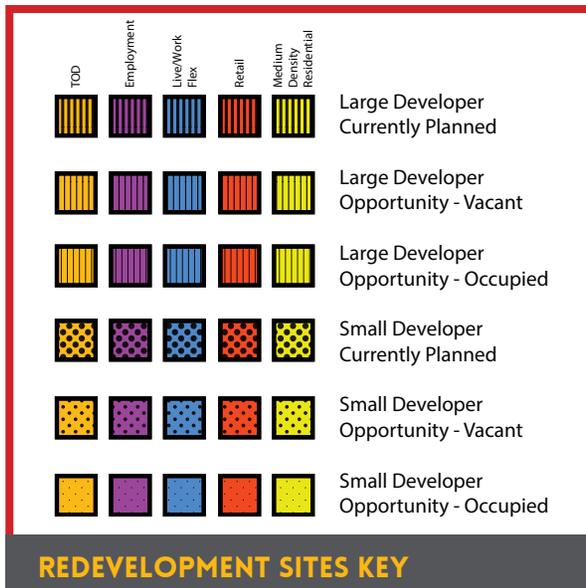




DIVISION, FROM BUCKLEY TO LOGAN (LOOKING WEST) - PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES





- Includes sites with smaller capacities to hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single business) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped

with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Focus Area has a balance of small and large developer opportunities, including potential transit-oriented development sites, live/work flex space in existing buildings and medium density residential near the intersection of Logan Street and La Grave Avenue. The Division and Wealthy Focus Area could generally accommodate between 300 – 400 units of housing on vacant and underutilized sites. As additional residential development occurs, it will be critical to designate space for parks and recreation. The Plan recommends the creation of a small neighborhood park or community garden as part of the Grand Rapids University Preparatory Academy Campus. A grocery store is highly desired in this area to serve both existing and new residents and should be pursued as part of larger redevelopment plans. In order to provide greater access to fresh food, another recommended option is to work with Van Eerden Foodservice, a major employer, to investigate the creation of a “cash and carry” grocery concept. Doing so could open their existing building to the

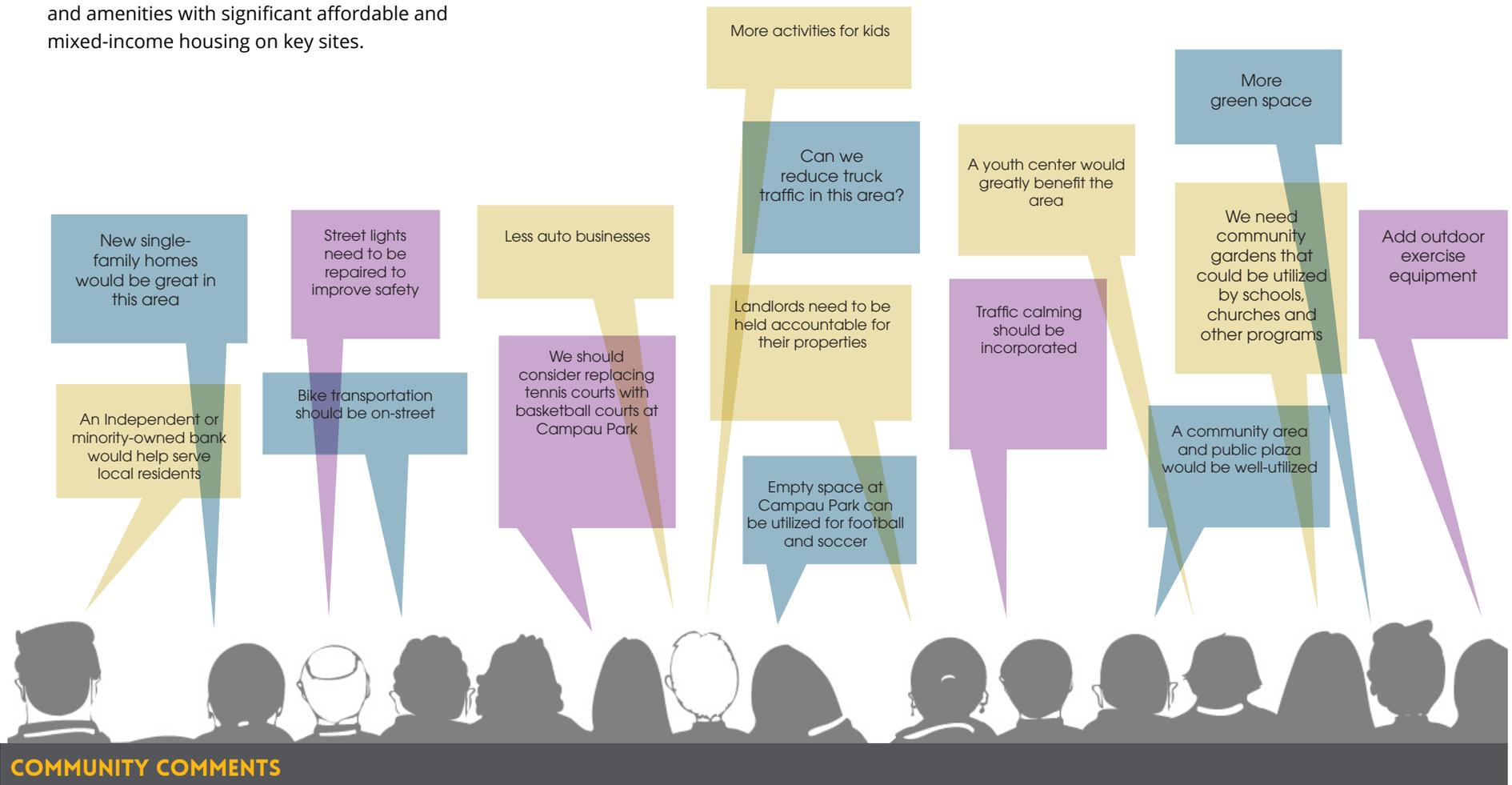
public.

ADDITIONAL DESIRED ELEMENTS

Additional desired elements include fostering ongoing neighborhood cleanup efforts, as well as improving landscape and pedestrian connections to the Downtown Market. Doing this could help make the Market more accessible and usable to the surrounding community. The incorporation of public art on new and existing buildings should be encouraged to reflect the rich culture of the neighborhood. Renovated and new buildings could include needed uses such as a business incubator space and a job training center. A financial institution and a pharmacy are highly desired by local residents and could be incorporated within new developments to the area. Public improvements should focus on improving safety through new crosswalks and the painting of the Silver Line bus lanes while also promoting positive community identity through neighborhood banners and signage and wayfinding. Bicycle routes should be focused on side streets like Sheldon and Ionia Avenues due to the high volume of traffic and transit routes along South Division Avenue.

FOCUS AREA 2 - SOUTH DIVISION & CAMPAU PARK

Focus Area 2 contains a high percentage of affordable and public housing units (Campau Commons), along with significant community resources such as Campau Park, the State of Michigan Department of Human Services, New Hope Baptist Church, United Methodist Community House, St. Luke AME Zion Church, Covenant House Academy and Great Lakes EMS Academy. Focus Area 2 is envisioned as a park-focused area with improved gathering spaces and amenities with significant affordable and mixed-income housing on key sites.



ZONING AND LAND USE

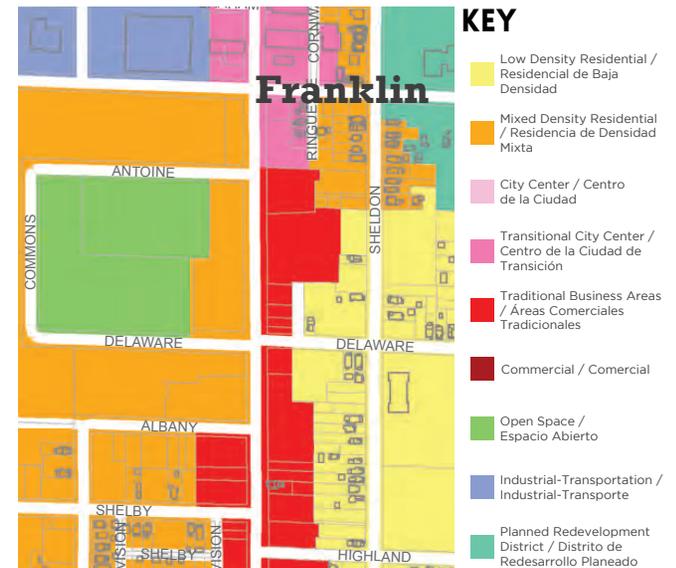
Current zoning designations and their land use implications are described below:

Within this Focus Area, the majority of areas west of South Division, are designated TN-MDR: Mixed Density Residential. The TN-MDR District is intended to provide a variety of housing choices in a spatially diverse manner while protecting established development patterns. Mixed-density neighborhoods are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. They often act as a transition between lower density residential development and non-residential uses. Redevelopment shall remain consistent with this pattern of development. The redevelopment of former commercial sites is a significant objective through context sensitive architectural designs and features common to the area.

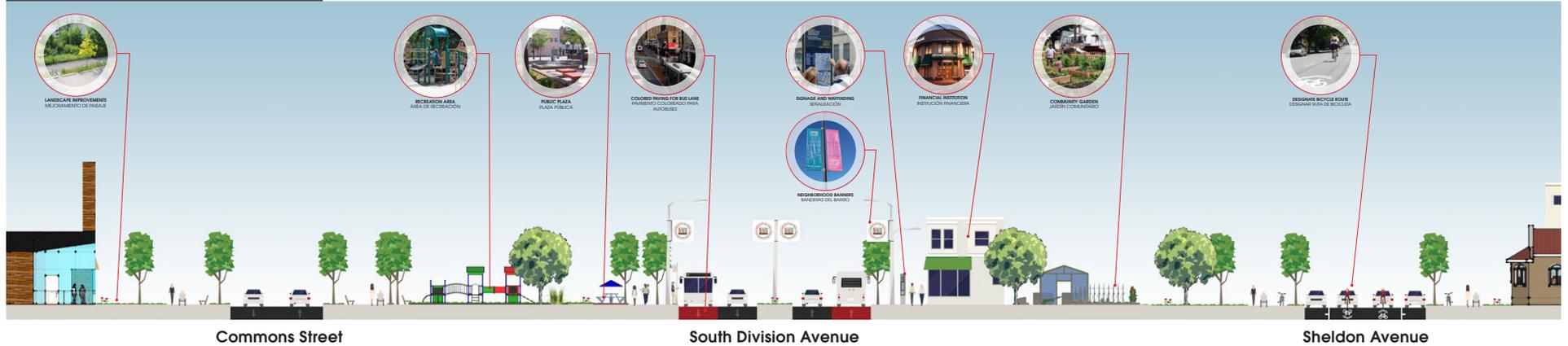
- » Campau Park is designated SD-OS: Special District - Open Space. The SD-OS District is intended to accommodate natural or park-like settings and preserve selected open space land and uses from development pressures. This Special District is intended for public or private purposes and may include parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, wetlands, floodplains and natural areas.
- » The far southeast corner of Franklin and South Division is zoned TCC: Transitional City Center. The Transitional City Center District is the buffer district between the dense City Center Zone District

and the surrounding near-downtown neighborhoods. This District provides a transition from the intensity of the downtown development pattern to adjacent areas. However, it also allows for more development than would ordinarily be allowed in general neighborhood commercial locations.

- » The remainder of the eastern frontage of South Division is designated TN TBA: Traditional Business Area. The TN-TBA District is designed to reinforce a pedestrian and transit friendly environment in a compact area characterized by a mix of uses. New development on primary and secondary street frontages shall be compatible in use and scale with surrounding, existing uses and structures.
- » A portion of the northern Sheldon Street area is designated TN-MDR: Mixed Density Residential. The TN-MDR District is intended to provide a variety of housing choices in a spatially diverse manner while protecting established development patterns. Mixed-density neighborhoods are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. They often act as a transition between lower density residential development and non-residential uses. Redevelopment shall remain consistent with this pattern of development. The redevelopment of former commercial sites is a significant objective through context sensitive architectural designs and features common to the area.



RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS



- » The remainder of the blocks of Sheldon Street are currently designated TN-LDR: Low Density Residential. The TN-LDR District is intended to protect established development patterns, consisting predominantly of medium-low density residential development in the form of detached single-family houses and two-family dwellings sited on individual lots. Pockets of medium-to high-density residential development are generally found along transit routes, near business districts and along major streets. The redevelopment of sites shall remain consistent with this pattern of development.

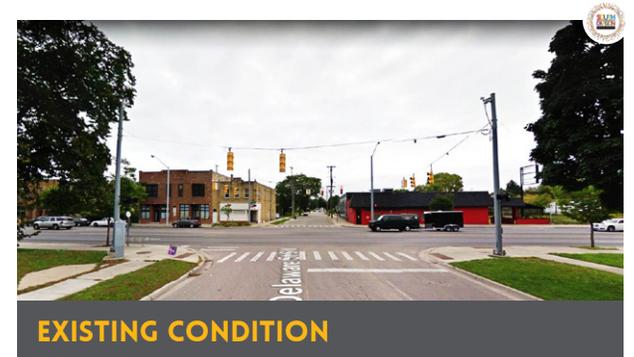
Recommendations

These designations are generally consistent with the vision for the Focus Area. The Plan recommends potentially redesignating additional open space around Campau Park to SD-OS: Special District - Open Space to preserve and

expand recreational opportunities. In addition, The TN-LDR area along Sheldon Street may transition over time to TN-MDR to encourage slightly more intense development within close walking distance of Silver Line BRT stops.

Potential redevelopment sites were defined through the following criteria in order to align with the goals of the Development Without Displacement Principle:

- » Large Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with greater capacities to hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Large Developer Opportunity - Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and



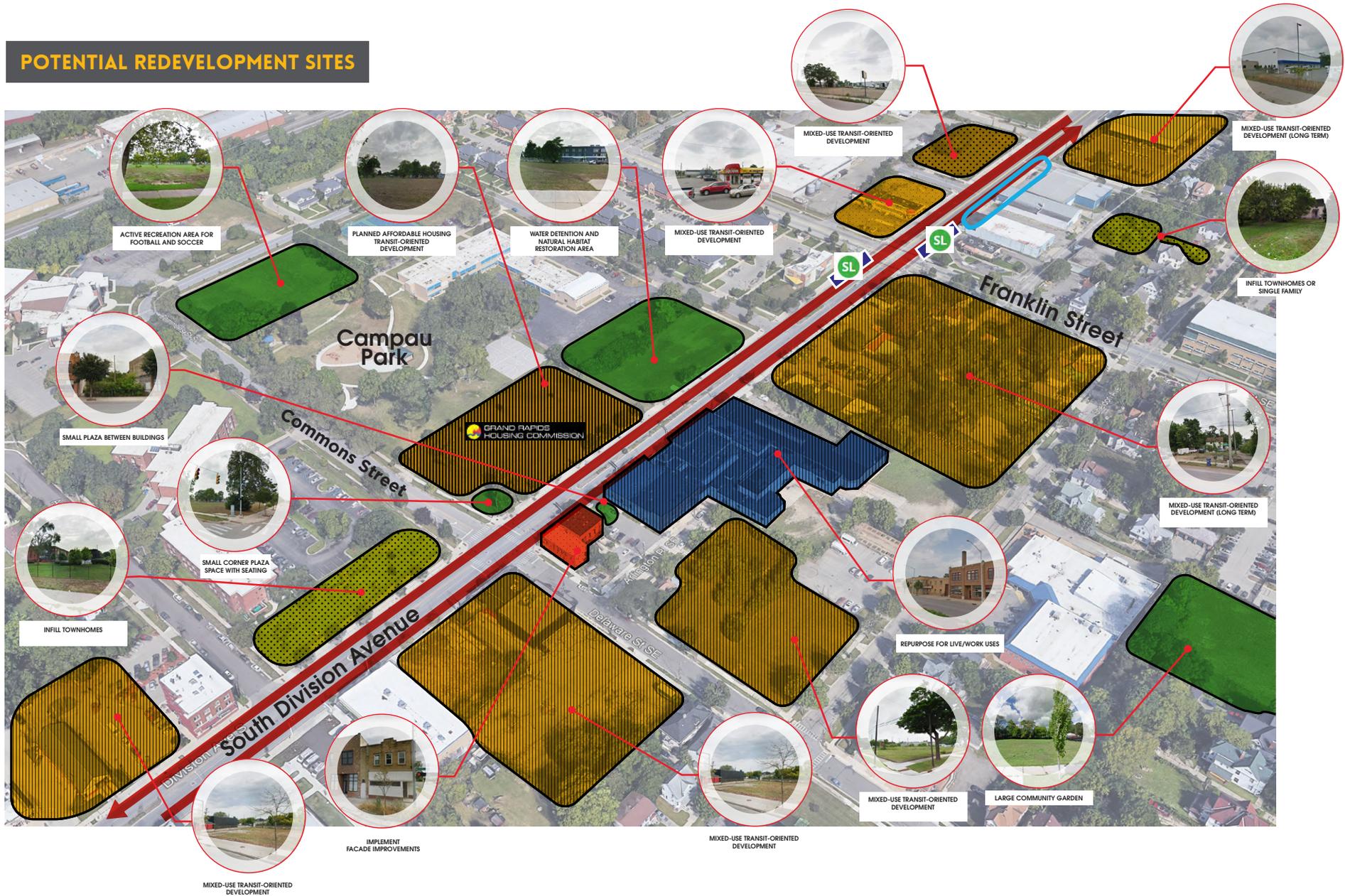
complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.

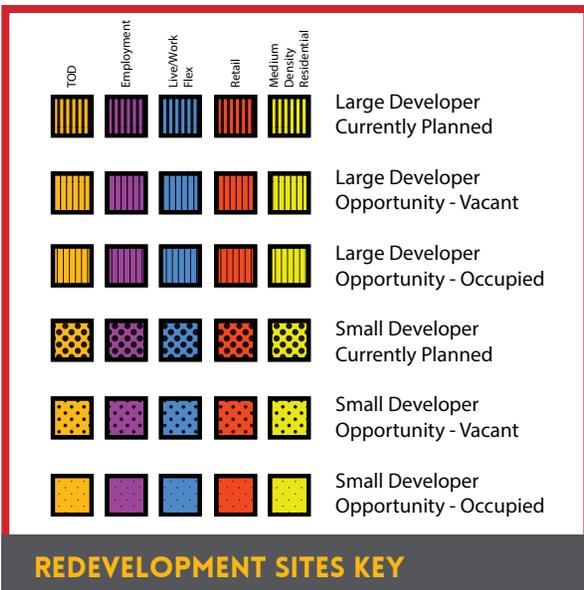
- » Large Developer Opportunity - Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.



INTERSECTION OF DIVISION & COMMONS ST (LOOKING EAST)- PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES





- » Small Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with smaller capacities to hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single business) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Small Developer Opportunity - Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.

- » Small Developer Opportunity - Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Focus Area's most notable amenity is Campau Park. Residents indicated that they would like to see additional park improvements with gardens and a plaza so it could be a stronger hub of commerce and social activity for the South Division Corridor. In addition to open space improvements, Focus Area 2 contains a significant number of potential development sites, which, because of their size and complexity, are primarily oriented to larger residential developers. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission is currently planning additional public housing adjacent to Campau Park, which will bring more residents to the area. It is estimated that housing growth, including transit-oriented development and medium density residential, could include up to 400-500 units, making this the Focus Area with the highest residential development potential. Along with residential development, there is an opportunity to repurpose the GR Baking Company building into live/work spaces.

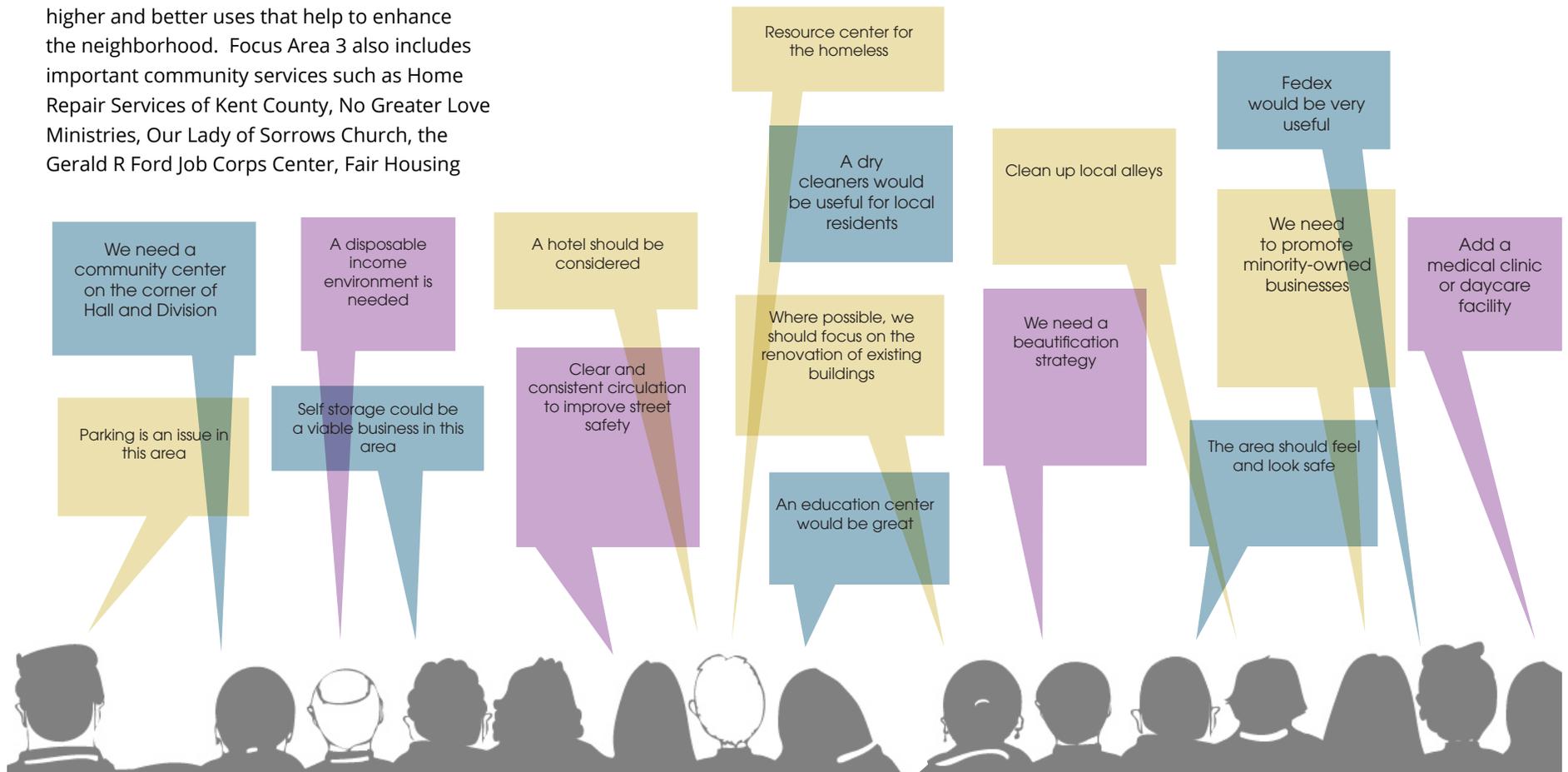
ADDITIONAL DESIRED ELEMENTS

Additional desired elements include significant landscape and recreation improvements in and around Campau Park, particularly to the ballfields on the west side of the Park. In order to create a gathering place for the community, the creation of a small public plaza at Commons Street and South Division is recommended. Façade improvements to the remaining small mixed-use buildings at the northeast corner of Delaware and South Division will help preserve local heritage while enhancing the neighborhood's appearance. Public improvements should enhance the function of the Silver Line BRT and include neighborhood banners, signage and wayfinding. Bicycle routes should be incorporated on Sheldon Avenue east of South Division. The community would also like to see a large community garden installed on vacant or underutilized property within the Focus Area to provide additional fresh food options along with food production training.

FOCUS AREA 3 - SOUTH DIVISION & HALL

Focus Area 3 is located in the center of the South Division Corridor and includes a large number of potential medium-to-small redevelopment sites, many of which many auto repair service and tire shops. Residents have mentioned on several occasions that the presence of these auto-oriented businesses is holding the neighborhood back. As the Corridor transforms over time, many of these auto businesses may transition out of the area to provide space for higher and better uses that help to enhance the neighborhood. Focus Area 3 also includes important community services such as Home Repair Services of Kent County, No Greater Love Ministries, Our Lady of Sorrows Church, the Gerald R Ford Job Corps Center, Fair Housing

Center of West Michigan and the Lamb of God Church. Focus Area 3 is envisioned as a beautified hub for community-serving uses including a potential pharmacy and bank with new transit-oriented development.



ZONING AND LAND USE

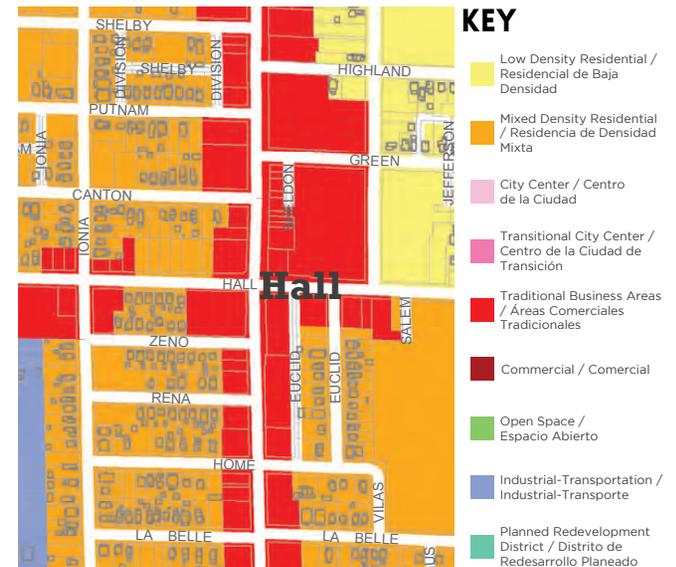
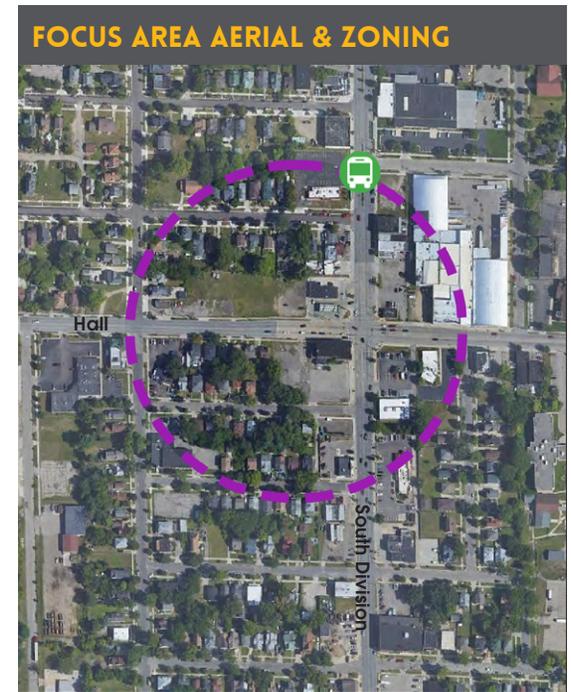
Current zoning designations and their land use implications are described below:

- » The majority of the Focus Area is designated TN-TBA: Traditional Business Area. The TN-TBA District is designed to reinforce a pedestrian and transit friendly environment in a compact area characterized by a mix of uses. New development on primary and secondary street frontages shall be compatible in use and scale with surrounding, existing uses and structures.
- » Western and eastern portions of the Focus Area are designated TN-MDR: Mixed Density Residential. The TN-MDR District is intended to provide a variety of housing choices in a spatially diverse manner while protecting established development patterns. Mixed-density neighborhoods are generally found along transit routes, near business districts and along major streets. They often act as a transition between lower density residential development and non-residential uses. Redevelopment shall remain consistent with this pattern of development. The redevelopment of former commercial sites is a significant objective through context sensitive architectural designs and features common to the area.
- » The far northeast portion of the Focus Area is designated TN-LDR: Low Density Residential. The TN-LDR District is intended

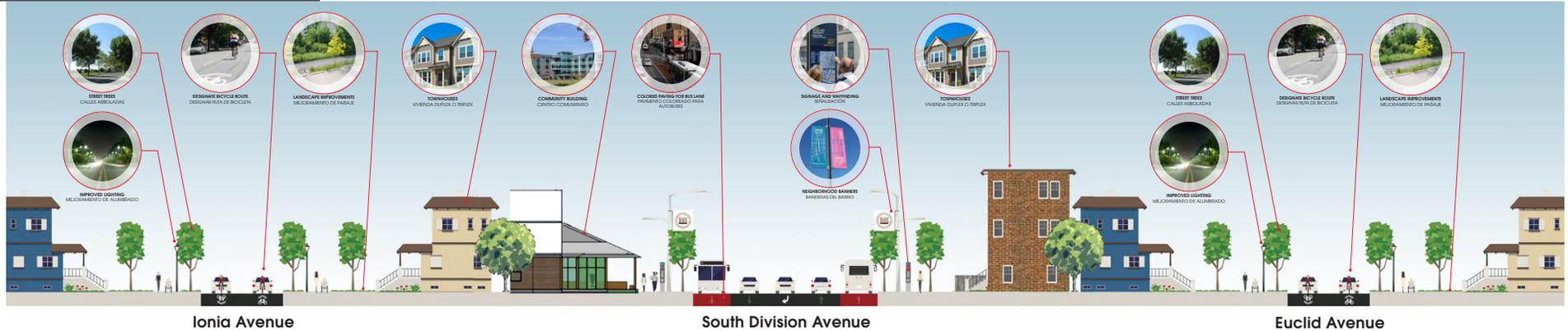
to protect established development patterns, consisting predominantly of medium- to low-density residential development in the form of detached single-family houses and two-family dwellings sited on individual lots. Pockets of medium- to high-density residential development are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. Redevelopment sites shall remain consistent with this pattern of development.

Recommendations

These designations are generally consistent with the vision for the Focus Area. The Plan recommends potentially redesignating the TN-LDR area in the northeast area of the Focus Area over time to TN-MDR to encourage slightly more intense development within close walking distance of Silver Line BRT stops.



RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS



Potential redevelopment sites were defined through the following criteria in order to align with the goals of the Development Without Displacement Principle:

- » Large Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with greater capacities to hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with greater capacities to potentially

hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.

- » Small Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with smaller capacities to hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single business) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped



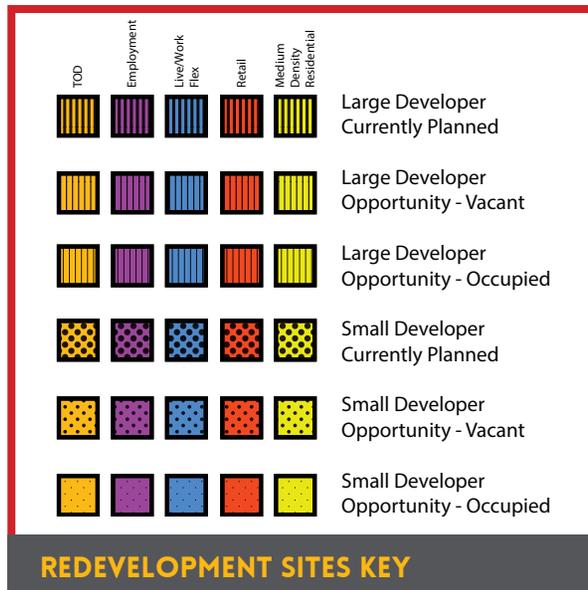
with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.



INTERSECTION OF DIVISION & HALL (LOOKING SOUTHWEST) - PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES



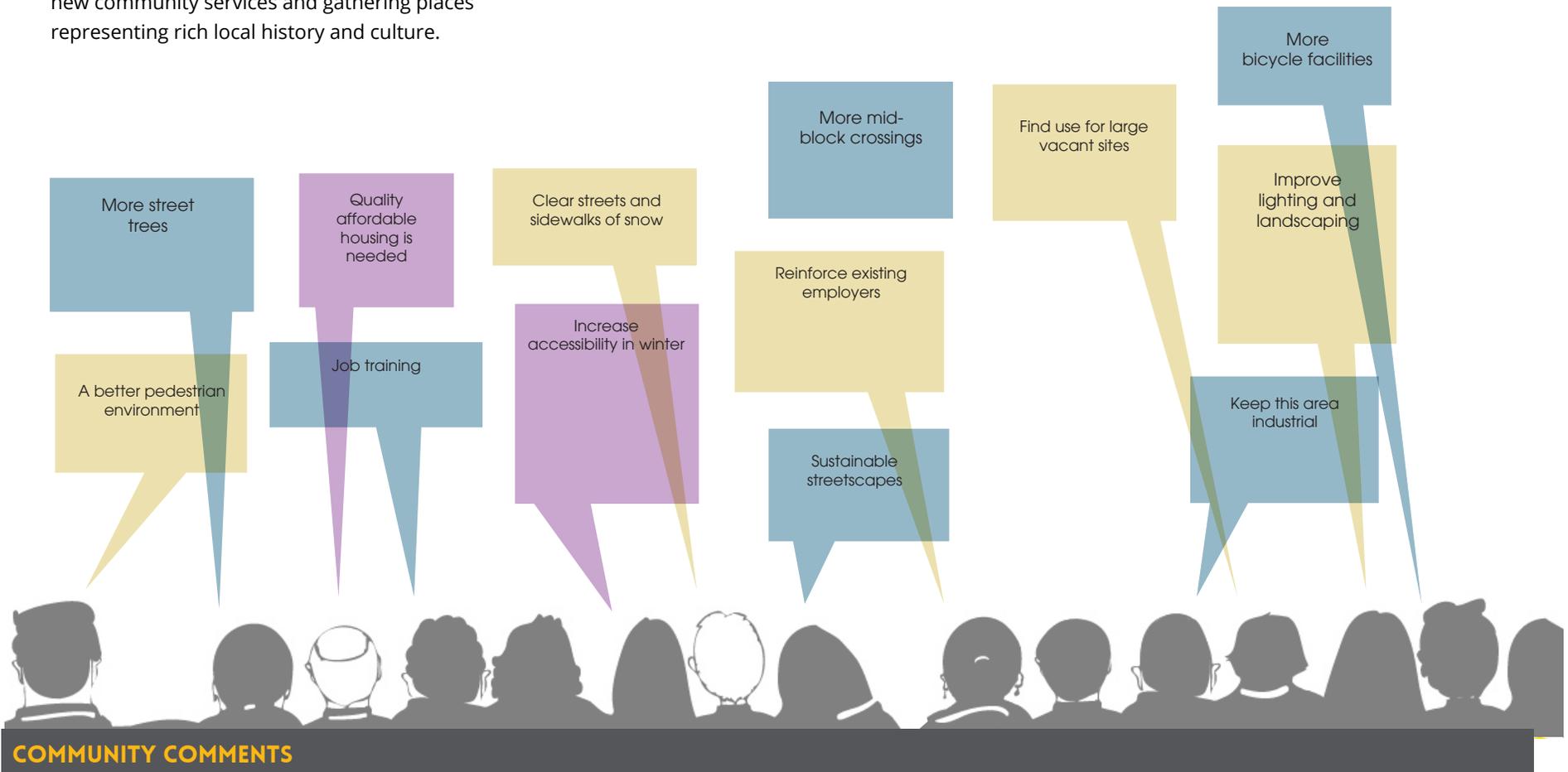


DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Redevelopment opportunities include transit-oriented development sites along South Division, live/work flex sites along Hall Street and South Division, retail sites within existing buildings north of Hall and employment uses at the western edge of the area. The large vacant and blighted building at the southwest corner of Hall and South Division is envisioned to include a financial institution and/or pharmacy to help provide needed services to the community. The Focus Area could eventually include up to 100-200 residential units, as well as significant square footage for other uses. Residents would like to see improved lighting, additional street trees and other landscape improvements throughout the area. New bicycle routes are desired on streets parallel to South Division, including Ionia and Euclid Avenues, while townhomes are the desired housing type along these residential corridors. New community spaces are highly desired, either as stand-alone facilities or within mixed-use or live/work environments. Signage and wayfinding, neighborhood banners, painted bus lanes and improved crosswalks are necessary to make the area safer, more attractive and more pedestrian friendly.

FOCUS AREA 4 - SOUTH DIVISION & COTTAGE GROVE

Division and Cottage Grove is a traditional manufacturing and light industrial hub for the South Division Corridor. As such, it includes a number of significant employers: Pridgeon & Clay, Notions Marketing Corp, Vi-Chem Corporation / Americhem, Nemic Industrial Supply and 20/20 Printing. The Focus Area also includes important community services such as The Salvation Army and the Boys and Girls Club. Focus Area 4 is envisioned as a mixed employment district with significant new community services and gathering places representing rich local history and culture.



ZONING AND LAND USE

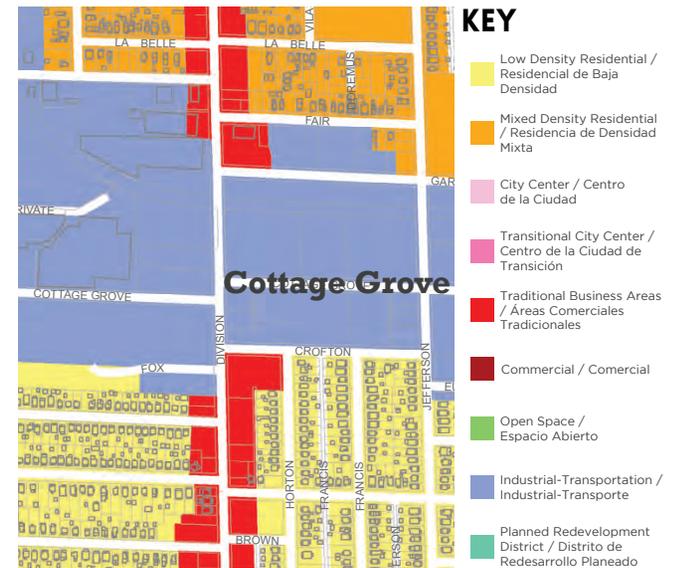
Current zoning designations and their land use implications are described below:

- » The majority of the Focus Area is designated SD-IT: Special District - Industrial Transportation. The Industrial-Transportation Districts (IT) are established to reflect the goals and objectives of the City's Master Plan for a wide range of light industrial and manufacturing uses, heavy manufacturing and processing of raw materials. Regulated adult uses are included within this Zone District to preserve the character and integrity of adjacent residential neighborhoods and family-oriented institutions, such as places of worship and recreation. Reasonable protection of adjacent land uses is also an important component of this Special District. Typical light industrial uses are permitted within this Zone District, while typical heavy industrial uses shall be considered as Special Land Uses.
- » South of Crofton Street, the portions of the Focus Area along South Division are designated TN TBA: Traditional Business Area. The TN-TBA District is designed to reinforce a pedestrian and transit friendly environment in a compact area characterized by a mix of uses. New development on primary and secondary street frontages shall be compatible in use and scale with surrounding, existing uses and structures.

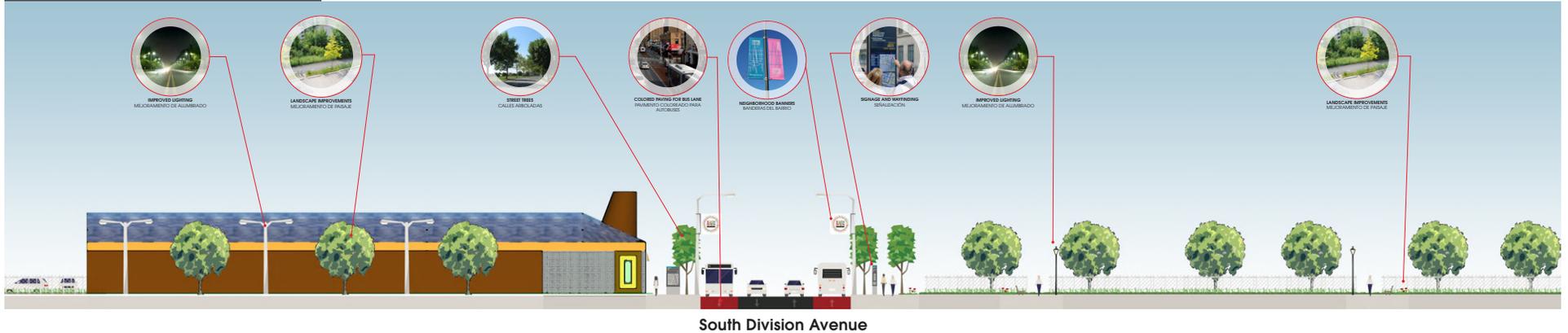
- » The far southeast and southwest portion of the Focus Area is designated TN-LDR: Low Density Residential. The TN-LDR District is intended to protect established development patterns, consisting predominantly of medium-low density residential development in the form of detached single-family houses and two-family dwellings sited on individual lots. Pockets of medium- to high-density residential development are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. The redevelopment of sites shall remain consistent with this pattern of development.

Recommendations

These designations are generally consistent with the vision for the Focus Area. The Plan recommends potentially redesignating existing open space at the northeast corner of South Division and Cottage Grove to SD-OS: Special District - Open Space to preserve and expand recreational opportunities.



RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS



South Division Avenue

Potential redevelopment sites were defined through the following criteria in order to align with the goals of the Development Without Displacement Principle:

- » Large Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with greater capacities to hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped

with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.

- » Small Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with smaller capacities to hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single business) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Occupied:



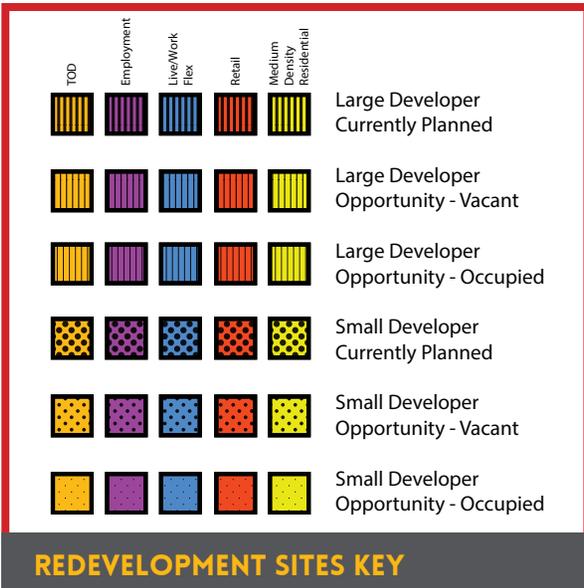
EXISTING CONDITION

Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.



DIVISION, FROM BROWN TO GRIGGS (LOOKING EAST)- PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS





DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Due to the current land uses, there are relatively few potential redevelopment sites within this part of the community. Improvements should be focused on improving the large open space just north of Cottage Grove while enhancing large parking lots with green infrastructure and landscape improvements. South of the existing railroad tracks, several vacant buildings and large truck parking lots at the southeast corner of Crofton and South Division should be repurposed for employment uses. North of the railroad tracks, small- and medium-sized development sites are more common and should be redeveloped to include a range of uses from live/work flex space to additional employment centers, mixed-use developments and retail to complement the immediate neighborhood.

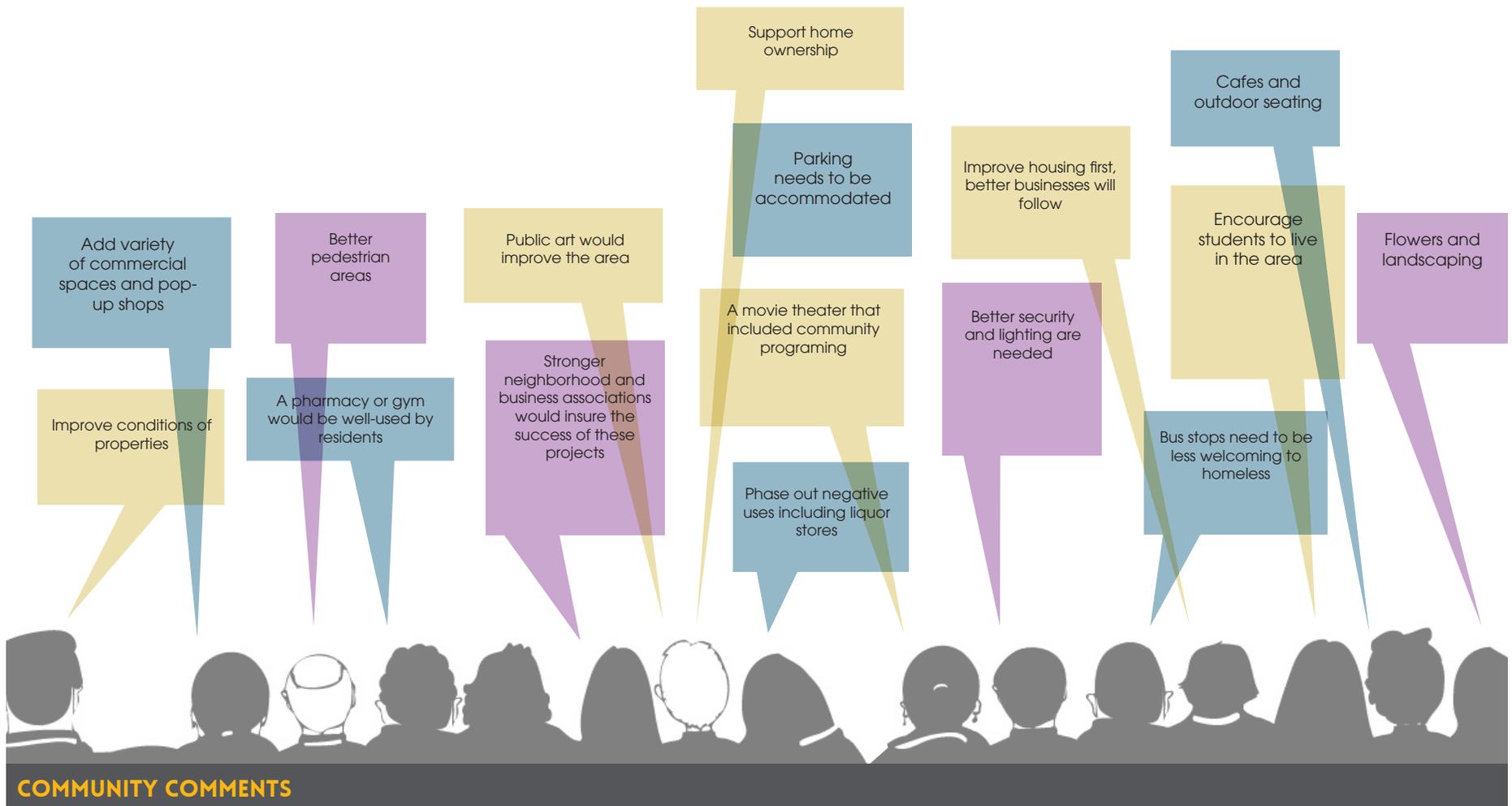
ADDITIONAL DESIRED ELEMENTS

Other desired community changes include improved lighting (especially on side streets) landscape improvements to mitigate the appearance of large industrial buildings, street trees, colored bus lane paving and installation of neighborhood banners. Improved signage and wayfinding is especially important as many businesses are tucked away within non-descript industrial sites and buildings.

FOCUS AREA 5 - SOUTH DIVISION & BURTON

Focus Area 5 is located in and around the historic Burton Heights District. Burton Heights was a small hamlet established in 1833 and annexed into Grand Rapids in 1910. The area includes a variety of smaller one-, two- and three-story buildings fronting South Division and Burton Street. Its fine-grained scale and character is prime for small-scale development infill and adaptive reuse of its significant building stock.

Focus Area 5 is envisioned as the vibrant heart of the South Division Corridor with thriving small businesses centered around a new community plaza.



ZONING AND LAND USE

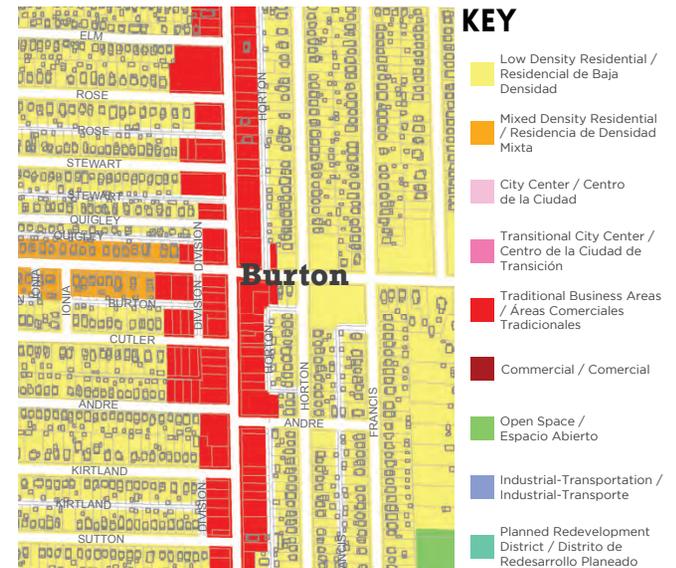
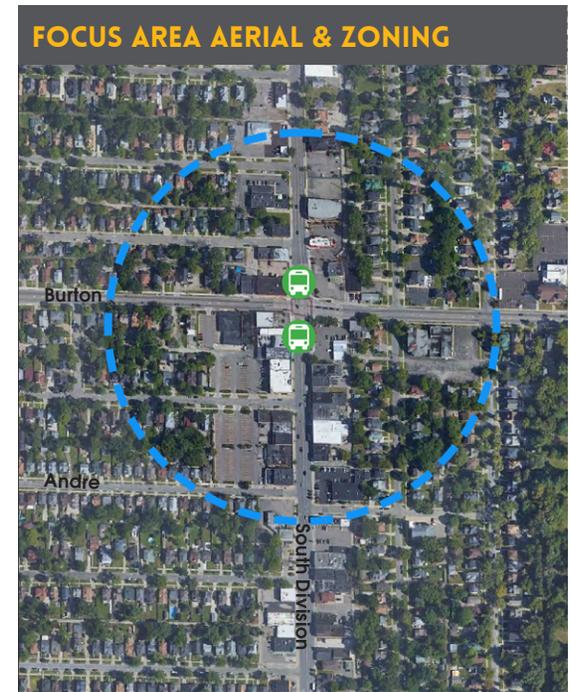
Current zoning designations and their land use implications are described below:

- » Areas of the Focus Area along South Division are designated TN TBA: Traditional Business Area. The TN-TBA District is designed to reinforce a pedestrian and transit friendly environment in a compact area characterized by a mix of uses. New development on primary and secondary street frontages shall be compatible in use and scale with surrounding, existing uses and structures.
- » The western portion of Burton Street is designated TN-MDR: Mixed Density Residential. The TN-MDR District is intended to provide a variety of housing choices in a spatially diverse manner while protecting established development patterns. Mixed-density neighborhoods are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. They often act as a transition between lower density residential development and non-residential uses. Redevelopment shall remain consistent with this pattern of development. The redevelopment of former commercial sites is a significant objective through context sensitive architectural designs and features common to the area.
- » Beyond the main corridors to the west and east, residential areas are designated TN-LDR: Low Density Residential. The

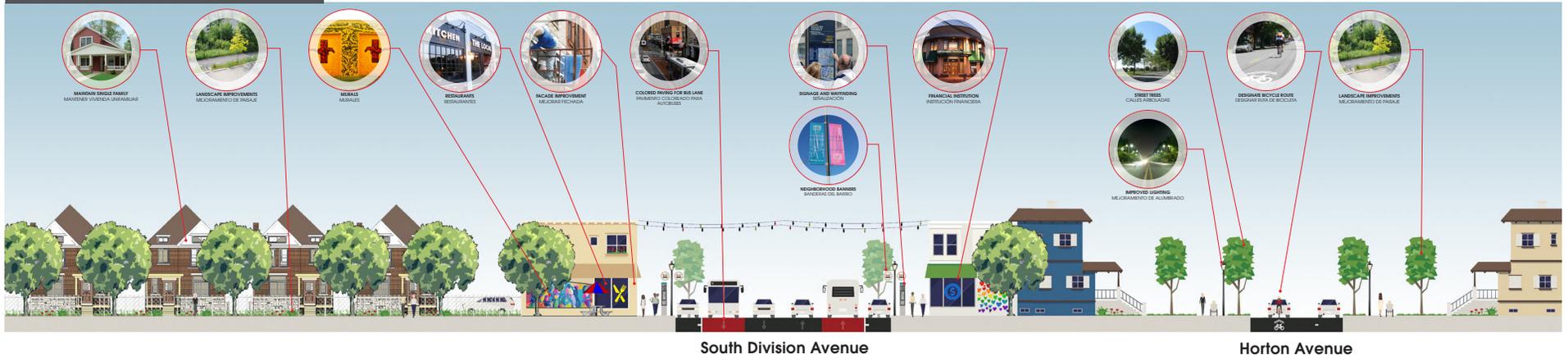
TN-LDR District is intended to protect established development patterns, consisting predominantly of medium- to low-density residential development in the form of detached single-family houses and two-family dwellings sited on individual lots. Pockets of medium- to high-density residential development are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. The redevelopment of sites shall remain consistent with this pattern of development.

Recommendations

These designations are generally consistent with the vision for the Focus Area. The Plan recommends potentially redesignating the portions of the TN-LDR zones closest to South Division to transition over time to TN-MDR to encourage slightly more intense development within close walking distance of Silver Line BRT stops. The Plan also recommends redesignating the Burton Street Corridor to TN-TBA from a live/ work environment that includes makerspaces, small shops and services along residential buildings. The Plan also recommends the potential creation and application of a Conservation Zone for the Focus Area to ensure preservation of historic structures that provide significant local character, compact spaces for smaller local businesses and important human scale to the area.



RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS



Potential redevelopment sites were defined through the following criteria in order to align with the goals of the Development Without Displacement Principle:

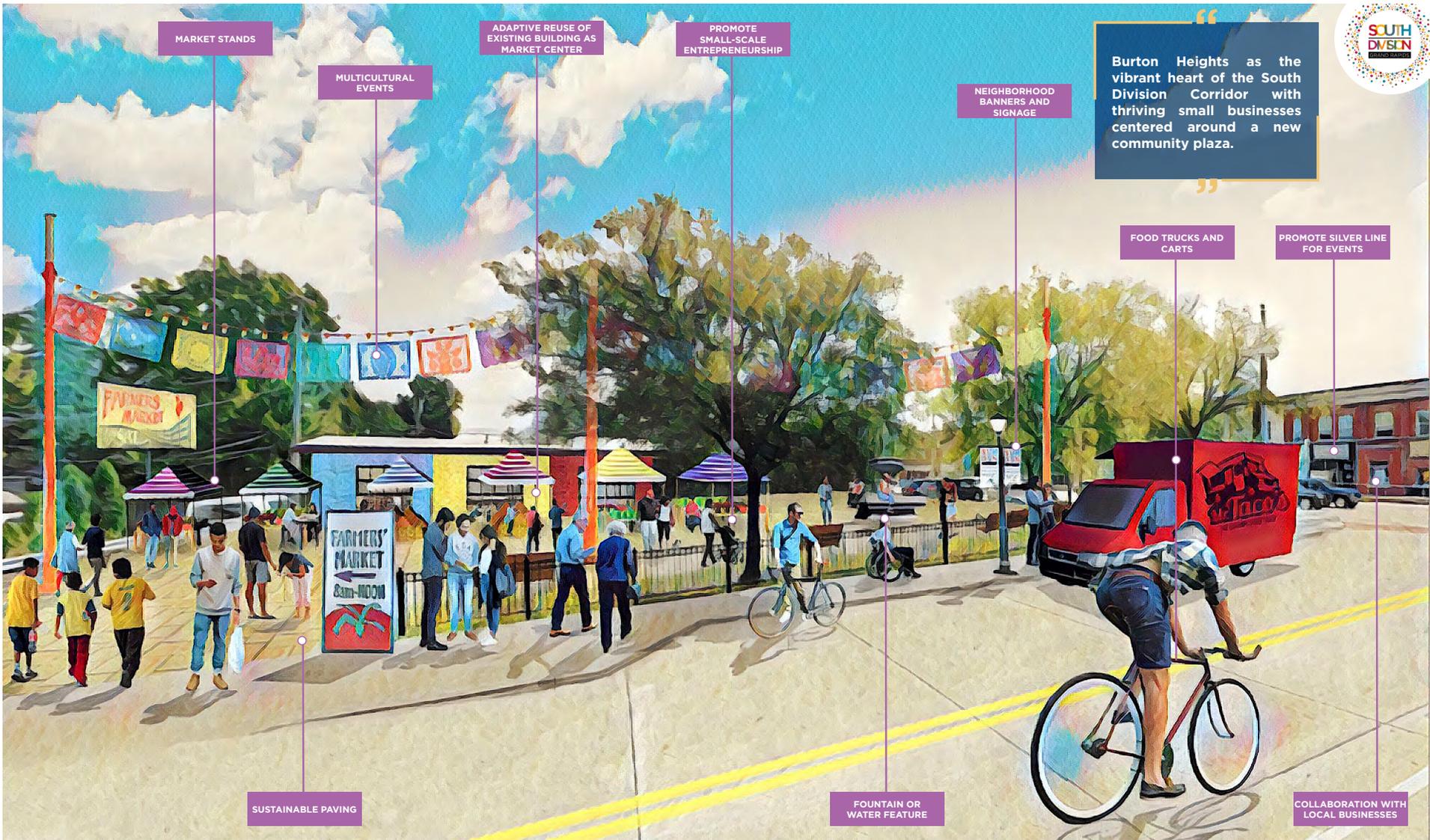
- » Large Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with greater capacities to hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped

with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.

- » Small Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with smaller capacities to hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single business) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.



- » Small Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.



MARKET STANDS

MULTICULTURAL EVENTS

ADAPTIVE REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDING AS MARKET CENTER

PROMOTE SMALL-SCALE ENTREPRENEURSHIP

NEIGHBORHOOD BANNERS AND SIGNAGE

Burton Heights as the vibrant heart of the South Division Corridor with thriving small businesses centered around a new community plaza.



FOOD TRUCKS AND CARTS

PROMOTE SILVER LINE FOR EVENTS

SUSTAINABLE PAVING

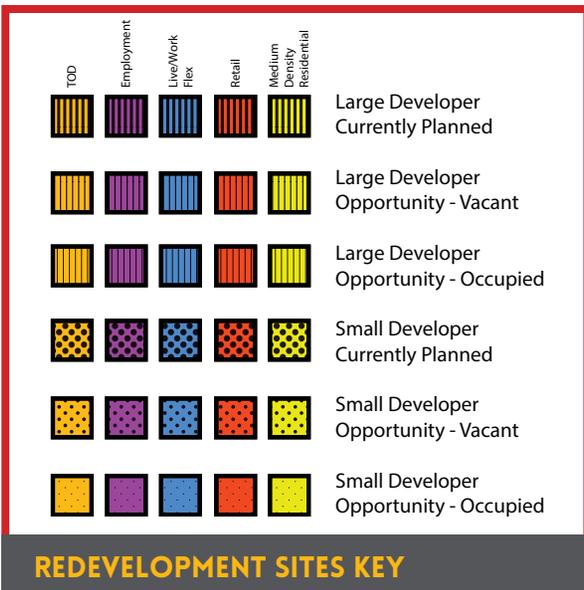
FOUNTAIN OR WATER FEATURE

COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL BUSINESSES

BURTON STREET, FROM DIVISION TO HORTON (LOOKING SOUTHWEST)- PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Burton Heights currently includes popular restaurants, shops and services close to Garfield Park, the most significant public open space within the Corridor. Any redevelopment in the Focus Area should respect the historic character and scale of the existing urban fabric and should focus on adaptive reuse where at all possible. Currently, many of the existing buildings include vacant upper floor space, which could be converted to residential or small office uses. New affordable housing is under construction and planned for properties along Burton Street east of South Division by the non-profit LINC UP. The City-owned parking lot at the southeast corner of South Division and Burton presents a tremendous opportunity to create a community plaza space for gathering and events. Such a space could create a focal point and catalytic amenity to help spur investment in surrounding properties.

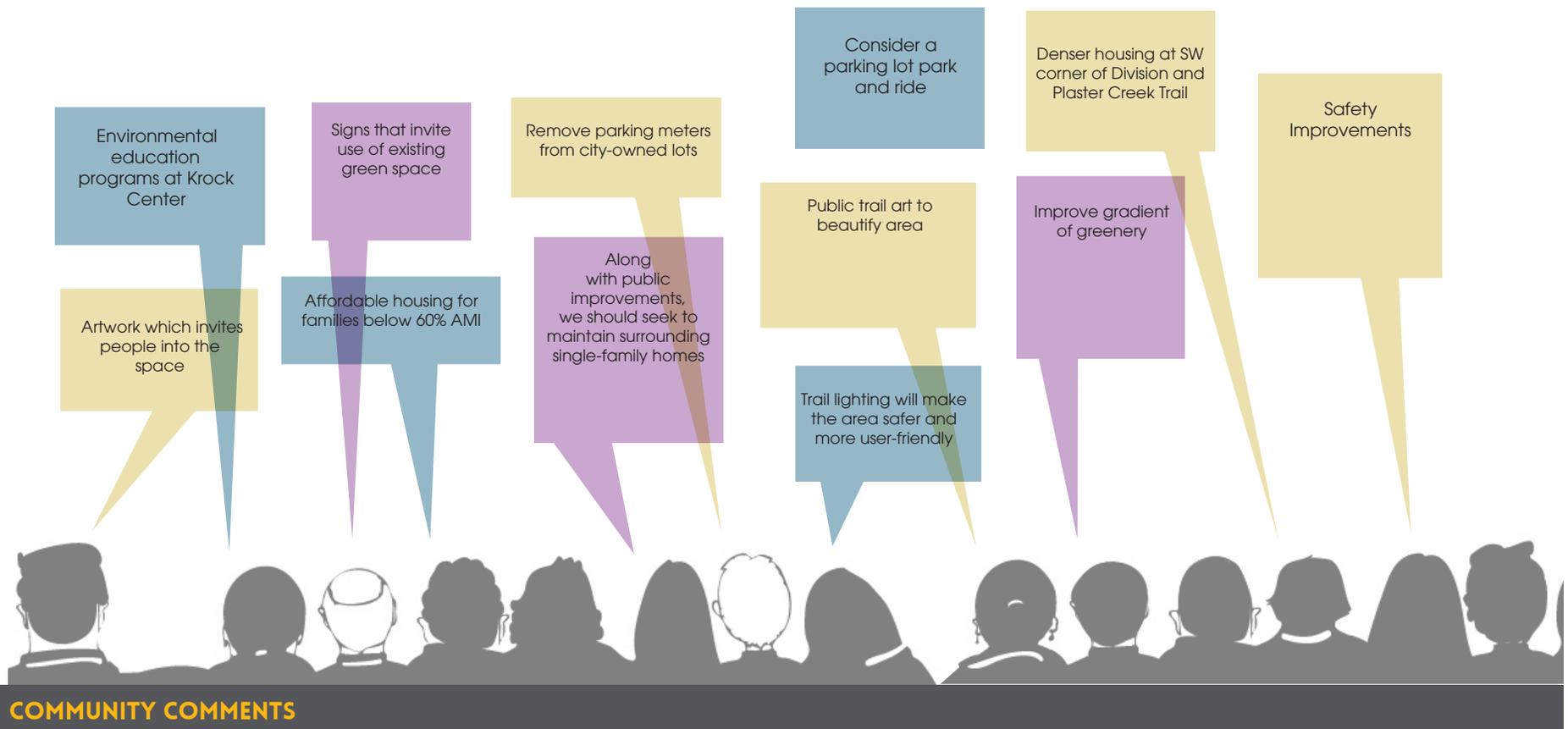
Another catalytic opportunity includes the planned adaptive reuse of the vacant Four Star Theater just north of Burton Street. Conversion of this building into an active community use space could create another anchor for the District. As redevelopment occurs, the Plan recommends preserving a significant portion of the large city-owned parking lots west of South Division to support a wide range of uses and activities that could occur in the area. Over time, these lots could transition to a combination of linear townhome development and structured parking to help meet future needs of both residents and visitors.

ADDITIONAL DESIRED ELEMENTS

Additional enhancements include a focus on renovating the existing homes and yards on Burton Street west of South Division in order to create a welcoming gateway into the community from US-131. Other single-family homes in the area should be improved and maintained to preserve the character of the neighborhood while providing homeowner opportunities for residents. Lighting, landscape improvements and murals are recommended to add to the color, vibrancy and attractiveness of the Focus Area. Additional restaurants with cafes and outdoor seating should be recruited to create a critical mass for destination dining. Painting the Silver Line BRT lane, installing neighborhood banners, signage and wayfinding will help to create an attractive pedestrian environment while creating a buffer between the sidewalk and fast-moving vehicles traveling along South Division. Existing buildings can be repurposed for a wide variety of uses including a potential financial institution. The alley to the west of South Division is heavily used by pedestrians and should be improved as an attractive walkway or paseo. Bicycles should be accommodated in front of businesses and bike traffic should generally be routed on Horton Avenue and other side streets.

FOCUS AREA 6 - SOUTH DIVISION & PLASTER CREEK

Focus Area 6 is heavily defined by Plaster Creek and its surrounding natural areas. It also includes the Kroc Center, which is the recreational and athletic anchor of the Corridor. Along with these amenities, Focus Area 6 includes a number of active retail spaces, small groceries and a bowling alley that serve the surrounding community. Focus Area 6 is envisioned as a natural green gateway district with safe and well-used trails, clean creek areas and outdoor amenities for the enjoyment of both local residents and visitors.



ZONING AND LAND USE

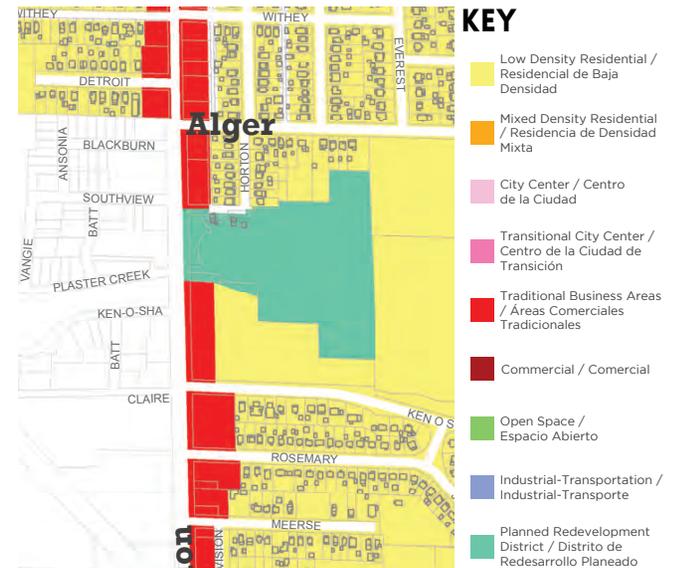
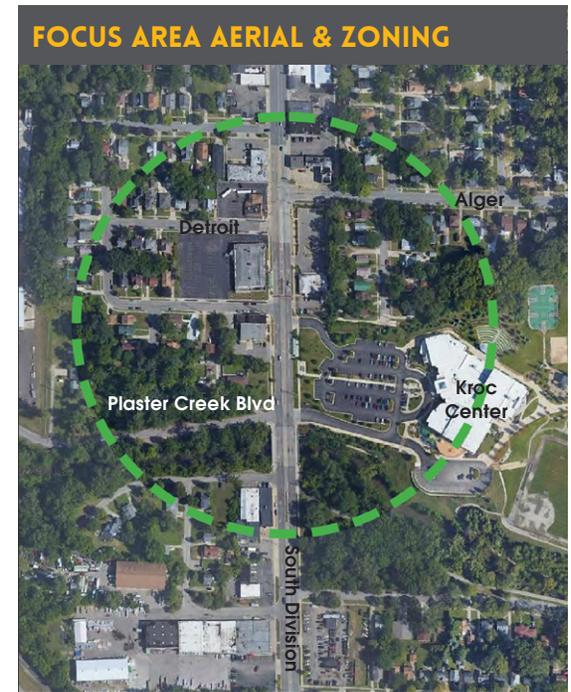
Current zoning designations and their land use implications are described below:

- » The Kroc Center Area is designated SD-PRD: Special District - Planned Redevelopment District. The Planned Redevelopment District is intended when it may be necessary or desirable to deviate from the standards in another Zone District to ensure that desirable and compatible development occurs. These flexible development standards are necessary to address special conditions with regard to setbacks, yards, building height and special traffic, policing or landscaping issues.
- » The eastern edge of South Division, within City limits, is designated TN TBA: Traditional Business Area. The TN-TBA District is designed to reinforce a pedestrian and transit friendly environment in a compact area characterized by a mix of uses. New development on primary and secondary street frontages shall be compatible in use and scale with surrounding, existing uses and structures.
- » The remainder of the Focus Area is designated TN-LDR: Low Density Residential. The TN-LDR District is intended to protect established development patterns, consisting predominantly of medium-low density residential development in the form of detached single-family houses and two-family

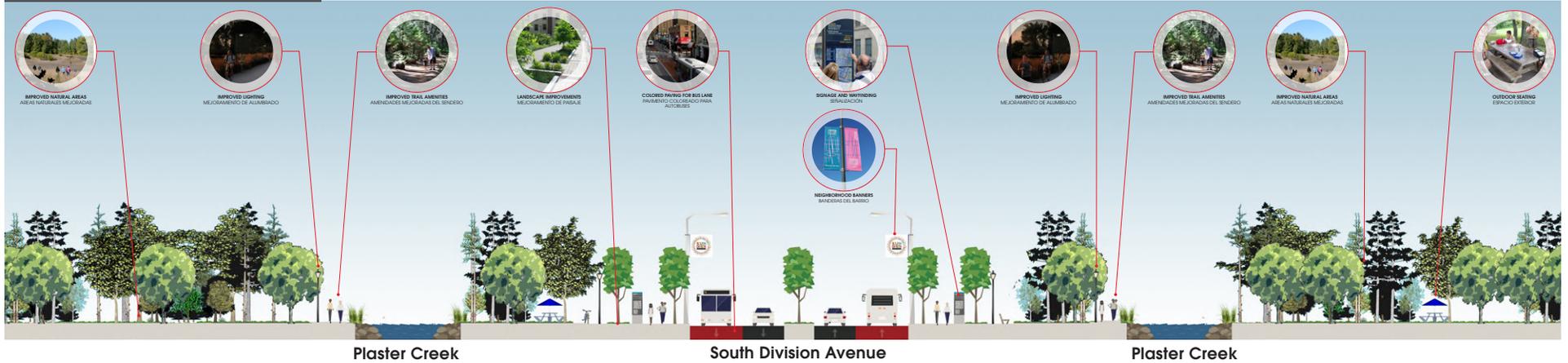
dwellings sited on individual lots. Pockets of medium- to high-density residential development are generally found along transit routes and major streets near business districts. The redevelopment of sites shall remain consistent with this pattern of development.

Recommendations

The Plan recommends rezoning natural areas along Plaster Creek to SD-OS: Special District - Open Space to preserve and expand recreational opportunities.



RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS



Potential redevelopment sites were defined through the following criteria in order to align with the goals of the Development Without Displacement Principle:

- » Large Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with greater capacities to hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with greater capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.
- » Large Developer Opportunity – Occupied: Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with greater capacities to potentially

hold housing units (20 or more) and/or retail or employment uses (two or more businesses). Because of the size and complexity of these sites, they are more likely to be developed by a large local or national non-profit or for-profit entity.

- » Small Developer Currently Planned: Includes sites with smaller capacities to hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single business) that are currently planned, permitted or otherwise under development.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Vacant: Includes sites that are currently vacant with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.
- » Small Developer Opportunity – Occupied:

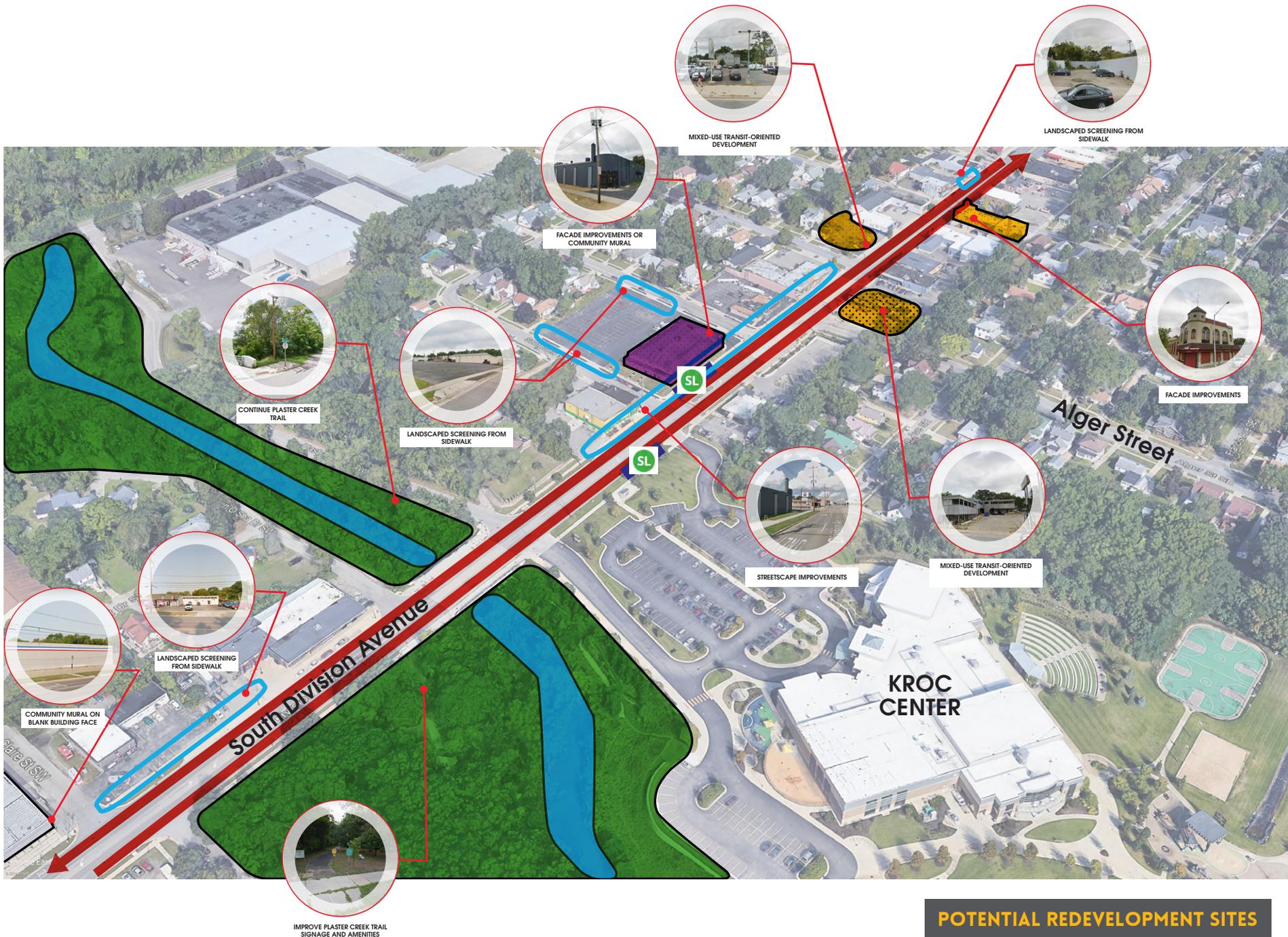


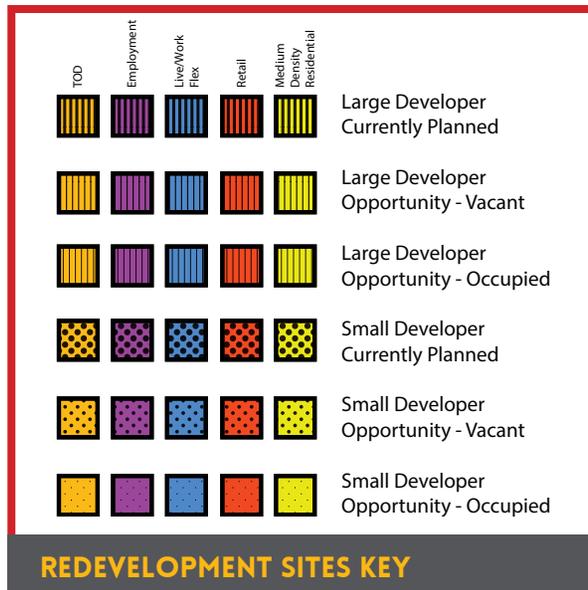
EXISTING CONDITION

Includes sites that are currently occupied, but have the potential to be redeveloped with smaller capacities to potentially hold housing units (20 or less) and/or retail or employment uses (single businesses). Because of the smaller size and complexity of these sites, they are good opportunities for smaller local community-based developers.



DIVISION, FROM PLASTER CREEK BLVD TO CLAIR STREET (LOOKING EAST) - PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



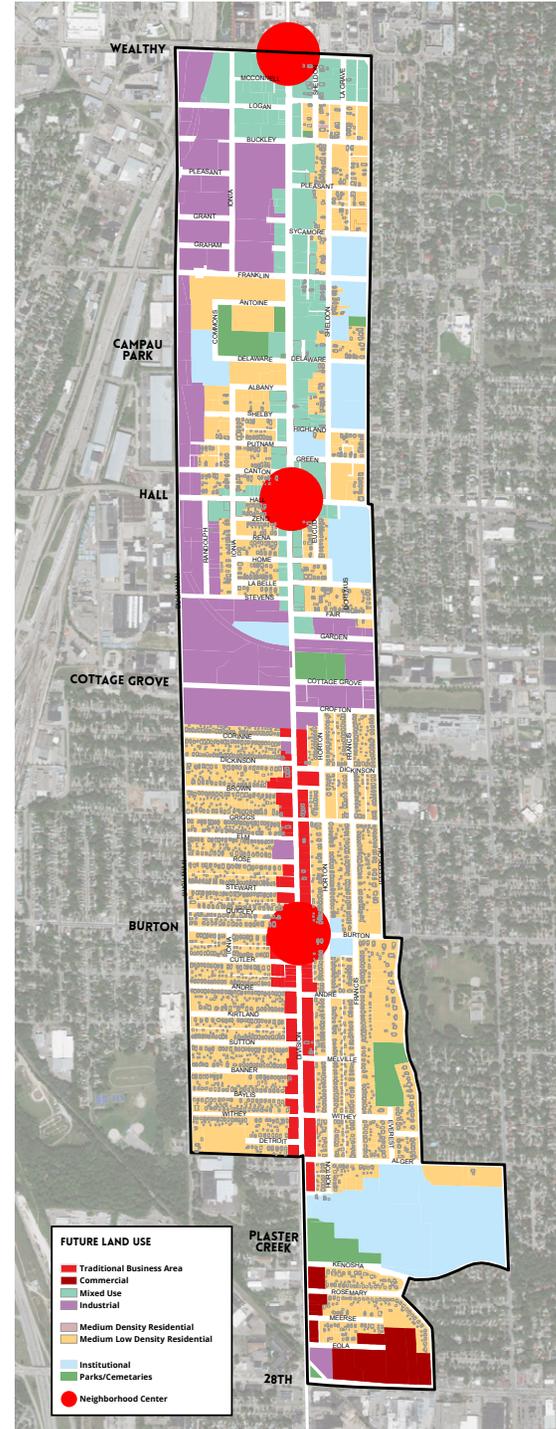


DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Community residents have stated that they would like to increase the awareness of existing amenities while increasing neighborhood connections, especially to the Plaster Creek Trail. The Plan recommends the establishment of improved natural areas along both sides of the Creek, enhanced lighting to ensure visibility and safety and improved trail amenities such as more visible signage and public seating to encourage use. Additional street trees and landscape would help to connect the green network into the neighborhood while banners and colored Silver Line bus lanes would enhance the identity of the corridor as a whole. West of South Division, the Plaster Creek Trail should be continued to connect with the Plaster Creek Family Park and Burton Elementary / Middle School. A few underutilized sites north of the Kroc Center have the potential for small-scale transit-oriented development to provide additional housing and commercial space for the community.



**FUTURE LAND USE MAP
CURRENT**



**FUTURE LAND USE MAP
PROPOSED**

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land use map shows the City's future landscape assuming the vision and goals of the Comprehensive Plan are met. Boundaries between land use districts are not intended to be precise. Based on the land use and development recommendations outlined in this chapter, the Plan recommends amending the City's Future Land Use Map to reflect the community's vision for the Corridor.

Primary changes include shifting locations of some of the TBA Traditional Business Areas to more closely align with specific focus areas as defined in the Plan. The City's current Future Land Use Map and recommended Future Land Use changes are shown on the preceding page.

Health, Environment and Quality of Life

Draft - June, 2019

Health, Environment and Quality of Life is of paramount importance to the South Division Corridor Plan. Access to green space, clean air and all types of recreation allow community members to lead active and fulfilling lives.



Value Statement

Strengthen the health and well-being of residents through the expansion of quality health care services, connection to a healthy and resilient environment, and community-based approach to safety and security.

Desired Outcomes

1. Local residents can easily access community gardens and other local groceries, farms, and markets.
2. Environmental issues, including air quality, are being addressed, providing additional space for recreation.
3. Older homes are free from lead and mold issues. Homeowners are supported and landlords are accountable to providing safe and affordable housing.
4. All residents, including new immigrants and refugees, are aware of, and able to feel safe and secure in their neighborhood.
5. Safety is greatly improved through better traffic enforcement to drugs and prostitution.

Implementation

Draft - June, 2019

Organizational Elements

Organizational Elements... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City...

Model 1: Consider Improvement District Lead

Model 1: Consider Improvement District Lead... A further improvement district... Model 2: Transition and Empower Steering Committee

Model 2: Transition and Empower Steering Committee

Model 2: Transition and Empower Steering Committee... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City...

Development Without Displacement

Draft - June, 2019

Development without Displacement means ensuring that the future growth of the South Division Corridor... The City... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City...



Value Statement

Create vibrant and resilient neighborhoods... The City... The South Division Corridor Plan... The City...

PORT ACCESS...
to "land" the project...
South Division...



09.

Implementation

This Chapter provides a description of how the South Division Corridor Plan intends to implement and carry out its vision, Six Key Principles, Community Supported Catalyst Projects, Priority Projects and Supporting Projects. This includes:

- An overview of **previous planning efforts** in the South Division Neighborhoods
- An **Equitable Development Scorecard** to evaluate future development in the South Division Neighborhoods
- An Implementation Matrix for each of the Six Key Principles' Community Supported Catalyst Projects, Priority Projects and Supporting Projects

OVERVIEW

The Implementation Strategy builds on the leadership and capacity building efforts of the Plan and is intended to establish an organizational structure that will be responsible for long-term action and advocacy. The Plan is based on an extensive public involvement effort designed to engage an audience that, in some instances, can be difficult to reach. Even after Plan adoption, change will not happen overnight and a sustained effort will be needed to continue to make progress.

PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The following summaries of past planning initiatives are provided to give context on recent planning policy history that has influenced the South Division Corridor. They do not represent all of the planning efforts that have taken place in the history of Grand Rapids; rather, they represent those most relevant to South Division over the past two decades. The plans offer insight into the implementation process of past efforts and help inform that of the South Division Corridor Plan.

Grand Rapids Master Plan (2002)

Conceived was a citywide update to the original 1963 City Master Plan, the 2002 Grand Rapids Master Plan provided a vision for the future of land use policy and the direction of the city as a whole. In order to provide a more detailed vision, the Plan lays out the need for Area Specific Plans. According to the 2002 plan, an Area Specific Plan would be implemented when an area of the city



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
MASTER PLAN
 2002
 KEY CONCEPTS



GREEN GRAND RAPIDS



required a more detailed approach to planning in order to ensure the appropriate level of attention was given to character, design and other matters that required detailed consideration. The South Division Corridor Plan was created to carry out an Area Specific Plan in the South Division study area.

The 2002 Master Plan also lays out a number of initiatives the city should pursue. These include: coordinating density with transit; the creation of “vital” business districts that are clean, attractively landscaped, well lit and walkable; encouragement of a strong economy with industrial districts located along rail and trucking lines; balance in terms of transportation systems; assurance that places in the city are well-designed, unique and built for the future while being mindful of the past; encouragement of infill development and brownfield clean up and reuse as well as reduced storm water runoff and value placed on high water quality; and an assurance that diversity in the city is respected and encouraged.

Green Grand Rapids (2012)

The 2012 Green Grand Rapids Plan was conceived as a partial update to the 2002 Master Plan with an emphasis placed on green infrastructure, sustainability and quality of life. The Plan outlines goals of encouraging quality urban design that supports placemaking, non-automobile transportation, social interaction and maintenance of Grand Rapids’ appeal as a place to live, work, visit and invest. Additionally, the Plan advocates for the elevation of city

history and historic preservation as important values in land use and development decisions. Most notably, the Plan calls for making Grand Rapids more in balance with nature by improving the quality of water resources, promoting “low impact development” strategies in the street network and pursuing river and stream restoration.

Vital Streets Plan (2016)

The Vital Streets Plan was a citywide complete streets and green infrastructure plan completed in 2016, to provide design guidelines for building safe and accessible streets in Grand Rapids. The Plan defines the portions of South Division Avenue in the project area as “urban center” and “crosstown connector” street types. Specifically, the stretch of the Corridor between Wealthy and Franklin was defined as an “urban center” street type, meaning it should have generous sidewalks, well managed loading zones, an enhanced streetscape and relatively slow traffic speeds. The section of the Corridor from Franklin to 28th Street is defined as a “crosstown connector,” indicating it should have greater vehicle capacity and efficiency, well-marked pedestrian crossings and parkways that buffer sidewalks from moving travel lanes. The Plan designates the “mode of emphasis” for South Division as transit, meaning that the Avenue should include enhanced stop amenities, smart signal operations, bus bulbs, queue jump lanes at intersections and/or dedicated transit lanes, among others.

Align Transit Improvement Study (2018)

Focused on service and amenity improvements to The Rapid transportation network, the Align Transit Improvement Study was completed and adopted by The Rapid Board of Directors in August 2018. The Plan calls for targeted improvements to both transit and pedestrian facilities. In the South Division Corridor specifically, the study proposes enhancing dedicated bus lanes from Wealthy Street to 28th Street with red thermoplastic paint to denote shared bus and bicycle lanes, concrete bus pads at stops and signage explaining lane rules. To improve the pedestrian experience along South Division, the Plan proposes enhancements at the intersections of Franklin, Burton and 28th Street. According to the plan, improved facilities should include sidewalk bump outs, pedestrian count-down signals, pedestrian leading intervals and neighborhood wayfinding signage.

Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan (2017)

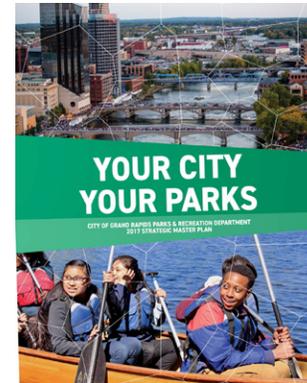
The Grand Rapids Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan is a system-wide strategic plan focused on departmental, physical assets and community needs. One of the primary and most relevant goals of the plan is to create “a network of parks, natural areas and waterways that is accessible to all of the Grand Rapids community.” The “Connected Network” goal was broken down into a number of categories.

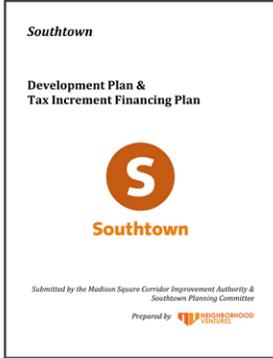
Most relevant to the South Division Corridor are the Connected Network goals associated with

Tributaries, Trails and Connected Streets. To improve the connectivity of tributaries and trails in the corridor, the Plan proposes studying the ownership of privately owned parcels along waterways (such as Plaster Creek) to identify areas feasible for potential acquisitions or easements in order to improve and build upon trails that connect rivers and parks. To improve the connectivity and quality of streets, the Plan proposes incorporating street trees, stormwater management techniques, strategic planting (based on ecological zone), multi-modal mobility options, park signage and wayfinding; all with the intention of improving environmental management and active lifestyle options.

Southtown Development Plan and TIF Plan (2010/2016)

The Southtown Development Plan and TIF Plan is a corridor improvement district (CID) tax increment financing and development plan focused on the development area boundaries along major arterials in southeast Grand Rapids. The initiative is relevant to the South Division planning effort because it overlaps with the project area between Wealthy and Hall Streets. There are only general recommendations in this plan. It does not specify specific locations for improvements; however, short-term, medium-term and long-term projects have been identified which address aesthetics, public realm improvements, signage and public amenities.





South Division, Burton, Hall CID Feasibility Study (2017)

The South Division, Burton, Hall CID Feasibility Study is a corridor improvement district (CID) feasibility study focused on the feasibility of a CID specific to that area of Grand Rapids. The study overlaps with the South Division planning effort between Hall and 28th Streets. In summary, the study found that a Corridor Improvement District was possible in the study area according to the criteria for a CID development area pursuant to Michigan Act 280 of 2005.

Southtown Business Area Specific Plan (pending, 2019)

The City of Grand Rapids created the Southtown Corridor Improvement District (CID) in 2016, as an expansion of the previously formed Madison Square CID. The Southtown CID encompasses five individual and unique business districts including Alger Heights, Boston Square, Franklin and Eastern, Madison Square and Seymour Square. The Plan provides physical, program and policy recommendations to support the business districts of the Southtown CID. The Plan can help strengthen and expand cultural and neighborhood assets and bring vitality to the districts. Overall, the Plan provides strategies that are specific to each business district while providing overarching recommendations that cover the full district.

South Division Grandville CID Tax Increment Finance Plan (2019)

The South Division-Grandville Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA), established in March 2018, recently completed its Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan. Adopted on May 14, 2019, it allows the CIA to begin capturing tax increment in fiscal year 2020 for all properties within the commercial corridor along Division Avenue south of Hall to 28th Street, along Burton from Division Avenue west to Grandville Avenue and along Grandville Avenue to Wealthy Street. Tax increment may be spent on public facilities and projects that benefit the corridor. The Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing plans help further the goals of the CIA to develop thriving business districts; encourage neighborhood-aligned economic growth that promotes and maintains the unique identity of the corridor; and support equitable development along the development area. Projects include the enhancement of physical corridor assets, business development, community engagement and promotion of the development district. Short term project goals include installing of public benches; generating opportunities for pop-up shops and businesses; planning and carrying out special events and festivals that bring the community together; and supporting the creation of district business associations.

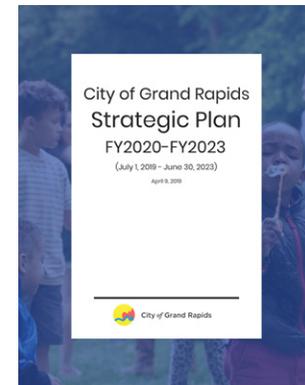
Grand Rapids Strategic Plan FY2020-FY2023 (2019)

The City's Strategic Plan focuses on realizing the vision that Grand Rapids will be nationally recognized as an equitable, welcoming, innovative and collaborative city with a robust economy, safe and healthy communities and the opportunity for a high quality of life for all. Much of the Plan is organized around equity. The City of Grand Rapids is dedicated to advancing equitable outcomes and opportunities by leading with racial equity to address root causes of disparities. The City defines equity as the condition achieved when people have the tools, resources and connections necessary to be fully engaged and prepared to benefit from the opportunities they seek. Racial equity is achieved when one's race or ethnicity does not determine, in a statistical sense, how one experiences opportunity, power and life outcomes.

Bicycle Action Plan (2019)

The Bicycle Action Plan has information on the City's current bicycling conditions, programs, policies and culture. The draft Plan includes recommendations relating to modifications to some corridors identified in the Vital Streets Plan, new bicycling facilities and changes or upgrades to existing facilities, policy changes and enhancements, programs and support services and facilities and operations and maintenance. The Action Plan recommends the following bicycle improvements along the South Division Corridor:

- » Proposed Signed Bike Route / Bike Boulevard on Buckley and La Grave Streets
- » Proposed Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder on Jefferson Street north of Hall
- » Bike Lane on Jefferson south of Hall
- » Proposed Separated / Raised Bikeway on Ionia north of Franklin
- » Proposed Off-Street Multi-Use Trail/ Sidepath and Proposed Signed Bike Route / Bike Boulevard on Ionia south of Franklin
- » Proposed Separated / Raised Bikeway on Division crossing railroad tracks just north of Cottage Grove
- » Proposed Separated / Raised Bikeway on Buchanan north of Griggs
- » Proposed Signed Bike Route / Bike Boulevard on Cottage Grove
- » Proposed Signed Bike Route / Bike Boulevard on Griggs
- » Proposed Signed Bike Route / Bike Boulevard on Withey
- » Proposed Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder on Burton
- » Proposed Off-Street Multi-Use Trail/ Sidepath along Plaster Creek



ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS

Successful Corridor Plan implementation is typically the result of strong municipal leadership combined with other stakeholders fulfilling important roles. In implementing community plans, the municipality has the broadest perspective and interest, which is to improve the community and enhance public welfare.

Other stakeholders, such as residents, property owners, developers and other units of government each have their own sets of interests and goals for neighborhood improvement. Implementation is a fluid process that requires adapting to a range of changing conditions.

While the City of Grand Rapids should ultimately oversee revitalization efforts, successful implementation of the Corridor Plan will likely require a neighborhood-based group made up of a broad range of stakeholders to help drive the process. Based on significant feedback from the Steering Committee, the Plan recommends the following approach to establishing an implementation team.

A Corridor Improvement District (CID) that allows the use of tax increment financing (TIF) to make capital improvements within an established commercial district. A CID is designed to assist development by reinvesting the tax dollars the City already collects directly into a district. The CID is governed by a city-appointed board called a Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA),

which is comprised of local property owners, business owners and residents of the district. The South Division Corridor is currently covered by two Corridor Improvement Districts. The first, the Southtown CID, includes the northern portion of the Corridor from Hall Street to Wealthy Street. The second, the South Division/Grandville CID, includes the southern portion of the Corridor from Hall to Coltrain Street. The Plan recommends the following steps in working directly with these CIAs:

1. Distribute the Draft Plan to members of both CIAs for review and feedback.
2. Hold a joint convening of the Boards of both CIAs to review the South Division Corridor Plan and discuss shared priorities and interests related to Plan Priorities.
3. Hold a second joint convening of CIAs to create a framework for the potential establishment of a South Division Subcommittee. These convenings could help to ensure that stakeholders are empowered to move forward while linking their efforts together to embrace diversity and cohesiveness.
4. Establish a single South Division Subcommittee to work with each CIA to specifically target improvements and projects outlined within the Corridor Plan. The Subcommittee would be an implementation-focused entity with an expanded role and capacity beyond the existing Steering Committee.
5. Invite current members of the South Division Steering Committee to serve within

the South Division Subcommittee. The Steering Committee contains a broad cross section of neighborhood stakeholders and has been very active in the development of the Plan.

6. Dedicate a percentage of overall CIA TIF funding to each South Division Subcommittee to begin to implement projects, focusing first on the Community-Supported Catalyst Projects. These operating resources should include funds for at least one paid employee who could help organize and track the progress of various projects outlined in the Plan. Additional funding could potentially come from banks, the City and local foundations.
7. Work with various local government structures to align and focus resources on the South Division Corridor. Benefits of this action would include:
 - » Greater unification of the Corridor
 - » Ability to further connect community values and goals with implementation resources
 - » Equitable distribution of resources into the Corridor
 - » Heightening awareness of portions of the Corridor that have historically been forgotten
 - » Ease of coordination in implementation efforts
 - » Continuity of planning and implementation

Once in place, the implementation team should possess a full understanding of the respective interests and roles of all stakeholders. These roles include:

- » The City oversees the process and adjusts the implementation agenda over time in response to new development, market changes and community feedback.
- » The City enacts development regulations customized for neighborhood redevelopment, including transit-oriented development.
- » The City undertakes equitable public improvements within the South Division Corridor to enhance the attractiveness of development sites.
- » The City provides financial incentives to encourage smaller local developers to build desired projects while safeguarding community values and resources.
- » Property owners understand and support the land use/development policies of the Plan and value their land consistent with these policies and current market conditions.
- » Developers, especially local minority-owned business enterprises, recognize the potential of the Corridor as a unique neighborhood within Grand Rapids and act to maximize the appeal and value of building sites within the neighborhood.
- » The financial sector, including community development financial institutions (CDFIs), is willing to invest in new and different forms of development, which at least initially, are not represented in the local market and may reflect a higher level of risk.
- » Local residents, businesses and community organizations make a commitment to stay informed and participate in public forums

to make sure their values and priorities are included in neighborhood planning and project reviews.

- » Local partner agencies identify programmatic gaps and begin working together, often through Consortium Agreements or MOUs to implement projects related to community services, economic development and neighborhood safety and security.
- » Local residents are organized, energized and focused on advocating for community improvements while utilizing the Plan as a guide.
- » Local faith-based organizations connect and align to share resources, while focusing on supporting Plan projects, especially projects designed to advance equal opportunity.
- » Local merchants work together to strengthen the existing business community in order to help businesses overcome challenges and obstacles while creating a climate for growth.
- » The performing and visual arts community will be engaged to develop projects, especially those relating to the celebration of history and diversity.
- » Existing Corridor Improvement Authorities work together to implement corridor-wide projects and actions.
- » Organizations, such as the EPIC Community Development Corporation are empowered to build ownership and expertise for local projects.

EQUITY ELEMENTS

The South Division Corridor Plan encourages the creation and maintenance of an economically and socially diverse community that will be stable over the long term. The values guiding the planning process and its results have gone beyond simply improving the neighborhood for economic gain. The Plan focuses on the people who form the South Division Corridor community and the history and values of that community. The Development without Displacement Working Group outlined the need to create a roadmap for development in the community which: (1) helps residents to understand process and become involved; (2) helps developers access incentives, understand community expectations and approval and implementation guidance; (3) creates a measurable scorecard to which the community can evaluate and recognize progress. As a part of the process, encourage or require Community Benefit Agreements for new infill and redevelopment projects. Ensure that there are community structures in place that can facilitate neighborhood involvement in the development process.

Economic Partnerships Initiatives Coalition (EPIC)

A group of Steering Committee members, Community Ambassadors, and other concerned citizens began meeting during the Plan process to focus on their vision to help drive equity and advance home and business ownership for black constituents. This discussion has evolved into the creation of a new 501(c)(3) not-for-profit that can bring a strategic focus to equity, engagement and intentionally inclusive economic development, all leading to improved quality of life outcomes. Rooted in environmental sustainability, EPIC is in a position to act as a key implementation partner for the South Division Corridor Plan.

Breakthrough quality of life outcomes for the underserved residents of the Grand Rapids metro area are at the heart of EPIC's aims to create a new 501c3 nonprofit community development corporation and new green economy workforce educator. In this context, EPIC will mobilize the Blacks in Green Sustainable Square Mile model (www.nrdc.org/resources/sustainable-square-mile-handbook-cultivate-your-green-village-community-based-principles) within the South Division Corridor Focus Areas along with specific attention to the Grandville Avenue area.

EPIC will lead in community and economic development initiatives including but not limited to analysis, community and stakeholder engagement, research, asset mapping, strategic planning, program design, and

property construction and management. EPIC will work collaboratively with neighborhood associations, businesses, educational institutions, municipalities, banks and lenders, and foundations and philanthropies on new pathways to intentionally inclusive economic development of people and communities, including but not limited to the following outcomes, which are directly aligned with the priorities of the Plan:

- » Residential property ownership
- » Commercial property ownership
- » Revenue growth of existing businesses
- » New business establishments
- » Accelerating workforce hires, employment tenure, advancement/promotion
- » Trade education training
- » Employment in cannabis and new green economy ventures
- » South Division Corridor Business Association
- » Increased voter registration
- » Beneficial policy
- » Smart energy use, less pollution
- » Increase in household incomes

Other Equitable Implementation Elements

Other implementation elements for the South Division Subcommittee to consider may include:

- » **Utilization of the equitable development scorecard**, Included in this chapter, to help to evaluate and promote development that is consistent with the values of the community.
- » **Establishment of a one-stop shop for technical assistance**, along with other programs for neighbor investors, helping to ensure that stakeholders in the South Division community who have viable ideas for development but no quick access to capital, can compete with professional developers and bankers when opportunities arise. This could also focus on accessing properties within the State Land Bank.
- » **Establishment of a consortium of real estate experts**, including a service delivery and technical assistance pool that can provide an important resource to local residents looking to improve existing or purchase new properties.

CITY-DRIVEN IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENTS

City-driven implementation elements should include:

- » **Establishment of staff point person**, to guide implementation efforts from the City's perspective and to help focus future resources towards projects identified in the Plan
- » **Dispersal of city property through community decision making**, to ensure equitable opportunities for local stakeholders to acquire publicly owned property along the Corridor, including utilization of the Equitable Development Scorecard.
- » **Potential establishment of a conservation district for one or more focus areas**, to help ensure that the scale and context of the neighborhood is maintained.
- » **Creation of zoning amendments and design guidelines** to ensure that the regulatory environment is consistent with the future development goals of the community. These efforts should be incorporated into the upcoming Transit Oriented Development & Multi-modal Planning Study, being led by The Rapid.
- » **Full assessment of recreational marijuana dispensaries and their potential impact on the corridor**. As policies are developed, we recommend local ownership while minimizing any negative effects to surrounding residents and business owners.
- » **Community education on opportunity zones**, which allow capital gains to be reinvested through an investment vehicle (Qualified Opportunity Fund) into an identified Opportunity Zone. The South Division Corridor is located within an Opportunity Zone.

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT SCORECARD (8/5/19 DRAFT)



INTENT: The Scorecard is intended as a tool to be utilized by the South Division Subcommittee of the Corridor Improvement Districts, as well as neighborhood groups, to assess larger proposed development projects seeking a special request from the City. The Scorecard should be utilized for developments of at least 20 dwelling units, and/or 10,000 square feet of commercial or office space.

PROJECT/PLAN NAME: _____

LOCATION OF PROJECT/PLAN: _____

IS THE PROJECT PART OF A LARGER LAND USE PLAN? (Circle) Y / N
If yes, please attach plan

PUBLIC INVESTMENT(S):

- Public subsidy funding amount and source
- Tax abatement amount and source
- Public land sale and amount
- Zoning changes/variances
- Infrastructure improvements (sewer/water, street, sidewalk, etc.)
- Other: _____

DEVELOPER: _____

DEVELOPER CONTACT INFO: _____

PUBLIC AGENCY: _____

PUBLIC AGENCY CONTACT INFO: _____

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS: _____

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT: _____

USING THE SCORECARD

Step #1: Fill out the project information sheet on the previous page.

Step #2: Review each Equitable Development Category based on information provided or dialogue with the developer.

Step #3: Hold conversations with your group around each criterion, and give each category a score.

Step #4: Add up all of the scores below for the final score, and you have completed the scorecard.

SCORING

1. Write the score from each section below, along with the maximum possible score for the section.

(Points Earned / Max possible)

Meaningful Engagement ___ / 10

Community Identity ___ / 10

Development Without Displacement ___ / 10

Economic Opportunity ___ / 10

Health, Environment and Quality of Life ___ / 10

Transportation ___ / 10

2. Add up all of the above scores to get a total.

___ / 60 Total *(Points Earned / Max Possible)*

3. Turn the total into an equitable rating percentage.

Divide the total Points Earned by the Max Possible

WRITE THE FINAL SCORE HERE: _____ %

Equitable Rating

- 75% - 100%** Excellent Equitable Development
- 50% - 74%** Good Equitable Development
- 25% - 49%** Fair Equitable Development
- 0% - 24%** Poor Equitable Development

Meaningful Engagement

Project was planned and is being implemented through a community led, collaborative effort.

 / **10** Based on criteria below, estimate overall SCORE

Check boxes below, based on criteria that has been met

Meets Criteria	Doesn't Meet Criteria	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO OR INCLUDES ELEMENTS RELATED TO ONE OF THE FIVE COMMUNITY-DEFINED CATALYST PROJECTS IN THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT IS DIRECTLY RELATED TO OR INCLUDES ELEMENTS RELATED TO ONE OF THE 15 PRIORITY PROJECTS IN THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT WAS INITIATED BY THE COMMUNITY OR DEVELOPERS HAVE PARTNERED WITH THE COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP THEIR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN BEFORE THE PROJECT STARTS.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEVELOPERS HAVE COMPLETED A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL TOUR OF THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR, LED BY A LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBER. THE TOUR INCLUDES ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPACTS OF PAST RESIDENTIAL PATTERNS INCLUDING RED-LINING, WHITE FLIGHT, RACISM AND IMMIGRATION AND ITS EFFECT ON NEIGHBORHOODS ALONG THE CORRIDOR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT, DEVELOPERS AND PLANNERS REGULARLY USE APPROPRIATE TOOLS TO ENSURE THAT THE PROJECT AUTHENTICALLY ENGAGES THE COMMUNITY AND RESPONDS TO PRIORITIES.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES A COMMUNITY BENEFITS AGREEMENT AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT.

Community Identity

Project will help to instill great pride among local residents while celebrating individual community character, cultural diversity and values and cultivating a sense of unity and shared identity within the South Division community.

 / **10** Based on criteria below, estimate overall SCORE

Check boxes below, based on criteria that has been met

Meets Criteria	Doesn't Meet Criteria	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES A DOCUMENTATION AND SUMMARY OF HISTORY OF SITE OR DEVELOPMENT AREA.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES NEW PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES , THAT ENCOURAGE DIVERSE GROUPS TO COME TOGETHER.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES PUBLIC ART ELEMENT TO MAKE THE COMMUNITY MORE INVITING AND ATTRACTIVE.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES AN "EARLY ACTION" ELEMENT FOCUSED ON A TANGIBLE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT THAT CAN REALIZED BEFORE THE PROJECT IS FULLY COMPLETED.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT CONNECTS TO, HIGHLIGHTS, AND RESPECTS COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS, LOCAL HISTORY, POINTS OF INTEREST, AND KEY FEATURES.

Development Without Displacement

Project will promote development without displacement by taking into account past history and current conditions to meet the needs of marginalized populations and to reduce disparities so that quality of life outcomes such as access to quality education, employment, a healthy environment, affordable housing and transportation, are equitably distributed for the people currently living and working in the neighborhood, as well as for potential new residents.

 / 10 Based on criteria below, estimate overall SCORE

Check boxes below, based on criteria that has been met

Meets Criteria	Doesn't Meet Criteria	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT IS LOCATED WITHIN ONE OF THE SIX FOCUS AREAS OF THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR PLAN.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PUBLIC SUBSIDIES ARE BEING USED TO ENCOURAGE PRIVATE INVESTMENT WHERE IT CAN BEST PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES REDEVELOPMENT OF VACANT OR SIGNIFICANTLY UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTY .
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT IS COORDINATED THROUGH A COMMUNITY LAND TRUST TO DEVELOP AND MANAGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING, COMMUNITY GARDENS, CIVIC BUILDINGS, COMMERCIAL SPACES AND OTHER ASSETS ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOUSING AT THE FOLLOWING INCOME RANGES: EXTREMELY LOW-INCOME HOUSING – GENERALLY RECOGNIZED AS SUBSIDIZED HOUSING THAT IS AVAILABLE FOR RENT TO HOUSEHOLDS EARNING BETWEEN 30% OR BELOW THE AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOUSING AT THE FOLLOWING INCOME RANGES: VERY LOW-INCOME HOUSING – GENERALLY RECOGNIZED AS SUBSIDIZED HOUSING THAT IS AVAILABLE FOR RENT TO HOUSEHOLDS EARNING BETWEEN 31%-50% OF THE AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW HOUSING AT THE FOLLOWING INCOME RANGES: LOW-INCOME HOUSING – GENERALLY RECOGNIZED AS SUBSIDIZED HOUSING THAT IS AVAILABLE FOR RENT OR PURCHASE TO HOUSEHOLDS EARNING BETWEEN 51%-80% OF THE AREA MEDIAN INCOME (AMI).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT HELPS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF VACANT HOMES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT SUPPORTS A RANGE OF HOUSEHOLD TYPES, LIFE STAGES AND SIZES.

Economic Opportunity

Project will help to instill great pride among local residents while celebrating individual community character, cultural diversity and values and cultivating a sense of unity and shared identity within the South Division community.

 / 10 Based on criteria below, estimate overall SCORE

Check boxes below, based on criteria that has been met

Meets Criteria	Doesn't Meet Criteria	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT HELPS TO HIGHLIGHT AND IDENTIFY EXISTING RESOURCES , ALLOWING GREATER UTILIZATION BY LOCAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES ONE OR MORE MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES OR SPACE TO INCUBATE AND FOSTER MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESSES.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT IS BEING IMPLEMENTED UTILIZING ALTERNATIVE FINANCING OPTIONS SECURED BY LOCAL ENTREPRENEURS OR BUSINESS OWNERS.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LOCAL RESIDENTS OR BUSINESSES OF THE SOUTH DIVISION COMMUNITY ARE BEING HIRED OR UTILIZED FOR THE ENGAGEMENT ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT (OUTREACH, TRANSLATION, MARKETING ETC.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LOCAL RESIDENTS OR BUSINESSES OF THE SOUTH DIVISION COMMUNITY ARE BEING HIRED OR UTILIZED FOR IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENTS OF THE PROJECT (BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION, STAFFING ETC.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	LEASE AGREEMENTS PRIORITIZE NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DEVELOPERS USE WORKFORCE/EDUCATION PROGRAMS , SUCH AS HUD SECTION 3, TO CONNECT RESIDENTS TO JOBS AND LONG-TERM EMPLOYMENT.

Health, Environment and Quality of Life

Project will strengthen the health and well-being of residents through the expansion of quality health care services, connection to a healthy and resilient environment and community-based approach to safety and security.

 / 10 Based on criteria below, estimate overall SCORE

Check boxes below, based on criteria that has been met

Meets Criteria	Doesn't Meet Criteria	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES GROCERY, URBAN FARM OR COMMUNITY GARDEN OR OTHER AFFORDABLE FOOD SOURCE.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES PLANS TO REMEDIATE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES OF AN EXISTING BROWNFIELD SITE.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES PLANS TO CLEAN OR REPAIR ANY NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS CAUSED BY THE DEVELOPMENT. IMPACTS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO POLLUTION OF AIR, WATER OR SOIL; WASTE REMOVAL; EXPOSED SOIL WILL BE PLANTED TO PREVENT EROSION.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES SIGNIFICANT LIGHTING UPGRADES TO HELP IMPROVE SAFETY AND SECURITY.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES A RETAIL COMPONENT WITH A PHARMACY AS A TENANT.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES A RETAIL COMPONENT WITH A FINANCIAL INSTITUTION AS A TENANT.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES A NEW PUBLICLY-USABLE PARK , WALKING TRAIL, PLAYGROUND OR PLAZA SPACE.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT LANDSCAPE INCLUDES NATIVE PLANTS AND GRASSES . REMOVES AND/OR DISCOURAGES INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT UTILIZES CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (CPTED) BEST PRACTICES.

Transportation

Project will promote broader mobility and connectivity, including transit, bicycling, walking and modes new to Grand Rapids. Project will prioritize an effective and affordable public transportation network that supports transit-dependent communities and provides equitable access to core services and amenities, including employment, education, and health and social services.

 / 10 Based on criteria below, estimate overall SCORE

Check boxes below, based on criteria that has been met

Meets Criteria	Doesn't Meet Criteria	N/A	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES TRAFFIC-CALMING IMPROVEMENTS ON SOUTH DIVISION, MAKING IT SAFER FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO UTILIZE AS A STOP-AND-SHOP CORRIDOR.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT IS WITHIN 1/4 MILE OF AN EXISTING SILVER LINE BRT STOP.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES PLAN FOR SNOW REMOVAL ON SIDEWALKS.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES PARKING FACILITIES WHICH ACCOMMODATE BICYCLE USE AND STORAGE AND DO NOT LIMIT ACCESS OR PASSAGE TO PEDESTRIANS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	IF PROJECT INCLUDES RESIDENTIAL UNITS, NEW TENANTS ARE PROVIDED SUBSIDIZED OR FREE TRANSIT PASSES BY DEVELOPER OR MANAGER.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PROJECT INCLUDES STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDING STREET TREES, BENCHES, LANDSCAPE AND LIGHTING AND SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS TO IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	PARKING IS LOCATED TO THE REAR OF THE SITE AND IS WELL-LANDSCAPED AND SCREENED FROM SURROUNDING USES.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

COMMUNITY IDENTITY					
	PROJECT	COMPLEXITY	ESTIMATED COST	ESTIMATED TIMELINE	POTENTIAL LEADS
* COMMUNITY SUPPORTED CATALYST PROJECT	DEVELOP A STOREFRONT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	MEDIUM	\$100K-\$500K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA
* PRIORITY PROJECTS	DEVELOP AND SUPPORT A VARIETY OF COMMUNITY EVENTS	MEDIUM	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GARFIELD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	DEVELOP A STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM	HIGH	\$1 MILLION+	3+ YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR) • THE RAPID
* SUPPORTING PROJECTS	CREATE A NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR AND COMMUNITY DIRECTORY	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA
	ENSURE ALL RESIDENTS ARE REPRESENTED THROUGH AN ACTIVE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION	LOW	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GARFIELD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	SUPPORT ARTS PROGRAMS AND PUBLIC ART DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR	MEDIUM	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARTPRIZE • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW CULTURAL / COMMUNITY CENTER SPACE	HIGH	\$1 MILLION+	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCHOOLS / PLACES OF WORSHIP • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA
	CREATE A YOUTH COMMITTEE / BOARD TO FOSTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE COMMUNITY AND IMPROVE YOUTH ENGAGEMENT	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCHOOLS / PLACES OF WORSHIP • GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
	DEVELOP A COORDINATED MARKETING PROGRAM FOR SOUTH DIVISION BUSINESSES	MEDIUM	\$50-\$100K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA • WEST MICHIGAN HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



DEVELOPMENT WITHOUT DISPLACEMENT

	PROJECT	COMPLEXITY	ESTIMATED COST	ESTIMATED TIMELINE	POTENTIAL LEADS
* COMMUNITY SUPPORTED CATALYST PROJECT	FACILITATE HOME REPAIR AND IMPROVEMENTS	MEDIUM	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HOME REPAIR SERVICES • AMPLIFY GR
* PRIORITY PROJECTS	ADVOCATE FOR CHANGES TO CITY & STATE POLICY	HIGH	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAIR HOUSING CENTER OF WEST MICHIGAN • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	EXPAND FINANCIAL ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE COMMUNITY	HIGH	\$50K-\$100K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEST MICHIGAN COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT ASSOCIATION • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
* SUPPORTING PROJECTS	CREATE A ROADMAP FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE COMMUNITY	MEDIUM	\$100K-\$500K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	IDENTIFY PUBLICLY OWNED PROPERTIES THAT CAN BE DEVELOPED TO HELP MEET COMMUNITY NEEDS	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	EXPLORE ALTERNATIVE HOUSING MODELS, INCLUDING CO-HOUSING AND TINY HOMES	MEDIUM	\$1 MILLION+	3+ YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICCF • LINC UP
	IDENTIFY PRIVATELY OWNED LANDS WHICH MAY BE APPROPRIATE FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT, AT MULTIPLE SCALES	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	DEVELOP A STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN LOCAL EMPLOYERS AND THE AVAILABLE WORKFORCE WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD	MEDIUM	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS • WEST MICHIGAN WORKS
	SEEK OUT ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPER MODELS THAT INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES TO LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS, MINORITY INVESTORS, AND OTHER COMMUNITY-FOCUSED INDIVIDUALS	MEDIUM	\$50K-\$100K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

	PROJECT	COMPLEXITY	ESTIMATED COST	ESTIMATED TIMELINE	POTENTIAL LEADS
* COMMUNITY SUPPORTED CATALYST PROJECT	RECRUIT A CREDIT UNION OR MINORITY-OWNED BANK	HIGH	\$1 MILLION+	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA • FDIC - MINORITY DEPOSTORY INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM
* PRIORITY PROJECTS	FOSTER THE CREATION AND GROWTH OF JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS	MEDIUM	\$500K - \$1 MILLION	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEST MICHIGAN WORKS • GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE
	CREATE A BUSINESS SUPPORT NETWORK	MEDIUM	\$50K-\$100K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • START GARDEN • GRAND RAPIDS AREA BLACK BUSINESSES • WEST MICHIGAN HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
* SUPPORTING PROJECTS	REESTABLISH A STRONG BUSINESS ASSOCIATION	MEDIUM	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA
	DEVELOP A BUSINESS INCUBATOR SPACE ALONG THE SOUTH DIVISION CORRIDOR	MEDIUM	\$500K - \$1 MILLION	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	CREATE AN INVENTORY OF INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA
	REQUIRE COMMUNITY BENEFIT AGREEMENTS	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GARFIELD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CIA



HEALTH, ENVIRONMENT QUALITY OF LIFE

	PROJECT	COMPLEXITY	ESTIMATED COST	ESTIMATED TIMELINE	POTENTIAL LEADS
* PRIORITY PROJECTS	FOSTER NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES FOR BEAUTIFICATION & SAFETY	MEDIUM	\$100K-\$500K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRAND RAPIDS POLICE DEPARTMENT • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CID
	SUPPORT ACCESS TO FRESH AND AFFORDABLE FOOD	MEDIUM	\$100K-\$500K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • URBAN ROOTS • EPIC CDC
	RECRUIT HEALTH AND FAMILY SERVICES TO THE CORRIDOR	HIGH	\$1 MILLION+	3+ YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AMPLIFY GR • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CID
* SUPPORTING PROJECTS	PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES SURROUNDING HEALTHY DIETS AND FOOD	LOW	\$50K-\$100K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCHOOLS / HOUSES OF WORSHIP • EXALTA HEALTH
	CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR GARDENS AND GREENSPACE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY	MEDIUM	\$100K-\$500K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS • SCHOOLS / HOUSES OF WORSHIP
	MAP COMMUNITY-WIDE HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT	MEDIUM	\$100K-\$500K	1-3 YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS
	DEVELOP AWARENESS OF EXISTING COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOURCES	LOW	\$0-\$50K	0-1 YEAR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CID • GARFIELD PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
	ENCOURAGE CONTINUED INVESTMENT IN PARKS AND COMMUNITY CENTERS TO SERVE THE NEIGHBORHOOD	MEDIUM	\$1 MILLION+	3+ YEARS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS



TRANSPORTATION

PROJECT	COMPLEXITY	ESTIMATED COST	ESTIMATED TIMELINE	POTENTIAL LEADS
* PRIORITY PROJECTS	PROMOTE TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES	MEDIUM	\$1 MILLION+	1-3 YEARS • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR) • THE RAPID
	ENCOURAGE TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT	HIGH	\$1 MILLION+	1-3 YEARS • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS • THE RAPID
	IMPROVE SNOW REMOVAL	LOW	\$50K-\$100K	0-1 YEAR • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR) • SOUTHTOWN CID • SOUTH DIVISION / GRANDVILLE CID
* SUPPORTING PROJECTS	IMPROVE BUS ROUTE 1 THROUGH IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSIT STOPS AND INCREASED FREQUENCY	LOW	\$50K-\$100K	1-3 YEARS • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR) • THE RAPID
	INCREASE RIDERSHIP OF SILVER LINE THROUGH BOTH PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS AND RIDERSHIP INITIATIVES	LOW	\$500K - \$1 MILLION	3+ YEARS • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR) • THE RAPID
	EVALUATE LOCATION AND DESIGN OF PARKING	LOW	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR) • THE RAPID
	EVALUATE BIKE ACCESS IN THE AREA	LOW	\$0-\$50K	1-3 YEARS • CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS (MOBILE GR)

