Acknowledgements

City of Aurora
Mayor David L. Stover

Aurora City Council
Abby Shuler, 1st Ward Alderman
David Marquez, 2nd Ward Alderman
Stephanie Kifowit, 3rd Ward Alderman
Chuck Nelson, 4th Ward Alderman
John “Whitey” Peters, 5th Ward Alderman
Michael B. Saville, 6th Ward Alderman
Scheketa Hart-Burns, 7th Ward Alderman
Chris Beykirch, 8th Ward Alderman
Leroy Keith, 9th Ward Alderman
Lynda D. Elmore, 10th Ward Alderman
Bob Shelton, Alderman-at-Large
Bob O’Connor, Alderman-at-Large

Aurora Planning Commission
Bill Donnell-Chairman
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Marlene Dunn
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Aurora Neighborhood Council
Theresa Chaidez, Neighborhood Representative
Margaret Havemann, Neighborhood Representative (deceased)
Linda Holmes, Neighborhood Representative
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Mark Anderson, Director, Property Standards Division
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Bill Spaeth, Deputy Director, Community Development Department
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Rich Sharpener
Arlene Shoemaker
Paul Stewart, Near South East Neighbors Association
David Sullivan, Guiding Light Development Corp.
Pedro “Pinky” Zepeda
Leon and Wilma Ardelean
Rev. Jeff Becker
Jim Berkland
Sandy Berkland
Beth Carter
Albert Fonseca
Jeanne Groleske
Scott Groleske
Mark Hall, Carstar
Roberta McCormick, South East Neighbors Association
Brian McReynolds

We extend special thanks to Bardwell Elementary School for opening its doors to the Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative and allowing the use of auditorium, classroom, and cafeteria space. Thank you for your reliable support and cooperation!

Tom Hartman, Principal
Cynthia Bustos, Head Secretary
Beth Pigatti, 5th Grade Teacher
Steve Baker, Custodian

Matt Jones
Davis O'futt
Chuck Pagels
Rose Smilgys
Paul Stew art
Margaret Truax

Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan
Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative
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</tbody>
</table>
The Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative (ANPI) is being implemented to help residents and other stakeholders shape the way their neighborhoods will grow and change over the next 20 years and beyond. The first neighborhood to participate in the ANPI, the Bardwell Area, is located south of Downtown Aurora along the east side of the Fox River. There were many active participants throughout this planning process, without which the initiative would not have been such a success. The Bardwell Area Neighborhood Planning Team was comprised of City staff, the volunteer Leadership Team, and consultants. The Planning Team hosted 4 neighborhood meetings to gather input and ideas from residents, business owners, and other stakeholders, in addition to numerous leadership team meetings and activities.

The Bardwell Area is home to 5,277 residents. Hispanic/Latino residents comprise 63.0% of the neighborhood. This demographic makeup contrasts with the racial composition of the entire City, where only 1 out of every 3 residents is Hispanic/Latino.

During early phases of the neighborhood planning process, participants were asked to complete a series of exercises and activities in order to create a neighborhood vision. The vision statement is intended to be a long-range description of the neighborhood that can be used to help with immediate decision-making and action plan implementation. At the culmination of these activities, the neighborhood had crafted the vision statement shown below.

Welcome to the Bardwell Area Neighborhood of the year 2020! The vision that we have for our neighborhood is defined by the following key components:

- A redeveloped Copley Hospital site
- An effective program that has converted multi-family homes back to their original single-family use
- Close collaboration between police and neighborhood residents
- Owner-occupied homes
- Effective parking policies that include a ban of on-street parking overnight
- Active and informed residents who participate in community groups and activities through a variety of avenues including electronic communications tools/Internet kiosks

The five Task Forces proposed in this plan will focus on implementing the priority actions that were identified by the neighborhood. Thirty-two action items were presented to the neighborhood at the third planning meeting. Participants were asked to vote for their top priorities, which are listed below. More detailed descriptions of these action steps are included in Chapter Seven.

**Top Twelve Priority Actions**

1. Illuminate Streets and Alleys
2. Involve youth in designing activities for them in the neighborhood
3. Consider amortization program
4. Identify site and funding for Skate Park
5. Collaborate with other neighborhoods and the City to improve existing incentive programs to attract more private investors
6. Establish Copley design review team
7. Expand public-driven conversions including public/non-profit purchase program (of converted properties)
8. Consider greater legal classification of nuisances and “shaming” tools
9. Identify locations for traffic calming improvements and tie into City-wide traffic study
10. Localize spending of code violation revenue
11. Work with City to identify target areas for inspection/enforcement “sweeps”
12. Provide homeownership counseling and assistance to renters
The vision for the Bardwell Area provides a long-term goal for the future of the neighborhood. However, in order to begin thinking about how to reach the goal described in the vision, a clear understanding of a potential framework for improvement needs to be understood by both neighborhood stakeholders and the City. This framework for neighborhood improvement has two critical components: Physical and Organizational.

The Bardwell Area planning process, as it evolved, focused primarily on organizational and non-physical community development priorities. Given the input on neighborhood assets and opportunities, however, the Planning Team prepared a Physical Framework for Improvements to be Considered shown on page 9.

The physical framework can be used by neighborhood residents and the City to understand the key relationships between physical elements in the Bardwell Area. By understanding these relationships, one can easily begin to envision an investment strategy with phasing that is closely aligned with a physical plan.

The components of the physical framework are:

- Lincoln Avenue
- Broadway Street
- Neighborhood Core/Bardwell-Copley Area
- Commercial Services
- Neighborhood Gateways
- River Access and Views
- Open Space Anchors
- Pedestrian Pathways/Key Connections
- Neighborhood Sub-Areas

A more detailed description of the physical framework plan can be found in Chapter Six.

The intent of the Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative is for residents to provide input to the City on how it can do its job to benefit both the City as a whole and specific neighborhoods. Additionally, as a result of the planning process, neighborhood stakeholders learn how they can assume responsibility for certain aspects of the improvement program. Such is the case in the Bardwell Area.

Plan participants and the Leadership Team that was assembled to guide development of the Bardwell Area plan are sensitive to the resources present in the existing neighborhood organizations. Rather than duplicate the work of those organizations or to create a new group altogether, the hope is to tap into the membership of existing groups as potential participants on neighborhood Task Forces designed to address the key issues identified during the planning process.

The work of the Task Forces will be fivefold:

- Initiate implementation steps to address priority issues as outlined in Chapter Six of this report;
- Report to neighborhood groups and the Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC) regarding progress, obstacles, and activities;
- Maintain a cooperative relationship with City staff that allows for collaborative work and successful lobbying to City leaders;
- Explore all avenues for neighborhood improvement relative to the Task Force focus (i.e. employ an attitude of “thinking outside the box”); and
- Promote the work of the Task Force in order to recruit support and expertise.

The task forces identified for the implementation of the Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan are:

- Crime and Safety Task Force
- Reconversion Task Force
- Property Improvement Task Force
- Copley Site Task Force
- Youth Involvement Task Force

The cooperative relationship between and distinct roles of the Task Forces, the ANC, and the City is described in the figure on page 10.
Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan
Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative

Executive Summary

Physical Framework for Improvements to be Considered
Cooperative Relationship between the Task Force, the ANC, and the City

**Neighborhood Task Force**
- Gather additional information as necessary (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with ANC)
- Develop proposals for new/revised activities, projects, policies (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with ANC)
- Report to ANC
- Follow-up with ANC
- Monitor City Council activity

**Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC)**
- Gather additional information as necessary (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with Neighborhood)
- Develop proposals for new/revised activities, projects, policies (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with the Neighborhood)
- Report to Neighborhood
- Execute changes/submit proposal to City Council as necessary

**City Council**
- Review proposals
- Gather additional information as necessary
- Act on proposals/draft ordinances as necessary
Introduction

Chapter 2

Overview of the Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative (ANPI)

The City of Aurora initiated one of the first comprehensive neighborhood planning efforts in the region in 2002. The Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative (ANPI) is being implemented to help residents and other stakeholders shape the way their neighborhoods will grow and change over the next 20 years and beyond.

Since February 2000, the City of Aurora has taken a proactive stance in working with its neighborhoods to identify common problems and develop solutions. The Neighborhood Revitalization Team (NRT), comprised of neighborhood representatives and City staff, spent several months identifying common issues confronting Aurora’s established neighborhoods. At the conclusion of their work, the group had formulated a number of recommendations that included sponsorship of two neighborhood-oriented programs.

The first program would allow ongoing City-neighborhood dialogue to address a variety of issues. The implementation of this recommendation was the formation of the Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC), a type of “one-stop shop” for neighborhoods to access City services. The ANC is made up of neighborhood representatives and is served by representatives of each City department.

The second NRT program was based on the acknowledgment that each of Aurora’s neighborhoods has its own character, its own unique set of issues, and, perhaps, its own priorities for improving its quality of life. As such, the NRT proposed a process for ensuring long-term, neighborhood-by-neighborhood planning. The goal of this proposal was to assure that the distinct needs of various neighborhoods are addressed and that revitalization is an ongoing, joint effort of both residents and City government. The ANPI was started to provide a forum for neighborhoods to collaborate with the City in addressing neighborhood issues through long-range planning. The objectives of the program are to:

- Identify and involve stakeholders;
- Help community stakeholders identify key goals for their neighborhoods;
- Involve stakeholders in determining the best ways to achieve neighborhood AND City goals; and
- Create a collaborative and inclusive environment that will foster community building in each neighborhood.

Mayor Stover speaks at the ANPI kick-off meeting.
**Bardwell Area Neighborhood Study Area**

The Bardwell Area is located south of Downtown Aurora along the east side of the Fox River. The area is named after Conrad M. Bardwell Elementary School, which lies in the center of the study area.

As shown in the map below, the study area is generally defined by the following boundaries: North Avenue on the north, 5th Street on the east, Simms Street on the south, and the Fox River on the west.

Although the neighborhood planning process primarily focused on the area encompassed by these boundaries, blocks located outside of but in proximity to the study area were also given consideration due to mere proximity or local affiliation. For example, Our Lady of Good Counsel Church is located just east of the study area along the east side of 5th Street, but numerous residents living within the study area are members of that church.

The Bardwell Area Neighborhood is a predominantly residential neighborhood located south of Downtown Aurora.

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**The Bardwell Area can be characterized by transportation routes and other local features.**

- The Burlington Northern Railroad traverses the northwest point of the study area.
- Lincoln Avenue and Broadway Street are two major roads that provide access to and from the rest of the City.
- Hurds Island, Spring Lake Memorial Garden, South Broadway Park, and Mt. Olivet Cemetery are local open spaces located outside the study area.
- The Near Eastside Historic District.
- Other local features are described in more detail in Chapter Three.
**Bardwell Area Planning Team**

The Bardwell Area Neighborhood Planning Team was comprised of City staff, the volunteer Leadership Team, consultants, and, most importantly, residents and other neighborhood stakeholders who participated in the process. The diagram below depicts the Planning Team and summarizes the general responsibilities of each component of the team.

**Leadership Team**

The Leadership Team was comprised of a diverse group of Bardwell Area stakeholders that focused on the outcomes of neighborhood meetings and input from residents. Working with City staff and consultants, the Leadership Team was instrumental in ensuring that the planning process reflected the community’s needs and desires.

Among its various assignments, the Leadership Team was responsible for initiating work on the following:

- Neighborhood vision statement;
- Prioritization of neighborhood issues;
- Compilation of the most meaningful existing neighborhood development tools;
- Priority action items for the Bardwell Area’s top planning issues; and
- Implementation program for the priority action items.

---

**Figure B - Bardwell Area Planning Team**

**Neighborhood Plan Participants**

- Attend/participate in meetings
- Communicate concerns, experiences & ideas
- Review consultant ideas in order to shape plan

**Neighborhood Leadership Team**

- Promote meetings
- Accept responsibility for assignments between meetings
- Make sure recommendations reflect neighborhood’s desires

**City Staff**

- Attend & help plan meetings
- Bring in additional resources & information as necessary
- Distribute information throughout process

**Consultants**

- Design & advise on activities
- Facilitate discussions
- Translate meeting results into planning document
Planning Process

Throughout the planning process, four neighborhood meetings were held to give residents, local business owners, and other Bardwell Area stakeholders the opportunity to participate in the planning of their neighborhood. The map on page 15 shows the geographic distribution of the residents and stakeholders who participated in the neighborhood meetings.

The planning process was primarily comprised of three neighborhood meetings that corresponded to three phases summarized in the diagram below. The final (fourth) meeting was used for presentation of the draft plan.

Phase One/Meeting One Objectives
1. Agree on where the neighborhood is today
2. Agree on where we want the neighborhood to be

November 12, 2002
“What is our vision for the neighborhood?”

Phase Two/Meeting Two Objectives
1. Generate strategies to address neighborhood issues
2. Identify improvement projects, programs, services

January 21, 2003
“What can we do to make our vision a reality?”

Phase Three/Meeting Three Objectives
1. Prioritize improvement projects, programs, services
2. Create action plan and assign responsibility

February 25, 2003
“What work needs to be done now and who is going to do it?”

Bardwell residents were invited to participate in four neighborhood meetings designed to gather community input and incorporate residents’ ideas into the neighborhood action plan.

Figure C - Bardwell Area Planning Process

The goal of the first neighborhood meeting was to give the Planning Team an idea of how residents not only perceive their neighborhood in its current state but also envision it in the future. A word association exercise and small group discussions helped identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that characterize the Bardwell Area. Based on the results from the first meeting, the Planning Team was able to prepare a draft vision for the neighborhood.

In order to attain the envisioned image, and improve upon existing programs of the neighborhood, the Planning Team identified strategies and action steps that would improve the neighborhood. These neighborhood improvement strategies focused on the top priority issues for the Bardwell Area as reflected by the results from Phase One. In addition, residents were surveyed on a draft of the neighborhood vision.

Based on the results from Phase Two, a preliminary action plan for neighborhood improvements was developed. The final phase of the planning process centered upon reviewing this action plan in order to prioritize the action items based on the immediate needs and desires of residents. In order to help facilitate the prioritization process, residents were informed of existing neighborhood improvement programs (if any) and who would be responsible for performing the action items.
At each neighborhood meeting, residents were asked to label the location of their residences or places of work on a neighborhood map. This is a compilation of these labels.
The neighborhood profile provides quantitative insight into the demographic composition of and conditions in the Bardwell Area. Topics covered in this profile include: population, households, housing occupancy and tenure, zoning districts, and neighborhood assets.

**Population**

The Bardwell Area Neighborhood is home to 5,277 residents. The neighborhood’s total population comprises only a small percentage (3.7%) of the City of Aurora’s total population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bardwell Neighborhood</th>
<th>City of Aurora</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population by Race</td>
<td>Percent of Total Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>3,285</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Race</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,277</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2000 U.S. Census data
Population by Age and Gender

Children older than five years but younger than 17 years comprise the largest population group by age in the Bardwell Area. The two smallest population groups by age are college-age young adults (18 to 21 years) and retired residents (65 years and over). The neighborhood composition of the other population groups by age is distributed fairly evenly.

The Bardwell Area has slightly more male residents (2,738) than female residents (2,539). In addition, male residents in the neighborhood have a higher median age (25.8 years) than female residents (24.6 years). The overall median age for all residents is 25.3 years.

Households by Type

Households in the Bardwell Area may be classified as being either a family household or a non-family household.

Family households include married couples (with and without children) and single householders with children. Four out of five households (79.3%) in the Bardwell Area may be classified as a family household. Over half (53.9%) of total households are occupied by married couples. About 17.8% of total households are occupied by single householders with children.

Non-family households include single residents and unrelated residents living in the same household. Only one out of five households (20.7%) may be classified as a non-family household. About 20.0% of total households are occupied by single residents. Only 5.1% of total households are occupied by unrelated residents living in the same household.

Note: The U.S. Census defines a “family” as “a group of two or more (one of whom is the household) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together”. A “household” consists of all people occupying a single housing unit and includes “related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers, foster children, wards, or employees who share the (same) housing unit”.

Figure F - Population by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population by Age</th>
<th>Percent of Total Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 to 17 years</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 21 years</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 to 29 years</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 39 years</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 to 49 years</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64 years</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 years and over</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure G - Median Age

- 24.6 years (female residents)
- 25.8 years (male residents)

Figure H - Households by Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent of Total Households</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family households</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couple families</td>
<td>1,125</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With own children under 18 years</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>37.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male householder, no wife present, with own children under 18 years</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female householder, no husband present, with own children under 18 years</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-family households</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unrelated residents in the same household</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Householder living alone</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male householder living alone</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female householder living alone</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Households</strong></td>
<td>1,419</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Average Household and Family Size

The average household size in the Bardwell Area is about 3.70 residents per household, which is higher than the 3.04 value for the entire City. The average family size in the neighborhood (4.06 residents per household) is also higher than the value for the entire City (3.55).

Housing Occupancy and Tenure

The Bardwell Area has 1,480 total housing units, of which 1,419 are occupied. As such, the housing units in the neighborhood are characterized by very little vacancy (4.1% of total housing units are vacant). The neighborhood’s vacancy rate is slightly lower than the vacancy rate for the entire City (4.7%).

 Approximately three out of every five housing units (60.2%) in the neighborhood are owner-occupied. Relative to the rest of Aurora, the percentage of owner-occupied households in the neighborhood is lower by about 10%. Conversely, the percentage of renter-occupied households is 10% higher in the neighborhood than in the entire City. The Owner Occupancy Map on page 20 shows the distribution of owner-occupied homes throughout the Bardwell Area.

With the exception of a few blocks, less than 50% of the housing units located north of South Avenue are owner-occupied. In addition, less than 60% of the housing units located west of Lincoln Avenue and north of Warren Avenue are also owner-occupied. In other words, these blocks have more rental units than owner-occupied units.

On the other hand, about 70% or more of the housing units located south of Marion Avenue and east of Lincoln Avenue are owner-occupied. Sexton, Lebanon, and Lafayette Streets have the most owner-occupied housing units in the entire neighborhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bardwell Neighborhood</th>
<th>City of Aurora</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td>Percent of Total Housing Units</td>
<td>Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied housing units</td>
<td>854</td>
<td>60.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter-occupied housing units</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>39.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total occupied housing units</td>
<td>1,419</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Owner Occupancy Households Map

Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan

Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative

Exhibit 2
Zoning Districts

Zoning districts are a general means of classifying land according to uses that are legally permitted by the City. Zoning classifications are typically similar to land use categories, but they also specify permitted uses and construction constraints such as lot and building dimensions, parking, and landscaping.

The Bardwell Area is primarily residential with a few non-residential uses scattered throughout the neighborhood. Below is a brief description of the different zoning districts in the neighborhood:

- A bulk of the lots in the neighborhood are designated as R-3 (One-Family Dwelling District) and R-4 (Two-Family Dwelling District) zones.
- A couple of lots along North Avenue and LaSalle Street are designated as commercial zones, particularly B-1 (Business District - Local Retail) and B-3 (Business and Wholesale District).
- One lot located southwest of the intersection of Evans Avenue and LaSalle Street is designated as an O (Office District) zone.
- Several lots north of Hazel Avenue, one lot along the Fox River (south of Bluff Street), and another lot just southeast of the railroad are all designated as M-1 (Manufacturing District - Limited) zones.
- The neighborhood’s three parks, the Virgil Gilman Trail, the Bardwell Elementary School, and a small lot on the northwest tip of the study area (northwest of the railroad) are all designated as P (Park/Open Space) zones.

The map on page 22 shows the existing zoning districts in the neighborhood.
Overview of Existing Zoning Districts in the Bardwell Area Neighborhood, Fall 2002

- **R-2 One-Family Dwelling District**: Allows single-family homes on 60' wide lots of at least 8,000 s.f.; building size must be at least 950 s.f. for one-story buildings and 1,300 s.f. for multiple-story buildings.

- **R-3 One-Family Dwelling District**: Same allowances as R-2 except that homes can be smaller – 750 s.f. for one-story buildings and 950 s.f. for multiple-story buildings; most properties within the Bardwell Area fall within this category.

- **R-4 Two-Family Dwelling District**: Two-family homes allowed on same lot sizes as above; many scattered properties throughout the neighborhood fall within this category.

- **R-5 Multiple-Family Dwelling District**: Generally only allows one building per lot; 2 parking spaces per unit are required; two of these type of properties currently exist on Broadway Street south of North Avenue and one exists on Lincoln Avenue.

- **R-5A Midrise Multi-Family Dwelling District**: Similar to R-5 except that more dwelling units are allowed per lot; the minimum lot area per dwelling unit is generally 1/2 to 1/3 the size required in R-5; only one property of this type exists in the n'hood (at the NW corner of Lincoln Ave. & Center Ave.)

- **O Office District**: Allows a greater variety of businesses including automotive sales and service and dry cleaning; allows for even fewer properties in the R-5 zoning district.

- **B-1 Business District - Local Retail**: Retail stores allowed in buildings no taller than 3 stories or 50' in height, only a few properties in the Bardwell Area fall within this category however, there are businesses within the M-1 zoning district.

- **B-3 Business and Wholesale District**: Allows a greater variety of businesses including automotive sales and service and dry cleaning; no height restrictions are allowed; B-3 zoned properties exist only around the gas stations at North Ave. & Broadway St.

- **M-1 Manufacturing District - Limited**: These areas generally located near residential areas must comply with restrictions that limit noise, smoke, odor, noxious gases, glare vibrations, and heat; several properties of this type currently exist along Hazel Avenue.

- **P Park/Open Space**: Publicly held open space and recreational areas; allows for interrelated governmental agencies to use common resources to establish facilities (Bardwell Elementary School falls within this category).

- **(S) Special Use District**: These unique types of uses or properties may not fit within any of the other zoning classifications; a special review process is conducted to make sure that there is no negative impact upon neighboring properties.
Neighborhood Assets

Neighborhood assets are community resources that include local buildings, services, recreational areas, and other community-related uses that residents visit, use, or need on a regular basis. The Bardwell Area is characterized by a variety of local assets, which are shown on the Neighborhood Assets Map on page 24. Bardwell Elementary School is one such asset and is the only non-religious affiliated educational institution in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is also home to the administration building for the Aurora East School District #131.

Bluff Street Park and Center Street Park are two other prominent features of the neighborhood. Titsworth Court Park is also an asset despite its small size and secluded location. The Virgil Gilman Trail, which runs along the southwestern edge of the neighborhood, provides recreational opportunities to residents.

Neighborhood assets such as Bluff Street Park (above) and the Virgil Gilman Trail (below) provide recreational opportunities to residents.

Although the neighborhood is predominantly residential in character, the few businesses and industrial enterprises in the neighborhood are assets to the community. These particular uses are primarily located in the southwest section of the neighborhood with a few small businesses (e.g., the former Buy Rite supermarket on 4th Street and the Minute Man Gas Station/convenience store on Broadway Street) scattered throughout the area. Community services such as the Aurora Health Center on Weston Avenue are also considered local assets.

Churches such as 4th Street United Methodist Church serve as local religious centers as well as aesthetic features to the Bardwell Area’s built landscape.

The neighborhood’s four churches (St. John United Church, 4th Street United Methodist Church, 1st Hmong Alliance Church, and Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal Church) are also assets to the community.

Bardwell Elementary School, which sits in the center of the neighborhood, is one of the Bardwell Area’s most prominent assets.
Neighborhood Assets Map
Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan
Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative
Exhibit 4
Neighborhood assets may also include opportunities for neighborhood improvement. The former Copley Hospital site is one such opportunity. After moving out of the neighborhood in 1995, the Copley Hospital site has remained vacant but presents a great redevelopment opportunity for the community. A few other vacant lots are scattered throughout the neighborhood and present similar opportunities.

The Fox River in and of itself is a local asset. However, the river’s east bank remains underutilized but offers recreational and other open space opportunities.

The Near Eastside Historic District partially extends into the Bardwell Area and is regarded as another local asset. Specifically, the Historic District primarily extends from central Aurora into the northeast part of the neighborhood along Lincoln Avenue. Physical elements such as historic light fixtures bring a unique character to the parts of the neighborhood that lie within the Historic District. By providing design standards that manage the appearance and dimensions of physical features of buildings and properties, the Historic District is designed to maintain the historic elements of the neighborhood. Many houses in the neighborhood -- both inside and outside the Historic District -- have historic value.

Vacant lots, such as the one on the northeast corner of Simms Street and Logan Street (shown above), provide the neighborhood with development opportunities that would help improve the Bardwell Area.
Before beginning to plan for the future of the Bardwell Area, it is necessary to look at the neighborhood as it is today and to inventory the positive and negative aspects that are shaping the area. Census data, activities at planning meetings, surveys, and voting were some of the tools used to generate thinking among participants regarding issues facing the neighborhood.

Planning Issues

At the onset of the Bardwell Area planning process, the consultant team conferred with the Leadership Team to identify a list of planning issues that should be addressed during the planning process. That list included:

- Property conditions;
- Rental conversions;
- Parking;
- Copley Hospital site;
- Homelessness;
- Safety and security; and
- “First impressions” (based on traffic patterns and the experience that drivers have as they travel along Broadway Street and, to a lesser degree, Lincoln Avenue).

When presented with this list of items, participants from across the neighborhood added that they felt that prostitution and population density were also pressing issues for the neighborhood. Many of these issues shaped discussions and development of the final plan recommendations.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

At the first neighborhood planning meeting, participants were asked to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) currently facing the neighborhood. A summary of the results is shown on the next two pages. The complete inventory of comments received is included in the Appendix beginning on page 74. A map highlighting these SWOT elements that could be identified with a physical location is shown on page 30.
There are many positive aspects of the Bardwell Area that can serve as a starting point for neighborhood improvement. When asked to identify strengths of the neighborhood, participants replied with some of the following:

- Hard-working, concerned, and diverse citizens
- Change in residential character
- Family-oriented
- “My home”
- Affordable homes with good value
- Unique character of homes
- Historic architecture
- Area was historically affluent
- Location (proximity to downtown, shopping opportunities, commuter rail & recreation trail
- Family-oriented and owned businesses
- Availability of parks and playgrounds
- Services provided by clinics, churches, and schools

After identifying strengths, the residents were asked to compile a list of weaknesses that they feel should be addressed by the neighborhood and the City. The following list is a summary of the comments organized by five predominant themes:

**Community**
- Lack of communication and a cultural barrier
- Lack of local programs, especially for youth
- Poor neighborhood image (bad press)
- High rate of mobility/turnover

**Crime & Nuisances**
- Gang violence
- Prostitution
- Drug activity
- Too many liquor stores
- Unsafe parks
- Homelessness
- Loitering
- Noise/loud music

**Housing**
- Lack of City programs
- Lack of owner-occupied homes and rental properties
- City conversion incentives are ineffective
- Vacant houses/properties
- Inadequate building/property maintenance
- Huge parking lots that are not maintained
- Abandoned parking lot at old Copley Hospital site
- Unlit school parking lot
- Insufficient street parking

**Public Infrastructure/Services**
- Inadequate street and alley maintenance
- Lack of City support with respect to infrastructure
- Poor street and sidewalk conditions in some areas
- Inconsistent and inadequate code enforcement
- Inadequate police presence, which leads to a disregard to laws
- Lack of bus service

*These issues raised by individuals participating in the neighborhood planning process are not intended to be representative of the group as a whole, the neighborhood, or City and were not evaluated for accuracy. Some issues may evidence statements of perception rather than fact; however, perceptions do matter.*
Once the neighborhood had identified strengths and weaknesses, they were able to consider different aspects of the neighborhood that they might be able to improve. Participants were asked to identify improvement opportunities in the neighborhood. Results are grouped into five categories:

### Opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Neighborhood Character</th>
<th>Public Infrastructure/Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural activities based on ethnic and age diversity of residents</td>
<td>Fox River as a bike trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language training and cultural information sharing</td>
<td>Capitalize on history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunity to improve community’s image and identity</td>
<td>Proximity to downtown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vested long-term residents as well as young families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Threats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Neighborhood Character</th>
<th>Public Infrastructure/Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perpetuation of stereotyping and discrimination</td>
<td>Conversions of single-family homes for multiple-family units</td>
<td>Image/perception of the neighborhood by current and prospective residents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of community involvement (especially from youth and the Hispanic community)</td>
<td>Discriminatory real estate practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents may leave the neighborhood</td>
<td>Conversion of senior housing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Infrastructure/Services</td>
<td>Perceived property values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of police presence and other City involvement</td>
<td>Contaminated properties</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient planning and infrastructure</td>
<td>Increased presence of slum lords</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adequate street lights</td>
<td>Encroachment/stolen property</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inconsistent housing inspections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increased population density (overcrowding)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the main reasons for conducting a neighborhood plan is to improve deficiencies in the area. By identifying these issues, the City and neighbors can create an effective plan for improvement. Participants were aware of the threats that are facing the neighborhood (listed according to six predominant themes):
Summary of Group SWOT Analyses
Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan
Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative

Compiled Comments
During the first neighborhood meeting, six small groups were asked to provide comments on their perceptions of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that characterize the neighborhood. This map is a compilation of those comments.

Colored Dots
Each colored dot, or colored dotted line on the map, corresponds to a SWOT item for which a resident did not provide a corresponding description.
Neighborhood Surveys

Participants also completed a survey at the first neighborhood planning meeting to confirm or contradict assumptions about the neighborhood that were made by professional planning staff based on site visits and review of existing conditions. The results of the survey are shown to the right. Complete results of the survey are included in the Appendix on page 74.

Issue Summary

The top issues from the SWOT analysis and neighborhood survey can best be summarized with the inventory of neighborhood issues shown in the figure below. These issues need to be addressed throughout this planning process and into the future in order to improve the Bardwell Area.

This list of 23 items that evolved out of comments raised at the first neighborhood meeting was presented to the Leadership Team at its next meeting with the objective of narrowing the list down to items that are of highest priority to the neighborhood. Leadership Team members were given six votes to cast for the issues that they think are the most important ones confronting the neighborhood. Results of the vote indicate that the following issues are most critical:

- Property Conditions
- Commercial Services
- Communication
- Rental Conversions
- Prostitution
- Traffic
- Parking
- Population Density
- Neighborhood Cohesion
- Copley Hospital
- Broadway Avenue Corridor
- Youth Activities
- Access to River
- Gangs
- Proximity to Downtown as an Opportunity
- Crime
- Sidewalk, Street, Alley Conditions
- Code Enforcement
- Youth Activities
- Perceptions/Image of Area
- Gangs
- Crime
- Sidewalk, Street, Alley Conditions
- Code Enforcement
- Copley Hospital
- Code enforcement
- Single-family structures being used as multi-family
- Crime reduction/elimination
- Youth activities
- Gangs

Complete results of the voting are included in the Appendix on page 85. The list of six items was then reduced to four by combining crime reduction/elimination with youth activities and gangs. These four issues and the creation of realistic and achievable action plans to address them became the focus of the remainder of the planning process.
During early phases of the neighborhood planning process, participants were asked to complete a series of exercises and activities to lead to the creation of a neighborhood vision. The types of activities, which are explained below, included taking pictures of positive and negative aspects of the area, brainstorming what an ideal neighborhood is, and writing a description of the neighborhood in 20 years. This process required thoughtful reflection by all involved and, at the culmination of these activities, the neighborhood had created a vision that identified five critical priorities. The vision statement is intended to be a long-range description of the neighborhood that can be used to help with immediate decision-making and action plan implementation.

**Existing Neighborhood Conditions**

To initiate the “visioning” process, Leadership Team members were asked to take photographs prior to the first neighborhood meeting to serve as a beginning inventory of strengths and weaknesses. Participants were asked to use the Bardwell Area as their source in taking pictures of as many of the following as possible:

- Favorite property(s) in the neighborhood
- Least favorite property(s)
- Any property or site that generates a lot of activity and/or traffic
- Buildings on the block where the participant lives or works
- Any property that should set the standard for good property maintenance (lawn, building, fence, lighting, etc.)
- Any public improvements (curbs, sidewalks, street lights, streets, etc.) that are in bad condition

Two sample images of existing neighborhood conditions are shown below. Additional images are shown on pages 86-87 in the Appendix.

**Desired Neighborhood Conditions**

Leadership Team members were also asked to gather photographs from magazines, newspapers, books, etc., prior to the neighborhood meeting to serve as a starting point for drafting a vision statement for the Bardwell Area. Participants were encouraged to gather photos that showed conditions that they would like to see in the Bardwell Area. Subjects could include particular housing types, open spaces and parks, streetscape elements (such as lighting, sidewalks, plantings, etc.) or could also include types of activities such as neighborhood celebrations, festivals, or particular types of businesses that are desired. The only requirement was that something in the photo should be an element

Among many other properties, members of the Leadership Team viewed this particular property on East Park Avenue as well-kempt and an example of how properties throughout the neighborhood should look.

On the other hand, the Leadership Team viewed properties such as this house with a poorly maintained roof as being unkempt and undesired in the neighborhood.
that the members would like to see in the neighborhood. Results indicated that the following characteristics were elements of the Leadership Team's collective vision for the neighborhood:

- Preservation
- Attractive landscaping, gardens, decorative yards
- Visual open space
- Security outdoors
- Outdoor family recreation
- Young couples/families
- Pocket parks
- Incentives for single family homes
- Less intrusive parking

Sample images of desired neighborhood conditions are shown above and to the left. Additional images are shown on page 86-87 in the Appendix.

At the first neighborhood meeting, participants were shown the results of the Leadership Team's work and then asked to give one word to describe the neighborhood as it is today and then one word to describe how they would like it to be. The words that participants used to describe how the neighborhood is today and how they would like it to be are summarized in the figures below.

Figure M - “Bardwell Area As It Is Today and How I Would Like It To Be”

- Dormant
- Changing
- Detrimental
- Promising
- A fraud
- Shootings
- Dangerous
- Uncertain
- Divided
- Neighbors
- More parking
- Crime-free
- Safer
- United with peace
- Unified
- Pretty
- Conflicted
- Historical
- Inconsistent
- Affordable
- Nasty
- Hopeful
- Ignored
- Colorful
- Bi-lingual
- Diverse
- Paradoxical
- Oppressed
- Criticized
- Hard working
- Reputation
- Unsafe
- Pride
- Opportunity
- Harmonious
- Quiet
- Less crowded
- Well-maintained
- Respectful
- Recognized
- Better
- Alive
- Communicable
- More participation
- Informed
- Industrious
- Slower traffic
- Resurrection
- Single-family
- (less rental)
Neighborhood Vision Elements

After the first neighborhood meeting, members of the Leadership Team were asked to describe the elements necessary to turn the Bardwell Area into a healthy neighborhood with conditions they would find to be ideal (their vision!). Members were asked to list anything that they feel would be necessary to achieve these ideal conditions. Their detailed responses are included in the Appendix on page 82.

From these results, a list of 19 specific items that were mentioned in the nine vision assignments were assembled for prioritization by the Leadership Team:

- A redeveloped Copley Hospital site
- Active and informed residents who participate in community groups and activities through a variety of avenues including electronic communications tools/web sites/internet kiosks
- An effective program that has converted multi-family homes back to their original single-family use
- Property values that have a comparable relationship/parity with the rest of the city
- A conservation district that protects areas outside of the historic district
- Industrious businesses that bring opportunity to the neighborhood
- Active neighborhood watch groups
- Safe streets
- Decorative lighting and street trees
- Effective parking policies that include a ban of on-street parking overnight
- Plenty of family-friendly activities and friendly, helpful neighbors
- City incentives that encourage residents to live in historic districts
- Close collaboration between police and neighborhood residents
- Owner-occupied homes
- Increased levels of disposable income
- Effective neighborhood groups
- Fewer home sales - people stay in the neighborhood for a longer period of time
- Crime-free community
- Parks and open space (including trails)

The Leadership Team members were given the opportunity to vote on the three items they felt are the most critical pieces of the neighborhood vision. The top-ranking items were shown in the vision statement that was presented to the neighborhood. The resulting neighborhood vision described below is the outcome of both the Leadership Team and neighborhood prioritization work. The detailed results of the voting are included in the Appendix on page 84.
The vision for the Bardwell Area provides a long-term goal for the future of the area. However, in order to begin thinking about how to reach the goal described in the vision, a clear understanding of a potential framework for improvement needs to be understood by both neighborhood stakeholders and the City. This framework for neighborhood improvement has two critical components:

- Physical Framework
- Organizational Framework

### Physical Framework

The Bardwell Area planning process, as it evolved, focused primarily on organizational and non-physical community development priorities. Given the input on neighborhood assets and opportunities, however, the Planning Team prepared a Physical Framework for Improvements to be Considered shown on page 38.

The physical framework can be used by neighborhood residents and the City to understand the key relationships between physical elements in the Bardwell Area. By understanding these relationships, one can easily begin to envision an investment strategy with phasing that is closely aligned with a physical plan.

The components of the physical framework are:

**Lincoln Avenue** - Lincoln Avenue is the spine of the neighborhood, the “showpiece” street of the area that houses major assets such as Bardwell Elementary School and the Copley Hospital site. The wide, tree-lined street highlights some of the finest homes in the neighborhood. As a City-wide connecting street and collector, it is also a gateway corridor in the neighborhood and should be used to showcase outstanding features of the neighborhood to residents from within and outside of the Bardwell Area.

**Broadway** - Broadway is another city thoroughfare that serves the Bardwell Area and exhibits neighborhood conditions to those from outside the area. In particular, this corridor provides direct links to Downtown and the Metra station. While Lincoln Avenue will primarily be a residential showcase street, Broadway can offer the neighborhood commercial services in an environment that balances a complementary mix of uses.

**Neighborhood Core/Bardwell-Copley Area** - The redevelopment of the Copley Hospital site is one of the highest priorities of the neighborhood. As one member of the Leadership Team described the site, “If Copley were redeveloped, all of these other problems would take care of themselves.” The existence of a potentially re-activated Copley site and Bardwell Elementary immediately adjacent to one another in the center of the neighborhood creates a core area that becomes the “heart” of the neighborhood.

**Commercial Services** - The existing mix of uses at the south end of Broadway can continue to serve the neighborhood in a positive way with the application of appropriate design and development guidelines and traffic calming tools.

**Neighborhood Gateways** - The major City streets in the neighborhood, traffic patterns, and distinctive physical conditions create gateway conditions -- the feeling that one is passing from one area with predominant characteristics to another. Key gateways are shown on both Lincoln and Broadway at North Avenue and at Hazel Avenue.

**River Access and Views** - Opportunities to interact with and view the Fox River can be enjoyed from properties along Rosewood Avenue and by extending existing trails to the river.

**Open Space Anchors** - Three existing parks (Titsworth Court Park in the northwest quadrant of the neighborhood, Bluff Street Park in the southwest, and Center Street Park in the northeast) in the neighborhood provide amenities for residents and could be the foun-
Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan
Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative

Physical Framework for Improvements to be Considered

Legend

- Lincoln Avenue (Neighborhood Spine)
- Broadway Street (City Thoroughfare)
- Neighborhood Core
- Bardwell-Copley Area
- Neighborhood Sub-Areas
- Commercial
- Pedestrian Pathways
- Key Connections
- River Access & Views
- Neighborhood Gateway
- Open Space Anchors

Potential Open Space or Landscaped Streetscape Enhancement
A potential for an interconnected network of open spaces that serves sub-areas of the neighborhood. A potential new open space feature in the southeast portion of the neighborhood could complete the network and would not necessarily be a significant new park requiring the removal of residential structures. Streetscape enhancements and/or right-of-way improvements could serve as an open space anchor in this location.

**Pedestrian Pathways/Key Connections** - The potential for five major neighborhood focal points (Bardwell-Copley area and potentially four open space features/parks) in addition to the river creates the opportunity for a system of comfortable and safe primary pedestrian and pedestrian/vehicular connections. Potential locations for these connections are shown along the riverfront, Lincoln Avenue, Simms Street, and Seminary Avenue (pedestrian pathways) and LaSalle Street, Titsworth Court, Center Avenue, Lafayette Street, and Fifth Street (key connections characterized by well-designed streetscapes that balance pedestrian and vehicular traffic).

**Neighborhood Sub-Areas** - The final, but most vibrant, piece of the neighborhood framework “puzzle” are the blocks of predominantly residential structures that provide an appropriate density of residents that keep the open spaces, pathways, and connections safe, comfortable, and well “looked after.”

**Organizational Framework**

The intent of the Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative is for residents to provide input to the City on how it can do its job to benefit both the City as a whole and specific neighborhoods. Additionally, as a result of the planning process, neighborhood stakeholders may learn how they can assume responsibility for certain aspects of the improvement program. Such is the case in the Bardwell Area.

The Bardwell Area is not lacking in neighborhood organizations and active residents. Three resident-based organizations are currently present:

- Southeast Neighborhood Association
- Near Southeast Neighbors
- SAFE Neighbors

The Near Eastside Historic District is a fourth neighborhood organization active in the area. These groups were represented throughout the planning process and provide an organizational network for achieving results. Additionally, the Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC) will play a role in the implementation of the Bardwell Area plan.

A neighborhood, like any other physical or organizational structure, requires ongoing maintenance and management. Shopping centers, apartment complexes, and corporate entities all benefit, to one extent or another, from a focused and managed approach to problem solving. Neighborhoods can also benefit when an identified organization assumes continuing responsibility for addressing problems. The City and the ANC can play a role in implementing many plan recommendations and in monitoring progress, but ultimately neighborhood stakeholders must be committed to hold themselves and the City accountable.

Plan participants and the Leadership Team that was assembled to guide development of the Bardwell Area plan are sensitive to the resources present in the existing neighborhood organizations. There is little desire to duplicate the work of those organizations or to create a new group altogether. Rather, the hope is to tap into the membership and also into “untapped” resources and citizens of existing groups as potential participants on neighborhood Task Forces designed to address the key issues identified during the planning process. The work of the Task Forces will be five-fold:
- Initiate implementation steps to address priority issues as outlined in Chapter Six of this report;

- Report to neighborhood groups and the ANC regarding progress, obstacles, and activities;

- Maintain a cooperative relationship with City staff that allows for collaborative work and successful lobbying to City leaders;

- Explore all avenues for neighborhood improvement relative to the Task Force focus (i.e., employ an attitude of “thinking outside the box”); and

- Promote the work of the Task Force in order to recruit new members and expertise.

The task forces identified for the implementation of the Bardwell Area Neighborhood Action Plan are:

- Crime and Safety Task Force
- Reconversion Task Force
- Property Improvement Task Force
- Copley Site Task Force
- Youth Involvement Task Force

Task Force Action Items - Figures N - R on pages 41 through 44 list the action items to be undertaken by each of the five task forces (items are listed in the order of priority based on neighborhood voting at the third neighborhood meeting; shaded items were determined to be a lower priority and should be carefully reconsidered before any action is taken). Responsibility for initiating and maintaining each action item falls in the hands of either the neighborhood, the ANC, the City, or other local groups. These responsibilities are also listed.

The Task Force approach does not work in every neighborhood. Typically, a task force is a group assembled for a short duration to accomplish a limited set of actions. The intent behind the use of task forces in the Bardwell Area was to keep the number of meetings to attract participants and to keep the groups focused on achieving results as quickly as possible.

Essentially, the objective was to assemble residents to participate in projects that were important to the neighborhood that would allow for “quick wins,” thereby attracting more participants interested in working on specific activities that improve the neighborhood. Discussions with plan participants, however, indicated that there were multiple issues that residents were personally interested in pursuing, so a consolidation of some of the issues into one Task Force made sense from a practical, meeting schedule perspective. Additionally, participants felt very strongly that lobbying to the City and acting as a “watchdog” to track the City’s progress on some of the tasks that were primarily their responsibility should be a defined task of neighborhood residents at many levels: neighborhood organizations, plan implementation Task Forces, and individual residents.

For example, an action item such as the amortization of multi-family uses in originally single-family structures may appear to fall primarily under the City’s responsibility given that the neighborhood has already identified it as a priority and that such a policy would likely affect an area larger than just the Bardwell Area. However, participants in the Bardwell Area planning process did not want to remove themselves from the implementation of that action item. They felt that they had a role to play in continually communicating the importance of this action to the City and actively lobbying for its execution.
The Crime and Safety Task Force will be responsible for exploring avenues for improving comfort levels and perceptions of safety in the neighborhood. Items below are listed in the order of priority based on neighborhood voting on February 25, 2003. Shaded items were determined to be a lower priority and should be carefully reconsidered before any action is taken. Task forces will be provided with more detailed implementation steps for the high priority (unshaded) action items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>% of Total Votes</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for INITIATING This Work?</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for MAINTAINING Progress of This Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS-1</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>City - Street Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-2</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>City - Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-3</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>City - Neighborhood Redevelopment</td>
<td>City - Neighborhood Redevelopment/Police</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS-4</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-5</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-6</td>
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<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-7</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-8</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-9</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-10</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-11</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/City - Parks Department/Fox Valley Park District</td>
<td>City - Parks Department/Fox Valley Park District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Reconversion Task Force will be responsible for exploring avenues for reducing the number of originally single-family homes that are now being used as multi-family dwellings. Items below are listed in the order of priority based on neighborhood voting on February 25, 2003. Shaded items were determined to be a lower priority and should be carefully reconsidered before any action is taken. Task forces will be provided with more detailed implementation steps for the high priority (unshaded) action items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>% of Total Votes</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for INITIATING This Work?</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for MAINTAINING Progress of This Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R-1 Consider amortization program (require conversions of all multi-family uses within a certain time period)</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City - Property Standards/Land Use and Zoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-2 Collaborate with other neighborhoods and City to improve existing incentive programs to attract more private investors</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City - Neighborhood Redevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-3 Expand existing publicly-driven conversions including public/non-profit purchase program (of converted properties)</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/City</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-4 Provide homeownership counseling and assistance to renters</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>Non-Profits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R-5 Expand marketing of City tools (through “Be a Good Neighbor” program and other means)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City - Property Standards/Neighborhood Redevelopment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Youth Involvement Task Force will be responsible for exploring avenues for engaging neighborhood youth in project, even, facility, and neighborhood planning. Items below are listed in the order of priority based on neighborhood voting on February 25, 2003. Task forces will be provided with more detailed implementation steps for these high priority action items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>% of Total Votes</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for INITIATING This Work?</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for MAINTAINING Progress of This Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YI-1 Involve youth in designing activities and facilities for them in the neighborhood</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YI-2 Identify site and funding for skate park</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Fox Valley Park District</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Property Improvement Task Force will be responsible for exploring avenues for improving property conditions through code enforcement and other means. Items below are listed in the order of priority based on neighborhood voting on February 25, 2003. Shaded items were determined to be of lower priority and should be carefully reconsidered before any action is taken. Task forces will be provided with more detailed implementation steps for the high priority (unshaded) action items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>% of Total Votes</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for INITIATING This Work?</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for MAINTAINING Progress of This Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PI-1 Consider greater legal classification of nuisances and “shaming” tools (more aggressive publishing of repeat and unresponsive offenders)</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City - Property Standards Division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI-2 Localize spending of code violation revenue</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>City - Property Standards/Finance</td>
<td>City - Property Standards/Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI-3 Work with City to identify target areas for inspection/enforcement “sweeps”</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City - Property Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI-4 Work with other neighborhoods to encourage enhanced code enforcement through more effective hours (i.e., evenings and weekends) and allocation of additional resources (e.g., hiring of retirees to do inspections part-time)</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI-5 Organize and provide training to property owners on proper maintenance; publish neighborhood resource handbook to assist with property maintenance and “where to go” list</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI-6 Expand existing awards program to include reconversions or model appearance</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>Neighborhood/ANC</td>
<td>City - Community Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI-7 Create neighborhood welcome program with listing of neighborhood/property maintenance resources</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>ANC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Copley Site Task Force will be responsible for exploring avenues for encouraging and supporting the redevelopment of the former Copley Hospital site in a manner that is appropriate to the Neighborhood. Items below are listed in the order of priority based on neighborhood voting on February 25, 2003. Shaded items were determined to be a lower priority and should be carefully reconsidered before any action is taken. Task forces will be provided with more detailed implementation steps for the high priority (unshaded) action items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>% of Total Votes</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for INITIATING This Work?</th>
<th>Who Will Be Responsible for MAINTAINING Progress of This Work?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CS-1 Establish Copley design review team</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-2 Consider how Tax Increment Financing (TIF), if established for the Copley site, could provide funding for neighborhood improvements beyond the immediate site</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>City - Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-3 Partner w/ Guiding Light CDC and developer to prepare public relations strategy that promotes the neighborhood, not just the site redevelopment</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-4 Encourage Guiding Light CDC to stay involved in neighborhood</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-5 Support property owner’s right to appropriately redevelop Copley site; encourage swiftest and most rational redevelopment of the site</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS-6 Work with Guiding Light CDC to publish/distribute Copley site redevelopment newsletter</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For its part, the City, upon approval of the plan, will be accepting responsibility for executing certain activities as described throughout this document. Additionally, the ANC will play a primary role in assisting the Task Forces as they need it. The work of the Task Forces will benefit from a type of resource council to which it can turn if they reach obstacles or are not sure of appropriate courses of action. The ANC can fulfill this need as it arises and act as informed experts to the Task Forces. The cooperative relationship between and distinct roles of the Task Forces and the ANC/City are described in the figure below.

One action item charged to the Youth Involvement Task Force is the development of a skate park.

Figure S - Cooperative Relationship between the Task Forces and the City/ANC

**Neighborhood Task Force**
- Gather additional information as necessary (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with ANC)
- Develop proposals for new/revised activities, projects, policies (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with ANC)
- Report to ANC
- Follow-up with ANC
- Monitor City Council activity

**Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC)**
- Gather additional information as necessary (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with Neighborhood)
- Develop proposals for new/revised activities, projects, policies (in some cases this may be done in conjunction with the Neighborhood)
- Report to Neighborhood
- Execute changes/submit proposal to City Council as necessary

**City Council**
- Review proposals
- Gather additional information as necessary
- Act on proposals/draft ordinances as necessary
Throughout the planning process, the Bardwell Area was represented by a diverse group of stakeholders who participated in identifying neighborhood issues, creating a vision, and prioritizing action items. Cooperation from these groups, as described in Chapter Six, will need to continue in order for the plan to succeed. The implementation process will follow a task force format that will be reliant on significant neighborhood involvement. The Task Forces will be assigned to a particular set of action items that were prioritized by the neighborhood.

**Action Items**

At the second neighborhood meeting hosted in January, participants reviewed and discussed a number of strategies designed to address the four priority issues (code enforcement, reconversions, crime and safety, Copley site). From these strategies, the planning team generated more specific action items that could be undertaken by neighborhood residents and/or the City.

Thirty-two action items were presented to the neighborhood at the third planning meeting in February. Participants were asked to vote for 10 of the action items that they felt were most critical to the future of the neighborhood at this time. Figure U on page 48 reflects the voting results.

Given the significantly high number of votes cast for the idea of involving youth in neighborhood activities, the Planning Team decided to further evaluate the voting results by grouping them into the following categories:

- Youth Involvement
- Reconversions
- Crime and Safety
- Property Improvement
- Copley Site
- Organizational

Results of the categorization (shown in Figure T below) indicate that crime and safety (25.2% of votes) and reconversions (20.4%) are most important to participants. Not far behind were property improvement (17.5%), Copley site (15.7%), and youth involvement (15.5%).

![Figure T - Statistical Results of the Action Item Voting (Third Neighborhood Meeting)](image-url)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Total No. of Votes</th>
<th>% of Total Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Illuminate streets and alleys</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Involve youth in designing activities and facilities for them in the neighborhood</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Consider amortization program (require conversions of all multi-family uses within a certain time period)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Identify site and funding for skate park</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Collaborate with other neighborhoods and City to improve existing incentive programs to attract more private investors</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Establish Copley design review team</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Expand existing publicly-driven conversions including public/non-profit purchase program (of converted properties)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Consider greater legal classification of nuisances and “shaming” tools (more aggressive publishing of repeat and unresponsive offenders)</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Identify locations for traffic calming improvements and tie into City-wide traffic study</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Localize spending of code violation revenue</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Work with City to identify target areas for inspection/enforcement “sweeps”</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Provide homeownership counseling and assistance to renters</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Consider how Tax Increment Financing (TIF), if established for the Copley site, could provide funding for neighborhood improvements beyond the immediate site</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Expand incentives for police to live in neighborhood</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Establish “porch light program” to improve illumination of homes</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Partner w/Guiding Light CDC and developer to prepare public relations strategy that promotes the neighborhood, not just the site redevelopment</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Host neighborhood events (e.g., celebrations, patrols, walks, clean-ups) to raise awareness of neighborhood organization, generate interest, solicit volunteers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Work with other neighborhoods to encourage enhanced code enforcement through more effective hours (i.e., evenings and weekends) and allocation of additional resources (e.g., hiring of retirees to do inspections part-time)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Encourage Guiding Light CDC to stay involved in neighborhood</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Establish communication network between neighborhood organizations</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Expand “Character Counts” program to include neighborhood improvement projects/focus</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Support property owner’s right to appropriately redevelop Copley site; encourage swiftest and most rational redevelopment of the site</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Provide training on how to do friendly neighborhood patrols/create an ambassador program that could welcome new residents, distribute community development information, etc.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Expand marketing of City tools (through “Be a Good Neighbor” program and other means)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Organize and provide training to property owners on proper maintenance; publish neighborhood resource handbook to assist with property maintenance and “where to go” list</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Promote/expand Citizens Police Academy (could include teen and neighborhood/community development aspects)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 Organize and train neighborhood block captains</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Provide emergency call boxes in Bluff Street, Tilton Court, and Center Street parks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Expand existing awards program to include reconversions or model appearance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Work with Guiding Light CDC to publish/distribute Copley site redevelopment newsletter</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Create neighborhood welcome program with listing of neighborhood/property maintenance resources</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Formalize Bardwell Area Leadership Team for an ongoing role in improvement efforts and create working task forces focusing on plan recommendations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Number of Votes: 607 100.0%
High Priority Action Items

The Planning Team determined that there was a distinctive “break” in the voting results between those items that received 20 votes or more and those that received less than 20. Twelve items received at least 20 votes and represent the neighborhood’s high priority action items. An overview of the 12 high priority action items is shown on pages 50 and 51.

The 12 high-priority action items will be the first assignments for the newly created Task Forces; however, this does not mean that the other thirty items will be disregarded. Once the Task Forces have made progress on the high priority actions, they should be encouraged to consider how to address the other tasks that fall under their category. The Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC) will act as both a monitoring and advisory group to the Task Forces throughout their work. If a Task Force should run into trouble or encounter an obstacle toward the implementation of these action items, the ANC will be consulted for assistance.

Implementation worksheets have been created for the top 12 action items. The worksheets can be used as tools for the Task Forces throughout the implementation process. Each worksheet describes who should initiate the work and who will be responsible for maintaining it. The worksheets outline the steps that have to be taken in order to accomplish each action item and can be used as a checklist for monitoring activities. These worksheets allow for assignments to be made to task force members and for reports to easily be made to the ANC and other groups.

After the top action items have been addressed it will be important to use the relationships that have been built to complete the final action items, utilizing City staff, the ANC, and non-profit organizations for implementation assistance.
**Action Item One**

**Illuminate Streets and Alleys**

This top-ranking item will require that neighbors do an inventory of the number and condition of streetlights in the neighborhood. With that inventory it will then be up to the Task Force to lobby the City for funding for the needed improvements. The responsibility of initiating this action item will be the neighborhoods; however, the City will be responsible for maintaining this work.

**Action Item Two**

**Involve youth in designing activities for them in the neighborhood**

Participants felt that gang activity presents a threat to the Bardwell Area; so providing activities for youth as alternatives to undesirable activities was a recurring theme in neighborhood planning discussions. The neighborhood residents would be responsible for initiating the work of this action item, as well as maintaining activities and engagement with neighborhood youth.

**Action Item Three**

**Consider amortization program**

(Require conversions of all multi-family uses in formerly single-family structures within a certain time period)

The goal of returning all residential structures in the Bardwell Area back to their original single-family use was a high priority for plan participants. An amortization process would specify a period of time within which ALL multi-family homes (in formerly single-family structures) would have to be re-converted to single-family use. The time specified would be intended to allow property owners to recapture their investment in the property. Given that previous downzoning of the neighborhood has not provided the desired results, this more forceful approach has appeal to plan participants. Because this would be a city-wide program, affecting many neighborhoods, this action would be initiated by the Aurora Neighborhood Council (ANC) but may require encouragement from the neighborhood through the Reconversion Task Force.

**Action Item Four**

**Identify site and funding for Skate Park**

Construction of a skate park in the neighborhood is appealing both because of its ongoing use by area youth and because neighborhood youth could participate in the site selection, design, and management of the facility.

**Action Item Five**

**Collaborate with other neighborhoods and the City to improve existing incentive programs to attract more private investors**

Participants in the planning process had varying opinions of existing neighborhood development and housing incentives. For example, some participants felt that the reconversion incentive is not high enough to make economic sense to a property owner, while others who had used it found it to be helpful. There was some discussion regarding potential targeting of incentives within areas of the city that exhibited certain characteristics (e.g., low owner occupancy, high building code violations, high vacancies, etc.). Since the inception of the program in 1995, 198 units have been removed and another 67 demolished through 84 projects completed by private property owners and 25 City-initiated projects.

**Action Item Six**

**Establish Copley design review team**

Redevelopment of the Copley Hospital site was a high priority for Bardwell Area plan participants, although there was not consistent agreement regarding the level of responsibility that should be demanded of the City versus the private developer of the property. Participants stated that the private sector should be responsible for all costs associated with redevelopment, yet also expressed strong desire to do whatever may be necessary to ensure that the property does get redeveloped.

Concern over market viability was expressed because residents do not want to see the property redeveloped for senior housing and then, subsequently, converted to another use because senior housing was not profitable. At a minimum, there was agreement that the neighborhood should stay involved in monitoring the progress of the redevelopment, supporting it in any
way possible, and determining principles for the re-development of the site that would ensure that its design is well-integrated and compatible with the neighborhood.

**Action Item Seven**

**Expand public-driven conversions including public/non-profit purchase program (of converted properties)**

The goal of returning all residential structures in the Bardwell Area back to their original single-family use was a high priority for plan participants. In addition to encouraging private sector reconversion of these properties, participants expressed a desire for the City to assume a more aggressive role—potentially through property acquisition, publicly-sponsored renovations, etc. This action item would be best initiated and maintained at the City level with ongoing neighborhood support, encouragement, and monitoring.

**Action Item Eight**

**Consider greater legal classification of nuisances and “shaming” tools**

(More aggressive publishing of repeat and unresponsive offenders)

Bardwell Area plan participants desire attractive and well-maintained properties in their neighborhood and expressed interest in a more aggressive approach to publicly identifying violators of building code and property maintenance standards. Participants considered examples from other communities where large signs that displayed the owner’s name, address, and phone were posted on properties. Because this action item would need to be passed into law—likely at the city level affecting many neighborhoods—this action would be initiated by the ANC but may require encouragement from the neighborhood through the Property Improvement Task Force.

**Action Item Nine**

**Identify locations for traffic calming improvements and tie into City-wide traffic study**

Plan participants identified several locations where traffic patterns present problems. For example, Rosewood Avenue can be dangerous for children and pedestrians because cars drive down the street too fast. Around Bardwell Elementary at the opening and closing of the school day, traffic can present a problem for residents. Thus, the Crime and Safety Task Force should inventory local traffic problems so they can be presented to the City for allocation of funding.

**Action Item Ten**

**Localize spending of code violation revenue**

Plan participants were very supportive of the idea that code violation revenue collected within the neighborhood should be spent within the neighborhood. This item would be best initiated and maintained by the City with ongoing neighborhood support, encouragement, and monitoring.

**Action Item Eleven**

**Work with City to identify target areas for inspection/enforcement “sweeps”**

Participants felt that code enforcement inspections that focused in a concentrated way on a one- or two-block area would be an effective way to get more dramatic results from inspections. It will be the Property Improvement Task Force’s responsibility to identify areas that need to be patrolled more frequently or thoroughly. The City will then maintain and complete the inspection sweeps.

**Action Item Twelve**

**Provide homeownership counseling and assistance to renters**

Participants felt that increased levels of homeownership would elevate conditions in the neighborhood. Additionally, many felt that given some rent prices in the area, renters could easily afford to become homeowners. Other than the Joseph Corporation, participants were not aware, however, of organizations who provide homeownership counseling services. The ANC would be the best agency to take the lead on this project, seeing that the benefits would stretch beyond the Bardwell Area.

Following on pages 52 through 63 are descriptions of implementation steps for the 12 high priority items (organized by Task Force) and pages 64 through 66 describe lower priority/longer term activities.
**Crime & Safety Task Force**

**Action Item: CS-1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Walk through neighborhood to identify broken lights, dim lights, missing lights, tree infringements, and dark areas</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prepare a map identifying problem areas</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Identify ComEd contact in order to maintain working relationship</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Create phone tree for reporting lights out</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Promote “bright nights” to encourage porch light use (could be in conjunction with neighborhood walks, events, etc.)</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Meet with the City to explain the map findings and to talk about appropriate improvements</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Determine timing for City funding of improvements</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Investigate other funding sources (grants, SSA, TIF, etc.)</td>
<td>Neighborhood/City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Issue RFPs for installation as necessary</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description:**

The recommendation to improve the lighting of the Bardwell Area's streets and alleys came up during discussions of crime and safety. Participants indicated that a number of streets and many more alleys in the neighborhood would benefit from increased lighting. Only Lincoln Avenue in the Near Eastside Historic District was called out as a street with a desirable level of lighting.
**Crime & Safety Task Force**

**Action Item: CS-2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description:</th>
<th>Initiating Responsibility</th>
<th>Ongoing Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plan participants identified several locations where traffic patterns present problems. For example, Rosewood Avenue can be dangerous for children and pedestrians because cars drive down the street too fast. Around Bardwell Elementary at the opening and closing of the school day, traffic can present a problem for residents.</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Get traffic counts and moving violation information from City to begin identifying problem areas</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Supplement City data through neighborhood surveys (visual and written) to finalize list of problem areas</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Prepare a map identifying problem intersections or “hot spots” where improvements are needed</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meet with the City to explain the map findings and to talk about appropriate improvements</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify funding for improvements and incorporate into capital improvements budget/schedule</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Issue RFPs for construction as necessary</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Evaluate effectiveness of improvements</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Property Improvement Task Force

### Action Item: PI-1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description:</th>
<th>Initiating Responsibility</th>
<th>Ongoing Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bardwell Area plan participants desire attractive and well-maintained properties in their neighborhood and expressed interest in a more aggressive approach to publicly identifying violators of building code and property maintenance standards. Participants considered examples from other communities where large signs that displayed the owner's name, address, and phone were posted on properties.</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What will be done? | Who will do it? | When will it be done? | Check when complete |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Assess effectiveness of existing tools</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gather best practices examples from other communities</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Develop proposal for greater shaming/classification of nuisances</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Submit proposal to City Council</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Adopt recommendations</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Property Improvement Task Force

**Action Item: PI-2**  
Localize spending of code violation revenue

**Description:**  
Plan participants were very supportive of the idea that code violation revenue collected within the neighborhood should be spent within the neighborhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Determine annual code violation revenue and historic trends</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Evaluate potential systems/boundaries for allocating revenue (capital improvement budgeting, ward projects, etc.)</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Develop system to map code violations and income from violations</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Establish quarterly evaluation of proportional income by area</td>
<td>City</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Initiating Responsibility**  
City

**Ongoing Responsibility**  
City

**Plan participants were very supportive of the idea that code violation revenue collected within the neighborhood should be spent within the neighborhood.**
### Property Improvement Task Force

**Action Item: PI-3**

**Description:**
Participants felt that code enforcement inspections that focused in a concentrated way on a block or two-block area would be an effective way to get more dramatic results from inspections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Promote task force meetings and recruit new volunteers</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Obtain training on how to recognize code violations</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Establish system of monitoring areas (e.g., weekly/monthly neighborhood walks/drives, phone tree, etc.)</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Prepare map for identifying sweep area on a quarterly basis</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Meet with City to finalize sweep area and date</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Conduct inspection sweep</td>
<td>City</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Initiating Responsibility:* Neighborhood  
*Ongoing Responsibility:* City
### Reconversion Task Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Action Item: R-1</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider amortization program (require conversions of all multi-family uses within a certain period of time)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Description:**

The goal of returning all residential structures in the Bardwell Area back to their original single-family use was a high priority for plan participants. An amortization process would specify a period of time within which ALL multi-family homes (in formerly single-family buildings) would have to be re-converted to single-family use. The time specified would be intended to allow property owners to recapture their investment in the property. Given that previous downzoning of the neighborhood has not provided the desired results, this more forceful approach has appeal to plan participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>What will be done?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Who will do it?</strong></th>
<th><strong>When will it be done?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Check when complete</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Inventory multi-family properties in the area</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Research both successful and unsuccessful amortization examples from other cities</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Evaluate pros and cons to the researched examples in relation to Aurora</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Develop proposal for amortization ordinance and/or revision to incentives to address reconversions (see action item #5)</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify neighborhoods or amortization &quot;districts&quot; that would be included in the program</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Develop a property amortization ordinance or make revisions to existing incentives</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Submit proposal to City Council</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Adopt recommendations</td>
<td>City</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Establish tracking system to monitor changes and improvements</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Establish property marketing program in conjunction with realtors</td>
<td>City</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Reconversion Task Force

### Action Item: R-2

Collaborate with other neighborhoods and City to improve existing incentive programs to attract more private investors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description:</th>
<th>Initiating Responsibility</th>
<th>Ongoing Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants in the planning process had varying opinions of existing neighborhood development and housing incentives. For example, some participants felt that the reconversion incentive is not high enough to make economic sense to a property owner, while others who had used it found it to be helpful. There was some discussion regarding potential targeting of incentives within areas of the city that exhibited certain characteristics (e.g., low owner occupancy, high building code violations, high vacancies, etc.).</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td>City</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### What will be done? | Who will do it? | When will it be done? | Check when complete |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Inventory all current incentive programs</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Assemble neighborhood team to evaluate effectiveness of each program</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Identify opportunity to strengthen existing programs and/or add new programs (could include creation of target areas)</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Develop proposal for incentive program revision</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Submit proposal to City Council</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Adopt recommendations</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Create program effectiveness and tracking system</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Create &quot;Welcome to Aurora&quot;/&quot;Looking to buy?&quot; campaign</td>
<td>City</td>
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<tr>
<td>9 Promote updated incentive programs to realtors</td>
<td>City</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Description:
Participants in the planning process had varying opinions of existing neighborhood development and housing incentives. For example, some participants felt that the reconversion incentive is not high enough to make economic sense to a property owner, while others who had used it found it to be helpful. There was some discussion regarding potential targeting of incentives within areas of the city that exhibited certain characteristics (e.g., low owner occupancy, high building code violations, high vacancies, etc.).
**Reconversion Task Force**

**Action Item: R-3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expand public-driven conversions including public/non-profit purchase program (of converted properties)</td>
<td>initiating responsibility</td>
<td>City</td>
<td>ongoing responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description:**
The goal of returning all residential structures in the Bardwell Area back to their original single-family use was a high priority for plan participants. In addition to encouraging private sector reconversion of these properties, participants expressed a desire for the City to assume a more aggressive role potentially through property acquisition, publicly-sponsored renovations, etc.

1. Inventory all current means for acquiring property (condemnation, purchase, etc.) and funding limitations
   - Who will do it? City
   - When will it be done? Check when complete

2. Identify other organizations that could participate in redevelopment
   - Who will do it? City
   - When will it be done? Check when complete

3. Explore new funding sources and best practices from other communities
   - Who will do it? City
   - When will it be done? Check when complete
**Reconversion Task Force**

**Action Item: R-4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description:</th>
<th>Initiating Responsibility</th>
<th>Ongoing Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants felt that increased levels of homeownership would elevate conditions in the neighborhood. Additionally, many participants felt that given some rent prices in the area, many renters could easily afford to become homeowners. Other than the Joseph Corporation, participants were not aware, however, of organizations who provide homeownership counseling services.</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td>Non-Profits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Inventory existing homeownership counseling services</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Identify gaps in services</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Assemble non-profit groups with similar mission to discuss potential for new programs/services</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Identify funding sources</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council/Non-Profits</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**Youth Involvement Task Force**

**Action Item: YI-1**

Involves youth in designing activities and facilities for them in the neighborhood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants felt that gang activity presents a threat to the Bardwell Area; so, providing activities for youth as alternatives to undesirable activities was a recurring theme in neighborhood planning discussions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Create a Youth Task Force</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Promote Youth Task force by word of mouth and in local schools and churches with fliers</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Identify projects and activity ideas (i.e. skate park-see action item #4)</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Identify school curriculum opportunities for neighborhood projects</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Network with area businesses to identify potential sponsorship opportunities</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Network with other neighborhoods to identify partnership opportunities</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Create a regular meeting schedule and nominate a representative to the ANC</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 Consider creation of a Neighborhood Youth Congress</td>
<td>Aurora Neighborhood Council</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Youth Involvement Task Force

**Action Item: YI-2**  
Identify site and funding for a skate park

**Description:**
Participants felt that gang activity presents a threat to the Bardwell Area; so providing activities for youth as alternatives to undesirable activities was a recurring theme in neighborhood planning discussions. Construction of a skate park in the neighborhood is appealing both because of its ongoing use by area youth and because neighborhood youth could participate in the site selection, design, and management of the facility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What will be done?</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Promote task force meetings and recruit new volunteers—especially youth</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Establish a working relationship with the Fox Valley Park Department to determine physical conditions necessary</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Identify sites that meet physical conditions; create a list of pros and cons for each site considering impact of property acquisition</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Select site location for the park (through neighborhood survey or task force decision)</td>
<td>Neighborhood/Fox Valley Park District</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Design skate park management plan (maintenance, youth involvement, sponsorship)</td>
<td>Neighborhood/Fox Valley Park District</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Issue RFP for construction</td>
<td>Fox Valley Park District</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Plan neighborhood celebration for the opening of the park</td>
<td>Fox Valley Park District</td>
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</table>
### Copley Site Task Force

**Action Item: C-1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Who will do it?</th>
<th>When will it be done?</th>
<th>Check when complete</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Promote task force meetings and recruit new volunteers</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Research status of development and obstacles</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Designate representative to attend GLCDC meetings</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Establish list of neighborhood's desired site development principles</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Meet with City and GLCDC to discuss development principles</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Meet with GLCDC to discuss how neighborhood can assist with property redevelopment</td>
<td>Neighborhood</td>
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</table>

**Description:**

Redevelopment of the Copley Hospital site was a high priority for Bardwell Area plan participants, although there was not consistent agreement regarding the level of responsibility that should be demanded from the City versus the private developer of the property. Participants stated that the private sector should be responsible for all costs associated with redevelopment, yet also expressed a strong desire to do whatever may be necessary to ensure that the property does get redeveloped. Concern over market viability was expressed because residents do not want to see the property redeveloped for senior housing and then, subsequently, converted to another use because senior housing was not profitable. At a minimum, there was agreement that the neighborhood should stay involved in monitoring the progress of the redevelopment, supporting it in any way possible, and determining principles for the redevelopment of the site that would ensure that its design is well-integrated and compatible with the neighborhood.
## Future Action Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force/Item No.</th>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Description and Implementation Possibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-3</td>
<td>Expand incentives for police to live in the neighborhood</td>
<td>The Federal government, with help from local banks and governments, provides an incentive for police (and teachers) to purchase HUD homes in certain neighborhoods. The constant presence of law enforcement in the neighborhood as residents and professionals can help to reduce crime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-4</td>
<td>Establish &quot;porch light program&quot; to improve illumination of homes</td>
<td>This program can be neighborhood or citywide. Provides incentives for neighbors to leave their porch lights on during the evening hours, in order to reduce crime. Grants could be pursued for installation of “dusk to dawn” porch and alley lights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-5</td>
<td>Host neighborhood events to raise awareness of neighborhood organizations, generate interest, recruit volunteers</td>
<td>Street parties, celebrations, patrols, walks, clean-ups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-6</td>
<td>Establish communication network between neighborhood organizations</td>
<td>Newsletters, fliers, designating residents to attend other organizations meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-7</td>
<td>Expand &quot;Character Counts&quot; program to include neighborhood improvement projects/focus</td>
<td>The school and police-based curriculum could be expanded to include neighborhood improvement projects that create a sense of ownership and responsibility for young neighborhood residents. Examples could include vacant lot, park, or senior resident yard “adoption,” participation in clean-ups, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-8</td>
<td>Provide training on how to do friendly neighborhood patrols/create an ambassador program that could welcome new residents, distribute community development information, etc.</td>
<td>Create “welcome wagon” committee. Collaborate with other neighborhoods to prepare materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-9</td>
<td>Promote/expand Citizens Police Academy (could include teen and neighborhood/community development aspects</td>
<td>Encourage youth and other residents to take ownership in the safety of their neighborhood by attending this workshop. Neighborhood organizations could attend and then create patrol for residents who attended the Academy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-10</td>
<td>Organize and train neighborhood block captains</td>
<td>Set a goal of identifying one captain for every block.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force/Item No.</td>
<td>Action Item</td>
<td>Description and Implementation Possibilities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Safety/CS-11</td>
<td>Provide emergency call boxes in Bluff Street, Titsworth Courth, and Center Street parks</td>
<td>Locate the phones, on poles, in well-lit areas that allow for residents to call for emergency help. This could help to deter crime but may present maintenance problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Improvement /PI-4</td>
<td>Work with other neighborhoods to encourage enhanced code enforcement through more effective hours (i.e., evenings and weekends) and allocation of additional resources (e.g., hiring of retirees to do inspections part-time)</td>
<td>By encouraging other neighborhoods to collaborate and efficiently utilize City inspectors, the neighborhood can both clean up the properties within the neighborhood, as well as making connections with other neighborhood organizations. Coordination with other neighborhoods will reinforce the need for inspection changes across the City and should improve responsiveness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Improvement /PI-5</td>
<td>Organize and provide training to property owners on proper maintenance; publish neighborhood resource handbook to assist with property maintenance and “where to go” list</td>
<td>The ANC can be a tremendous resource for assembling these materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Improvement /PI-6</td>
<td>Expand existing awards program to include reconversions or model appearance</td>
<td>Currently the awards program highlights historic preservation projects. Two new categories could be added: one for exceptional reconversions and another for outstanding overall property conditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Improvement /PI-7</td>
<td>Create neighborhood welcome program with listing of neighborhood/property maintenance resources</td>
<td>A brochure about the neighborhood and all of its assets should include local emergency information as well as property and neighborhood improvement contacts and resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconversion/R-5</td>
<td>Expand marketing of City tools (through “Be a Good Neighbor” program and other means)</td>
<td>Utilize block captains and other neighborhood networks to disseminate improvement information to both current and potential residents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Future Action Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force/Item No.</th>
<th>Action Item</th>
<th>Description and Implementation Possibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Copley Site/C-2</td>
<td>Consider how Tax Increment Financing (TIF), if established for the Copley site, could provide funding for neighborhood improvements beyond the immediate site</td>
<td>Creation of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district for an area larger than the Copley site would allow new incremental taxes generated from redevelopment in the district to be used throughout the district. This could provide funding for improvements through the neighborhood (see page x for more information on TIF districts).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copley Site/C-3</td>
<td>Partner with Guiding Light CDC and developer to prepare public relations strategy that promotes the neighborhood, not just the site redevelopment</td>
<td>Redevelopment newsletter, update letters, neighborhood celebrations at the conclusion of phases of the redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copley Site/C-4</td>
<td>Encourage Guiding Light CDC to stay involved in neighborhood</td>
<td>Attend GLCDC meetings and inform them of neighborhood activities and meetings. Assign a neighborhood representative to make bi-weekly contact with GLCDC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copley Site/C-5</td>
<td>Support property owners right to appropriately redevelop Copley site; encourage swiftest and most rational redevelopment of the site</td>
<td>By encouraging the swift development of the site, the neighborhood will benefit from a functioning site rather than the current state of a vacant lot. This work will require participation to stay well-informed of activities and lobbying the City to encourage redevelopment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copley Site/C-6</td>
<td>Work with Guiding Light CDC to publish/distribute redevelopment newsletter</td>
<td>Writing and distributing a regular newsletter about the site will keep neighbors informed and active in the redevelopment process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Involvement/YI-3</td>
<td>Plan for ongoing meetings, events, and activities involving youth</td>
<td>Create a standing committee consisting of mostly youth from the neighborhood. Provide support to them on an ongoing basis, but allow them to set their own agendas, identify projects, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Financial Resources

Many of the action items within this neighborhood action plan will require funding or financial support of some level in order to succeed. The following information is intended to serve as a starting point for residents searching for financial resources. Programs and sources have been separated into three categories: Incentives and Assistance, City Funding Sources, and Grants.

The type and amount of resources available will vary by item and may only be available to certain people, such as property owners, low-to-moderate income residents, etc.

Incentives and Assistance

Assist Program - Through this program, the City Division of Neighborhood Development provides lower-rate interest and money for down payment and/or closing costs to first-time homebuyers.

Mortgage Credit Certificate Program (MCCP) - Through the MCCP, the City Division of Neighborhood Development provides first-time homebuyers with an income tax credit equal to one-fourth of the annual interest paid for the life of the mortgage. Maximum annual credit is $2,000.

Real Estate Transfer Tax Rebate - For participants in the Assist and MCCP programs who purchase property in one of the City’s targeted neighborhoods, the City will refund its portion of the real estate transfer tax to the buyer. This is a seller expense but a buyer’s benefit, and it averages around $200 after closing.

Emergency Rehabilitation Program - The City will provide a zero-interest, deferred payment loan for the cost of emergency home repairs up to $5,000. Technical assistance is also available at no cost for determining what needs to be done, how it should be done, and for the review of bids from contractors. Recipients must be income qualified.

Senior Citizen/Disabled Home Security Grant Program - The City Neighborhood Development Department provides a $1,000 grant to pay for the purchase and installation of home security features as recommended in a free Aurora Police Department home security survey. Recipients must be age/disability and income qualified.

Reconversion Incentive - The City provides financial incentives for the return of multi-family homes to the original single-family use. Grant start at $28,000 for the first unit removed and have a maximum value of $75,000 depending on the number of units removed.

Citizens Police Academy - Described as a “mini-police academy,” this 10-week course (meets once a week) is strictly informational and familiarizes citizens with the policies and procedures of the APD. Upon graduation, citizens do NOT have any authority over any other citizen, but often become more active in their own neighborhood patrols, neighborhood groups, etc.

Neighborhood Patrols - These patrols are not a specific function of the Police Department; however, the department will support groups/organizations who desire to conduct patrols. Officers may be assigned for initial patrols as needed, but groups conduct the neighborhood patrols. In the past, APD has supplied cell phones and reflective vests.

Landlord/Tenant Training Program - The Police Dept. conducts this program which provides information and assistance on leases, evictions, background checks, etc. The program is free and voluntary. Landlords are required to take the class ONLY when in violation of City ordinance. Training is held once in the spring and once in the fall.
City Funding Sources

New Start Program - This housing rehab program is a partnership of the City of Aurora and the Joseph Corporation (JOCO). The City provides gap funding to JOCO for the renovation of older properties to increase the supply of high quality housing in Aurora.

Capital Improvement Plan - The City’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) provides funds for long-term infrastructure and capital project needs. For a project to be included in the CIP, it must involve the creation or purchase of a tangible asset of at least $25,000 and a useful life of at least one year.

Right-of-way Improvement Program - Through this program, residents can obtain a 50% grant from the City to help pay for the replacement of sidewalks and drive approaches.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District - In a TIF district, the incremental increase in property taxes generated from new development is earmarked for improvements within the district. This funding source is dependent on guaranteed increases in property tax revenue because improvements are typically funded “up front” through the issuance of bonds. The annual new tax revenue is then used to pay off the bond debt. After the debt is retired, the tax revenue is then redirected back toward general revenue. Improvements can be located within the site that is being redeveloped or anywhere throughout the TIF district.

Special Service Area (SSA) Funds - SSA’s enable property owners to participate in a neighborhood capital project through the payment of a special property tax. SSA’s have been used to finance a variety of capital projects including street improvements, curbs and gutters, and decorative street lighting.

Grants

Community Development Assistance Program - Grants are provided to selected units of local government to finance projects in public works, housing and economic development. The projects should benefit primarily low and moderate income people, improve health and safety, and increase job opportunities. Only general purpose units of government with populations of 50,000 or less can apply. Generally, governments in the urban counties (Cook, Kane, Lake, St. Clair, DuPage, Madison, Will and McHenry) are not eligible to apply unless they have formally opted out of their respective urban county entitlement programs.

Community Services - Grants are awarded from a federal block grant to fund a variety of local anti-poverty programs including employment and economic development, family planning education, housing assistance, self-sufficiency services, and seminars to assist low-income persons in becoming more involved in community affairs. Ninety percent of the allocation is passed through the state to a network of federally recognized Community Action Agencies. In Illinois, CAAs include 11 public and 25 private nonprofit organizations. Funds are awarded to the community action agencies by formula based upon the percentage of low-income population in the area served.

Competitive Communities Initiative (CCI) - This program assists local communities in organizing their local development efforts by: performing a rigorous community self-assessment, developing a written action/implementation plan, and linking local communities to the state, federal and private resources available to them. Communities are required to respond to a “Request for Partners” (RFP) that is judged on a competitive basis against other applying communities. Communities are judged on their willingness and ability to per-
form the self-assessment and commitment to organize and develop partnerships. Both urban and rural communities are eligible to participate.

Low Income Home Energy Assistance - This program helps low-income households meet the costs of home energy. It provides heating assistance, emergency services, and, depending upon funding availability, medically necessary cooling assistance. The amount of assistance is based upon income level, size of household, and fuel costs. Grants are awarded on a population-based formula to local administering agencies. Other units qualifying for assistance include federally-recognized community action agencies or community-based organizations.

Public Infrastructure Program - This program provides assistance under two components. Business Development Infrastructure funding is provided to communities which demonstrate that specific infrastructure improvements are essential to attract new business or to support the expansion or retention of an existing business. Under Affordable Financing of Public Infrastructure, up to $100,000 is loaned to local entities and public health clinics for infrastructure improvements to promote economic development or address threats to health and safety.

Bicycle Path Grants - Provides matching grants to eligible local units of government to assist them in the acquisition and/or development of nonmotorized bicycle paths. Projects must be locally operated and maintained. The program can provide up to 50 percent reimbursement. Assistance for development (construction) projects is limited to $200,000 per annual request. No maximum limit exists for acquisition projects.

Fund for Illinois’ Future Grants - Grants are provided for infrastructure improvements including, but not limited to, park and recreational projects, facilities, bike paths, equipment, and other necessary costs.

Off-Highway Vehicle Recreational Trails - Grants are available to provide financial aid to government agencies and others to develop parks and trails that are open and accessible to the public in Illinois. The program can provide up to 100 percent reimbursement assistance.

Open Space Land Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) - Provides local governments with funding to acquire and/or develop public outdoor recreation areas. Approved projects are eligible for up to 50 percent reimbursement. Maximum grant assistance for development projects is $400,000 per annual request. Acquisition projects are limited to $750,000 per annual request.

Recreational Trails - Grants are available to provide up to 80 percent funding for both motorized and non-motorized trail acquisition, development, rehabilitation, enhancement and maintenance.

Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) - DARE is a comprehensive drug abuse and violence prevention education program which represents a community partnership between schools and law enforcement agencies. The DARE curricula are designed to equip elementary, middle and high school students with the appropriate skills to resist substance abuse, violence and gangs. The DARE curricula are taught by especially trained and experienced
uniformed police officers to school children in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The elementary core curriculum consists of seventeen weekly lessons, and targets young children in order to develop the life-skills necessary to help them avoid substance abuse and violence as they enter adolescence. In addition to the components for elementary, junior and senior high schools, there are also programs for special education students and parents or other interested adults.

**Heritage Grant Program** - The program provides grants to owners of historic properties for rehabilitation, restoration or planning. Properties must be listed on the national Register of Historic Places or be given landmark designation by a local preservation ordinance. The grantee must provide a 40 percent match and must sign a 5-10 year contract to protect the property. Awards up to $50,000 are granted.
For the neighborhood process to sustain itself, the neighborhood Task Forces must be part “cheerleader” and part “task master”. As “cheerleader”, they must keep people informed and involved. As “task master,” they must monitor projects and programs to ensure that all parties are living up to their agreements. The Task Forces must establish a way to track progress on projects and programs and will be responsible for making quarterly reports to the ANC about activities and progress in plan implementation.

From time to time, Task Force members will want to ask each other the following questions:

- Do we represent the Bardwell Area? Has the makeup of the neighborhood changed since we developed our plan?
- Do we have correct information? What developments may have made our initial information gathering out-of-date?
- Do we need to re-examine our vision? What have we learned that is worth adding?
- Have the improvements achieved had the results we hoped for? Why or why not?
- Do we need to renegotiate our agreements, arrangements, and accommodations? Are the players in other sections different from the ones with which we first dealt? Have political or economic conditions changed?
- Are we taking appropriate actions? Are they having the desired effects?
- Are we involved enough to sustain our neighborhood? Do we need new “blood” or new challenges?
- Do we need to look for new financial collaborators, partners, or grants? Have we found ways to make our efforts financially self-sustaining?

Answers to these questions (and others) should be communicated to the entire neighborhood at least annually in a “State of the Neighborhood” meeting. This meeting should accomplish the two objectives described below.

State of the Neighborhood Meeting Objectives

- Celebrate accomplishments -- no matter how small -- that are serving to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood; and
- Enlist neighborhood stakeholders in assessing the relevance of the original plan documents and making adaptations as necessary.

A summary of the meeting and any proposed actions/changes should be submitted to all of the original groups that approved the Neighborhood Action Plan: Aurora Neighborhood Council, Planning Commission, and City Council.

In addition to the annual “State of the Neighborhood” meetings, the neighborhood should prepare an update to the original plan no less frequently than every...
An update of the neighborhood action plan should describe the major accomplishments since the adoption of the original plan.

- Changes in the neighborhood that necessitate redirection of activities and programs;
- New initiatives including the explanation of need; and
- Updates to the Neighborhood Action Plan worksheet.

three years. Funding from City programs will be made based on these updates which should employ a collaborative and interactive approach similar to the process described in the ANPI Neighborhood Planning Handbook.

Depending upon conditions in the neighborhood, the plan update process could be accomplished in one neighborhood-wide meeting or in several meetings over the course of several months. A document describing the plan update process should be submitted to the Aurora Neighborhood Council, Planning Commission, and City Council every three years. The document should address the following:

- Process and neighborhood involvement used to conduct the plan update;
- Accomplishments since the adoption of the plan;
- What items were not accomplished and why;
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During the early stages of the neighborhood planning process, members of the Leadership Team were asked to submit photographs, clippings from magazines and newspapers, and other images that portrayed existing and desired neighborhood conditions. These images were then presented at the First Neighborhood Meeting.

Existing neighborhood conditions include features that leadership team members both liked and disliked. Desired neighborhood conditions include features that members wished to see in the Bardwell Area.
Existing and Desired Neighborhood Conditions

**Existing Neighborhood Conditions**
“What You Do Like”

**Desired Neighborhood Conditions**
“What You Do Like”
Initial Survey Results
First Neighborhood Meeting (November 12, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Don’t Know/Blank</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: The Virgil Gilman Trail is an asset to the neighborhood.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Properties to the west of Broadway Street are less well-maintained than those elsewhere in the neighborhood.</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>3: The current mix of commercial and residential uses on Broadway Street is good.</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: Property conditions are not a major issue for most of the Bardwell Area.</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: The historic district designation is a good thing for the neighborhood.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: Better access to the Fox River from the neighborhood should be provided.</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7: Lincoln Avenue acts as a common ground connecting both sides of the neighborhood.</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8: There is a need for additional nearby commercial services to serve neighborhood residents.</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9: Reuse of the hospital building presents a great opportunity to strengthen the neighborhood.</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Individual Group SWOT Results
First Neighborhood Meeting (November 12, 2002)

Blue Dot Group

Strengths
- Historic Lincoln and 4th architecture
- Hard working citizens
- Strong churches with significant influence
- Close proximity to the river
- Bardwell Elementary School as a central focal point
- Family-owned businesses
- Friendly residents
- The historic qualities of the neighborhoods housing stock
- Concerned citizens
- Diversity

Weaknesses
- Speed limits and stop signs are disregarded and not enforced
- Many of the homes are owned by absentee landlords
- Noise
- Gang violence
- Inadequate street and alley lighting
- Lack of City support with respect to infrastructure
- Bad sidewalks
- Pot holes in streets
- Language barrier
- Inconsistent and inadequate code enforcement
- Lincoln Avenue should be one way
- Many of the homes are vacant
- Prostitution
- Drug dealers
- Too many liquor stores
- Not enough citizen involvement in programs such as neighborhood watch
- Not enough owner-occupied housing
- Abandoned parking at Copley
- Lack of adequate police presence
- Poor image/bad press
Opportunities
- Copley Hospital
- Investment in children and their education
- Strong Hispanic presence and diversity
- Historic areas and homes
- Opportunity to improve communities image
- Vested long-term residents
- River front bike trail and open space
- Redevelopment of old train station - Maybe as specialty/antique stores
- Institution of a Hispanic police squad
- Expand and capitalize on Aurora Alive
- Library
- Enhance Titsworth Park
- Improve image
- Provide more convenience shopping

Threats
- Community may become increasingly marginalized
- Copley may be used for low income housing
- Perpetuation of discriminating practices against non-Hispanics
- Perpetuation of stereotyping of neighborhood residents
- Continued lack of community involvement, particularly the Hispanic population.
- Increased population density
- Conversions of single-family structures into multi-family units
- Continued lack of police presence
- Increase in violent/drug related crimes
- Discriminatory real estate practices

Red Dot Group

Strengths
- Bardwell Elementary School
- Family-owner businesses
- Buy Rite
- Churches
- Big single-family homes
- Concerned citizens
- Good neighbors
- Well-lit historic district
- Diversity

Weaknesses
- Dark alleys
- Unlit school parking lot
- Dead-end streets
- Abandoned houses
- Unsafe parks
- Traffic on 5th Street, Jackson Street, South Avenue, Lincoln Avenue, and LaSalle Street
- Prostitutes and drug dealers
- Homelessness
- Divided homes
- Sidewalks
- Alley parking
- Lack of bus service
- Gang violence
- Rental homes (parking, overcrowding)
- Lack of patrol at corners
- Mobility/turnover
- Abandoned shopping carts
- Loitering
- Loud music
- Multiple families in single-family homes
- Slum lords
- Parking in front of supermarket
- Building/property maintenance
- Lack of policing
- Street lighting

Opportunities
- Youth groups at 4th Street Methodist Church
- Copley Hospital
- Depot west side of Broadway Street
- Raise home values
- Young families
- Vacant properties
- Broadway Street as a thoroughfare
- Fox River for bike trail
Specialty shops/small shops for neighborhood needs
Capitalize on history like Galena
downtown

**Threats**
- People may leave
- Increased crime
- Conversion of homes of elderly
- More conversions
- Contaminated property
- Perceived value of properties
- Copley Hospital
- Slum lord conversion opportunities
- Lack of city responsiveness
- Stolen property, encroachments
- Lack of police response/protection
- Image and misperception
- East side and Aurora reputation
- Traffic/speed in alley
- Lack of inspections (building code, occupancy)
- City follow-through

**Red-Green Dot Group**

**Strengths**
- Housing stock - you get a lot for your money
- Lower taxes - than the west side and then other nearby communities
- Character of homes - variation/uniqueness and workmanship/details
- Diversity of people
- Families
- Area was historically affluent
- Value to the homes
- Big trees
- "Nosy" neighbors that look out for each other
- Transportation - BNSF

**Weaknesses**
- "Us vs. Them" mentality
- Neighborhood allows itself to be associated with all of the east side (north to Pigeon Hill)
- Crime
- Prostitution
- Gangs
- Rental properties are centers of criminal activity
- City conversion incentives are not working - they are not worth it
- Alleys are used as short cuts
- Poor leaf collection
- Traffic around Bardwell School
- Slum lord conversion opportunities
- Perceived value of properties
- Copley Hospital
- Slum lord conversion opportunities
- Lack of city responsiveness
- Stolen property, encroachments
- Lack of police response/protection
- Image and misperception
- East side and Aurora reputation
- Traffic/speed in alley
- Lack of inspections (building code, occupancy)
- City follow-through

**Opportunities**
- Overcoming the "Us vs. Them" mentality to partner with the City/Police
- Resale potential
- Community activism/involvement - "be a pain in the butt"
- Establishment of minimum standards for appropriate property appearance
- Take exception to grouping with other areas
- Improvement of school district management
- "Contagious" property improvement - almost like peer pressure...when one person starts work, others follow
- Attack first impressions to change perceptions of the area
- "Take ownership" of improvement program - ACT!
- Knowing neighbors and who to call for help
- Transparency

**Threats**
- Notion that the area is "not worth" investment/that it is going down hill
- Perceptions from outside shaping the community
- Bored youth looking for something to do
- Shifting crime activity - problems just keep getting relocated
- Density
- Multi-family property values make re-conversions unlikely
- Lack of money in neighborhood - economically stretched
- Not accurate representation—not proportional amount of Hispanics
- Speed on Lincoln—stop signs do not work
- Police patrols reduced after the hospital left

**Spanish Speaking Group**

**Strengths**
- Services provided by clinics, churches and schools.
- Affordable housing

**Weaknesses**
- Not enough services for the Hispanic community.
- Lack of street lights, especially in the Riverfront area.
- Crime.
- Lack of city programs for homeless people.
- Lack of participation of the Hispanic community. (Need for more reach-out activities).

**Opportunities**
- The Copley Hospital could be converted into a community center that will promote a better interaction between different ethnic groups through the implementation of community development programs.
- The ethnic diversity of the neighborhood could be a great source for organizing a wide variety of cultural activities. The community needs better programs dedicated to the promotion of arts and music.

**Threats**
- Urban planning and infrastructure is not parallel to population growth.
- Lack of services for the Hispanic community. Spanish speakers are severely underrepresented. In order to address this problem, the city should make a combined effort with the neighbors to approach prospective Latino leaders in the community.

**Yellow Dot Group**

**Strengths**
- Change in residential character of neighborhood (e.g., more Hispanic residents and young families)
- Nice affordable housing
- Children playing around the neighborhood (e.g., skateboarding)
- Local parks have wide open spaces available for passive recreation
- Churches and schools are symbols of the neighborhood
- Good, friendly, “smiley” neighbors
- Immediate home improvements after new residents move into neighborhood
- Proximity to Downtown Aurora and other shopping opportunities around the City
- Good relationship between parents and children (i.e., parents are actively involved in their children’s activities and interests)

**Weaknesses**
- Change in residential character of neighborhood (e.g., although having more Hispanic residents is a strength, the language barrier often poses problems)
- Slow retail service at gas stations (one gas station sells small items, e.g., brillo pads, which could be sold at a convenience store rather than a gas station; residents suggested that station owners should try to limit or control the kinds of items they sell)
- Cracked sidewalks
- Old run-down homes along Titsworth Court
- Fast traffic along Simms Street and 5th Street
- Lack of stop signs at certain blocks (corner of 5th Street and Seminary Avenue is one example)
- Huge parking lots
- Insufficient youth programs
- Lack of street lights in certain areas of the neighborhood
Historic lights look nice but they are too bright and they tend to shine horizontally across to residents' windows rather than vertically down to the sidewalk.

- Crime (e.g. gangs, prostitution, homelessness, drug activity)
- Lack of communication among residents
- High dropout rate and truancy at the school
- Lack of community involvement and activities

Opportunities
- Great housing opportunities
- Renovation/Conversion of Copley Hospital (some ideas included senior housing, smaller medical clinics, a community center); residents mentioned that the City had the opportunity to make changes to the Copley property but it chose to use the money for political purposes rather than neighborhood improvements
- Skate park to encourage children's interest in skateboarding but keep skateboarding in a centralized area (i.e. off private property and the streets)
- Activities organized by neighbors (e.g. block parties to allow neighbors to get to know each other better in a locally organized setting)
- Future youth programs at Armory (note: located south of Bardwell Area)
- More medical clinics and other health-related services (many services were lost when Copley Hospital left the neighborhood, and many residents have to drive to other parts of the City to access these services)
- Off-street parking lots
- Neighborhood watch program
- More youth programs and community activities at the churches and schools
- Fine arts/community murals programs
- Day-care centers
- Renovation of the old train station at South Broadway Street (note: train station is located outside the study area; potential location of a skate park)

Threats
- People tend to congregate at Minute Man Gas Station
- Realtors often discourage potential new residents from moving into the Bardwell Area
- Multiple tenants listed on a mortgage/lease lead to overcrowding (which leads to too many cars parked on the street)
- Housing inspectors are often too nit-picky during their inspections and inconsistent with the level of inspections (some areas are scrutinized very closely while other areas are scrutinized at the bare minimum); inspectors don’t organize their priorities in a sensible manner
- Confusing definitions of “family” (what constitutes a family?) and “bedroom” (is a bedroom defined by square feet or by the number of persons that can reside in a room?)
- Lack of supervision at local parks (parents like taking their children to the parks, but they are weary when they let their children play at the parks without supervision)

Green Dot Group

Strengths
- Location. This neighborhood is close to downtown, close to commuter rail and close to recreation trail.
- Residential Character. Homes have a lot of historic character. Many have interesting improvements.
- Diversity. The diverse cultures are seen as a positive.
- Mature Landscaping. This area has mature street trees.
- Schools and Churches. Positive institutional presence in the neighborhood. Bardwell School in particular is seen as a long standing positive force within the neighborhood.
Playgrounds. Bluff Street Park is a positive. Center Avenue Park is not.

Prices. Housing prices are low as are taxes.

Residents. Many residents have lived in this neighborhood for a very long time. They are invested in the neighborhood. New residents are hard working and generally fit in with the culture of the neighborhood.

Weaknesses

- Crime. There are numerous drug houses. Drugs, graffiti and gangs are prolific within certain portions of the neighborhood. Prostitution is also an issue in portions of the neighborhood, particularly near downtown.
- Traffic. There is a lot of cut through traffic in this neighborhood. Both cut through and neighborhood traffic involves speeding, particularly in alleys.
- Parking. There is a lack of available parking on neighborhood streets.
- Communication. This applies to both to communication between residents and other residents and residents and the City. Communication between residents is largely impaired by language barriers. Residents feel ignored by the City.
- Cultural Differences. There is no merging of cultures and a distinct lack of understanding of cultural differences.
- Perception. Residents feel this neighborhood has to overcome a negative perception. This is not just the perception of the rest of the community, but also real estate agents who steer perspective home buyers (particularly white home buyers) away from this neighborhood.
- Multiple Family Housing. There are several issues raised with regard to multiple family housing. First is the conversion of single family homes. Many felt this was degrading the housing stock and shoehorning multiple family into single family areas. Second is absentee landlords. Too many of the multiple family buildings are owned by absentee landlords who neglect the property. Third is overcrowding. Some blame this on the Hispanic residents who often have large families. Others blame weak City codes regarding occupancy and poor code enforcement.
- Property Maintenance. Some properties lack property maintenance. Here again residents feel that there are weak City codes and very bad code enforcement.
- Nuisances. Littering, noise and vagrancy are considered nuisances by residents.
- Copley Hospital. Somewhat of an afterthought. Residents do not like the fact it is empty, but it is considerably less important than the above issues.

Opportunities

- Home Improvement Programs. Resident ideas included grants, loans, “help the elderly days”, and training.
- Merging of Cultures. Residents suggest cultural programs, language training, and information sharing forums.
- Redevelopment of Copley Hospital. Potential uses brainstormed by the group are a police substation, townhomes, a park, an assisted living facility and a community building.
- Lighting. Residents saw the potential to increase lighting in the neighborhood.
- Clean-Up. Increasing street cleaning, having neighborhood clean up days, and removing graffiti.
- Reduce Crime. Residents suggest increased police presence and neighborhood policing.

Threats

- Traffic. If nothing is done to slow traffic and reduce through traffic residents see it only increasing in amount and intensity.
- Crime. Residents are particularly concerned that shootings and gang violence will increase if not addressed. Drugs, drug houses and prostitution are also likely to spread in the opinion of residents.
- Education. Residents are concerned about the education level of the neighborhood. They state that poor education, dropouts and truancy are already on the rise. They do not want to let this become the norm.
- Decline in Housing Stock. If poor maintenance continues the quality and appearance of housing in the neighborhood will only decline.
- Overcrowding. Without better City enforcement residents worry that overcrowding of homes will increase and result in the overcrowding of schools.
- Stereotypes. This came from the Hispanic members of the group, at least in part due to the stereotypes being used by some members of the discussion group. Hispanic residents were concerned about misperceptions and felt that if they were not dealt with that they would be detrimental to the neighborhood.

Overall, the feeling was that Crime was the most important issue facing the community with property maintenance and traffic following closely behind. Beyond those major issues, there was disagreement regarding other problems. Some felt that overcrowding and density were the biggest issue while others said stereotypes and cultural misunderstandings that were more important. Everyone agreed that communication between the City and the neighborhood residents is very poor. Residents felt very strongly about an increased police presence and code enforcement. Hispanics in particular felt that cultural programs and informational sessions were key to improving relations within the neighborhood.

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**Drafts of Ideal Neighborhood Descriptions**
**Leadership Team Meeting (December 10, 2002)**

**Draft One**
The Near-Eastside Neighbors meeting convenes for its 15th anniversary in the ‘old Copley’ community center, though only a few of the residents have any reason why it is always called that. A few of the new comers grab earphones to aid them in translation of the many languages spoken by the stream of residents and speakers who come to the meeting. The news of the neighborhood is quickly passed by for clarification, since most of the residents were able to breeze over the details from their community internet resources. The meeting focuses on open discussion for the new challenges the neighborhood faces, continued restoration of homes approaching 150 years old, interacting 23rd century technology into the schools, managing traffic of site-seers coming into town to view the historic homes of the neighborhood. Each citizen leaves, challenged to contribute in some way to the neighborhood initiatives, parties, and celebrations coming up over the rest of the year...

**Draft Two**
The City of Aurora implemented a better program to convert multi-family homes back to single-family homes reducing parking and density problems. The city and neighborhood groups work closely to keep each other informed on what is going on with the community to solve problems. The residents take pride in the neighborhood and appearance of their properties to keep the homes in the area attractive and inviting and also boosting property values. The old Copley Hospital was renovated to an assisted-living facility for the elderly and also space was used on the first floor for stores, banks, pharmacy, etc. This can be used by the community as well as the residents of the facility and makes things more convenient. The residents get together for neighborhood block parties and welcome new comers to the area.
It would be wonderful if by the year 2020, the Bardwell Area neighborhood would be entirely safe and crime-free. I would love that all the homes would be well-maintained and that all the homes that were originally built as single-family could be returned to single family use and zoning. There are some wonderfully unique and historic homes in this area which could be the backbone of an enhanced revitalization effort by the City of Aurora which currently spends most of its planning efforts on the new development areas. The older neighborhoods should not be used as depositories for programs that cater to low-income individuals. The only way for the older neighborhoods in Aurora to be revitalized is to have an increase of people who have the disposable income to properly maintain and enhance their properties. I would love the Bardwell Area by the year 2020 to have property values that are comparable to other historic areas in the nation. Improved property values would enhance city services, school programs, and the current image of older neighborhoods in Aurora. It would also be wonderful if the former Copley Hospital and the Burlington Train Station could be renovated and reutilized, and a conservation district established in the areas outside of the Historic District.

The Bardwell Area is a safe, family-oriented neighborhood. The well-maintained homes illustrate the pride of the homeowners. Neighbors actively participate in community groups, working to open lines of communication and keep the residents informed and unified. The Bardwell Area is a quiet, peaceful recognized as one of the best areas in the city to raise a family.

The Bardwell area is united with peace in a neighborly effort to keep a safer, crime-free, single-family neighborhood that is recognized by all who pass by. The resurrection of our industrious businesses brings opportunity to our lively neighborhood and because of their intense participation with the community we maintain a harmonious and respectful community. We are an informed community due to better involvement of the homeowners taking pride and helping each other maintain a unified and quiet existence.

A safe, well-maintained neighborhood, recognized for its commitment to a mutual respect for one’s own property and the property of others, including city property and its infrastructure.

Our neighborhood is a model for other neighborhoods. The people here are courteous and friendly. We have neighborhood meetings that are well-attended. The neighborhood is aesthetically pleasing. There is a balance between areas of single-family housing and trails or parks. People feel safe here and there is an active neighborhood watch group. Traffic laws are enforced and small businesses thrive. We are diversified and peaceful.

I would like a safe, friendly neighborhood that is litter-free. I would look out my windows in the front of my house and see street lighting similar to the historic district lights. I would also look out and see no cars parked on the streets overnight thanks to a city-wide ban on parking on the streets overnight. I would look up and down the street and see well-maintained houses that don’t have too many people living in them.
I would like to see our neighborhood mostly owner-occupied, just outside a vibrant downtown area. A clean, multi-cultural, well-respected area where people from all walks of life can live in safety.

**Ideal Neighborhood Experiences**

**Leadership Team Meeting (December 10, 2002)**

**Good place to raise children**
- School accessible 18 hours a day to the community for use.
- No guns or violent acts.
- Family friendly activities (celebrations, parties, meetings with child care).

**Well-maintained**
- City incentives people to commit to historic preservation and living in historic districts.
- First encourages good maintenance in a safe way, then if needed uses property standards and the threat of a fine.
- Alley’s are as well treated and reflected as front streets.
- All neighbors follow City regulations and codes.
- Unused clutter is removed from all property.
- Repairs or improvements are completed quickly.
- Yards are mowed and trimmed on a regular basis.
- Holiday decorations are removed in a timely manner.
- Excess autos are removed from property and streets.

**Safe and crime-free neighborhood**
- People think of our neighborhood as a place to purchase a home and raise their family.
- Police work closely with the neighborhood groups to rid the area of problem people.
- Neighbors are friendly to one another and are willing to help out.
- Gang activity is now several neighbors helping a senior in the neighborhood.
- Community policing is when everyone gets together to rake leaves.
- Fencing is a sport only.

- We know and talk to all our neighbors.
- Language is not a barrier, nor are cultural differences.
- Homes are mostly owner-occupied.
- Lower density.
- Proper police representation (crime that is allowed in our neighborhood would be unacceptable in other areas of the city).

**Attractive neighborhood**
- The historic homes and the diversity of the look of the homes in the area make this neighborhood attractive.
- Homes built in these eras have more architectural charm & detail and appeal to buyers.
- Homes are affordable in this area.
- Well-maintained yards and homes add to the value.
- The location near downtown and the schools and churches in the area would also attract newcomers.
- Parking restrictions now allow passersby to see flowers in the front yard, not cars.
- Streets are easily navigated by children.
- City and neighborhood collaboration have eliminated weeds and debris and empowered personal responsibility.
- Lighting and mature trees complement the area.
- There is a yearly block party.
- There is an active neighborhood watch and walking patrol.
- Neighbors attend area group meetings on a regular basis.
- Homes are mostly owner-occupied.
- Lower density.
- Vibrant downtown area.
- Ethnically well-balanced (residents and commercial).
Near downtown neighborhood
- People feel safe to walk Downtown without being hassled by vagrants, drug dealers, or prostitutes on their route.
- There are sufficient people with disposable income living in the area willing to find interesting shopping opportunities Downtown.

Walkable neighborhood
- Fronts of homes are well-lit at night.
- Sidewalks are all in good condition.
- Properties are well-maintained and landscaped.
- There are safe street crossings and slow traffic.
- There are parks in the area to walk to.
- Long-term friendships with neighbors.
- Security of knowing your neighbors.
- Having consistent property maintenance standards.
- Knowing our long-term community policing officers.
- Being able to let our kids play out in front of our houses.
- Families feel safe walking in the neighborhood.
- There are few homes for sale - people stay here a long time.

Stable neighborhood
- People buy and stay in these homes for the long term.
- Homeowners continually add improvements.
- All homes are owner-occupied.
- Effective neighborhood groups exist.
- Mature trees within the neighborhood.
- Churches offer variety to satisfy worship needs.
- Few cars are parked on the street and none block sidewalks.
- People are out in front using and enjoying properties.
- Many homeowners hang seasonal decorations.
- There are many beautiful gardens in our neighborhood.
- The bike trails are well-maintained by the park district.
### Results of Leadership Team Neighborhood Vision Voting Exercise

**Leadership Team Meeting (December 10, 2002)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Redeveloped Copley Hospital</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An effective program for converting multi-family homes back to single-family use</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property values that have a more comparable relationship with the rest of the city</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A conservation district that protects areas outside of the historic district</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active &amp; informed residents who participate in community groups via a number of means including the internet, electronic communication, and internet kiosks</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrious businesses that bring opportunity to the neighborhood</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Neighborhood watch groups</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Streets</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorative lighting and street trees</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abolition of on-street parking overnight</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility of Bardwell School for community use</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks of family-friendly activities and friendly, helpful neighbors</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City incentives that encourage residents to live in historic districts</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close collaboration between police and neighborhood residents</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied homes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased levels of disposable income</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective parking restrictions that free up alleys and streets for circulation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective neighborhood groups</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer home sales - people stay in the neighborhood for a longer period of time</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime-free community</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Open Space (including trails)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

The table above presents the results of the Leadership Team Neighborhood Vision Voting Exercise held on December 10, 2002. Each item was voted on by the team, and the number of votes for each item is listed.
### Results of Leadership Team Priority Issues Voting Exercise
#### Leadership Team Meeting (December 10, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Property Conditions</td>
<td>2 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copley Hospital</td>
<td>14 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;First Impressions&quot;</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prostitution</td>
<td>4 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to the Fox River</td>
<td>1 Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Activities</td>
<td>6 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-family structures being used as multi-family</td>
<td>9 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Involvement</td>
<td>1 Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Density</td>
<td>3 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to Downtown as an Opportunity</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>3 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalk/Street/Alley Conditions</td>
<td>1 Vote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Enforcement</td>
<td>10 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Reduction-Elimination</td>
<td>8 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Services</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadway Avenue Corridor</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions/Image of Neighborhood</td>
<td>0 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Cohesion</td>
<td>3 Votes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gangs</td>
<td>6 Votes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results of Neighborhood Vision Elements Questionnaire

Second Neighborhood Meeting (January 21, 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A redeveloped Copley Hospital site</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An effective program for converting multi-family homes back to single-family use</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close collaboration between police and residents</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied homes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective parking policies/restrictions (including a ban of on-street parking overnight) that free up alleys and streets for circulation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active and informed residents who participate in community groups and activities through a variety of avenues including electronic communications tools/web sites/internet kiosks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decorative lighting and street trees</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plenty of family-friendly activities and friendly, helpful neighbors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and open space (including trails)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A conservation district that protects areas outside of the historic district</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear traffic system</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable child care</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional elements (written in by participants)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn Seminary Avenue one way and Marion Avenue one way around the Bardwell School</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of unemployment</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buried utility wires to replace poles and visible utility wires, boxes, etc.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening classes and activities at the Bardwell School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property maintenance courses in the schools’ curriculum</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety, security, and streets devoid of crime</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-maintained properties and City infrastructure</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A community center with strong teen/young adult programming</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased police enforcement of traffic and nuisance (e.g. loud music) laws</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A reduction in overcrowding in homes and schools</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proposed Strategies & Actions

- Guide reuse of the site through the use of development standards/principles
  1. Determine preferred uses
  2. Determine key design elements
  3. Produce description of development principles
  4. Meet with the City and developer to discuss principles
  5. Ensure that principles are followed throughout the redevelopment process

- Use redevelopment of the site to assist with other neighborhood improvement work
  6. Identify the measure that provides the most assistance to other neighborhood improvements
  7. Enlist help of Copley site developer to promote the neighborhood (to realtors, buyers, etc.)
  8. Partner with church and developer to prepare public relations strategy that ensures that the redevelopment process positively promotes the neighborhood
  9. Consider financial tools that could generate revenue for neighborhood improvements (e.g. TIF)

- Encourage resident participation during the redevelopment process
  10. Hold neighborhood meetings to gain input of/update residents as reuse proceeds
  11. Prepare “red development new sletter” in conjunction with church and developer to highlight positive changes occurring in the neighborhood

12. Host neighborhood “parties/celebrations” at key points in the redevelopment process (e.g. groundbreaking)

Group Responses

Participants were asked to vote on which of the three strategies they preferred. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Approach</th>
<th>Dot Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Guide reuse of the site through the use of development standards/principles</td>
<td>Green: 55% Blue: 100% Red: 100% Yellow: 75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use redevelopment to the site to assist with other neighborhood improvement work</td>
<td>Green: 20% Blue: 0 Red: 0 Yellow: 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Encourage resident participation during the redevelopment process</td>
<td>Green: 25% Blue: 0 Red: 0 Yellow: 25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While participants voted for one approach, there was a general consensus that a combination of each would be most desirable. Generally speaking, participants were in favor of taking a very active and inclusive approach to planning and oversight of this development.

While all groups agreed that senior housing was the most appropriate use for the site, there was consensus that the site should provide a mix of uses.

Encourage These Uses

- Youth-center, or at least a multi-generational (youth/senior) activity program
- Pharmacy
- Hospice office
- Small retail uses (coffee shop, laundry, video store, convenience oriented uses)
- More green space
- Underground parking if possible
Community college satellite education center on the site
A few participants from one group suggested the development of single-family houses

Discourage These Uses
- All groups were opposed to multi-family housing in any form other than assisted senior living. Concern was raised as to how the City would ensure that the development remain exclusively senior living for the life of the project.
- The development of a large-scale (big-box) retail center should be prohibited.

Other Issues
- Generally, participants indicated a preference for assigning all project costs to developer(s); although, they also expressed a strong desire to do whatever may be possible to ensure that the property does get redeveloped.
- The process for developer recruitment/approval was also a concern. Given other projects in the community that had eventually become mental health facilities, participants wanted to ensure that the developer chosen to undertake the project is credentialed and experienced in this type of development. Interest was also expressed in making sure development had market viability.
- Participants were concerned about what types of residents such a project would attract.
- Participants wanted to ensure that the design of the development is one that is integrated into the neighborhood, rather than a gated or internally oriented.

Proposed Strategies & Actions
- Act as resource (financial, technical, labor) to property owners
  1. Organize neighborhood/property clean-ups
  2. Work with other neighborhoods to develop pool of resources to provide financial assistance
  3. Provide user-friendly (including bilingual) materials to describe standards
  4. Establish an awards/recognition program for blocks that maintain adequate property conditions

- Make City enforcement efforts more effective
  5. Work with other neighborhoods to encourage the provision of more code enforcement officers
  6. Train residents on identifying code violations
  7. Organize community inspection program that would allow for property owners to be notified by neighborhood group prior to involvement of City inspection officers
  8. Increase penalties for violations
  9. Publish names of repeat offenders
  10. Host seminars to educate residents on code requirements

- Strengthen aspects of property maintenance code
  11. Review code for shortcomings and clarity issues
  12. Provide user-friendly (including bilingual) materials to describe standards
  13. Create conservation district that would allow for Bardwell Area-specific standards
Group Responses

Participants acknowledged an opportunity for residents and property owners to assume a more pro-active role in maintaining an appropriate appearance in the neighborhood by organizing clean-ups; however, they also suggested extended hours of inspection into the evening (some felt that inspectors occasionally miss a code violation because they inspect a property during work hours, i.e. times when the violation is only committed when the violator is at home) and would encourage the hiring or training of more bilingual inspectors.

It was also suggested that the City should supplement its “Be A Good Neighbor” brochure (provided annually in the Spring) with other written materials describing neighborhood codes and standards, resident involvement, etc. In addition, participants suggested that codes and standards were published or posted for the general public to ensure that new residents (owners and renters alike) are aware of neighborhood and City expectations at the onset of their lease, mortgage, etc. One suggested example was to have new residents sign a form specifying that they have read or received a copy of the neighborhood codes and standards.

To reward and highlight outstanding properties and blocks, participants suggested that the City’s existing awards/recognition program for historic preservation be expanded to include general property/neighborhood improvements or that the City and/or neighborhood organizations explore options for other awards/recognition/incentive programs.

Under the assumption that homeowners have a greater stake in maintaining their properties to a high standard, participants also expressed a desire for more incentive programs to encourage homeownership. Participants were not certain that the proposed action of publishing the names of repeat offenders of code violators was worthwhile because they said that is currently being done and they are not sure how effective it is.

Proposed Strategies & Actions

- **Encourage re-conversions by providing economic benefits**
  1. Collaborate with other neighborhoods and City to improve existing incentive programs
  2. Identify possibility of tax benefits
  3. Establish an awards/recognition program for blocks that complete successful re-conversions

- **Increase marketability of area as a desirable single-family neighborhood**
  4. Provide high quality public improvements such as lighting found on Lincoln Avenue
  5. Provide realtor outreach program to promote the neighborhood
  6. Develop public relations campaign to promote the neighborhood
  7. Collaborate with other neighborhoods and City to promote existing homebuyer incentives and package them more effectively

- **Promote benefits of re-conversions**
  8. Create marketing materials to promote re-conversion incentives to owners/buyers
  9. Provide residents with information stating the benefits of re-conversions
  10. Design community service projects (including youth projects) that assist with the re-conversion process (e.g. demolition work, site work, etc.)
Group Responses

Participants generally agreed with the proposed objective of reducing the number of originally single-family homes being used as multi-family dwellings; however, there were some differences in opinion about whether or not single-family rentals or owner occupants renting out part of their home to another family would be acceptable. It was also pointed out by Hispanic participants that, in their culture, it is not uncommon for the extended family to live within one household. This is an important aspect of Hispanic culture that needs to be accommodated within the neighborhood; it was suggested that there may be a need to expand the definition of “family” as it pertains to occupancy codes.

Participants had several suggestions for increasing the number of re-conversions: City/non-profit purchasing of units, re-converting them, and then selling them; offering incentives to real estate agents to encourage single-family buyers and to inform them of incentives; greater marketing and promotion of the neighborhood and available incentives; incentives to home sellers to encourage them to sell to individuals who will re-convert the property; creating a “trust fund” for purchasing properties; and stronger lending restrictions to try and limit property use.

There was some discussion in one group of a Special Service Area that could be created. In such an area, property owners would agree to an additional property tax assessment; but the assessment would go to a special pool to potentially pay for property acquisition, re-conversions, etc. Utilizing the City’s partnership with Joseph Corporation was also suggested. At this meeting, more so than during previous discussions, the issue of absentee landlords came up; participants strongly supported changes to encourage homeownership and “crack down” on absentee landlords.

In general, participants did not think there was anywhere in the neighborhood that it would be appropriate to introduce and/or allow multi-family housing as a way of serving rental needs. There was some consideration of the idea that perhaps it might make sense to allow larger homes to remain two- or three-family units because of their size and upkeep requirements—assuming that parking was appropriately provided.

Participants also strongly supported the idea that more homeownership counseling should occur because of the high rental rates some residents pay. In the long run, it may be better for that money to be going toward a mortgage. Additionally, the desire was expressed for stronger code enforcement on problem rental properties—particularly those that may be overcrowded and creating parking problems or in poor condition. The intention was not, however, to create problems for households with extended families who are maintaining their properties well.

Proposed Strategies & Actions

- Increase police presence
  1. Provide police substation in neighborhood
  2. Provide incentives for police to live in the neighborhood
  3. Involve police in neighborhood meetings and activities

- Provide youth activities and facilities
  4. Build skate park along riverfront
  5. Involve youth in neighborhood organization/projects
  6. Negotiate gang truce
  7. Expand “Character Counts” program to include neighborhood improvement projects/focus
  8. Promote after-school programs at Bardwell Elementary School and incorporate with neighborhood improvement projects
- Use residents as enforcement officers
- Organize neighborhood block captains
- Include neighborhood crime watch reports at Aurora Neighborhood Council meetings
- Ensure bilingual capabilities of neighborhood watch programs
- Implement appropriate physical improvements
- Provide emergency call boxes at critical locations
- Provide additional street lighting

**Group Responses**

Participants generally felt that there is more of crime issue as opposed to police presence. They believe the police have a good presence already; however, they did indicate that the quality of the police presence is important - there may be different techniques for dealing with crime than current practices. They also suggested that police patrols should be staggered and exhibited in different means - unmarked police cars, on bicycles, etc. Noted obstacles to improved police measures are lack of money and the ease of access to the neighborhood (the road network creates barriers to the neighborhood). Participants felt emergency call boxes in public places (parks) are a good idea if there is a way to minimize vandalism of them.

Participants did support the idea of increased incentives for police officers to reside in the neighborhoods they serve.

Participants felt that the Citizen Police Academy (class) is effective because citizens are able to better understand what powers they have and how the police operate.

The importance of youth activities and involvement in the community was mentioned repeatedly. A noted obstacle in regard to activities is the lack of supervision during times that parents are at work or at prior commitments. The idea of a skate park was well-received. It was also suggested that Hurts Island is a good opportunity for increased recreation/open space opportunities.

It was also suggested that the school could arrange activities that involve parents and the students at the same time and that a stronger relationship between the school and the YMCA would be good. Other suggested activities/programs for the youth in the neighborhood included a “Teen Patrol” that pays; an ROTC sponsored program; skill-oriented programs (computers, shop, etc). Additionally, participants felt there should be efforts to teach organizations or representatives of (such as churches) how to teach how to become involved in the community. Participants thought teachers could be a good resource for getting teens involved. Group members felt that neighborhood youth should be involved in creating programs that are geared towards teens/children because doing so may increase the programs’ effectiveness.

The groups did not like the idea of a negotiated gang truce because they did not think it would rid the streets of gangs.

Participants pointed out that there are issues with lighting versus illumination. The problem with illumination of the alleys is that the lights tend to get “shot out” by the undesirables. Porch lights are a good idea.

Other issues raised include traffic, speeding, and accidents. Speed bumps, stop signs, and speed reporting devices (monument that registers and reports speed) were suggested as a means of addressing these issues.

The distinction between crimes and nuisances was pointed out with some question about how to police nuisances. It was suggested that utilization of the web could help keep citizens informed of problems in the neighborhood, and a form of documentation that police could rely upon when dealing with common crime occurrences.
### Bardwell Area Neighborhood Plan

#### Aurora Neighborhood Planning Initiative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program/Service</th>
<th>Relationship to Neighborhood Vision</th>
<th>CHANGES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ESSENTIAL</td>
<td>IMPORTANT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Assist Program</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Mortgage Credit Certificate Program</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Real Estate Transfer Tax</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Emergency Rehabilitation Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Senior Citizen/Disabled Home Security Grants</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Reconversion Incentive</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. New Start Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Citizens Police Academy</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Neighborhood Patrols</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Landlord/Tenant Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Capital Improvement Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Right-of-Way Improvement Program</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Rental Property Licensing</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Tax Increment Financing</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. Special Service Area Funds</td>
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