



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### INTRODUCTION

Starting in the late summer and fall of 2002, the residents of the Southside Neighborhood began meeting with officials of the City of Kalamazoo regarding a proposed housing project in their area. There was a large turnout at these meetings, especially considering that there had been little interest in forming a neighborhood association before. Capitalizing on the energy of that group, the City endeavored to create a neighborhood plan for the neighborhood. Although people were very adamant about what they *did not* want, they didn't have a clear vision of what they *did* want. Over the course of the next few months, the residents of the Southside Neighborhood met with City staff on four occasions to discuss their neighborhood: what was good about living in the Southside and what they wanted to improve.

This document is the result of those meetings. It begins with an asset map, attached to this introduction, which shows some of the resources that the residents of the Southside Neighborhood have at their disposal, in terms of social, economic, and community capital. The following section contains background information on the area. This existing conditions section tells the story of what the neighborhood is like today. The next section, goals and objective, details what the residents see as the desired outcomes of this plan. This section is broken up into six goals and objectives: Retain Owner-Occupied Nature of the Neighborhood, Improve Greenspace/Access to Recreation, Address Pedestrian and Vehicular Concerns, Burdick Main Street, and Neighborhood Leadership and Open Dialogue with Adjoining Neighborhoods. Following this is the plan section, which is a vision for how the Southside Neighborhood could be tomorrow. This section also follows the six major goals and objectives outlined in the goals and objectives section. Finally, there is an

implementation section, which lays out exactly how these objectives will be met. The implementation section includes an appendix which illustrates some resources that are discussed throughout the plan.

With this plan as a guideline, the Southside Neighborhood can continue to grow and enrich the lives of those who live, work and play within its boundaries.

### Table of Contents

1.	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
	Explanation of Asset Map	Page 5
	<i>Asset Map</i>	Page 6
2.	<b>Existing Conditions</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
	Survey Results	Page 13
	<i>Aerial Map</i>	Page 17
	<i>Current Zoning Map</i>	Page 18
	<i>Current Land Use Map</i>	Page 19
	<i>Future Land Use Map</i>	Page 20
	<i>Metro Transit Routes Map</i>	Page 21
3.	<b>Goals and Objectives</b>	<b>Page 22</b>
4.	<b>The Plan</b>	<b>Page 25</b>
	<i>Concept Map</i>	Page 25
	Retain Single Family, Owner-Occupied	
	Nature of the Neighborhood	Page 26
	<i>Proposed Zoning Map</i>	Page 29
	Sample Student Welcome Packet	Page 30
	Improve Infrastructure and Maintenance	
	in the Neighborhood	Page 31
	Improve Greenspace/Access to Recreation	Page 33
	<i>Proposed Planting Map</i>	Page 36
	Portage Creek Trail Proposed Connection	Page 37
	Address Pedestrian and Vehicular Concerns	Page 40
	<i>Area Street Trees Map</i>	Page 44
	Burdick Main Street	Page 45
	Neighborhood Leadership and Open Dialogue	
	With Adjoining Neighborhoods	Page 48
	<i>Proposed Neighborhood Boundaries Map</i>	Page 51
5.	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>Page 52</b>
	Plan Implementation Steps	Page 52
	Appendix	Page 55



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### HOW TO READ THE ASSET MAP

The asset map is a reflection of those areas that the residents of the Southside Neighborhood see as an asset to the neighborhood. The following symbols are those that are used on the map and what they mean:



Greenspace or Open Space (can be public or private)



Church or Place of Worship



Industrial Area



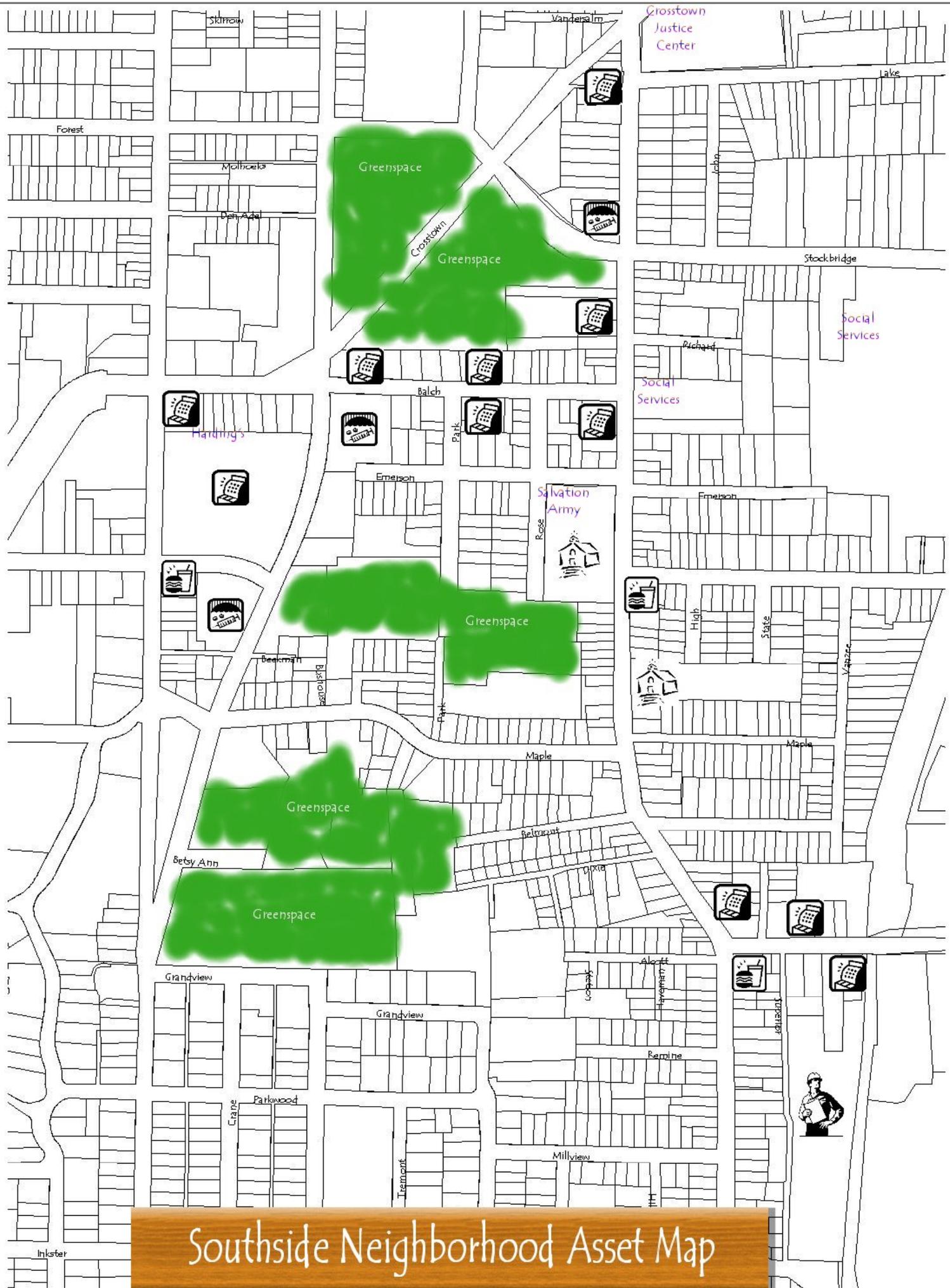
Retail or Commercial Center



Medical Office



Restaurant



Southside Neighborhood Asset Map

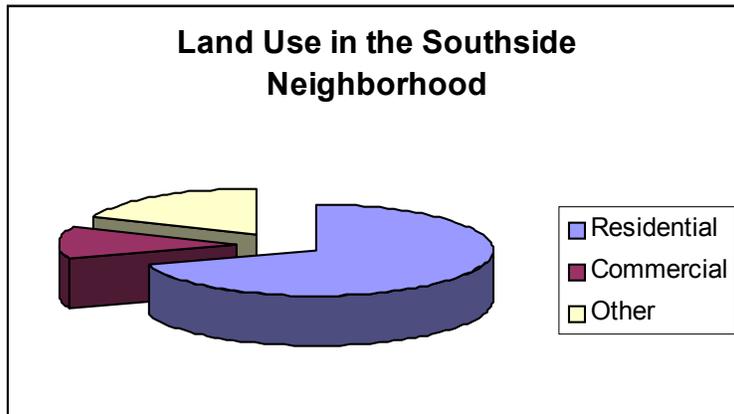
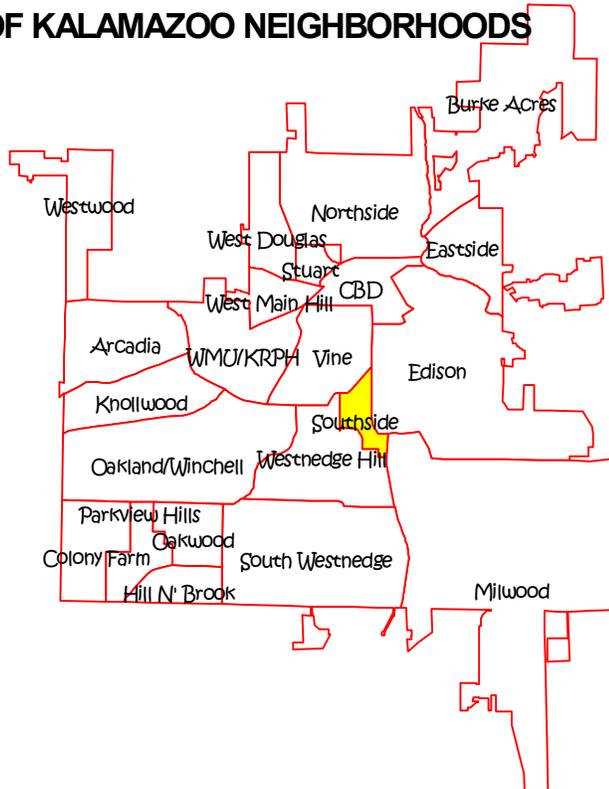
## Basic Information

The Southside Neighborhood is bordered on the north by Crosstown Parkway, on the west by South Westnedge Avenue and South Park Street., on the south by Summit Drive and Millview Avenue, and on the east by South Burdick Street and Alcott Street.

It encompasses a fairly small area (0.31 square miles) and is the second smallest officially recognized neighborhood in the City (the smallest is the Stuart neighborhood, which is approximately 0.20 square miles).

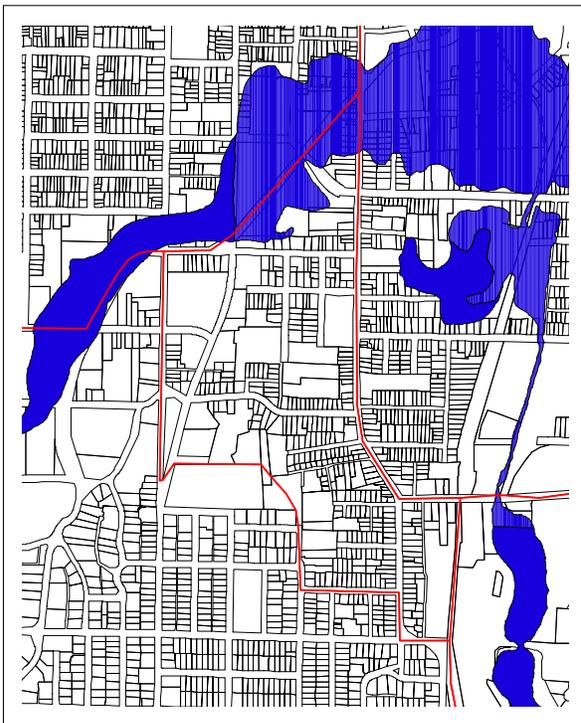
The Southside Neighborhood is comprised primarily of residential dwelling units. There are 182 owner-occupied homes and 108 rental or multiple-family homes in the neighborhood, out of a total of 416 parcels, which is nearly 70% residential. Comparatively, there are only 48 commercial or retail parcels, which is almost 12% of the total. Most of the commercial and retail properties are located along South Westnedge and Crosstown Parkway.

### CITY OF KALAMAZOO NEIGHBORHOODS



The terrain of the neighborhood is quite varied, with some steeply sloping hills on the western half of the neighborhood bounds, especially on some of the residential streets. The extreme northeast portion of the neighborhood lies in the floodplain.

Southside  
Neighborhood  
Elevation



100 Year  
Flood Plain

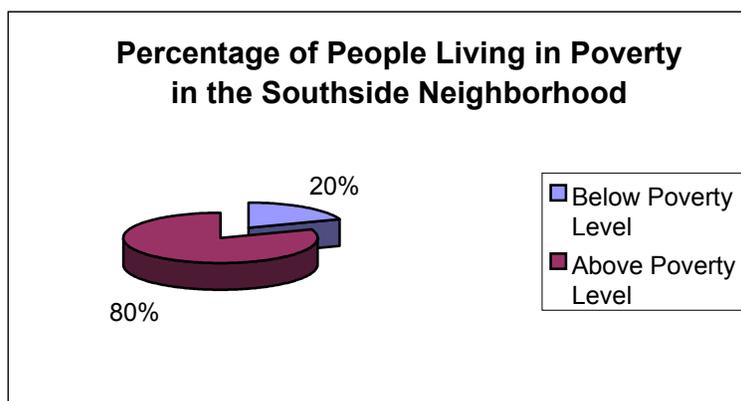


## Demographics (from the 2000 U.S. census)

	<u>Southside</u>	<u>City of Kalamazoo</u>
Population	681	77,145
Race		
White	74.2%	70.8%
Black	17.0%	20.6%
American Indian/ Alaskan Native	1.0%	0.6%
Asian	0.3%	2.4%
Hispanic/Latino	5.3%	4.3%
Median Age	29.9	26.1
No. of Families	150 (57.7%)	14,358 (48.8%)
Average Family Size	3.29	2.99
Total Housing Units	289	31,798
Total Vacancy Rate	10%	7.5%
Occupied	260	29,413
Owner Occupied	164 (63%)	14,027 (47.7%)
Renter Occupied	96 (37%)	15,386 (52.3%)
Poverty Rate	19.5%	24.3%

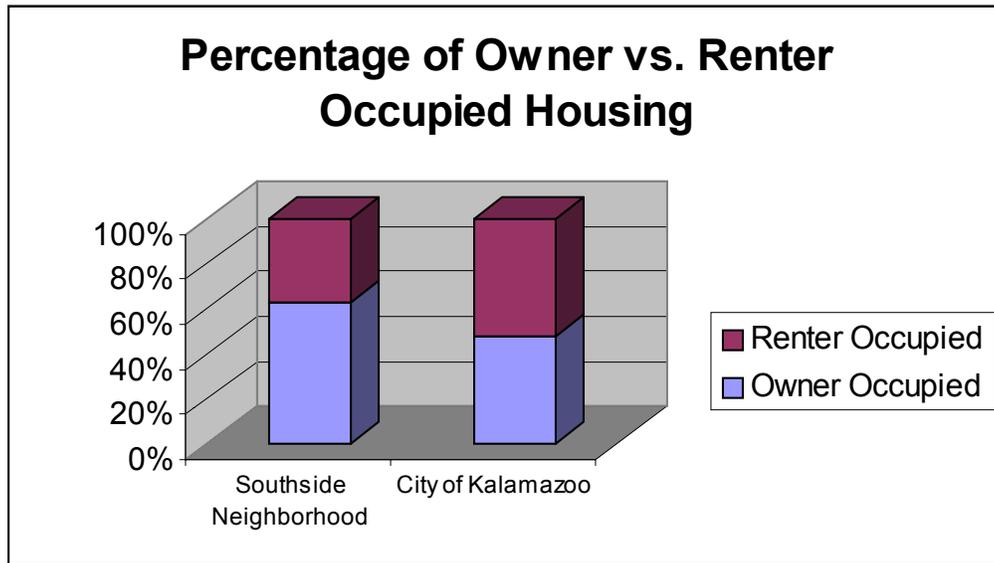
## Economics

The average household income is \$36,386 and 19.5% percent of the population in the Southside lives below the poverty level. This rate of poverty does not appear to be isolated to young families or the elderly, as is often the case in less affluent areas. On the contrary, over 80% of those living beneath the poverty level in the Southside Neighborhood were between the ages of 18 and 64.



## Housing

The rate of owner occupied housing units, which is 63%, is one of the highest in the City (the average for the City of Kalamazoo is 47.7% owner occupied). In addition, 29% of Census respondents in the Southside Neighborhood reported that they had lived in their house for five or more years. This indicates a relatively stable residential base.



Historically, celery fields were common at this end of the city. The marshy lands have yielded to the Crosstown Ponds, dredged to help drain the area just after World War One. Predominately residential, this area was home to middle-class working families and a few businesses. Building foundations near Crosstown Parkway and Stockbridge Avenue tend to be tall to minimize damage from flooding. There is a solid, historically sound housing stock in the Southside Neighborhood. A review of the housing by a historical preservation consulting firm in 2000 showed that most of the homes in this area were built before World War One and one area, on Balch and Emerson, merits further study, as well as a few businesses along South Burdick Street.

A survey of the housing stock is as follows:

### Housing Conditions

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Not Contributing	TOTAL
10	239	264	24	3	540

### Year Built

Pre-1880	1880-WWI	WWI-WWII	WWII-1955	Post 1955
7	409	114	9	2

## Balch-Emerson Typical Properties



**1010 Balch St.**

Greek Revival  
(vernacular)

Ca. 1870



**1016 Balch**

Queen Anne

Ca. 1875



**1614 South Park**

vernacular "I" house

Ca. 1880

**Balch-Emerson Typical Properties**



**203 Emerson**

Foursquare

Ca. 1905



**1718 South Park**

Bungalow

Ca. 1925



**203 Emerson**

Vernacular

Ca. 1895



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



As part of the plan process, a survey was given to the neighborhood residents to help decide on a framework for the neighborhood plan. With this survey and other research, the existing conditions of the neighborhood were determined. From that base, the shape of the plan could be formed. The survey addressed issues such as housing, neighborhood satisfaction, economic development and code enforcement. The following is a summary of those existing conditions.

### Survey Results

- 89% own their own home, and 11% business owner
- 89% single family home, 11% business
- 56% satisfied with present home, 33% very satisfied, 11% very dissatisfied
- Types of new housing desired: 40% none, 50% single family homes, and 10% townhouses
- 90% rated the overall housing stock as adequate, 10% as inadequate
- 44% believed that their homes and their homes' condition should not be a concern of their neighbors, 33% believed it should be a concern of their neighbors, and 22% were undecided
- 67% believed that the condition of other people's houses were their business, while 33% were undecided
- Listed as the "best" parts of day-to-day life in the Southside Neighborhood:
  - Quiet
  - Family oriented
  - Friendly
  - Accessible
  - Secluded
  - Dead-end streets
  - Privacy
  - Near to amenities

- Listed as major disadvantages to day-to-day life in the Southside Neighborhood:
  - Speed/ Traffic
  - Foot traffic
  - Parking
  - Private roads
  - Sirens
  - Bums
  - Lack of yard
  - No parks/landscaping
  - No profitable businesses
  - Trash
- 80% said that they were “satisfied” with the quality of life in the Southside Neighborhood, while 20% said they were neutral
- When asked to describe the way they felt about their life in the Southside, 44% said peaceful, 22% said fulfilled and 22% said fair to middling, while 11% characterized their lives as happy
- 89% felt neutral about the statement “the future of the neighborhood is bright”, while 11% agreed
- 50% disagreed with the statement “people won’t work together to get things done for the neighborhood”, while 38% felt neutral and 11% agreed
- 44% felt neutrally about the statement “there is strong leadership in the neighborhood, while, 22% agreed, 22% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed
- 56% of respondents disagreed with the statement “residents of the neighborhood continually look for new solutions to problems rather than being satisfied with things as they are”, 22% agreed the statement, and 22% were neutral about it.
- The things listed as having changed in the neighborhood in the last five years were:
  - Upgraded exteriors
  - More student rentals
  - More multi-family residential units
  - Street improvements
  - More traffic
  - Cleaner and quieter areas
  - Older population
- The things listed as major improvements that were desired were:
  - Amenities for pedestrians
  - Rezoning of the neighborhood
  - Less multi-family
  - Greenspace
  - Play area for children
- The residents most wanted to preserve:
  - Dead-end streets
  - Tranquility
  - 1813 S. Rose as open space
  - Woods
  - Seclusion of area

- Trees/ greenspace
- 62% felt enforcement of building codes was somewhat important and 38% felt it was very important
- 88% felt land use planning was very important, while 12% felt it was somewhat important
- 62% felt enforcement of zoning codes was very important, while 38% felt it was somewhat important
- 100% of respondents felt that open space was very important, as well as environmental protection
- 62% felt economic development was very important, while 38% felt it was somewhat important
- 88% felt that citizen participation was very important, while 12% felt it was somewhat important
- 88% were in favor of a neighborhood level plan, while 12% felt unsure
- Types of retail shops that the respondents felt were most needed:
  - Hardware Store (3)
  - Restaurant (2)
  - Drycleaner/Laundry Mat (2)
  - Bookstore (1)
  - Other small business (1)
- The majority of respondents felt that single-family residential land uses should be encouraged, while several people also mentioned commercial/retail and professional/office buildings
- 62% felt that there should be community efforts to increase economic growth in the Southside, while 38% were unsure
- An even amount of respondents felt that increasing economic growth should be a “significant” effort and a “moderate” effort

At the same time the survey was given, a group interview revealed the likes and dislikes of the neighborhood. The residents discussed the things that are great about the neighborhood and the things that need some work. In the opinion of those neighborhood residents, these were the best and worst things about living in the Southside Neighborhood. Also included is a wish list of things that they would like to see in the future.

### The Best

Properties kept up  
 Proximity to shopping  
 Some parts of the neighborhood are plowed well (Dixie Hill)  
 Salvation Army  
 Pansy field  
 Family area  
 Owner occupied  
 Dead end roads

## The Best (cont'd)

Quiet neighborhood  
Trees absorb noise  
Views

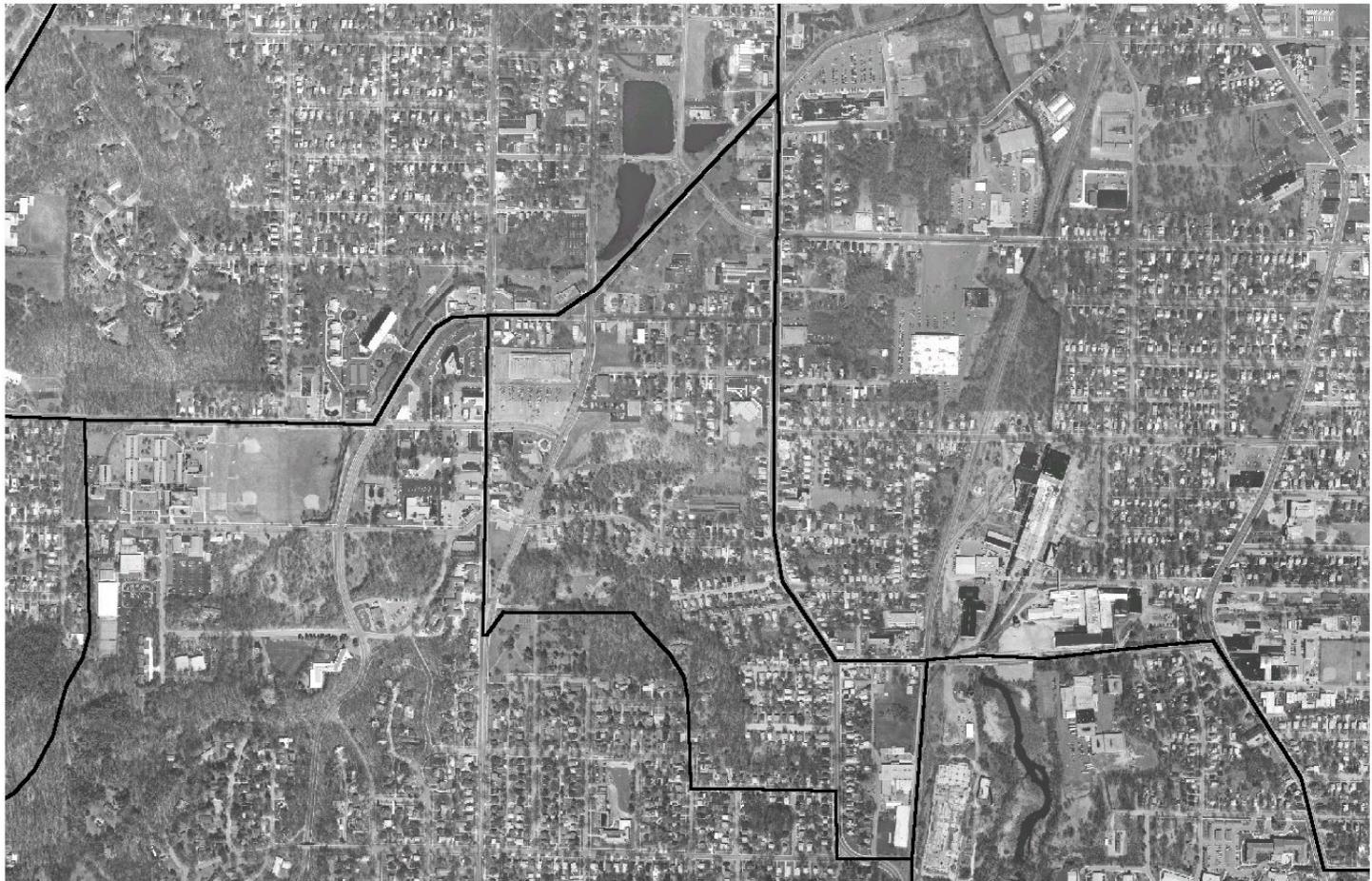
## The Worst

Density  
Controversy over 1813 S. Rose  
Student Use  
Infrastructure/ Street Capacity  
Parking  
Privately Owned Roads/ Courts  
Maintenance/ Snow Removal  
Zoning  
Wellfield on Westnedge  
Trash from Hardings  
No sidewalks on Park St.—poor linkages  
Emerson and S. Rose (little)—poor upkeep on the sidewalks  
Drainage  
Burdick too fast  
Emerson as a cut-off—speeding  
Parking  
Snow Build-up  
Lack of park/ playground nearby  
Residential area cut in two sections by Burdick St.  
Lack of roadside trees  
Lighting throughout Burdick, Reed to Alcott  
Trail from Dixie Hill to Crane Park—too steep  
Trail from Rose to S. Westnedge—too steep

## Wish List

Landscaping- ponds near Crosstown Park  
Improvements to facades  
Tax incentives for businesses  
Brownstone project (high quality)  
Park  
Trail or other connection to Crane Park  
Restaurants  
Portage Creek trails  
Burdick St. treatment (crosswalks, trees)  
Outdoor skating rink/ other amenities

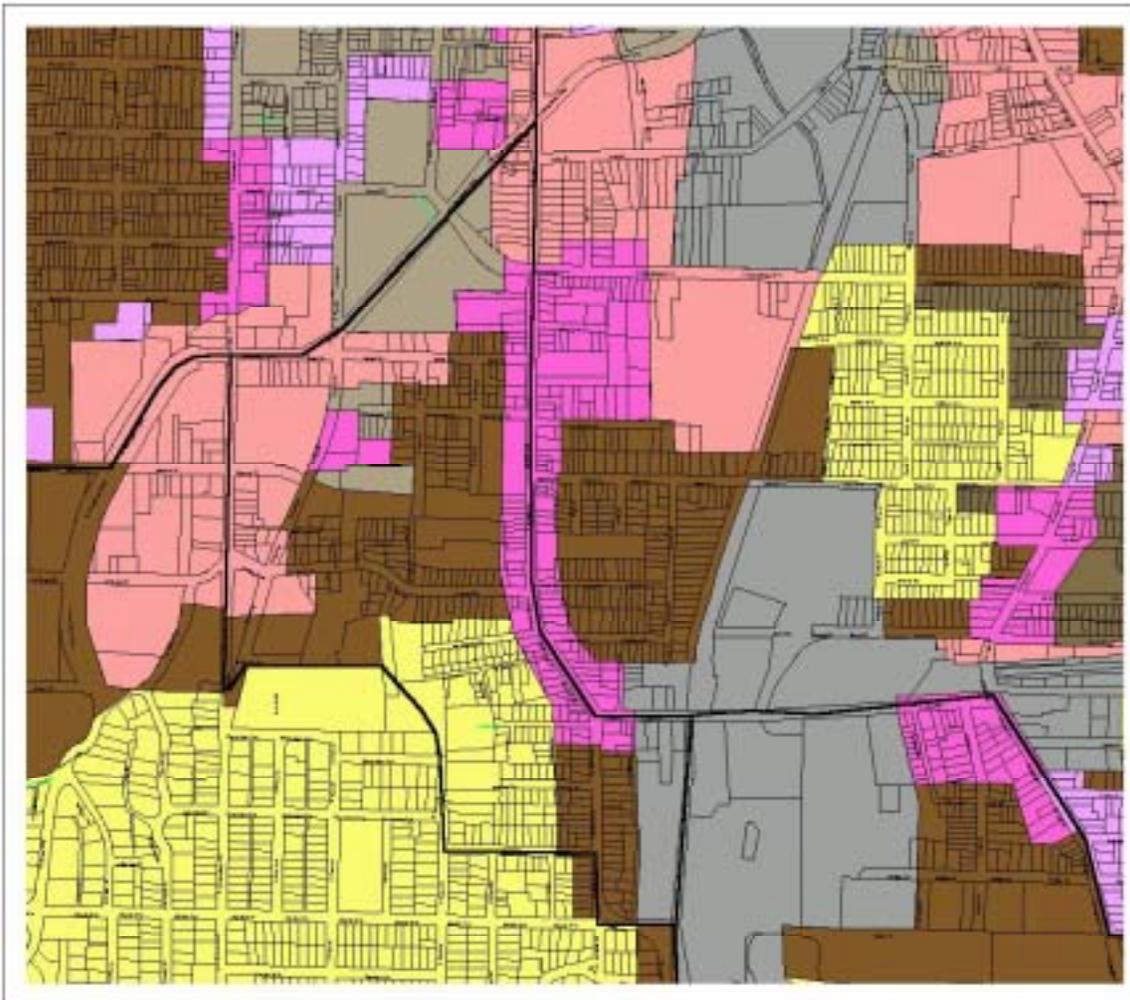
# SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD AERIAL VIEW



0 500 1000 Feet



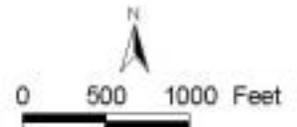
# SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD EXISTING ZONING



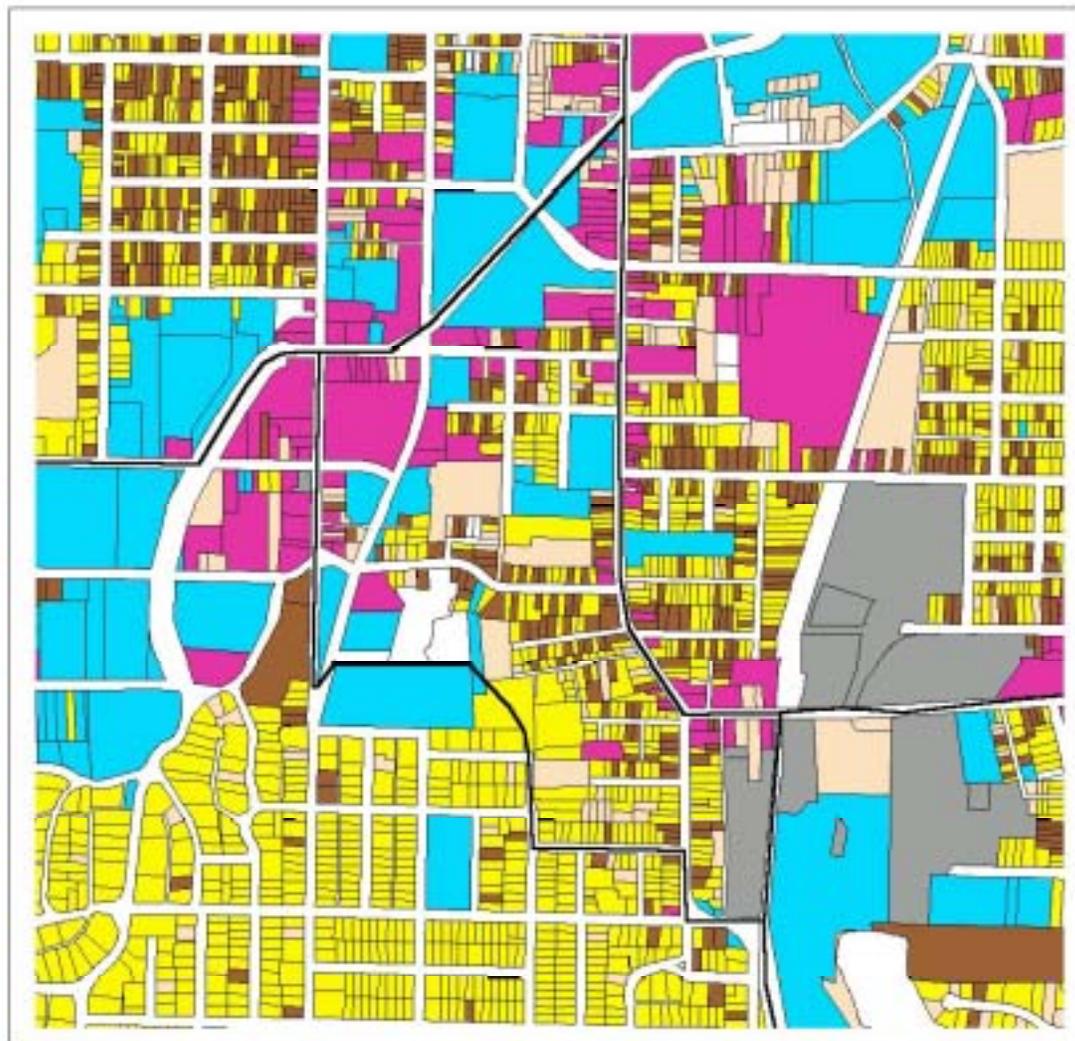
## EXISTING ZONING

### Zones

-  ZONE:1
-  ZONE:2
-  ZONE:3
-  ZONE:4
-  ZONE:5
-  ZONE:5A
-  ZONE:5B
-  ZONE:5PUD
-  ZONE:6
-  ZONE:7
-  ZONE:7A
-  ZONE:7B
-  ZONE:7APUD
-  ZONE:7PUD
-  ZONE:8
-  ZONE:8PUD
-  ZONE:BTR

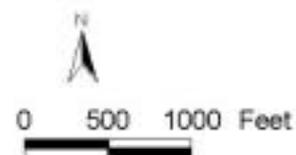


# SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD LAND USE

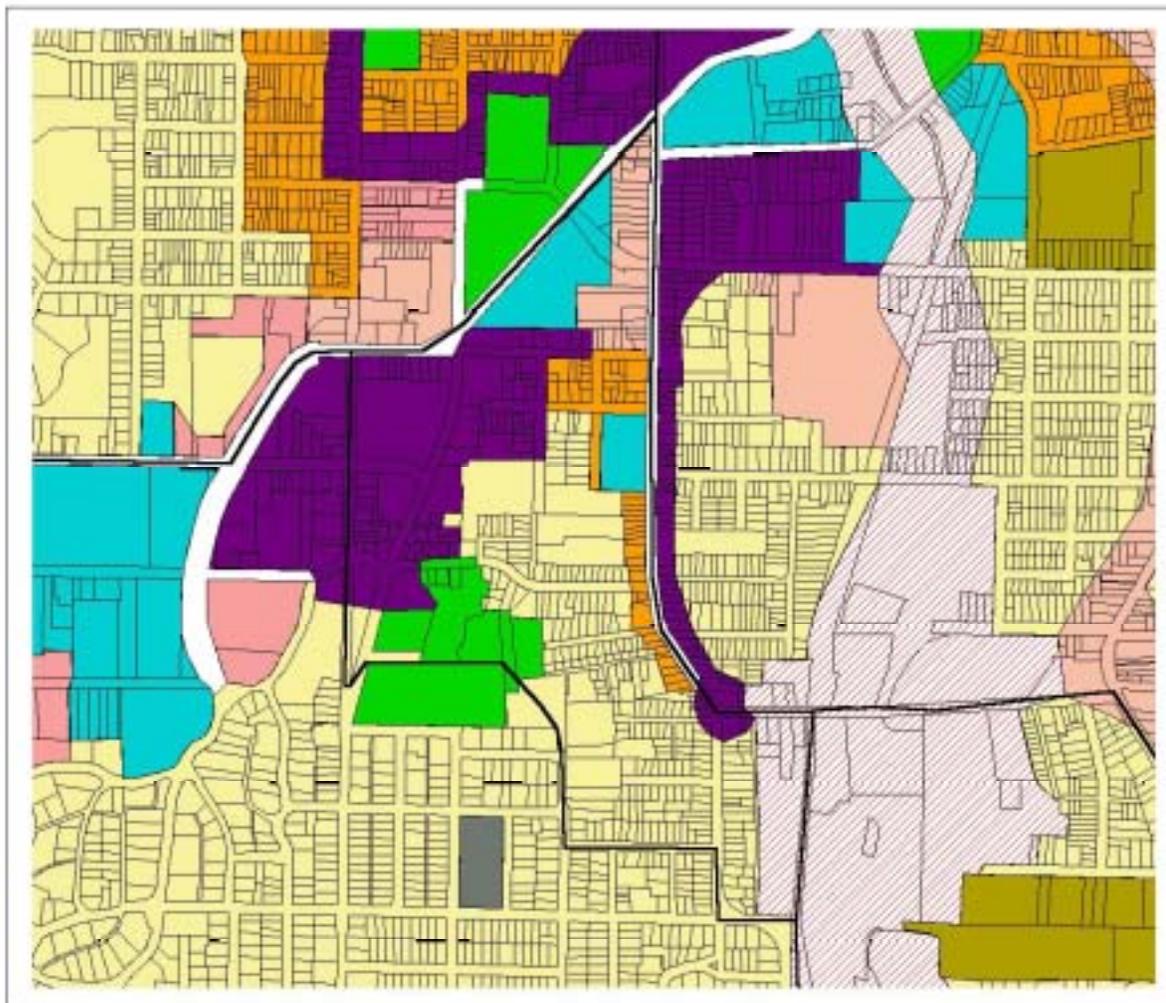


## EXISTING LAND USE

-  SINGLE-FAMILY
-  MULTIPLE-FAMILY or RENTAL
-  COMMERCIAL
-  PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL
-  INDUSTRIAL
-  VACANT

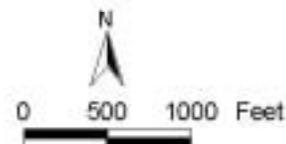


# SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD FUTURE LAND USE MAP



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

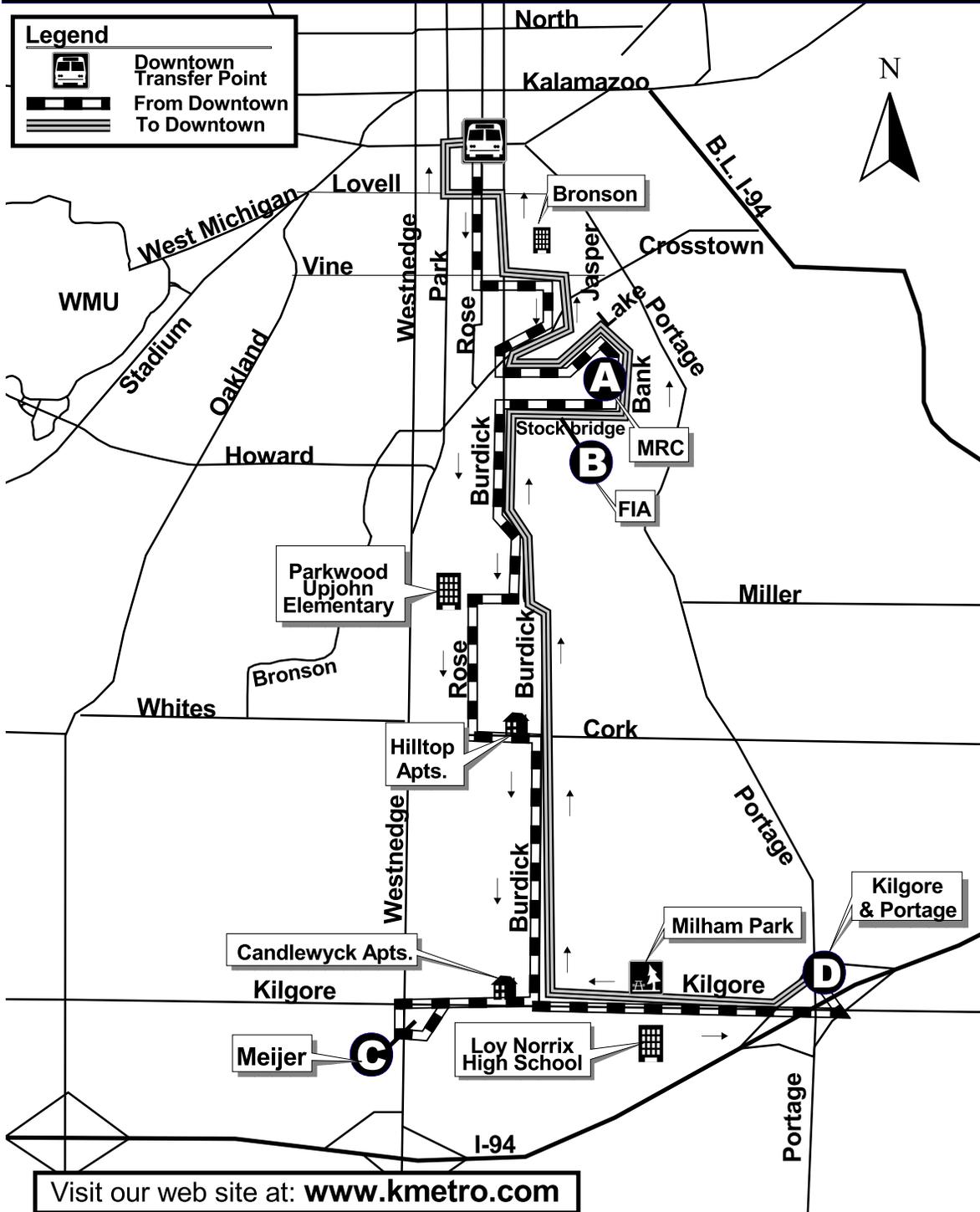
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- INSTITUTIONAL
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL/RECREATION
- OFFICE
- OFFICE/RESIDENTIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MOBILE HOME PARK
- OPEN SPACE
- PARKS
- MIXED USE STUDY AREA
- SPECIAL CONSIDERATION



# Route 13 - South Burdick

**Legend**

- Downtown Transfer Point
- From Downtown To Downtown
- To Downtown



# Monday - Saturday

from downtown					to downtown		
Leaves Rose	MRC	FIA	Meijer	Kilgore & Portage	FIA	MRC	Arrives Rose
6:00am	—	—	—	6:15	—	6:30	6:42
6:45	6:49	6:51	7:10	7:12	7:30	7:32	7:42
7:15	7:19	7:21	7:40	7:42	8:00	8:02	8:12
7:45	7:49	7:51	8:10	8:12	8:30	8:32	8:42
8:15	8:19	8:21	8:40	8:42	9:00	9:02	9:12
8:45	8:49	8:51	9:10	9:12	9:30	9:32	9:42
9:15	9:19	9:21	9:40	9:42	10:00	10:02	10:12
9:45	9:49	9:51	10:10	10:12	10:30	10:32	10:42
10:15	10:19	10:21	10:40	10:42	11:00	11:02	11:12
10:45	10:49	10:51	11:10	11:12	11:30	11:32	11:42
11:15	11:19	11:21	11:40	11:42	12:00 pm	12:02	12:12
11:45	11:49	11:51	12:10	12:12	12:30	12:32	12:42
12:15	12:19	12:21	12:40	12:42	1:00	1:02	1:12
12:45	12:49	12:51	1:10	1:12	1:30	1:32	1:42
1:15	1:19	1:21	1:40	1:42	2:00	2:02	2:12
1:45	1:49	1:51	2:10	2:12	2:30	2:32	2:42
2:15	2:19	2:21	2:40	2:42	3:00	3:02	3:12
2:45	2:49	2:51	3:10	3:12	3:30	3:32	3:42
3:15	3:19	3:21	3:40	3:42	4:00	4:02	4:12
3:45	3:49	3:51	4:10	4:12	4:30	4:32	4:42
4:15	4:19	4:21	4:40	4:42	5:00	5:02	5:12
4:45	4:49	4:51	5:10	5:12	5:30	5:32	5:42
5:15	5:19	5:21	5:40	5:42	6:00	6:02	6:12
5:45	5:49	5:51	6:10	6:12	6:30	6:32	6:42
6:15	6:19	6:21	6:40	6:42	7:00	7:02	7:12
7:15	7:19	7:21	7:40	7:42	8:00	8:02	8:12
8:15	8:19	8:21	8:40	8:42	9:00	9:02	9:12
9:15	9:19	9:21	9:40	9:42	10:00	10:02	10:12

— Bus does not service area.

Visit our web site at: [www.kmetro.com](http://www.kmetro.com)



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Based on the information gathered in neighborhood meetings, surveys and conversations with people that live and work in the Southside Neighborhood, six major goals and objectives for this plan became apparent. These six major goals will be discussed in detail in the "Plan" section of this document. The following is a brief overview of each of the major themes of the plan.

#### I. RETAIN SINGLE-FAMILY, OWNER-OCCUPIED CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

One of the ideas that came up time and time again from discussions with residents of the Southside Neighborhood was the appeal of the neighborhood as a family-oriented, stable area. The neighborhood has one of the highest rates of owner occupied housing in the City. The average age in the neighborhood is also significantly higher than the rest of the City. The average family size is also higher in the Southside Neighborhood. These factors all point to what the residents know instinctively. The Southside Neighborhood is a single-family, owner-occupied area. One of the most important goals of this plan is to create conditions that help foster and retain the character of the neighborhood.

#### II. IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE/MAINTENANCE

A large portion of the complaints about living in the Southside Neighborhood fell under the category of infrastructure and maintenance. Several factors contribute to this perceived "lack of service". The topography of the Southside neighborhood is unique in the City of Kalamazoo. With steeply sloped roads and several dead end streets, there are major impediments to

snow removal and on-street parking availability. In addition, there are several private streets in the area that are not plowed or kept up by the City. In addition, many of the streets in the neighborhood are in disrepair and street maintenance is needed. Because of each of these factors, there is a feeling of neglect on the streets of the Southside Neighborhood. Another major objective of this plan is to address these concerns, and create innovative ways to overcome the crumbling infrastructure and improve maintenance of the streets.

As a corollary, the housing stock in the area is becoming aged, and there are often not enough resources available for upkeep. As part of this objective, this plan seeks to find funding sources for façade improvements and property enhancements for residential property owners. With improved streets and parking availability, as well as upgraded exteriors to homes in the area, the Southside Neighborhood's outward look can more accurately reflect its close-knit feel.

### III. IMPROVE GREENSPACE/ACCESS TO RECREATION

One of the most notable deficiencies in this area is access to greenspace. Though Crane Park is nearby, topography creates serious barriers to the use of the park by Southside Neighborhood residents. Also, because the lots are very small and the density is very high, there are rarely residential yards to act as greenspace. Another important goal of this plan is to improve access to the parks that already exist in this area, as well as create new recreation areas within the confines of the neighborhood. This new recreation area should include amenities for children, which are lacking in Crane Park, the only nearby City park.

Another part of this goal is to improve the yard areas that do exist in the neighborhood, as well as establish a system of trailways that are aimed at pedestrians, who are common in the area. By creating a formal system to accommodate the informal uses in the area, access to greenspace can also be improved.

### IV. ADDRESS PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR CONCERNS

As was touched upon in the previous objective, there are many pedestrians who use both the streets and informal trails through the Southside Neighborhood. Unfortunately, there are few amenities aimed at this important segment of the neighborhood population. Accordingly, this plan aims to improve lighting, trail systems, and safety throughout the neighborhood.

Though a majority of the area is small, local serving, residential streets, the neighborhood is bordered by several major streets: Crosstown Parkway on the north, Burdick Street on the east, and Emerson Street, which is one of the

few through streets in the neighborhood. The Southside Neighborhood Plan includes recommendations on traffic calming for these major streets in order to protect pedestrians and drivers alike.

#### V. BURDICK MAIN STREET

The main commercial corridor through the Southside Neighborhood is Burdick Street. Though it does boast several businesses, many storefronts are empty and there exists a high potential for a mainstreet renaissance. This plan gives several ideas for attracting businesses to the area, improving streetscape and making the entrance into both the Southside Neighborhood and the downtown an event, rather than just a passing.

The neighborhood hopes to learn from another local street's efforts in this regard, specifically the Portage Main Street effort. Already, there has been improvement on Burdick Street from Crosstown Parkway north. The aim is to continue the improvements south of Crosstown Parkway to the curve south of Belmont Street. With a thriving neighborhood-serving retail corridor and improved streetscape announcing the Southside Neighborhood as a destination, the mainstreet area can take on a whole new character.

#### VI. NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP AND OPEN DIALOGUE WITH ADJOINING NEIGHBORHOODS

Until recently, there was little resident organization within the boundaries of the Southside Neighborhood. Little defined it as a neighborhood except the lines drawn on the map. Now, with this plan, the residents hope to both redefine those boundary lines and make them mean something.

The first part of this objective is to create a neighborhood association, and this plan suggests which form would be the best for that organization. Additionally, with a neighborhood association in place, the lines of the neighborhood should be redrawn to reflect a more natural boundary than currently exists, incorporating a portion of the Edison neighborhood. This plan also hopes to improve communication with the adjoining neighborhoods, as well as communication of the Southside Neighborhood with the local City government and other agencies that can aid in furthering neighborhood goals.



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### RETAIN SINGLE-FAMILY, OWNER-OCCUPIED CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The retention of neighborhood character can be divided into three general plan implementation categories: rezoning/land use changes, integration of all neighborhood residents into the neighborhood, and exterior and façade improvements.

#### A. Rezoning and Land Use Changes

The land use of the neighborhood clearly shows that the majority of the residential area of the Southside is used as single family residential. Unfortunately, the entire area was zoned Zone 7 (Multiple Family Residential-Medium Density) many years ago. Originally, city planners thought that the core neighborhoods near the center of the city would become higher density while the outlying areas would be lower density residential, and zoned the City this way. The Southside Neighborhood has not developed in this manner, and the zoning should reflect the actual use of the area. For this reason, it is recommended that the areas currently Zone 7 be rezoned to Zone 8 (Single Family Residential).

Additionally, there are several areas of commercial along both Crosstown Parkway and South Burdick Street that should be rezoned to more accurately

reflect their uses. The properties along S. Burdick Street should continue to be zoned 5B (Neighborhood Commercial), and the properties along the western portion of Crosstown should remain Zone 4 (Community Business District). There are a few properties that are split zoned between zone 7 and Zone 6 (Multiple Family Residential- High Density) currently, which should be rezoned to 5A (Professional and Office District) to be kept in line with their current and future uses.

The southwestern portion of the neighborhood is currently zoned Zone 2 (Light Manufacturing). It should remain Zone 2, though there should be a buffer zone between the newly rezoned Zone 8 properties and the adjacent Zone 2 properties. For this reason, a section of 7A (Two-family Residential District) has been added along the western portion of South Burdick, south of Alcott Street. The industrial property, the former Strebtor, Inc. plant, is currently undergoing an environmental remediation and may join the Brownfield Redevelopment Initiative, which would be a economic boost for the area. A map of the proposed rezonings is attached.

#### B. Integration of all neighborhood residents

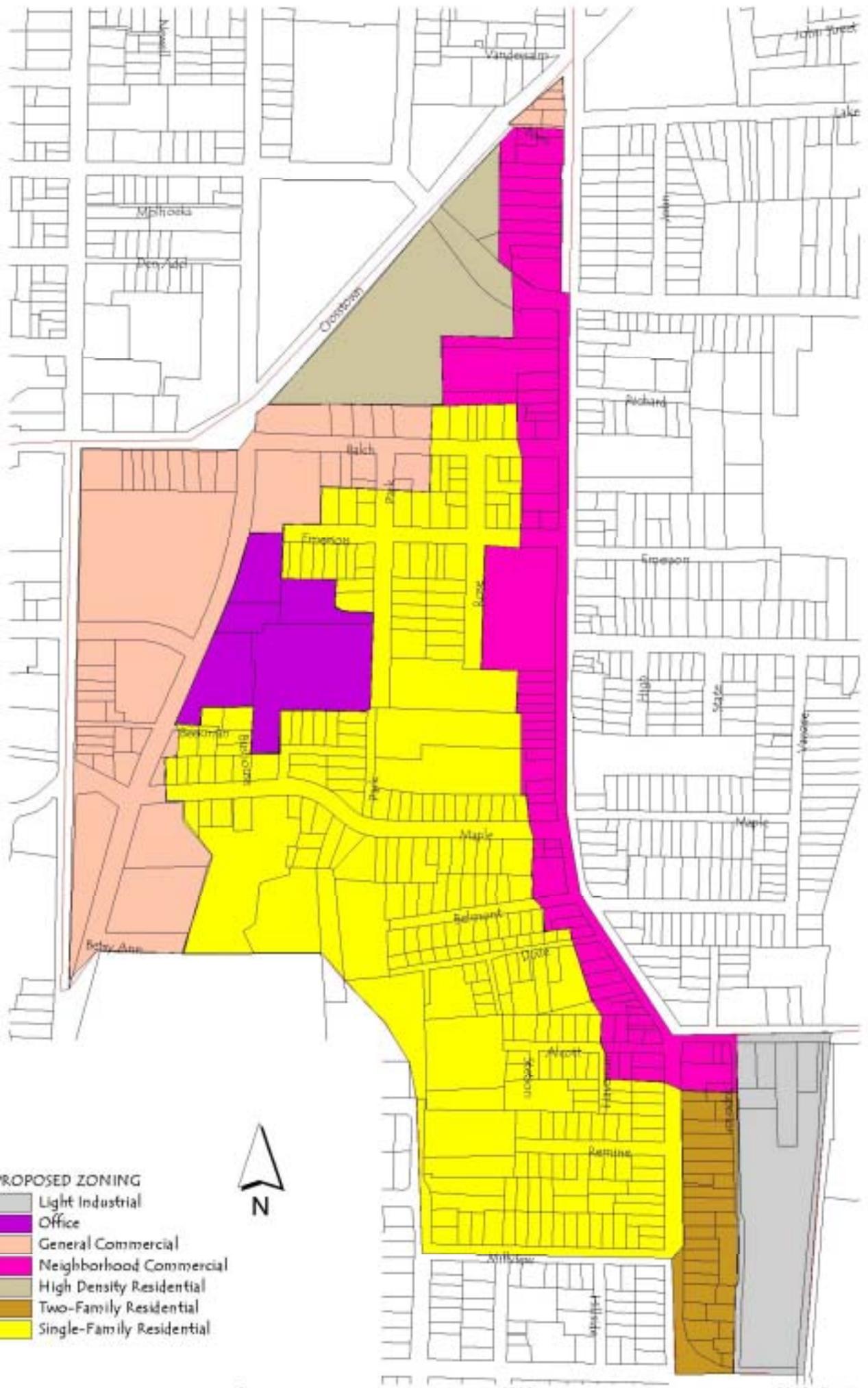
One of the most important boundaries to cross in the Southside Neighborhood is to integrate homeowners with renters. Currently, there is some enmity between renters and homeowners, especially those that the residents determine are student rentals. The fact that some homes are rented will not change, so looking for other opportunities for neighborhood unity is important. One method that other neighborhoods have used is a neighborhood welcome packet. This can help define expectations in a non-threatening manner. It is recommended that the neighborhood develop and distribute a welcome packet to all new residents, both renters and new homeowners. A sample welcome packet is attached to this section.

Additional neighborhood integration can be facilitated through the Neighborhood Association. A variety of neighborhood building activities are utilized throughout the city, including socials, neighborhood meetings, block parties and neighborhood volunteer outings. Other roles for the neighborhood association will be discussed in the final section of this plan.

### C. Exterior and Façade Improvements

Part of having a cohesive and inviting neighborhood is having well kept houses, both on the interior and the exterior. There are several funding sources available for these exterior improvements. A list of these sources is available in the appendix.

Additionally, the Southside Neighborhood has a strong historic housing stock. It is worth investigating the possibility of designating a portion of the neighborhood as a local historic area, as this opens up funding sources and tax credits that would otherwise be unavailable. An outline of this process, as well as criteria and information regarding the tax credits is also in the appendix.



- PROPOSED ZONING**
- Light Industrial
  - Office
  - General Commercial
  - Neighborhood Commercial
  - High Density Residential
  - Two-Family Residential
  - Single-Family Residential



0 1000 2000 Feet



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The residents of the Southside Neighborhood feel the lack of city services most acutely related to snow removal and street upkeep. While this is somewhat a function of budget and neighborhood topography, there are several things that the neighborhood residents can do to upgrade their ageing infrastructure and improve the city services in the area.

#### A. Street Improvements Added to the CIP

The City has a plan for street improvements that is called the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Every year, the City adds projects for the following year's CIP based on the current City budget. While these projects are generally larger projects, there are occasionally small-level improvements and local street upgrades added. The Southside Neighborhood Association can help to lobby for the addition of these street improvements to the CIP for the next 5 years.

Additionally, there is the possibility of using a special assessment to pay for street improvements or the addition of sidewalks. A special assessment is designed to finance a particular capital improvement that benefits a particular geographic area, such as a street or a block. Information on special assessments is attached to the appendix.

## B. Neighborhood Association as a Liaison for Public Utilities

One of the most important parts of having a Neighborhood Association is its ability to act as a liaison between the local forms of government and the residents of the neighborhood. In addition to direct access to the City Commission every third Monday of the month, Neighborhood Associations unite in the Kalamazoo Neighborhood Coalition and often have direct access to advisory boards and neighborhood improvement teams.

As part of this plan, the newly formed Southside Neighborhood Association will act as an emissary to various boards and teams, as well as the City Commission directly, to help improve city services within the neighborhood. In the last section of this Plan, the neighborhood association will be discussed in more detail.



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### IMPROVE GREENSPACE/ACCESS TO RECREATION

One of the things that makes the Southside Neighborhood unique is its high density residential development that gives it a close-knit feel. A downside of this is the lack of access to recreation. The neighborhood residents feel one of the most important aspects of a great neighborhood is an integrated park system, one that is usable for both children and adults, as well as a formalized trail system to accommodate the many pedestrians that use the neighborhood.

#### A. "Start with the Petunias"

An adage of urban planning is "start with the petunias". It means that sometimes the beginning of a vast overhaul can start with something as simple as planting petunias. This adage can hold true for improving both the look and the feeling of greenspace in the Southside Neighborhood. This plan suggests that a coalition of neighborhood residents and local volunteers plant flowers in several strategic places around the neighborhood. One possible place to receive flowers is Flipse Flowers, which is located in the Southside Neighborhood. Another option is the GoodNeighbor Grant from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation (information in the appendix).

The areas that should be targeted for plantings are as follows (map attached):

1. Near Crosstown Park
2. Along Burdick Street
3. Throughout neighborhood in strategic areas

## B. Linkages to Available Parks

Though the lack of available greenspace is obvious within the confines of the Southside Neighborhood, there are several parks within a short distance, most notably Crane Park. This plan hopes to help connect the Southside Neighborhood with the available park systems in the area. This can be accomplished through a formalization of the current trails that are used in the neighborhood.

Crane Park is nearby, but it is separated from the neighborhood by fairly steep topography. A trail system should be put in place, including some graded steps to aid in traversing the steep hill. A map of the proposed trails is attached. Additionally, there is a park located just north and west of the neighborhood, in the Edison Neighborhood (Upjohn Park), which can be connected to the Southside Neighborhood through improved pedestrianways and bikeways along South Burdick. This plan proposes adding bike lanes to South Burdick Street as well as incorporating the Portage Creek Trail system into the Southside Neighborhood.

## C. Portage Creek Trail System

The current plan for the Portage Street trail system (attached) includes a bike trail and pedestrian amenities for an area just to the east of the Southside Neighborhood. This plan proposes that the trail system be extended a few blocks to the west to incorporate the South Burdick Street Improvements and connect with the proposed trail system from South Burdick Street to W. Crosstown Parkway. The proposed trail map and trail cross-section samples are attached.

## D. Conservation of Green Area

The greenspace that currently exists in the area, specifically 1800 S. Park Street and 1813 S. Rose Street, as well as the Crosstown Ponds area, and the City Wellfields along W. Crosstown Parkway, should be protected. In an area with little access to recreation facilities, the open area that exists should continue to be used in a similar manner.

Conversely, the fact that these areas are not formal recreation areas is a detriment. There are problems with petty crime and vagrants in the open

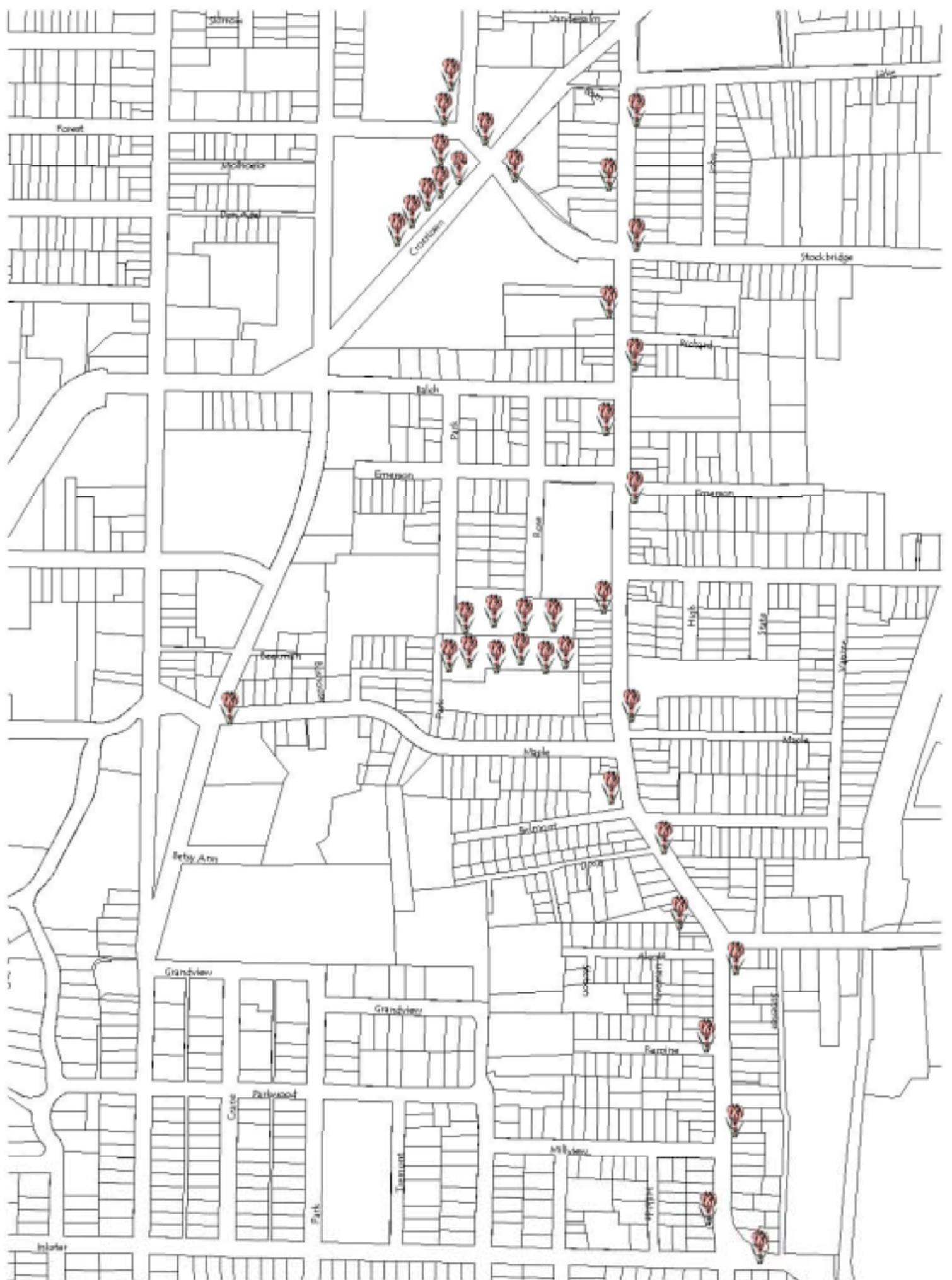
spaces that are poorly lit and poorly cared for. For this reason, it is also a goal of this plan to create active, formal recreation areas.

E. Creation of Active Recreation Area

The area at 1813 S. Rose is an informal greenspace for the Southside Neighborhood. This plan proposes to make it a formal one, and one that can provide active recreational area for children. Though Crane Park is nearby, it has no amenities for children. Because there are a large amount of small children

both in the Southside Neighborhood and in the adjoining area of Edison Neighborhood, there is a need for a neighborhood park with play equipment. See the concept plan for a detailed view of the location of the proposed park.







## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### ADDRESS PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR CONCERNS

Because the Southside Neighborhood enjoys the benefits of a central location, it is possible for people to walk to many amenities, including the Salvation Army and a local grocery store. A result of this is increased pedestrian traffic around and through the neighborhood. There are several potential problems associated with this traffic: unofficial pedestrianways are utilized but are not necessarily safe, there are few pedestrian amenities such as lighting and adequate sidewalks, and there are few roadside trees to protect the pedestrians from traffic.

Additionally, there are some problems with pedestrian and vehicle interactions. Though the majority of the neighborhood is comprised of locally serving residential streets, there are several streets that have a high incidence of speeding, including Emerson and Burdick Streets. On the small residential streets, there has also been an increasing problem with on-street parking. The following are recommendations to address these vehicular and pedestrian concerns:

#### A. Improve lighting throughout Neighborhood

There have been several lighting improvement projects recently in the City of Kalamazoo. One completed lighting project is on Stockbridge Avenue, from Bank Street to Portage. In this project, the neighbors used a grant from the City and the Kalamazoo Community Foundation to put pedestrian level lighting in their front yards (please see information on special assessments in the appendix). The result was a more human scale to the street and a safer

environment for pedestrians. This plan suggests that the same project structure is applied to the Southside Neighborhood in strategic areas throughout the neighborhood, as well as along Burdick Street (please see concept map at the beginning of this section for approximate locations of improved lighting).

B. Active enforcement of Parking Violations

The active enforcement of parking violations must be encouraged through a concerted effort on the part of neighborhood residents. Whenever there is a parking violation, residents should call Central City Parking at (269) 342-6383.

C. Steps or other grading on trails

Those trails that are used both formally and informally in the Southside Neighborhood, specifically from Dixie Hill to Crane Park and from Rose Street to South Westnedge Avenue, should have grading or steps added for the promotion of safety for those pedestrians that use the trails to get to Crane Park.

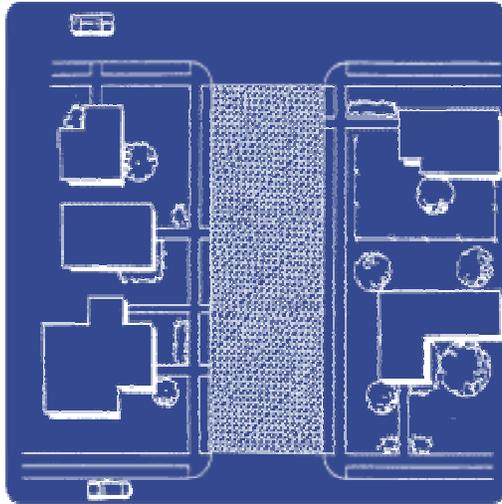
D. Plant Roadside Trees

Though there are many roadside trees throughout the area, there is a significant lack of trees along South Burdick. As part of the Burdick Street treatment (see next section) and in order to provide more pedestrian friendly amenities, this plan suggests the placement of street trees along South Burdick Street in between W. Crosstown Parkway and E. Alcott Street (see attached map for highlighted section of proposed plantings). Though there is a slight cost associated with the placement of street trees, research shows that property values can increase 3-10 percent on developed property and 6-27 percent on undeveloped property.

This particular type of planting is one that can be done on a neighborhood level, as well. With the proper fundraising and neighborhood support, as well as an interface with the City of Kalamazoo's Public Works Department, the planting of street trees can be done fairly inexpensively.

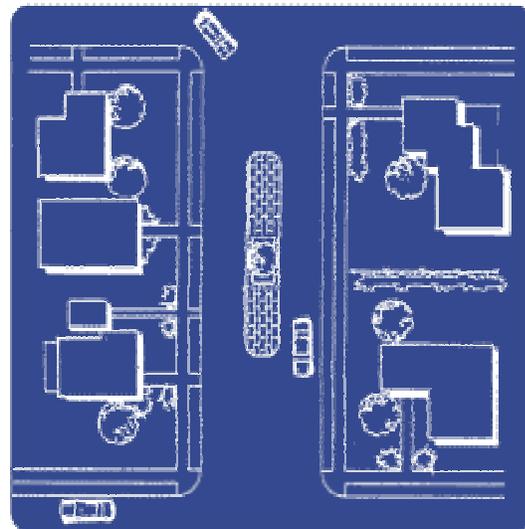
E. Traffic Calming on Emerson, Burdick

There are several methods that can be used to calm traffic, many of which are discussed in other parts of this plan. The first would be the continuation of the Burdick Street treatment south to Alcott Street. Additionally, planting trees has a history of slowing traffic. Several other traffic calming devices are used throughout the country. Some that might be used along Burdick and Emerson Streets are as follows:



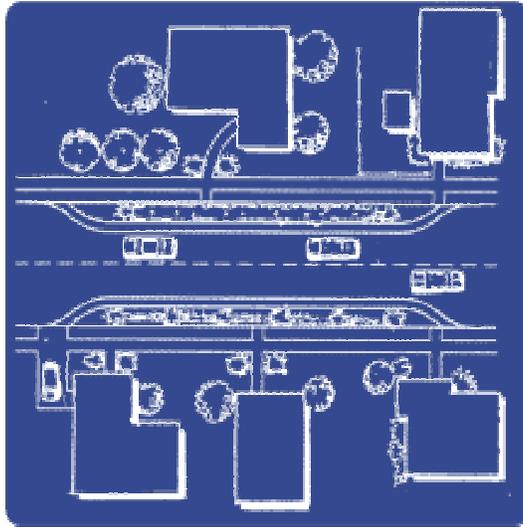
Textured Pavements

Textured Pavements, such as brick or stone surfaces, cause drivers to have a slightly bumpy ride over an extended distance, while improving the aesthetic quality of the street environment.



Center Island Narrowings

Center island narrowings are islands located along the centerline of the street that narrow the street at that location.



Chokers/Bumpouts

Chokers are curb extensions or islands on one of both sides of the street that narrow the street at that location.

Any of these methods can be used to calm traffic and as parts of the streets improvements. Additionally, there is the possibility of using angled parking along the neighborhood commercial area of South Burdick Street to calm traffic. Cost estimates for some of these traffic calming methods will be provided in the implementation section of this plan.





## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### BURDICK MAIN STREET

Imagine a neighborhood-serving Main Street, where pedestrians and vehicles interact in a safe and pleasant way, where local merchants and restaurants are located along a boulevard. Imagine neighborhood residents meeting each other for a cup of coffee at an outside café, and you have a sense of entry into both downtown and the Southside Neighborhood. This is Burdick Main Street.

The National Main Street program specializes in revitalizing traditional commercial areas, much like Burdick Street. This plan recommends joining the national Main Street program and beginning the process of encouraging retail and commercial growth along this important corridor (please see information in the appendix regarding this program). With the expertise behind the movement, the following steps can be taken:

- A. Continue the Burdick Street treatment beyond Crosstown Parkway to Alcott Street, including street level plantings, landscaping, brick crosswalks, and traffic calming methods.
- B. Add banners announcing the entrance into the Southside Neighborhood.
- C. Add street trees and median plantings to encourage slowed traffic and develop a human level scale for the area
- D. Remove overhead utilities and bury cables and electrical lines that diminish the area.
- E. Encourage the revitalization of the retail and commercial businesses by encouraging tax credits and grants for façade and building improvement.

This process will be facilitated through the neighborhood association. Information on the New Markets Tax Credit is also located in the appendix. The residents of the Southside Neighborhood have said that the most important businesses that they would like to see in the Burdick Street commercial corridor are: a hardware store, a restaurant, a dry cleaner and Laundromat, and a bookstore.

There is a stylized example of how Burdick Street could look with an improved streetscape attached to this section.





## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP AND OPEN DIALOGUE WITH ADJOINING NEIGHBORHOODS

The Southside Neighborhood has recently decided to organize, plan and work towards a great neighborhood in the future. As part of this goal, the neighborhood must organize formally, create partnerships with other organizations and neighborhood associations in the City, actively address neighborhood concerns for the entire neighborhood. The following steps will help to achieve this goal:

- A. Create partnerships with surrounding neighborhoods and expand neighborhood boundaries

The neighborhood lines that are currently drawn do not accurately reflect the natural and urban spatial boundaries that exist in the area. This plan suggests that the lines be redrawn so that the Southside Neighborhood incorporates the area to the east of the current boundaries (please see the attached map). Currently, the boundary is Burdick Street, whereas the more natural line would be the railroad tracks further to the east. In this way, the people that live in the residential area between the railroad tracks and the Crosstown Parkway corridor can work more closely on projects that affect them all: lack of available recreation area, dense housing stock, façade improvements, and Burdick Street revitalization.

## B. Create Neighborhood Association

There are many options for creation of a neighborhood association. In the City of Kalamazoo alone, there are volunteer-based neighborhood associations, 501 (c)(3) non-profit neighborhood associations, neighborhood watches and economic development corporations. Based on the stated goals of the neighbors, there are two likely methods to form a neighborhood advocacy group for the Southside Neighborhood

The first, a volunteer-based neighborhood association, is the least formal and the easiest to accomplish. A neighborhood association is simply a group of concerned citizens who meet on an as-needed basis to discuss neighborhood issues and formulate actions for neighborhood improvement. All it takes is the impetus and follow-through of a group of neighbors. It is still possible to receive funding as a volunteer based neighborhood association by partnering with another non-profit entity that can act as fiduciary partner. Grant money can be awarded to the neighborhood through the non-profit partner, though the neighborhood association will have less control over the dispersal of the money.

The second, a non-profit neighborhood association, involves more work and allows for greater action potential. In order to apply for non-profit status, the association must file articles of incorporation, have a board of directors, and be responsible for documenting most of their actions. On the positive side, they may also apply for tax-exempt status, which allows for contributions from outside partners, and also allows the City to allocate federal funds to neighborhood projects. Please see the appendix for information on incorporation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit.

This plan suggests beginning meetings as a neighborhood association, and as projects that need funding become apparent, consider becoming an official non-profit. This method will allow the newly-formed neighborhood association to create a mission statement and develop goals before filing with the state for non-profit status, yet eventually allow for the allocation of federal funds and fundraising options that come with 501(c)(3) status.

C. Partnerships with other neighborhood associations and nonprofit organizations

The 21 neighborhood associations of the City of Kalamazoo have formed a Neighborhood Coalition that gathers once a month to discuss common issues and develop partnerships to tackle neighborhood issues. This plan suggests that the Southside Neighborhood Association join this coalition to gain perspective from those associations, and to form alliances with the adjoining neighborhood associations. A list of the neighborhood associations of the City, as well as contact information for the Neighborhood Coalition is attached in the appendix.

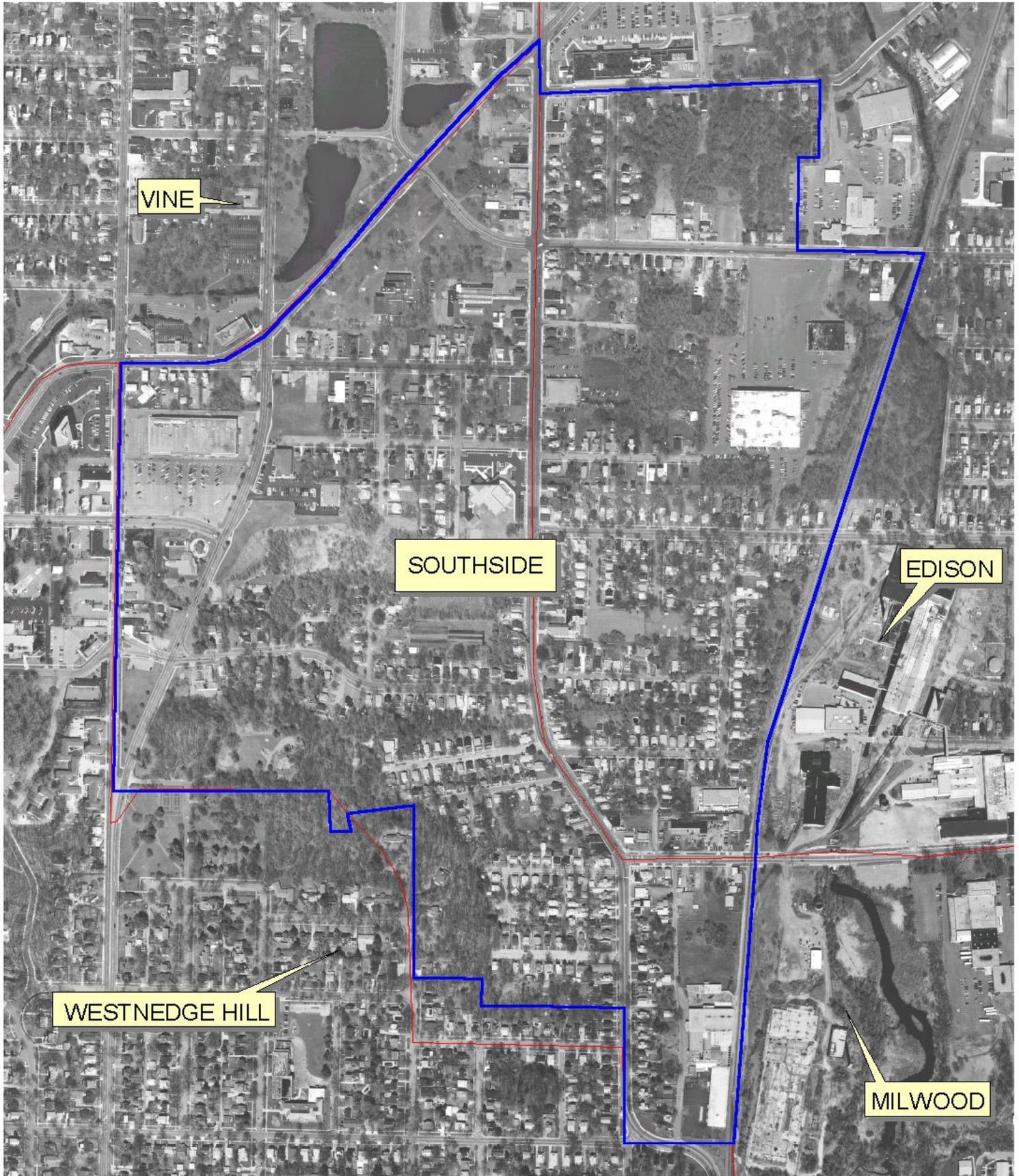
Additionally, as the neighborhood association forms, they should endeavor to form partnerships with other non-profits and governmental agencies in the area, such as Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. (KNHS), Coalition for Urban Redevelopment, Housing Resources, Inc., the State of Michigan, Kalamazoo County Government and the City of Kalamazoo.

D. Activism for neighborhood concerns

One of the most important resources that the Southside Neighborhood Association will have is the opportunity to speak one-on-one with the Kalamazoo City Commission. Every third Monday of the month, approximately three neighborhood advocacy groups are invited to speak to the Commission; to give updates on activities, to discuss issues in the neighborhood, to report on successes, and to give suggestions for future City programs.

Additionally, the Southside Neighborhood Association will have the ability to leverage its group power at Commission and board meetings, and work directly with City staff on issues that affect its citizens. There is a large amount of power associated with a neighborhood association in terms of activism and voice. The Southside Neighborhood Association, once formed, will be able to leverage that power to implement programs and improvements within the neighborhood.

# PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES



 PROPOSED NEIGHBORHOOD LINES  
 EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD LINES



0 500 1000 Feet  




## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The following implementation steps are organized into three groups: Tier 1 Actions (those that do not require funding and can be implemented immediately), Tier 2 Actions (those that require minimal funding and can be accomplished within the first year), and Tier 3 Actions (those that require substantial funding and can be accomplished as funding becomes available).

#### Tier One Actions

Action	Implementation Date	Estimated Cost
Form Neighborhood Association	Immediate (first meeting in March)	None
Have Neighborhood Plan approved by Planning Commission	Scheduled for the March 6, 2003 Planning Commission meeting	None
Rezone residential area to Zone 8 (Single Family Residential)	Scheduled for April 3, 2003 Planning Commission meeting	None
Redraw neighborhood lines to incorporate area west of rail lines	Late March 2003	None
Create partnerships with neighborhood associations and non-profits	March 2003 and on-going	None

Join Kalamazoo Neighborhood Coalition	March or April 2003	None
Neighborhood Association as liaison to City Commission	April or May 2003 (City Commission Neighborhood Meetings)	None
Conserve Green Space	Ongoing Advocacy	None
Address parking concerns and active enforcement of parking violations	Current and ongoing work with the City and AutoPark	None
Actively recruit small businesses to Burdick Street through tax credits and loans	Ongoing	None

Tier Two Actions

Action	Implementation Date	Estimated Cost
Develop welcome packet for renters	July or August 2003 (for student move-in time)	Copying costs for 10 packets: \$69.50 (assuming 5 color sheets at \$1.29 each and 5 black and white sheets at \$0.10 each)
Neighborhood Plantings	April or May of 2003	\$450 (assuming volunteers and 50 flats of flowers at \$9.00 each)
Plant roadside trees	Summer 2003	\$500 (assuming volunteers and sapling trees at \$10.00 each)*

Tier Three Actions

Action	Implementation Date	Estimated Cost
Tax Credits and Façade Improvements	As funding and projects becomes available	Varies
Street Repairs added to Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)	As funding becomes available (CIP currently projects 10 years in advance)	Varies (list of certain road improvements in appendix)
Linkages to available park systems (trail and grading)	Within five years a (as part of Parks Master Plan)	Unknown
Portage Creek Trail System Additions	2004+	None (if accepted as part of Trail plan)

Create active recreation space with 1813 S. Rose St.	As funding is available	\$300,000 (with land acquisition \$342,000)**
Improve lighting throughout area	As funding becomes available	\$200.00/home plus \$2.00/month in additional electricity costs***
Burdick Main Street Improvements	As funding becomes available	Approximately \$210/linear foot****

\* it may be possible to have both the flowers and the sapling trees donated to the neighborhood association (via Flipse or other local flower shop)

\*\* general estimate based on similar City owned property on Dutton Street converted to a park and playground equipment acquisition, allowing for topography and acreage.

\*\*\* based on private funding and a special assessment and street level lighting wired into the electricity for each home

\*\*\*\* based on continuation of Burdick Street treatment beyond Crosstown Parkway and in 2001 dollars (streetscape work done in 2001 was \$105/foot, multiplied by two for each side of the road as a special assessment).



## The Southside Neighborhood Plan



### APPENDIX

The information contained in this appendix is meant to inform the reader of various loan programs, grants and tax credit that are available to the neighborhood associations and citizens of Kalamazoo. Additionally, there is information on the workings of the Special Assessment procedure, incorporation of a 501(c)(3) non-profit entity, and information regarding the various neighborhood association that already exist in the City.