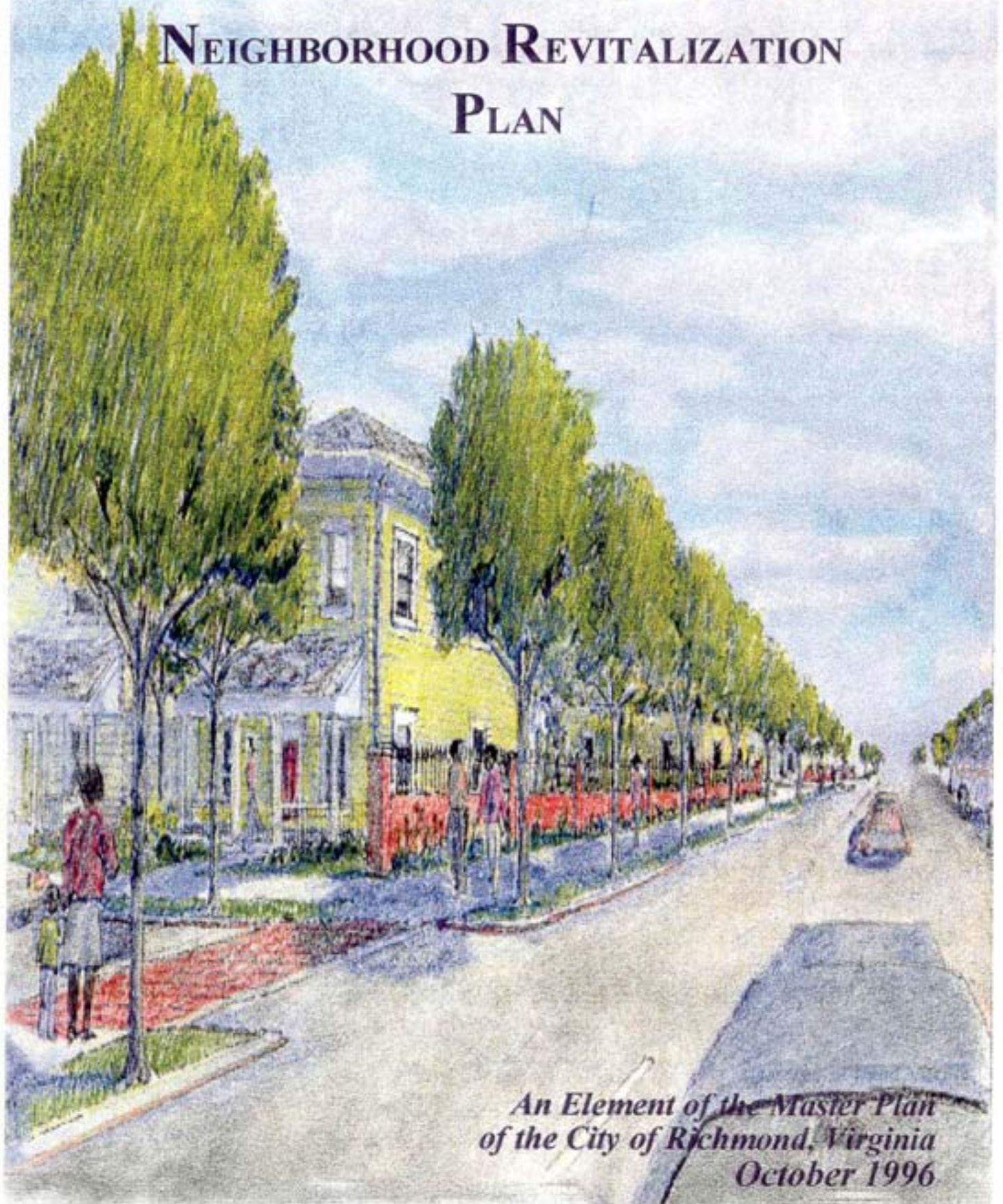


BLACKWELL

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN



*An Element of the Master Plan
of the City of Richmond, Virginia
October 1996*

BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD

R I C H M O N D , V I R G I N I A



REVITALIZATION PLAN

An Element of the Master Plan of the City of Richmond

A Cooperative Effort By:

The Blackwell Community
City of Richmond/Department of Community Development/
Division of Neighborhood Planning



October 1996

Adopted: City Planning Commission, October 7, 1996
Adopted: City Council, November 25, 1996 (Ordinance 96-286-280)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Adopted by City Planning Commission - October 7, 1996

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Table of Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Section I. EXISTING CONDITION	2
History	2
Neighborhood Character	4
Land Use Characteristics	5
Zoning	7
Demographics and Socioeconomic Profile	7
Housing Units	11
Housing Tenure	11
Age of Structures	13
Exterior Housing Assessment	14
Percent Vacant Structures	14
Major Crime Locations	17
Analysis of Physical Problems	19
Section II. STATEMENT OF VISION AND GOALS	21
Vision Statement	21
Goals and Objectives	22
Land Use	22
Housing	22
Community Facilities and Character	22
Economic Development	23
Public Safety	23
Organizational	23
Section III. STATEMENT OF POLICY	24
Section IV. BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN	25
Market Opportunities	25
Housing	25
Retail and Service	26
Industrial	28
Concept Plan	30
Land Use Plan and Strategy	32
Additional Recommendations	38
Housing and Revitalization Strategy	41
Reduce Crime/Improve Social Climate	41
Crime Reduction Actions	41
Improve Social Climate	42
Eliminate Blighted Conditions	43
Create Specific Planning Areas in Community to	43

Table of Contents

	Page
Create Conservation Areas for Blackwell Neighborhoods	44
Privatize a Target Group of Public Housing Units	44
Modernize Public Housing Units	45
Introduce Tenant Involvement Concepts To Public Housing	45
Develop New In-Fill Housing	45
Expand Efforts to Revitalize Hull Street Commercial Corridor	46
Introduce New Single Family Housing Core in Community	46
Section V. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM	47
Blackwell Planning Committee	47
BBCDC	47
Imani Intergenerational CDC	47
SCDHC	48
Virginia Community Development Loan Fund	48
Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority	48
Community Development	49
Office of Economic Development	49
Public Works	49
Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities	49
Public Schools	49
Strategies for Implementing the Revitalization Plan	50
Conservation/ Rehabilitation/ Infill/	50
Public Housing Development and Modernization	51
Redevelopment and New Housing	52
Capital Improvement Program	53
Code Enforcement	53
Marketing Strategy	53
Community Organization	55
Economic Development	55
Monitoring and Evaluation Process	56
Time Table of Actions	57
Plan Benchmarks	59
Evaluation Process	61

APPENDICES

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit #1	BRNP Planning Process
Exhibit #2	Blackwell Location Map
Exhibit #3	Existing Land Use Plan
Exhibit #4	Tenure
Exhibit #5	Exterior Housing Assessment
Exhibit #6	Percent Vacant Structures
Exhibit #7	Major Crime Locations

Table of Contents

Exhibit #8	Analysis of Physical Problems
Exhibit #9	Concept Plan
Exhibit #10	Land Use Plan
Exhibit #11	Illustrative Plan/ New Neighborhood Center
Exhibit #12	Perspective View of New Wall and Landscaping

Introduction

This Plan sets forth specific land use and development policies towards Blackwell and is the supporting documentation that amends the Master Plan for the City of Richmond.

This Plan represents the culmination of activities by the community and City for developing a revitalization strategy for the Blackwell community. The Plan is a response to issues identified by the community and is designed to pursue a vision established by the community.

The general concepts of the Plan have evolved from a process of presentation and refinement based upon comments from the Blackwell Planning Committee or from stakeholders in the community. (See Planning Process Chart on following page.) This approach was designed to maximize, to the greatest extent possible, participation in the plan development process by the community.

The development of the Plan involved four basic steps. These steps were:

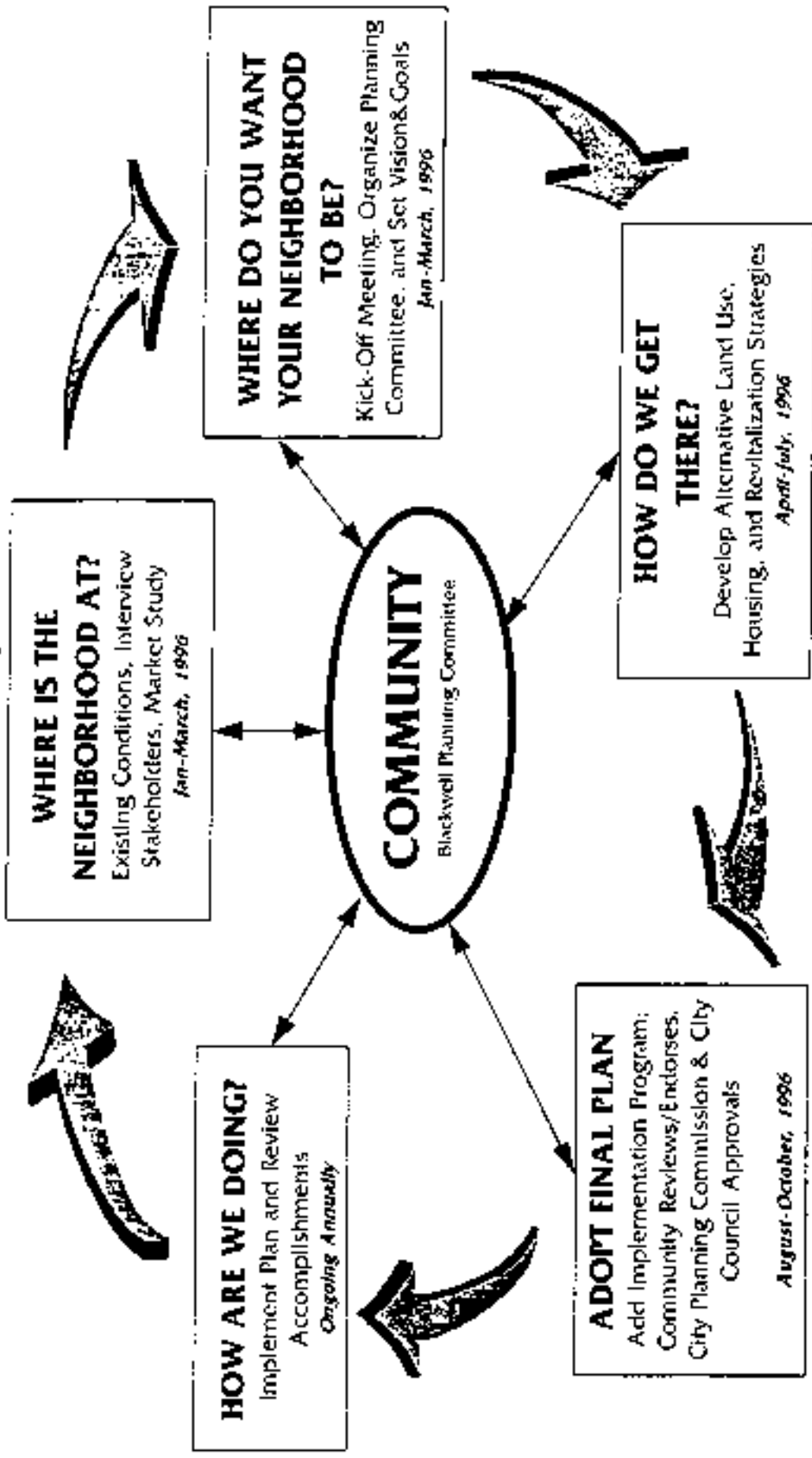
- A series of stakeholder interviews
- Five Major community Meetings
- Research information from a consultant team
- Meetings with the Blackwell Planning Committee

The initial community meeting was the forum for establishing the issues. This was followed up with by an intensive effort by the Planning Committee to draft a Vision Statement presented to and refined by the community. The two activities established the framework for the development of the Plan presented in this report.

Because of this process, public decision makers can be assured that the Plan has been driven by the desires of residents of the community. These are residents who have demonstrated through their investment of time their commitment to the community.

Exhibit #1
Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan
PLANNING PROCESS

S t a r t



SELECT PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE AND REFINE PLAN

Section I. EXISTING CONDITIONS



Section I. EXISTING CONDITIONS

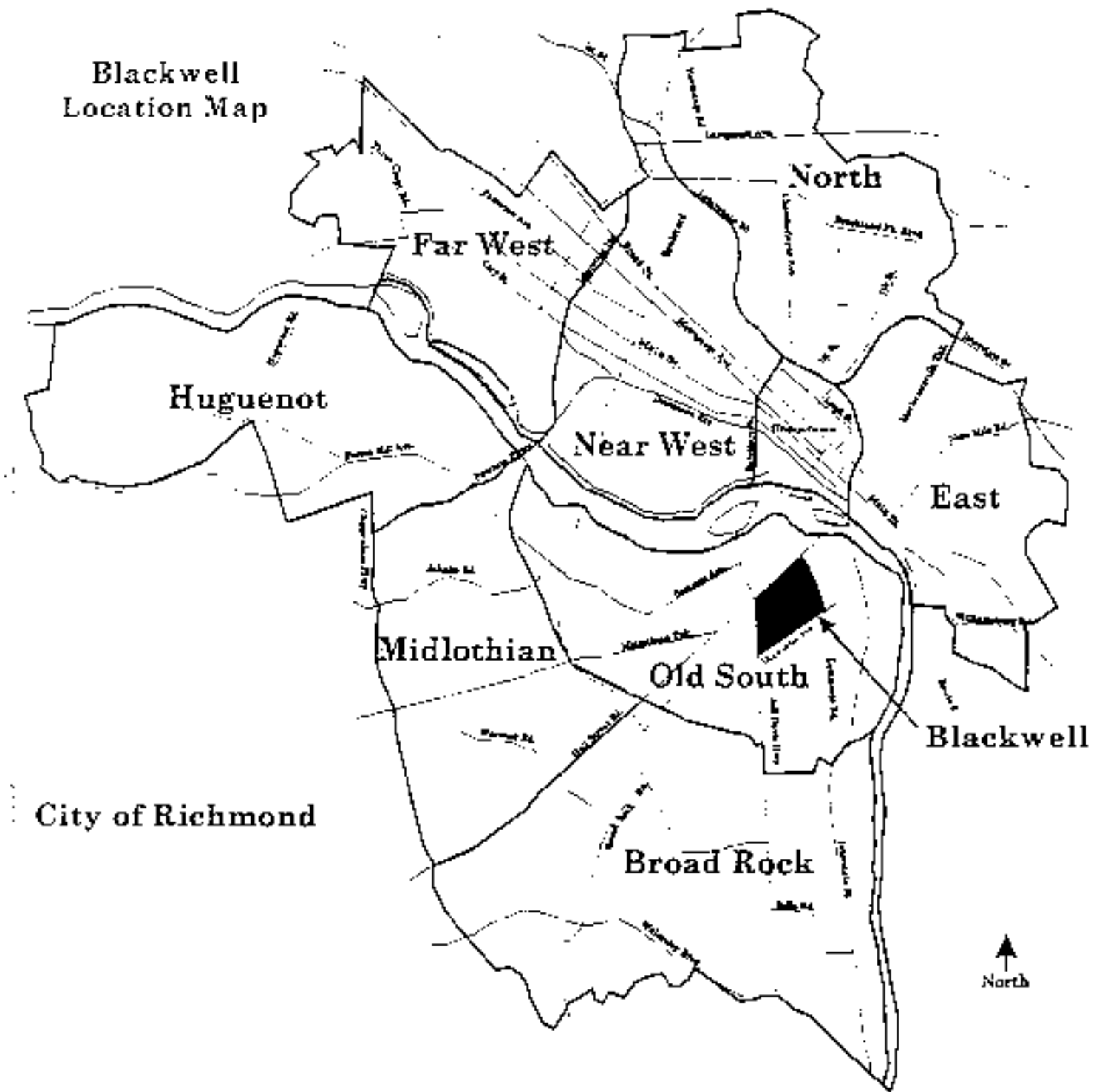
The Blackwell Neighborhood planning area is approximately one mile from downtown Richmond, Virginia. For purposes of this study, the Blackwell planning area is defined as the area bounded by Commerce Road to the east, Hull Street to the north, Jefferson Davis Highway on the west, and Dinwiddie Avenue to the south. This area contains approximately 226 acres. Geographically, the plan area is located on a gentle slope that extends from the James River to the north. The core area is a large open space that provides an impressive view of the surrounding neighborhood.

History

A large section of the Blackwell planning area was originally part of the Town of Manchester. Established in 1769, the Town of Manchester consisted of 312 lots with Decatur Street as the southern extent of its boundary. During the Revolutionary War, Manchester became a staging and supply area for Southside Virginia. In the years following the war growth was slow until the Civil War and Reconstruction sparked substantial manufacturing growth in this area. As a result, Manchester's southern boundary was extended from Decatur Street to Maury Street. By 1874, Manchester had become an independent city. What is now the Blackwell planning area was known for its many black-owned businesses and the strong sense of community created by the workers and merchants who lived there. In 1911, Manchester voted to be annexed by the City of Richmond.

The Maury School located at the corner of 17th and Maury Streets named in honor of Matthew Fontaine Maury, was a school for black students and one of Manchester's earliest schools. Founded in 1888, the school consisted of the Maury Elementary School and Manchester High School with James H. Blackwell as its principal. The school's name was changed to Dunbar in honor of the black poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar after a new school for white patrons was constructed on Bainbridge Street in 1916. Because black principals were not allowed by policy in the City of Richmond Schools, Mr. Blackwell was replaced as principal of Dunbar. He remained a seventh grade teacher at Dunbar until his retirement, but continued to be involved in the school and the surrounding community. When a new school building was completed in 1952, the school was renamed in honor of the deceased James H. Blackwell for his commitment and service to the community. Soon after, the neighborhood surrounding the school was identified by the new school name and began to be known as Blackwell. During this time, areas on the Southside for Richmond began to grow and prosper, but much of this new growth was concentrated outside of Blackwell.

Exhibit #2. Blackwell Location Map



By the late 1960's Blackwell had suffered substantial decline and was targeted for improvements by the City of Richmond. In the late 1960s, an ambitious strategy to address the blighted conditions in the Blackwell neighborhood was enacted by the City which included a strong code enforcement program, demolition of dilapidated houses, and construction of new public housing units. This "scattered site" approach to public housing, while well intentioned and pioneering at the time, eventually undermined what stability was remaining in the neighborhood. Incompatible architecture and the vast concentration of scattered site units (440 exist today) has unfortunately not reversed the neighborhood's decline, but tended to exacerbate community problems. With the support of the district's Councilperson, Community Development Block Grant funds were allocated in 1993 to revisit Blackwell and develop a new neighborhood plan that tries to undo this plight. The major emphasis of this plan was answering the question, "How can stability be restored to the neighborhood?"

Neighborhood Character

Because part of the neighborhood was originally in the Town of Manchester, some sections of Blackwell retain a character reminiscent of the turn of the century. A rectilinear street grid pattern with mid-block alleys characterizes the early subdivisions of the neighborhood. The housing was typically built to provide affordable housing to factory workers in the industrial sections of South Side and is, therefore, generally less grandiose and ornate than housing in the old Manchester neighborhood. However, the Blackwell planning area does contain several distinct sections.

The northern half of the planning area (north of Maury) was generally known as Manchester at the turn of the century. Historic buildings and houses with architectural significance are more prevalent in this section. The larger, detached, two-story Victorian townhouses and buildings can be found along Decatur and Stockton Streets, particularly east of 16th Street. While the east-west streets are wide and tree-lined, the north-south streets (16th to 19th Streets) are narrow and lack street trees or a planting strip. The lots and houses along these streets are smaller in scale (e.g., one-story) with a mix of detached/attached rowhouses. Many still retain historic architectural qualities.

The one major exception to this character in the northern half of the community is the more recent brick public housing buildings in the northwest section (east of 13th St.) While they are not taller than two-stories, the brick duplexes and apartments are inconsistent with earlier houses because of their scale, density, orientation, and materials. The visual appearance of these buildings, while in decent condition, makes for a very inconsistent character throughout the northern half of the planning area.

The southern half of the planning area (south of Maury St.) was generally considered part of Oak Grove years ago. It has narrow streets, newer homes, larger setbacks, and more landscaping. This is most evident by the small, detached, one story

homes along Albany, Boston, Chicago, and Dinwiddie Avenues which resemble homes built during the Post War Era. These homes mix with some larger, older homes of more architectural significance particularly in the area west of 16th Street. Like the northern half of the planning area, public housing buildings (along 15th and 16th Streets) are inconsistent with the surrounding neighborhood's character. Another major exception to the character of the southern half is the presence of a large area of industrial development along Maury Street that contradicts the residential character.

Land Use Characteristics

The Blackwell planning area contains primarily residential, institutional, and recreational open space uses in the interior, commercial uses on the periphery, a large area of industrial use occupying the southwest corner of the community. There are many small vacant parcels of land throughout the community, with the largest located at the corner of 16th Street and Dinwiddie Avenue.

Commercial uses are concentrated in the Hull Street commercial corridor and along Jefferson Davis Highway. The remaining commercial uses are more isolated and located in the interior of the community.

Most of Blackwell's land area consists of a mix of single-family, two-family, and multi-family housing. The multi-family uses are concentrated between Decatur and Maury (from 9th Street to 14th Street) and between Maury and Dinwiddie (from 15th Street to 16th Street). These areas have a high concentration of multi-family housing that are primarily provided by the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority. The remaining developed areas of the community's interior are occupied by single-family housing, with only a few two-family uses scattered throughout the plan area.

Institutional land uses occupy significant areas of land in the Blackwell neighborhood. The Blackwell Elementary School (Grades 2-5) and the Blackwell Primary School (Grades K-1) are separated by a large tract of open space located in the center of the community. This area of open space is also occupied by a gymnasium, community swimming pool, and tot lot. Other institutional uses in Blackwell include the Manchester Court House at 912 Hull Street, the Blackwell Scattered Site Office at 214 E. 14th Street, and a number of churches dispersed throughout the plan area.

Remaining land uses include an industrial area, an outdoor recreational complex, and industrial/Accessory parking located along Commerce Road. The industrial use is a large brickyard occupying a large tract of land that forms the southeastern boundary of the neighborhood. Adjacent to the brickyard is a large outdoor recreation complex that includes recreational facilities such as, a baseball diamond, basketball courts, and tennis courts.

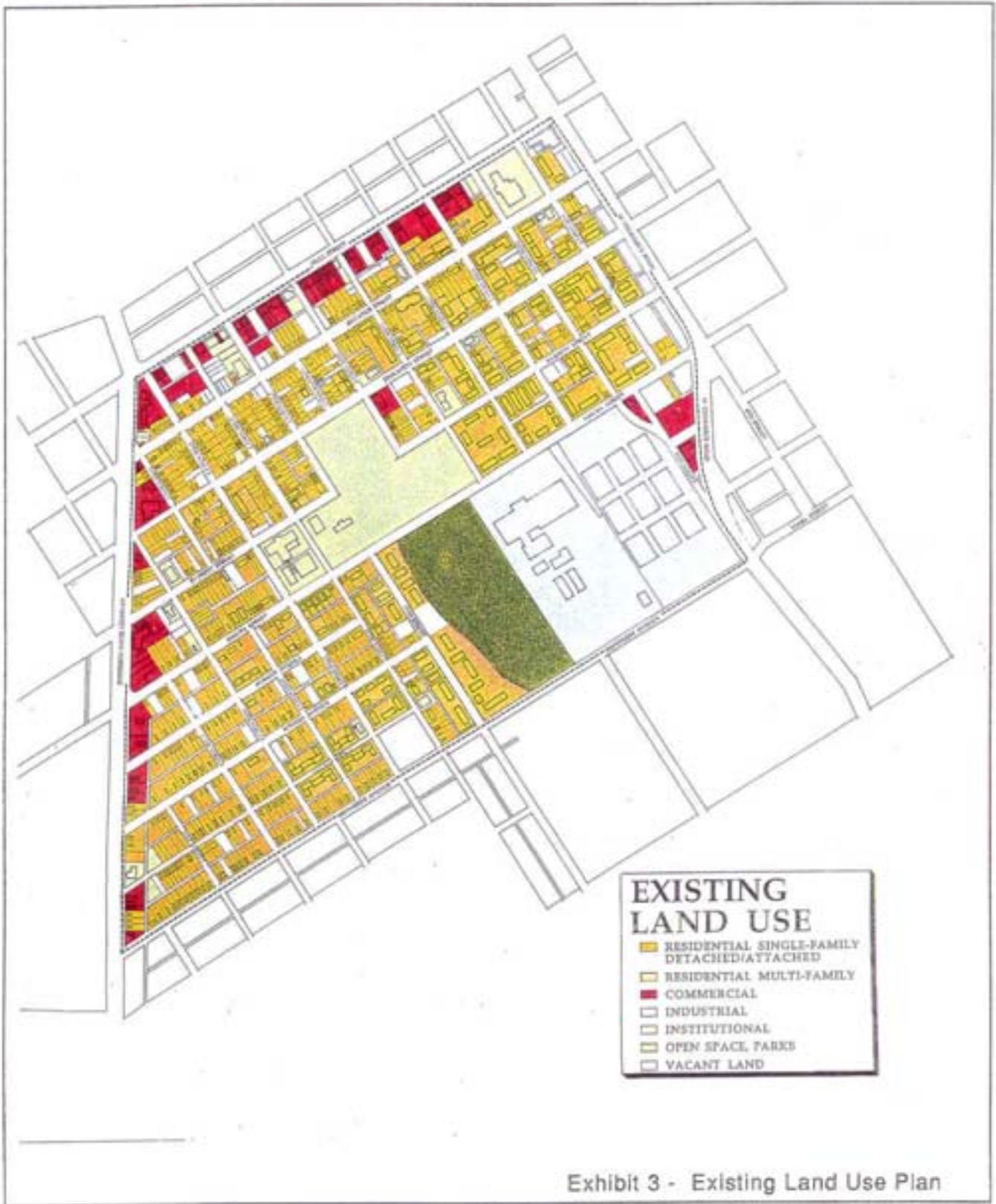


Exhibit 3 - Existing Land Use Plan
 Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan
 6

Zoning

The existing zoning for the Blackwell Neighborhood is predominately residential and separated into three classifications: R-53, R-6 and R-5. Areas bounded by Decatur and Maury (from 9th Street to 14th Street) and Maury Street and Dinwiddie Avenue (between 15th Street and 16th Street) are zoned "R-53". The "R-53" zoning allows for a variety of residential uses including nursing homes, day nurseries and lodging houses.

The largest amount of land in the neighborhood is classified as "R-6" which allows for single family and two family detached or attached housing. This zoning applies to those areas between Decatur and Dinwiddie and from Jefferson Davis Highway to 14th Street. A small area along Dinwiddie Avenue at the southern boundary of the neighborhood, is zoned "R-5" which allows for single family detached housing. The Hull Street corridor is zoned "B-2" which allows banks, restaurants, dry cleaning establishments and a variety of other community businesses. The western boundary of the community along Jefferson Davis Highway is zoned "B-3" which allows for a wide range of general business uses.

The large tract of land that occupies the southeast corner of the Blackwell Neighborhood Plan area is zoned "M-2" which allows a variety of heavy industrial uses.

Demographics and Socioeconomic Profile

The Blackwell Neighborhood planning area is located in the Old South Planning District of the City and is part of Census Tract 602, block groups 1 and 4, Tract 603, block group 3 and 4, and Tract 601, block group 3. For comparison to city-wide statistics, see the Appendix.

Blackwell mirrors the city-wide decline in population over the past several decades, although Blackwell's decline has been more substantial. Between 1980 and 1990, the City experienced an 8% decline in population, while Blackwell's population plunged a total of 28%. As of 1990, 3,367 residents lived in the planning area that was comprised almost entirely of black residents (97%), and had 57% women and 43% men. Table 1 illustrates the composition of the Blackwell planning area's population.

Table 1. Blackwell Neighborhood Population, 1980-1990

	1980	1990	Change 1980-1990
Gender			
Female	2,623	1,914	-27%
Male	2,065	1,453	-30%
Race			
Black	4,573	3,270	-28%
White/Other	115	97	-16%
Total Population	4,688	3,367	-28%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

Blackwell's population is very young when compared to the City's population. In 1990, 45% of the planning area's population was 19 years old or younger, compared to 24% for the City. Reinforcing this trend, the elderly population (65 or older) comprised 10 percent of Blackwell's population which was below the City average of 15% in 1990. Between 1980 and 1990 each cohort experienced a decline with the most significant being the 15 to 19 years old (-52.4%) and the 20 to 24 years old (-50.9%) cohorts.

Table 2. Blackwell Population and Age

Age	1980	1990	Change 1980-90
Under 5 years (% of total)	465 9.9%	433 12.9%	-6.9%
5 to 9 years (% of total)	460 9.8%	420 12.5%	-8.7%
10 to 14 years (% of total)	602 12.8%	361 10.7%	-40.0%
15 to 19 years (% of total)	616 13.1%	293 8.7%	-52.4%
20 to 24 years (% of total)	442 9.4%	217 6.4%	-50.9%
25 to 34 years (% of total)	574 12.2%	486 14.4%	-15.3%
35 to 44 years (% of total)	396 8.4%	355 10.5%	-10.4%
45 to 54 years (% of total)	381 8.1%	230 6.8%	-39.6%
55 to 64 years (% of total)	335 7.1%	222 6.6%	-33.7%
65 to 74 years (% of total)	263 5.6%	205 6.1%	-22.1%
75 and older (% of total)	154 3.3%	145 4.3%	-5.8%
Total Population	4,688	3,367	-28%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

The decline in the number of families living in the Blackwell Neighborhood (21.3%) between 1980 and 1990 reflects the area's overall loss of population. This decline was much more pronounced in the "husband-wife families" category which experienced a 52% percent decrease. "Female-headed families with children under 18" only decreased by 8% mirroring the national change in family composition from husband-wife to single parent households. These figures also reveal that the neighborhood has failed to attract and keep husband-wife families as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Blackwell Community Households, 1980-1990

Household Type	1980	1990	Change
Families	1018	801	-21%
<i>Percent of Total</i>	73%	72%	
Husband/Wife	355	172	-52%
<i>Percent of Total</i>	26%	15%	
Female Headed	616	543	-12%
<i>Percent of Total</i>	44%	49%	
With Children	494	453	-8%
<i>Percent of Total</i>	36%	40%	
Total Households	1,388	1,119	-19.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 & 1990

Data related to the income of residents collected from the 1990 census reveals that the area was comprised of an overwhelming majority of residents who were considered low income (family incomes 80% or less than the metropolitan area median income of \$33,489 in 1989). Approximately 56% of the residents in Blackwell were below the poverty level in 1989, more than double the City's poverty population (21%). The concentration of poverty in this area is extremely high and indicates that the neighborhood has lost most of its employed population.

Table 4. Blackwell Community, Levels of Poverty

Income Category	1990
Persons in Poverty	1,880
<i>Percent of Total</i>	56%
Low Income Persons	
80% or less of MSA	2,998
<i>Percent of Total</i>	89%
Very Low Income	
50% or less of MSA	2,415
<i>Percent of Total</i>	72%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 & 1990

Low median household income levels for the surrounding area (\$5,000 for Census Tract 601, \$16,228 for Census Tract 602, and \$12,214 for Census Tract 603) indicate that poverty is present throughout the surrounding area and not limited to Blackwell alone. Table 4 highlights the level of poverty in the planning area.

Housing Units

There are a total of 1,077 housing units in the Blackwell Neighborhood. Approximately 40% of these units are single family residential. Approximately 8% are two family residential.

Table 5. Housing Units

Unit Type	Units
Residential - Single-Family (% of total)	436 40%
Residential - Two-Family (% of total)	84 8%
Residential - Multi-Family (% of total)	557 52%
Total Housing Units	1,077

Source: City of Richmond, Office of Assessor and Department of Community Development field survey (January 1996)

The Blackwell planning area has an uneven distribution of housing types. Of the 1,077 existing units, multi-family units comprise the most, accounting for over half of all of the neighborhood units.

Housing Tenure

Table 6 provides a breakdown of housing tenure. Data is presented for owner-occupied units, renter-occupied units and for vacant/boarded units.

This information was gathered during a field survey conducted by the Department of Community Development in January, 1996. Survey results are based on visual inspection (not interviews), therefore the number and type of units and total number of vacancies are approximate.

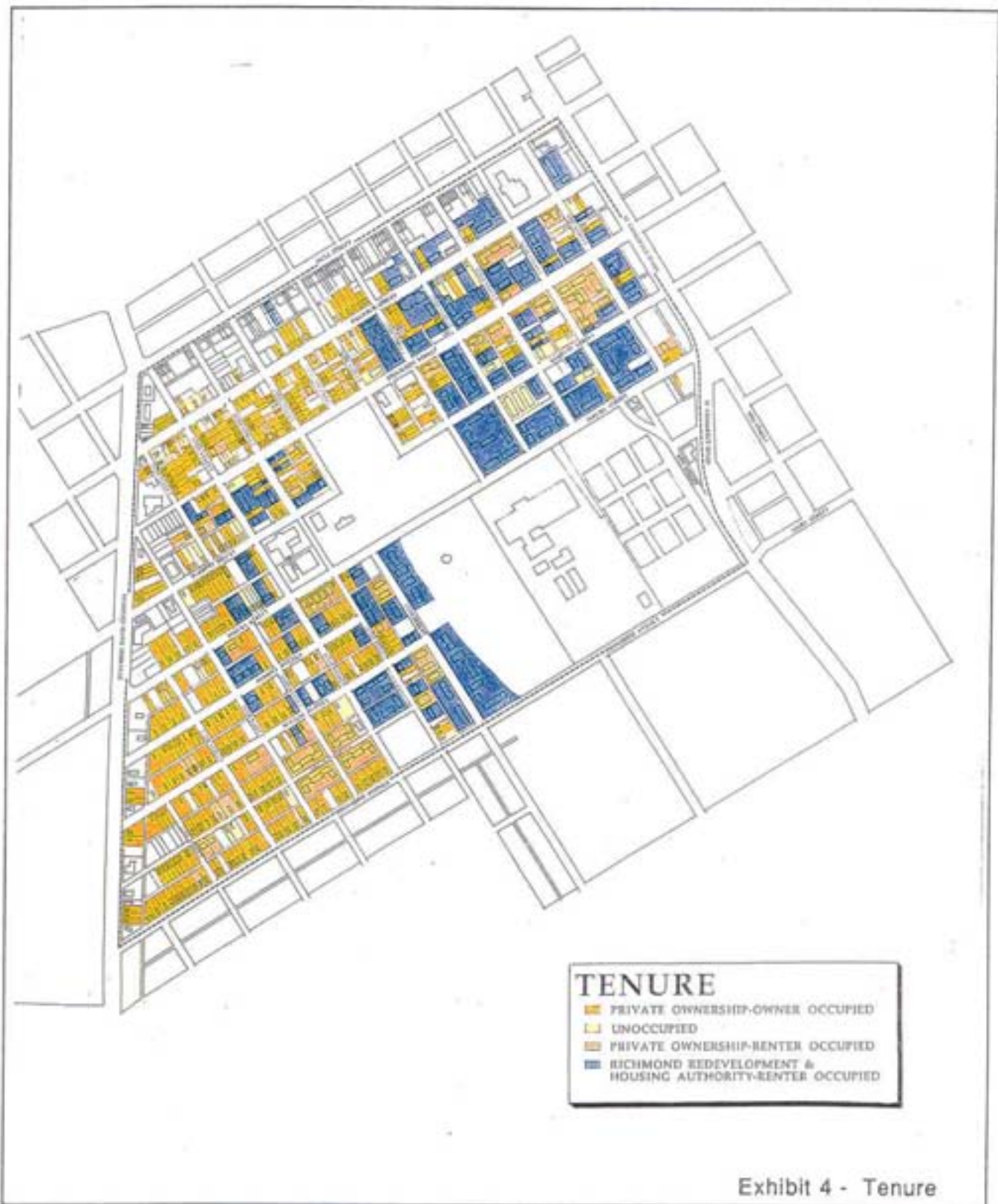


Exhibit 4 - Tenure

Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Table 6. Housing Tenure

Unit Type	Owner-Occupied Units	Renter-Occupied Units	Vacant/Boarded Units
Residential - Single-Family (% of total)	166 38%	217 50%	53 12%
Residential - Two-Family (% of total)	3 4%	81 96%	0 0%
Residential - Multi-Family (% of total)	0 0%	478 86%	79 14%
TOTAL (% of Total)	169 15%	776 74%	132 12%

Source: City of Richmond, Office of Assessor and Department of Community Development (January 1996)

The Blackwell planning area presently contains substantially more renters than home owners. Of the 1,005 occupied units in the neighborhood, only 15% are owner occupied. This is especially evident by the single-family homes that are 50% renter occupied and two-family homes that are only 4 percent owner occupied.

Age of Structures

The Blackwell planning area has a large number of structures that were built prior to 1929. Of the 631 structures, 62% were built prior to 1929, 15% were built between 1930 and 1949, 25% were built between 1950 and 1969, and only 3% have been built since 1970.

Table 7. Age of Structure

Time Period	Structures	Percentage
Prior to 1929	393	62%
1930-1949	96	15%
1950-1969	126	20%
Since 1970	16	3%
Total Structures	631	

Source: City of Richmond, Office of Assessor and Department of Community Development (January 1996)

Structures built from 1950 to 1969 were overwhelmingly multi-family built for RRHA's scattered site public housing program. Since 1970 there has been a variety of structures built including a few single-family and multi-family structures, a library, a church and some commercial uses.

Exterior Housing Assessment

The Exterior Housing Assessment Survey assesses the quality and condition of the exterior of existing private residential structures. Three categories from Major to Minor have been established. The Minor category indicates deficiencies noted in the exterior of the structure which would be corrected in the course of regular maintenance. Those elements include missing or deteriorated handrails, cracked window panes, or weathered paint in need of minor painting. The Intermediate category indicates the need for more extensive repairs. Those defects include rotten or missing gutters, cracked foundation walls, and porches or chimneys in need of obvious repair. The Major category indicates the need for substantive repairs to the dwelling caused by structural or closure deficiencies. Those deficiencies include the following: sagging or leaning portions of the house which may indicate structural deficiencies in internal walls or foundations; holes in foundations, walls or roofs; or evidence of fire or flooding inside the structure. All data for the Assessment were taken from a photographic survey of the site conducted in early 1996, an intensive exterior visual survey of the site conducted in early 1996 as well as an intensive exterior visual survey conducted in April of 1996. The survey indicates that roughly 6 out of 10 private residential structures are in need of moderate to substantial repair -- 39% of the units (183 units) were determined to be "minor", 35% of the units (165 units) were considered to be "intermediate", and 25% of the units (119 units) were rated as having "major" exterior deficiencies.

The survey also indicates dwelling units that were deemed of architectural merit. Architectural merit was determined if a structure was endowed with high quality details and characteristics, particularly those that represented the historical development of the neighborhood.

Percent Vacant Structures

The field survey counted 132 vacant housing units in the planning area, accounting for 12% of the total (1,077 units). However, of the non-public housing units, 21% are either vacant or boarded-up.

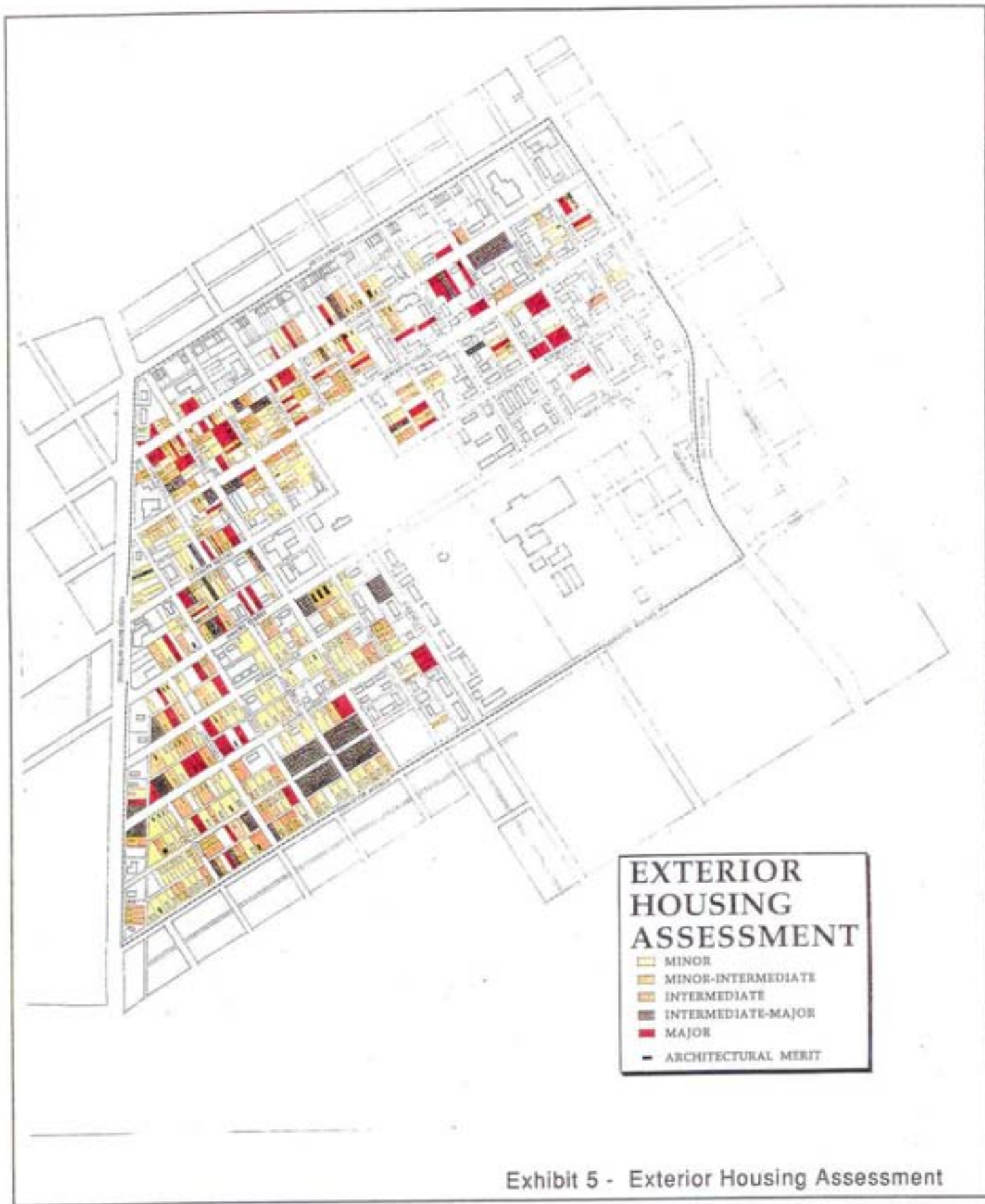


Exhibit 5 - Exterior Housing Assessment
Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan
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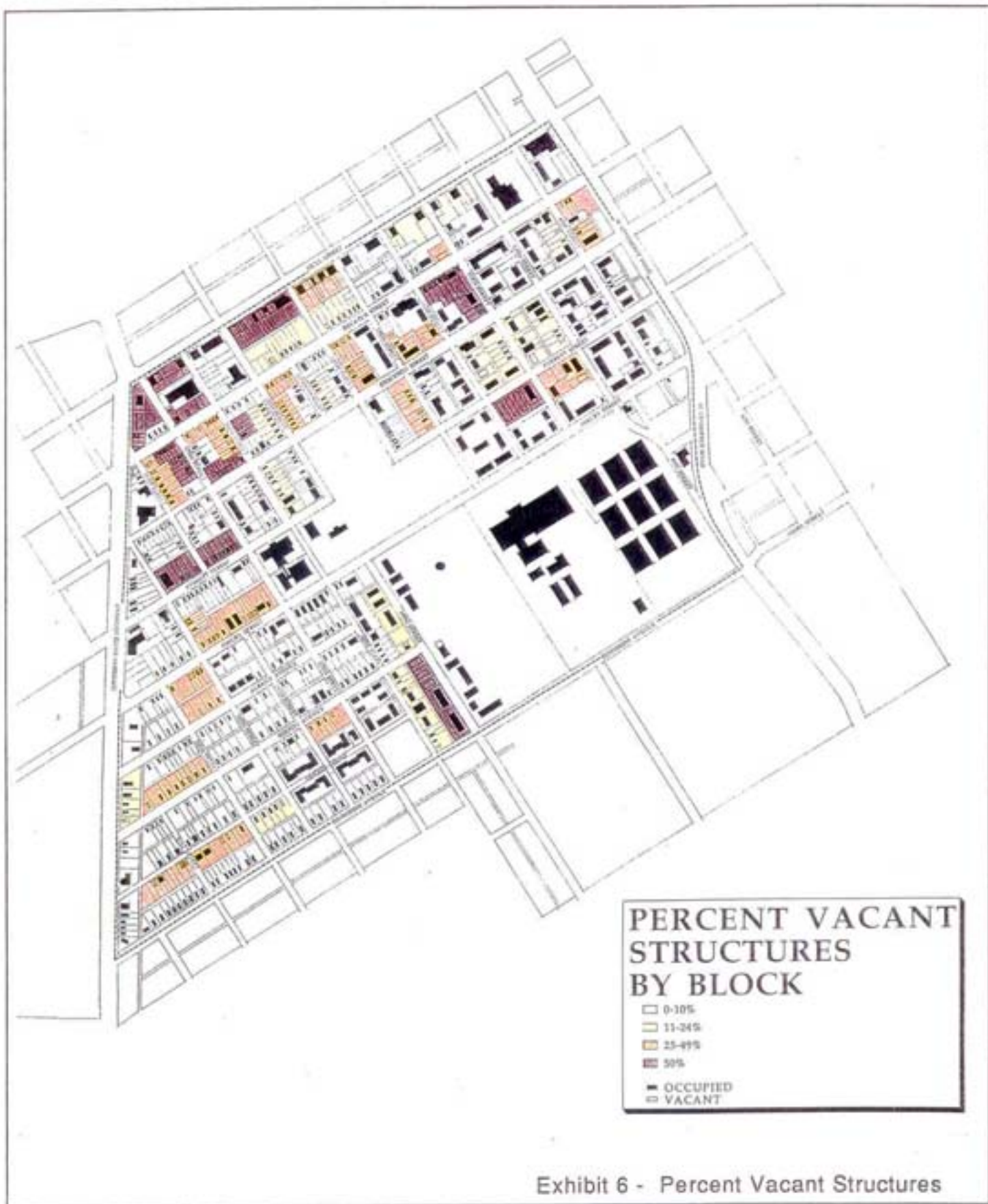


Exhibit 6 - Percent Vacant Structures
 Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Table 8. Vacant Units

Unit Type	Vacant/Boarded		Percentage
	Units	Total Units	
Residential -Single-Family	53	436	12%
Residential - Two- Family	0	84	0%
Residential - Multi Family	79	557*	14%
TOTAL	132	1,077	12%

* Estimated

Source: City of Richmond, Department of Community Development, (January 1996)

The survey further indicated that of the total vacant units, roughly 40% are single-family, and 60% are multi-family.

Major Crime Locations

Major crimes reported in the Blackwell Neighborhood were assessed from August 1995 to January 1996. Major crimes were defined as murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, auto theft, and larceny. Based on the Richmond Police Department's information there are many areas of Blackwell that have a high incidence of major crimes reported.

The most significant crime areas include those areas between Hull Street and Decatur Street (from 10th Street to Jefferson Davis Highway), Decatur Street and Stockton Street (from 9th Street to 14th Street), Everett Street and Maury Street (from 10th Street to 12th Street), 15th, 16th and 17th Streets (between Maury and Dinwiddie), and the 1900 block of Boston Avenue. Most of these areas had 5 to 9 crimes reported, with some blocks reporting 10 or more crimes during the 6 month period. These figures, while relative for the time period taken, indicate current criminal activities are high throughout the neighborhood and are more frequent near multi-family housing and the commercial corridors of Hull Street and Jefferson Davis Highway.

The Major Crimes Exhibit indicates the area and concentrations within the site of crime activity. Data for the plan were taken from major crimes reported to the police for a six month period beginning in July of 1995. The data is recorded within blocks within the study area.

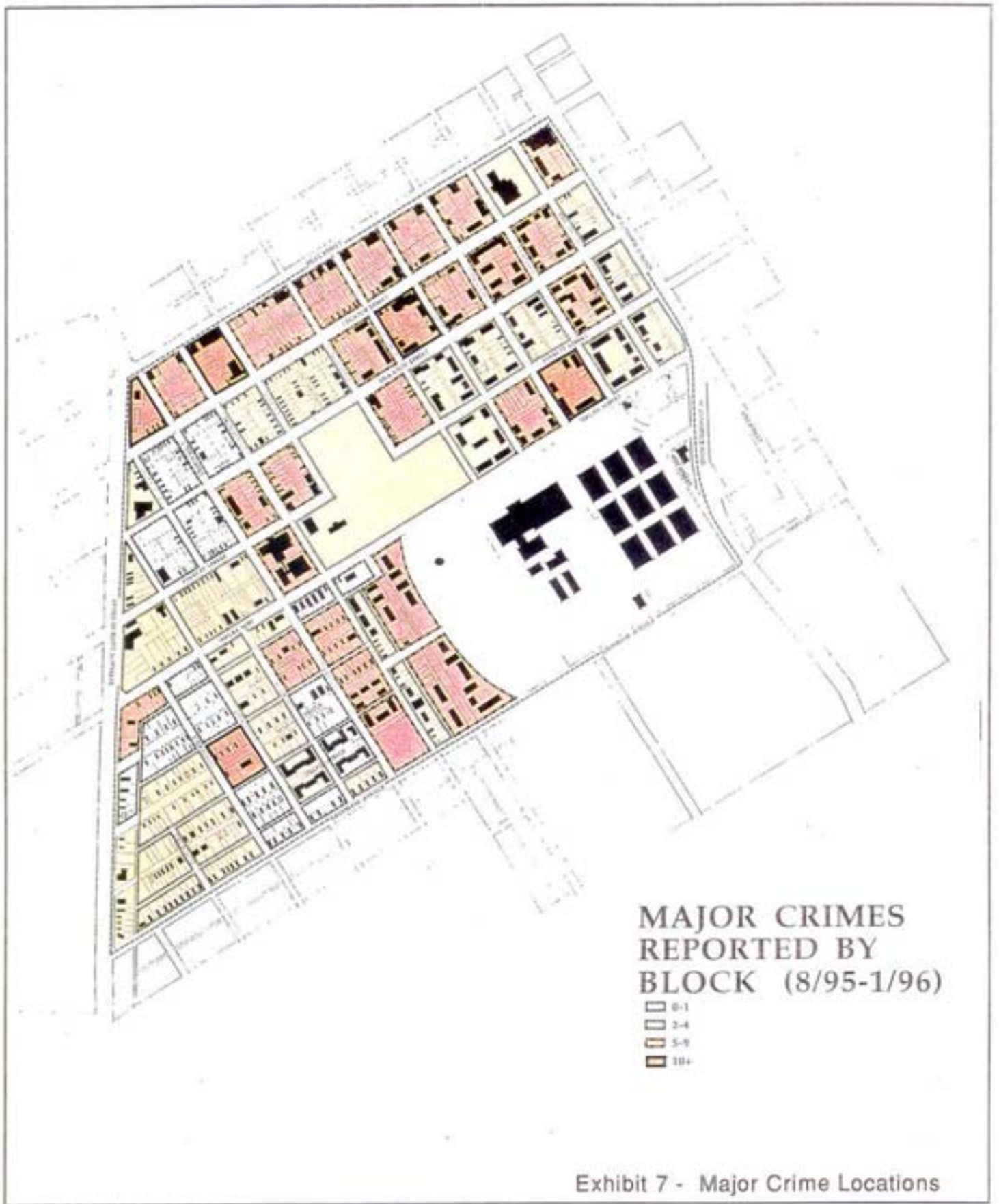


Exhibit 7 - Major Crime Locations

Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Analysis of Physical Problems

The map on the following page provides a summary of existing conditions as they impact the Blackwell community.

Of particular concern are the areas designated as "Distressed Areas." These are locations in the community impacted by high crime rates, a number of vacant buildings, and high concentrations of either private rental or public housing units.

DISTRESSED AREAS

- HIGH CRIME RATES
- NUMBERS OF VACANT BUILDINGS

DISTRESSED AREAS

- HIGH CRIME RATES
- NUMBERS OF VACANT BUILDINGS
- CONCENTRATIONS OF RENTAL UNITS
- CONCENTRATIONS OF RHA UNITS

LARGE OPEN SPACE WITH NON-DEFENSIBLE EDGES

EXISTING SCHOOL

LARGE OPEN SPACE WITH NON-DEFENSIBLE EDGES

DISTRESSED AREAS

- HIGH CRIME RATES
- NUMBERS OF VACANT BUILDINGS
- CONCENTRATIONS OF RENTAL UNITS
- CONCENTRATIONS OF RHA UNITS

ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL PROBLEMS

Exhibit 8 - Analysis of Physical Problems
Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan
20

Section II. STATEMENT OF VISION AND GOALS



Section II. STATEMENT OF VISION AND GOALS

The following is a vision statement and Goals that have been developed by the planning committee and have been endorsed by the community.

Vision Statement

Our vision is for a new and different Blackwell Neighborhood, a neighborhood rooted in its past but one that looks forward confident of its future. It will be a neighborhood free of crime and violence, free of vacant buildings and dirty lots, and free of drug pushers. Yes, it will also finally be free of young men loitering on its corners. This is because it will be a neighborhood where people go to work to earn money and come home to enjoy friends and neighborhoods in an atmosphere in mutual respect.

Our new Blackwell Neighborhood will have lots of things for both the young and old to do. Whether these activities are in a recreation center, or churches, or the library, or shopping on Hull Street, there will be something somewhere for each of us to do. It will be a neighborhood with a new good school, where truancy levels are low, and our kids are excited about learning.

It will be a neighborhood with clean streets, sidewalks, and alleyways that result not only from city services but because resident work to keep them that way. Our new Blackwell neighborhood will have improved street lighting, well-pruned trees, good street signs and new trash cans. It will be a place where one must search far and wide to find abandoned cars.

Our housing will have been renovated and where too blighted, torn down to make room for new in-fill housing units. By then it will have been renovated and sold to families who want to make a long term investment in our neighborhood's future. Blackwell will again return to a neighborhood of home owners rather than renters. Best of all, property values will be going up showing that we are attracting more people to our neighborhood.

Yes. Our new Blackwell Neighborhood will be a beautiful neighborhood again. It will be a clean neighborhood again. It will be a neighborhood with nice housing where one can sit outside and enjoy the community. Yes. There will be flowers in the yards and kids playing outside and stores with good prices just a few blocks away.

Goals and Objectives

Land Use

- Blackwell should be a community primarily of single family residential land uses and should significantly decrease the concentration and amount of multifamily housing.
- Primary neighborhood commercial land uses should be concentrated in the Hull Street Corridors.
- Retain existing park and open space locations while creating smaller green space opportunities throughout the community to improve the image of the neighborhood.
- Explore alternative land uses to replace existing industrial land use that would be more compatible to a single family residential character in the future.

Housing

- Eliminate the distinction between public and private housing and increase homeownership opportunities substantially.
- The majority of housing in Blackwell should be for homeowners.
- Home ownership opportunities should be targeted first towards existing residents and first time homeowners and therefore, be affordable.
- Continuing rehabilitation programs should be made available to current homeowners.
- The plan should support higher standards for the design and long-term maintenance of new in-fill homes that complement the neighborhood's single family character.
- To the greatest extent possible, existing homes should be rehabilitated instead of demolished.

Community Facilities

- Provide more structured recreational and development opportunities for persons of all ages, especially teens.
- Construct a new multipurpose elementary school in the center of the community that is a 365 day educational, recreational, and civic resource for the community.
- Encourage and provide linkages between all community facilities including schools, libraries, recreation centers, churches, day care etc., which will produce greater responsibility and lead to community empowerment.

-
- Provide for public improvements including an improved street system, modernized public utilities, community policing, and defensible space to foster an expanded and diversified residential base for the neighborhood.

Community Character

- Beautify community spaces and eliminate blighted and deteriorated conditions, untended vacant lots, and boarded up buildings that affect the physical, social and economic viability of the neighborhood.
- Emphasize responsibility of residents to maintain their properties in a clean, healthy, and orderly manner, and promote programs to assist clean-up and recycling efforts.
- Create a positive neighborhood image at main entrances, important gateways, and along the edges of the community.

Economic Development

- Discourage the development of businesses within the residential neighborhood that may contribute to illegal or disorderly conduct.
- Support the revitalization of the Hull Street commercial corridor as the primary retail/service amenity for the neighborhood and as an employment center for neighborhood residents.
- Create job training and employment opportunities for neighborhood residents through full participation in State Enterprise Zone program and through support for City Business Retention and Attraction efforts.
- Develop and maintain linkages with the community's major employers.

Public Safety

- Eliminate all physical, social, and economic conditions that are known to be conducive to criminal activity.

Organizational

- Establish one unified and inclusive organization that can speak in the best interest of the entire Blackwell community and that will oversee implementation of the plan.
- Develop a marketing strategy in order to promote a more positive image and identity.

Section III. STATEMENT OF POLICY



Section III. STATEMENT OF POLICY

The following statement articulates the City's policy towards the Blackwell Community:

The Primary goal of the City with respect to the Blackwell Community is to create a strong affordable mixed income residential community that eradicates the distinction between public and private housing in Blackwell as a statement of economic class and as a source of architectural conflict. Where feasible the City will begin the process of privatizing some of the public housing units and adopting strategies to encourage increased levels of home ownership.

To achieve the goal of a strong affordable mixed-income community we recognize that a variety of approaches will be required. These approaches include physical programs relating to community infrastructure, housing, and urban design as well as programs to reduce crime and increase job and educational opportunities

Achieving the goal of a strong affordable mixed-income community for Blackwell will also require an allocation of public dollars that should be designed and allocated to attract private reinvestment. Such public investments should be based upon a long range commitment to the Blackwell Community that is consistent with the short and long term implementation schedule. Implementation should occur in coordination with and complimentary to similar revitalization efforts in Old Manchester and on Hull Street.

Finally, the City recognizes that the revitalization of the Blackwell Community can not be achieved by City actions alone. What is required is a strong partnership between the City, Community, and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority that works together to achieve the community's vision of its future.

Section IV. BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN



Section IV. BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN

The Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan is designed to provide realistic and feasible recommendations for the future redevelopment of the neighborhood. This means that it must be grounded within the realities of the market while at the same time pursuing the "vision" for the community set forth by the community. To be realistic the plan must also recognize the limitations of public financing resources in the light of decreasing federal government support for neighborhood revitalization activities. Such a plan should also recognize the importance of the need for new partnerships between public agencies and the community in which the community takes a greater responsibility for its revitalization.

This plan begins with an assessment of the market opportunities for the Blackwell Neighborhood and presents strategy recommendations related to land use, housing, overall revitalization, and marketing.

Market Opportunities

The Blackwell Neighborhood is a part of the broader South Richmond market. As indicated by its current land uses, the neighborhood is presently composed of residential, commercial and industrial uses. Most of the commercial uses border the neighborhood along its Jefferson Davis Highway or Hull Street borders which are characterized by retail or service businesses. The industrial uses consist mostly of one large site in the eastern sector of the neighborhood. While there are commercial uses sprinkled throughout the neighborhood, residential uses are dominant and consist of both single family attached and detached units, two-family duplexes, and multifamily units. The rest of the neighborhood consists of vacant land, open space, parks and institutional uses. It is within this context that we have explored the market opportunities for housing, retail and service, and industrial uses.

Housing

The potential for housing development in the Blackwell Neighborhood is limited by a number of factors which must be corrected if the neighborhood is to be turned around. These factors include a poor neighborhood image, the impact of public housing on the surrounding neighborhoods, crime, housing abandonment and blight, a high number of vacant units, conflicts in architectural character, and deteriorating neighborhood infrastructure. These conditions create low resale values and affect the length of time required for a resale period. As a result there has been a reduction in market demand for private housing in the Blackwell Neighborhood.

This reduction in demand is reflected in the decrease of households in the neighborhood between 1980 and 1990, especially households composed of both husband and wife. In 1980, the Blackwell Neighborhood had 1,388 households of which

355 or 26% were husband and wife families. By 1990 the number of households had dropped to 1,119 for a loss of 19%; husband and wife families had dropped to 172 for a loss of 52%.

This lack of demand for private housing units in the Blackwell community is a strong economic force that continues to generate housing vacancies and creates blight. For example, the number of housing units in CT 601 and 603 declined by 32% and 3% respectively between 1970 and 1990 and the percentage of housing vacancies doubled in each census tract over the same period. This weakness in demand in the housing market for the Blackwell neighborhood can only be overcome with a broader planning context that relates to both housing, retail/service, and institutional uses. In this context there must be a commitment from both the City and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority for other programs beyond brick and mortar that have been noted by the residents of the area.

The Blackwell Community will, therefore, require a market creation strategy if it is going to successfully reintroduce new or rehabilitated housing. The elements of a market creation strategy are defined in the housing revitalization and marketing strategies discussed later in this report.

In the absence of an expressed demand for housing in the Blackwell neighborhood it will be necessary to establish a goal for the market creation strategy. The goal should be in the range of 100-150 new units and 200-300 rehabilitated units by 2015. This would require absorption of 7-10 new units per year or less than 1 unit per month.

These goals have been arrived at after reviewing the performance of other affordable housing developments in the city and especially those on the South Side. While some projects such as Fulton Manor and Wallace Manor have performed well, properties on the South Side have not moved as quickly. Paradise Place averaged 9 units sold per year and some scattered site units averaged only four sales per year.

Retail and Service

A well crafted plan also needs to take into account the short and long range retail and service opportunities that will make possible the revitalization of the Blackwell community. This is especially important since Hull Street can have a major impact on the viability of the Blackwell community as well as the Old Manchester neighborhood and because Hull street is presently engaged in a revitalization effort. The fact is that Hull Street serves as the most convenient base for convenience goods and services for the community.

Our field survey of the market indicated that the primary market area for the Hull Street commercial corridor is approximately a 0.5 to one mile radius around the Hull Street

commercial corridor. This trade area, as distinct from the Blackwell community planning area, has a population of 3,728 persons in 1,536 households. Average household income is estimated to be \$23,973 with a total expenditure potential of \$36.8 million.

If no major new initiatives are undertaken within the trade area, both population and households are expected to decline by 2001. Population is expected to drop to 3,473, and households are expected to drop to 1,460. However, average household income is expected to increase to \$26,038. Total expenditure potential is projected to increase to \$38 million.

This data, which has been provided by Claritas data services, has been utilized to calculate the market support for various categories of community businesses. These include food at home, eating and drinking establishments, alcoholic beverages, apparel, entertainment, and household equipment and services. Table 9 presents the findings.

Table 9. Hull Street Supportable Square Footage from Primary Trade Area, 1996

Store Category	Expenditure Potential	Sales Projected PSF	Supportable Square Feet
Food at Home	\$4,544,000	\$400	11,360
Eating and Drinking	2,190,000	175	12,514
Alcoholic Beverages	391,000	175	2,235
Apparel	2,107,000	175	12,040
Entertainment	1,656,000	150	11,040
Household Eq. & Services	1,652,000	150	11,013
Total	\$12,540,000	N/A	60,202

Source: Claritas and Hammer, Siler, George Associates.

This analysis indicates that approximately \$12.5 million of the \$36 million in expenditure potential from the primary trade area could support a maximum of 60,000 square feet of commercial on Hull Street at the present time. However, since Hull Street is unlikely to be able to capture more than 70 percent of this expenditure potential, a more likely estimate of supportable square footage is 42,000.

Hull Street has substantially more than 200,000 square feet of commercial space. This factor limits its revitalization potential unless a mix of uses, that go beyond retail and service, are a strong part of the revitalization plan. This is true despite the fact that Hull Street may be able to capture in-flow sales from the large volume of traffic that flows through the community.

The potential for retail and service on Hull Street can improve substantially if more upscale housing could be attracted to the Old Manchester Neighborhood. Since no market data is available at this time, we have made the assumption that by 2015 there will be 1,000 new households within the primary trade area that have average household incomes of \$40,000. This would result in the expenditure potentials and supportable space found on Table 10.

Table 10. Hull Street Supportable Square Footage from Primary Trade Area, 2015

Store Category	Expenditure Potential	Sales Projected PSF	Supportable Square Feet
Food at Home	\$8,544,000	400	21,360
Eating and Drinking	4,117,811	175	23,530
Alcoholic Beverages	735,189	175	4,201
Apparel	3,961,752	175	22,638
Entertainment	3,110,544	150	20,758
Household Eq. & Services	3,105,225	150	20,708
Total	\$23,657,521	N/A	113,195

Source: Claritas and Hammer, Sifer, George Associates

If a substantial number of new and rehabilitated units could be developed in the primary market area, Hull Street's potential for revitalization would therefore dramatically improve. Based upon a capture rate of 70 percent, the primary trade area could support approximately 80,000 square feet of community business space. While this would still require a mixed use commercial corridor, it could have a more substantial retail and service component.

This analysis leads us to believe that the future of Hull Street lies in creating a mix of uses rather than an attempt to recapture its past as a region serving retail and service corridor. The retail and service component of the corridor must be downsized to reflect realistic market demand conditions.

Industrial

The industrial area of the Blackwell community is bounded by Maury Street, Commerce Road, Dinwiddie Avenue and 15th Street. In the process of making a determination of its longer range potential a field evaluation of the area was undertaken. The purpose was to determine its future competitiveness for industrial development using essentially eight criteria.

These criteria were accessibility, visibility, strategic location, attractiveness, safety, amount of vacant land resources, amount of vacant building resources, and compatibility with surrounding uses. The industrial area scored fairly high in the area of vacant land resources. However it ranked low in accessibility, visibility, and strategic location primarily because of a lack of direct highway access. The site ranked moderately in terms of site attractiveness and safety, but it ranked low again in the area of vacant building resources since it appeared that most building structures are in current use.

It also ranked moderately in terms of surrounding uses since it does abut an essentially residential neighborhood.

The result of the field survey suggested that despite significant expansion within the broader industrial market, the industrial area is not highly competitive in a metropolitan industrial market that is made up of not only the City of Richmond but also Chesterfield, Hanover, and Henrico Counties. For example, over the ten year period between 1984 and 1993, 383 new industries, 512 relocated industries, and 401 expanding industries created 18,855 new jobs and nearly \$2.8 billion of investment.

The lack of competitiveness of the industrial area might suggest the reprogramming of this site in the future for a different use. On the other hand, the area is in current use, even if it appears to have excess capacity, and our analysis indicates there is not sufficient demand for expanded housing and retail activities.

Given these realities the prudent strategy would be to continue to use the area for industrial or light manufacturing uses.

Concept Plan

This Concept Plan, as depicted by the exhibit on the following page, illustrates the essential design components of the revitalization strategy and conceptualizes the community's goals. The following design concepts are the basic ingredients essential to the revitalization strategy:

- Break down the community into smaller strategic areas by the creation of new centers and edges.
- Introduce new infill housing in neighborhoods that is sympathetic with the architectural characteristics of existing housing.
- Privatize selected public housing units.
- Increase single family land uses and home ownership opportunities throughout the community; decrease multi-family concentrations.
- Create a new image of the Blackwell community along edges and at gateways.
- Support the revitalization of the Hull Street Commercial Corridor as the primary retail/service amenity for the neighborhood.
- Concentrate neighborhood commercial uses along Hull Street.
- Create a new neighborhood center area of new and existing open space, recreation, school, and housing uses to provide a focal point for the community.
- Encourage linkages between all community facilities including schools, library, recreation facilities and open space amenities.
- Provide for the effective layout and use of existing recreation space.
- Maintain and support existing institutional uses within the community.

CONCEPT PLAN

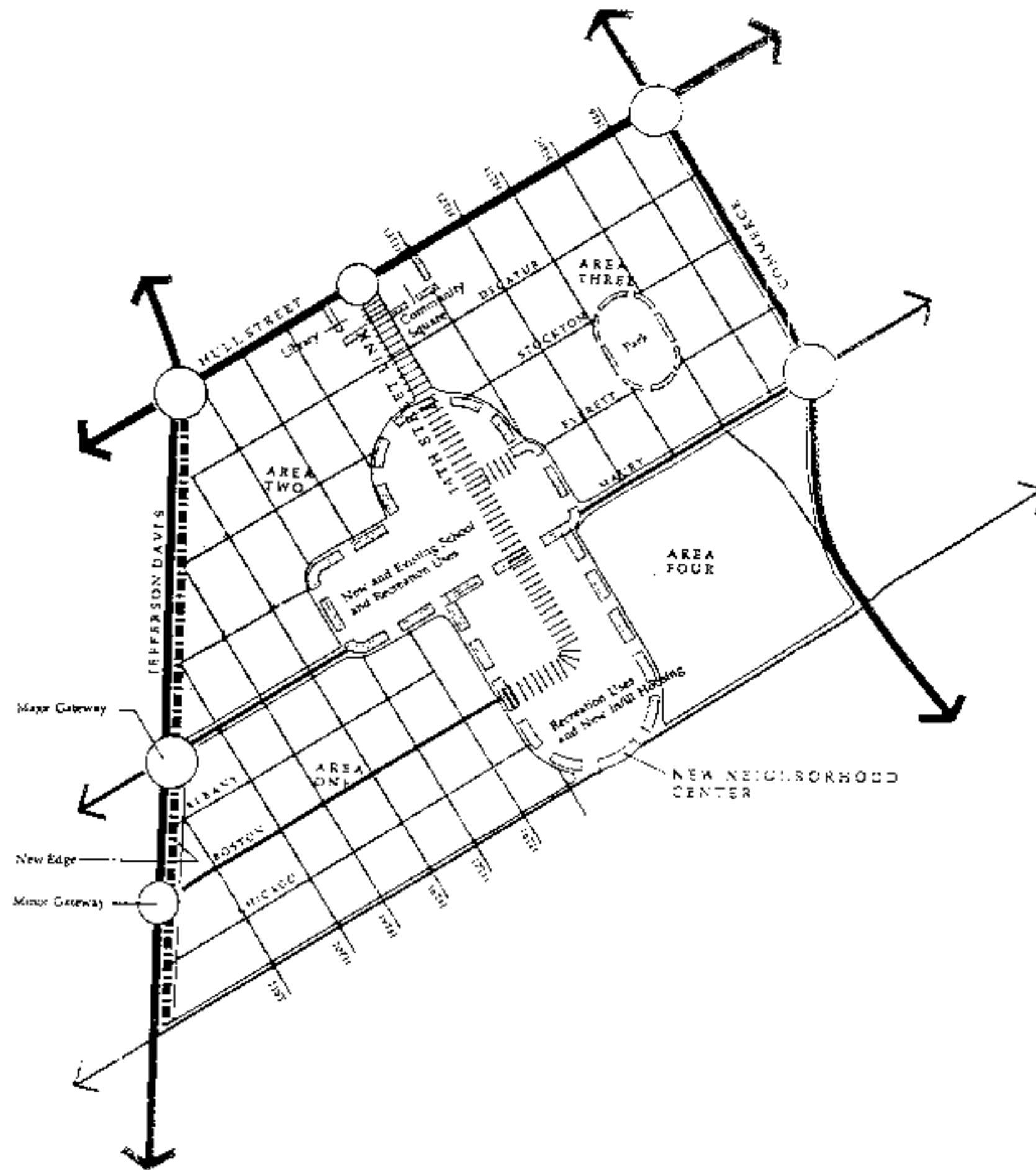
Exhibit 9

Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

DESIGN CONCEPTS

- Break down the community into smaller strategic areas by the creation of new centers and edges.
- Introduce new mid-rise housing in neighborhoods that is sympathetic with the architectural characteristics of existing housing.
- Privatize selected public housing units.
- Increase single family land use and home ownership opportunities throughout the community, decrease multi-family concentrations.
- Create a new fringe of the Blackwell community along edges and all gateways.
- Support the revitalization of the Hull Street Commercial Corridor as the primary retail service centers for the neighborhood.
- Concentrate neighborhood commercial uses along Hull Street.
- Create a new neighborhood center area of new and existing open space, recreation, school, and housing uses to provide a focal point for the community.
- Encourage linkages between all community facilities including schools, libraries, recreation facilities and open space amenities.
- Provide for the effective layout and use of a transit, pedestrian system.
- Attract and support existing institutions and uses within the community.

Hammer, Tyler, George Associates
C/T/S Architects and Planners
Abramson Associates, Inc.



Land Use Plan and Strategy

The objective of the land use plan is to allocate land uses in a manner that facilitates a "market creation strategy" for home ownership in the Blackwell community and to improve the overall image of Blackwell as an attractive residential neighborhood and to better define neighborhood character within the community. The Land Use Plan attempts at the same time to preserve the basic mixed-use character and structure of a true community so that residents can live, work, shop, recreate and be educated within Blackwell.

As a part of the land use plan process, three alternatives were developed. Each represented different ways that land in the Blackwell community could be allocated to help achieve the vision of the community. Several meetings with the Blackwell Planning Committee provided additional input leading to the creation of the preferred land use plan that was presented to the broader community.

The land uses proposed for the Blackwell neighborhood and their location are shown on the Land Use Plan on the following page. The following explanation of the land use plan breaks the neighborhood down into its constituent land use areas.

1. SFD

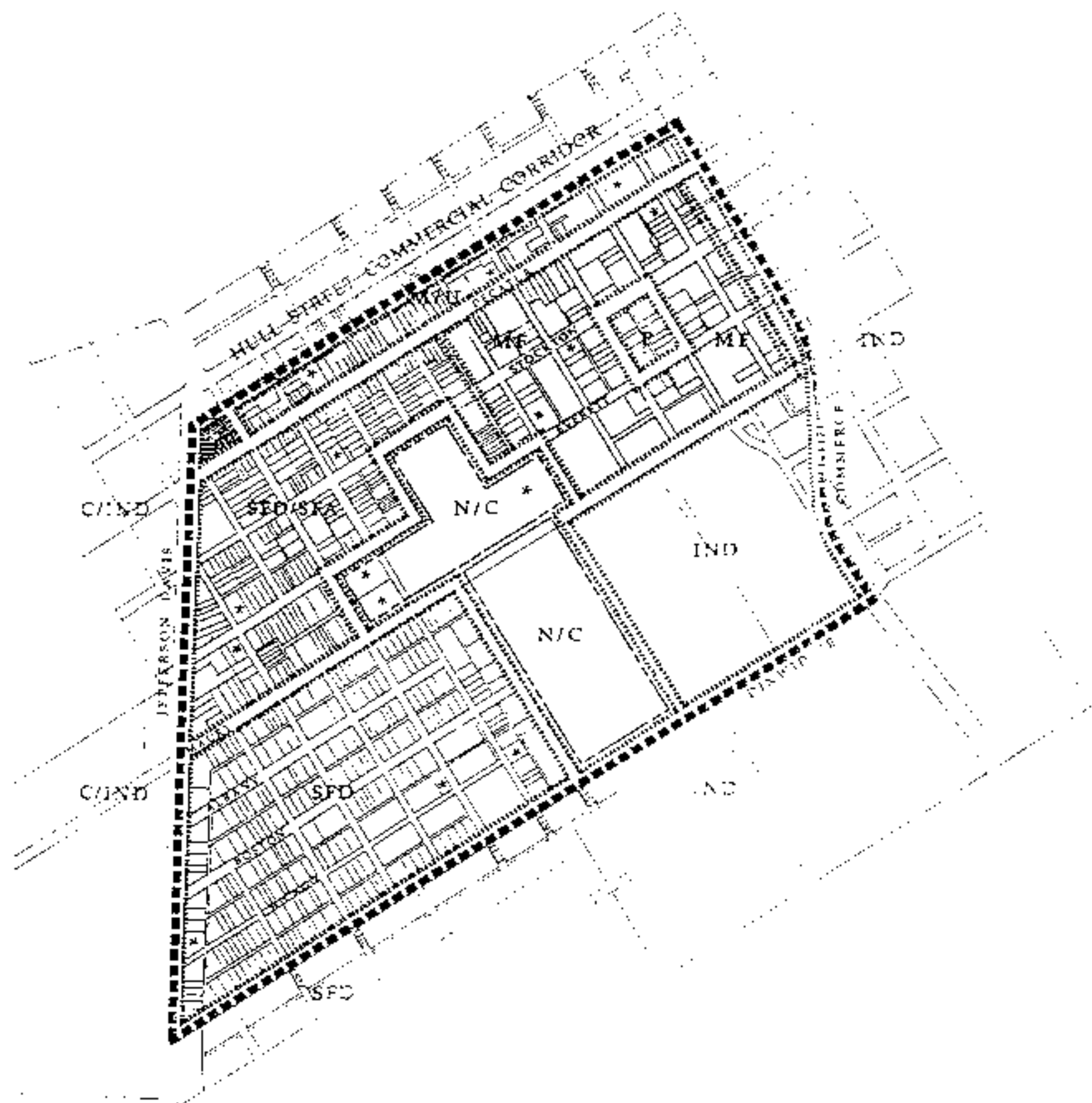
The location of this land use area is between 15th Street and Jefferson Davis Highway and Maury Street and Dinwiddie Avenue. This area is characterized by straight streets lined with single family dwellings. The quality and continuity of this housing results in a clearly distinguishable community character. This was deemed a strong positive feature by the community and one that should be supported and enhanced in future development.

The land use plan allocates the acreage within this area to the residential single family category. In order to achieve increased land allocations for single family housing there have been reductions in the amount of commercial space that is internal to the community. There also has been elimination of the commercial uses along Jefferson Davis Highway. These land resources have been reallocated to single family housing. However, if the State widens Jefferson Davis Highway to three lanes in the future causing the frontage parcels to become impractical for viable single family residential uses, a public greenway should be created along the Highway. This would achieve the neighborhood's objective of creating a new/improved image along Jefferson Davis Highway.

LAND USE PLAN

Exhibit 10

Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan



- SFD Single Family Detached
- SFD/SFA Single Family Detached/Attached
- ME Multi-Family
- M/U Mixed Use Area
- ME, SFA, SF;
- Institutional;
- Factory
- N/C New Neighborhood Center
- N/C Public and Open Space
Recreation
Institutional
- N/C Recreation
ME, SFA, SFD
- P Parks and Open Space
- IND Industrial
- C Commercial
- * Institutions
- R BRD - see legend p. 10

City of Blackwell, Georgia Association
of Architects and Planners
Council Associates, Inc.

While the SFD designation will not immediately result in changes to existing land uses, it will impact future development. Single family land uses are to be increased both by new development which should be in the form of single family detached dwellings or by the conversion of existing multi-family units into single family attached units. New construction can occur on existing vacant infill sites, such as that between 17th and 16th Streets and Chicago and Dinwiddie Avenues, or on sites created by the conversion of commercial parcels internal to the community or along Jefferson Davis Highway which are in a vacant or blighted state. Selected multi-family units owned and operated by RRHA should be targeted for modernization and privatization as single family attached dwellings. Units recommended for privatization are those within this land use area as well as the existing multi-family units on the south side of Dinwiddie Avenue.

2. SFD/SFA

The location of this land use area is located between 14th Street and Jefferson Davis Highway and between Maury and Decatur Streets and is also characterized by single family land uses. Smaller single family lots and more attached housing as well as some multi-family housing all exist. Lots within this area are generally in the 3,000 square foot range.

The land use plan allocates this acreage to the residential single family category. Similar to the SFD area, single family land uses have been increased by substantial reductions in the amount of commercial space that is internal to the community and along Jefferson Davis Highway. These land uses have been reallocated to the single family housing category. However, if the State widens Jefferson Davis Highway to three lanes in the future causing the frontage parcels to become impractical for viable single family residential uses, a public greenway should be created along the Highway. This would achieve the neighborhood's objective of creating a new/improved image along Jefferson Davis Highway. Smaller lot units are recommended in order for the new housing to be sympathetic to the existing housing stock. This new housing may be in the form of either detached or attached dwellings based upon market conditions and community objectives. However, this land use plan does not recommend any overall increase in density within this area.

3. Residential Multi-family

The multi-family use reflects the existing use that is intended to remain after the revitalization process has been completed. While an overall objective within all of the Blackwell community is to increase the single family land use acreage, the multi-family land use represents an important ingredient within the Blackwell community and one that should remain. The plan supports the concept of neighborhood community composed of a diversity of housing types and configurations. To that end, detached

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and attached single family dwellings within this area are also appropriate. The area of the site recommended for multi-family land use is located between 14th and Commerce Streets and between Maury and Decatur Streets.

The plan recommends that existing multi-family units in this area be targeted for modernization. Special attention should be paid to landscaping and facade improvements as a way to upgrade the image of the community and improve exterior amenities.

4. Parks and Open Space

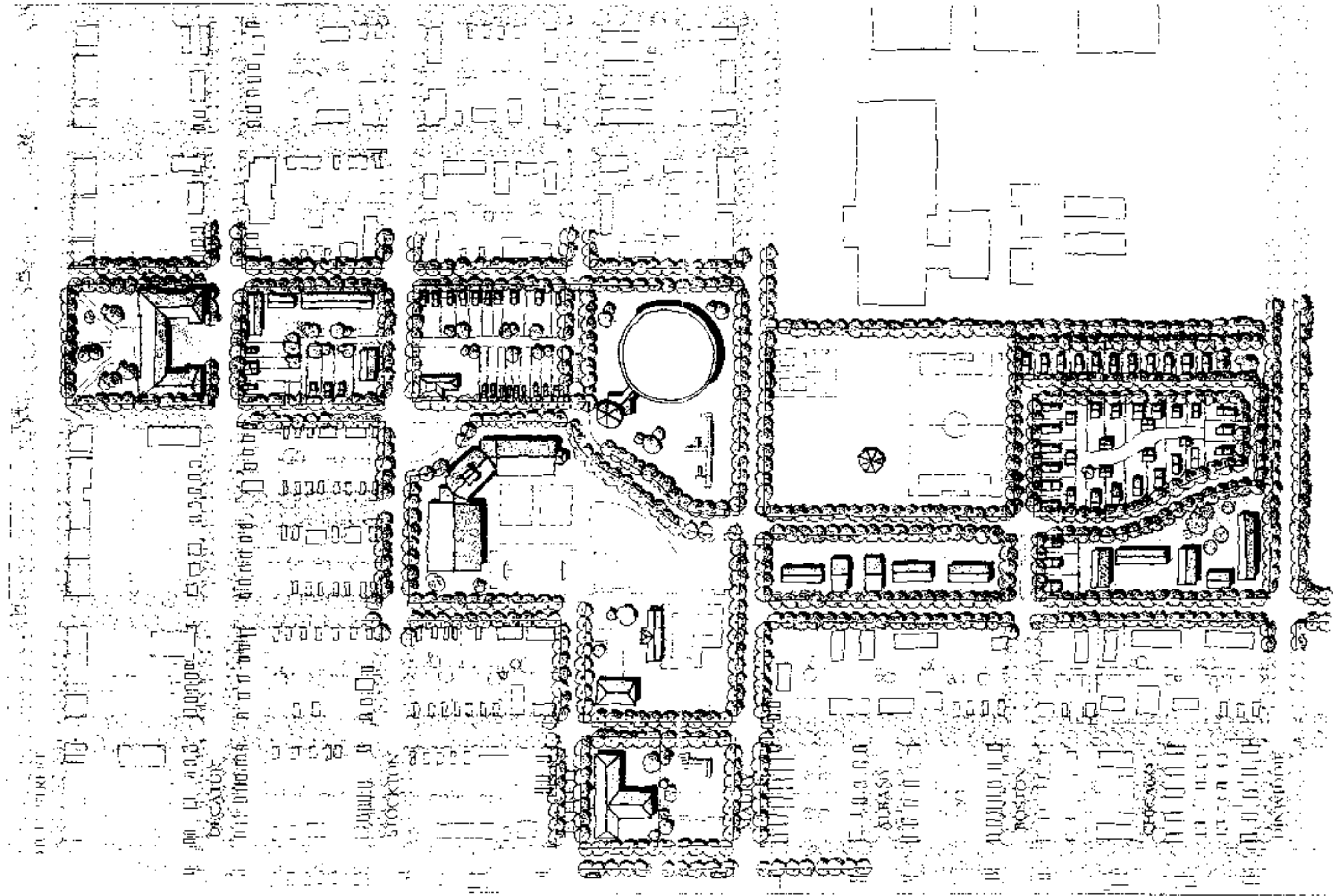
The plan recommends that a central park and open space be located between Everett and Stockton Streets and 10th and 11th Streets. Located towards the center of the multi-family area, this park will serve as a focus for community activity and provide for needed exterior amenities such as passive open space and active recreation areas for young children. This open space will also serve to offset the density which currently exists given the concentration of multi-family land uses.

5. Mixed-Use Area

This land use category is intended to provide an appropriate buffer between the commercial uses along Hull Street and the residential uses to the south. This land use area is located along Decatur Street and extends to the mid-point of the blocks between Decatur and Hull Street. This land use category will allow for all types of residential uses, including single family attached, detached and multi-family. This designation reflects the diversity of housing types which currently exist and will also permit uses such as Senior Housing which is proposed at Decatur Street in conjunction with a new community square adjacent to the existing library. The mixed-use area prohibits commercial uses since they would be incompatible to the houses on the south side of Decatur Street. While the intent of the mixed-use area is to support uses inherent to the Decatur Street corridor and therefore should be primarily residential, customer parking uses to support Hull Street businesses would be appropriate provided an attractive landscape buffer fronts Decatur Street. Institutional uses, including existing churches and the Manchester Courthouse are also allowed and supported by this designation.

6. New Neighborhood Center Area

The New Neighborhood Center Area provides for a mix of uses which will create a vibrant new center of activity for the Blackwell community. Located near the geographic center of the existing neighborhood planning area, this area of the site combines institutional, recreational, open space and residential land uses. The combination of recreation and school facilities within this new campus will realize the



Illustrative Plan of the New Neighborhood Center Area
Exhibit 11

community school" concept advocated by the community. The proposed illustrative plan demonstrates a possible layout for such an area.

The New Neighborhood Center Area is divided into two portions. The first, north of Maury Street, allows for institutional, recreational and open space uses. An approximately 14 acre parcel, this site currently contains an elementary school, a primary school, gym, bathhouse and pool. A new elementary school is to be constructed in this site area. Existing recreation facilities within this area are devoted to young children and should be in the future. This plan strongly recommends that detailed site plan of this area including all new and existing school and recreation facilities be developed and reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to ensure the most effective utilization of existing land area and a true integration between the various uses. The success of this new center will be a critical component in the successful revitalization of the Blackwell neighborhood.

A second area within the Neighborhood Center Area is established south of Maury Street and between 15th Street and the existing industrial land. The proposed land uses for this area include recreation and residential uses including single family detached, attached and multi-family. This portion of the site currently contains adult recreation facilities, substantial open space and a number of multi-family units. This area should operate as part of the New Neighborhood Center serving as a key-link between portions of the Blackwell community north and south of Maury Street. The expansion to the existing adult recreation facilities should be accommodated. The remainder of this site area may in the future offer opportunities for new single family housing. The plan also recommends that a detailed site plan of this area be reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to ensure the most effective integration of land uses.

7. Industrial

The land use plan makes no change in the industrial land use category since a compelling case could not be made for a change at this time. At present, the Blackwell community has more than sufficient land resources for both housing and commercial development. Because of these factors, it was concluded that the industrial land resources might be more productively used to generate jobs for the community. However, the 30-acre brick yard site between Maury and Dinwiddie is not the most residential-friendly use for the future of the neighborhood. Impacts such as noise, odor, truck traffic, and dust, should be mitigated to the greatest extent possible in order to provide "market conditions" necessary to achieve the stated residential land use objectives. If impacts persist as an impediment to achieving these objectives, the City should explore the possibility of relocating the use to a more appropriate industrial site in the vicinity.

A strip of land along Commerce Road between Maury and Decatur Streets is presently used for Philip Morris employee parking and therefore is considered accessory to industrial uses. Employee parking is a highly appropriate use given the

proximity to both residential and industrial uses. However, the industrial designation in the Plan is not intended to support primary industrial uses that are intensive and not compatible with the adjacent residential uses. The Plan does recommend that if the parking use should become abandoned in the future this area may offer opportunities for either resident or employee recreation (e.g. tennis, volleyball, street hockey, basketball, etc.) and hence become more compatible with residential uses.

8. Commercial (Community)

With relatively few exceptions, commercial designations have been eliminated from the residential portions of the community and along Jefferson Davis Highway. These changes have been made to facilitate the community's desire that neighborhood commercial uses should be concentrated in the Hull Street commercial corridor. It is also in recognition of the limited number of retail and service businesses that can be supported by the primary market area. The reallocation of commercial land uses should facilitate stronger demand for properties in the Hull Street Corridor.

However, one parcel along Decatur Street between Jefferson Davis Highway and 17th Street is proposed to remain commercial. Although such uses are not recommended in other locations along Decatur, the proximity of this site to a key intersection of Jefferson Davis Highway and Hull Street support its designation as a commercial use provided it is compatible with "Community Business District" standards for the City.

Additional Recommendations:

1. Infrastructure

Improvements and alterations to existing infrastructure are recommended in order to realize the concepts introduced in the Land Use Plan. Street and sidewalk repairs should be carried out throughout the neighborhood to create a street system of acceptable quality.

In order for the New Neighborhood Center Area to operate as a true center of activity, it should have strong links to all areas of Blackwell. The current discontinuity of the street grid along Everett Street and along 14th Street within the confines of the New Neighborhood Center Area currently prevent this. As a remedy, a recommendation is made to create either strong automobile or pedestrian connections along 14th Street between Hull Street and Boston Avenue and along Everett Street between 14th and

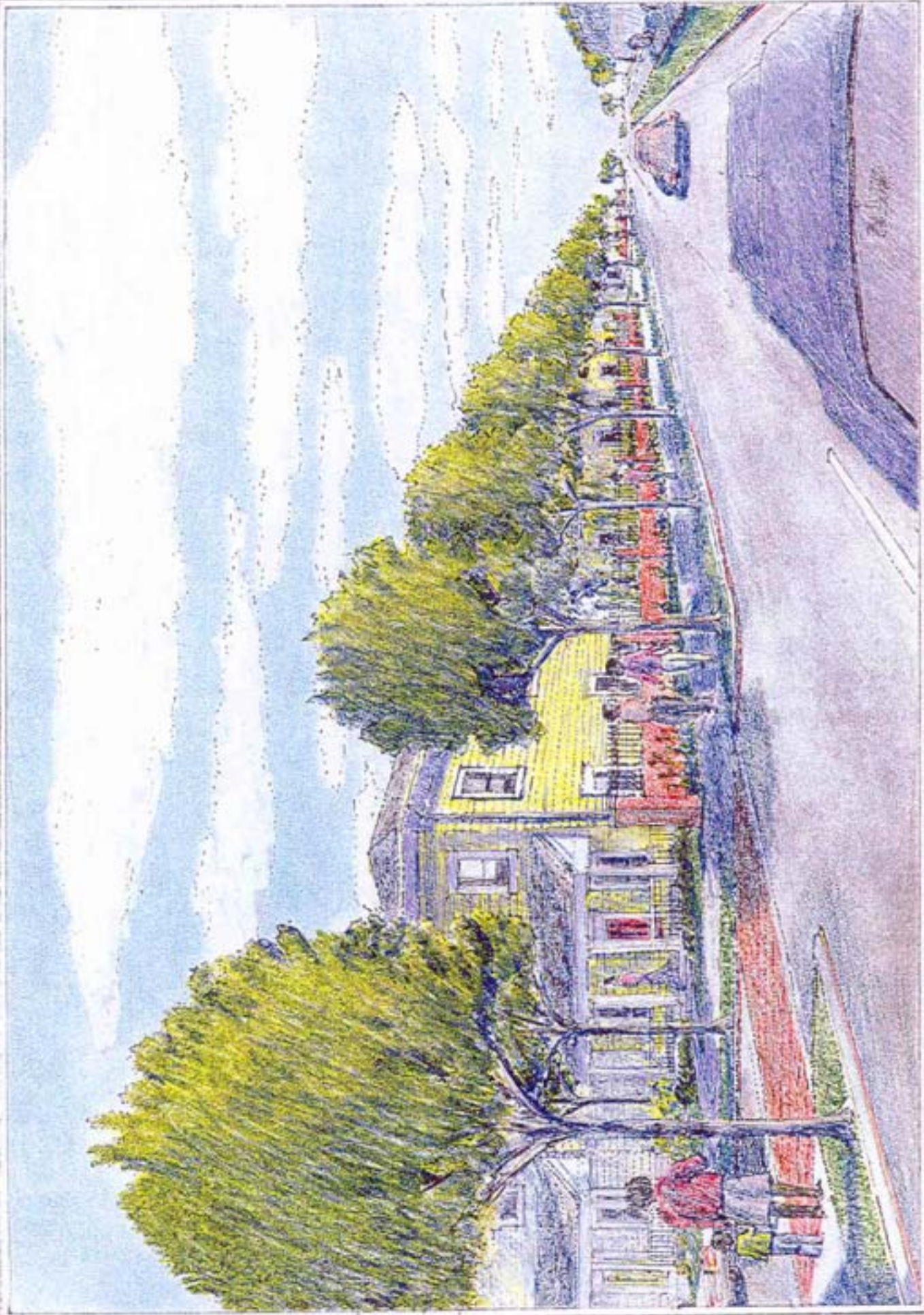
13th Streets within the area of the New Neighborhood Center Area. Improvements to 14th Street including street widening and brick sidewalks which were performed in conjunction with the new library should be extended to Maury Street. This will provide an important and appropriate access to the Neighborhood Center Area and an appropriately prominent entry for the new elementary school. A child could thus easily walk from school to the library or the recreation facilities. This strong circulation link will strengthen the impact and importance of all of these community facilities. The extension of 14th Street south of Maury Street would be necessary to accommodate new residential development in this half of the Neighborhood Center Area.

Improvements should also be made to Maury Street should adult recreation facilities be enlarged to the south. Such improvements should include the introduction of brick crossings and crosswalks and other features at key intersections. These will help slow down the considerable traffic on that street and provide better connections to the recreation facilities.

2. Landscape

The most important landscape improvement recommended as part of the plan is the introduction of new elements along Jefferson Davis Highway. The perspective drawing on the following page shows the proposed new wall and landscaping. The goal of these new landscape elements and the land use changes are to improve the image of the community from this important route. Such improvements to the image of the Blackwell community will be one of the elements which will help to support increased investment in single family housing.

Improvements should also be made in the quality of landscaping along public streets throughout the neighborhood. While street trees on the east-west avenues are present, those on the cross-streets are sparsely and erratically planted. Improvements should be made to provide for continuous and consistent tree planting along these routes.



Perspective view of new wall and landscaping at Jefferson Davis Highway
Exhibit 12

Housing and Revitalization Strategy

The housing and revitalization strategy consists of ten actions that are designed to stimulate private housing demand in the Blackwell Community. Restarting the private housing market is so fundamental to the future of the Blackwell community that housing cannot be separated from the overall revitalization effort. Separating housing out as a separate strategy might leave the impression that a private housing market could be revived despite other existing social and physical problems. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Ten actions, requiring implementation by a partnership between the community, city, and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) have therefore been proposed.

These actions are as follows:

1. Reduce Crime/Improve Social Climate
2. Eliminate Blighted Conditions
3. Create specific planning areas in the community designed to empower residents
4. Create Conservation/Redevelopment Area
5. Privatize a target group of public housing units
6. Modernize public housing units
7. Introduce Tenant Involvement Concepts to Public Housing
8. Develop New In-fill housing
9. Expand efforts to revitalize Hull Street Commercial Corridor
10. Introduce New Single Family Housing Development

Reduce Crime/Improve Social Climate

The reduction of crime and the improvement of the social climate is a precondition to the revitalization of the Blackwell Community. It is for this reason that the following are recommended:

Crime Reduction Actions

- Encourage active citizen involvement in addressing crime through the creation of community initiated crime prevention programs. This includes creating neighborhood watch programs, publicizing incidents of criminal activity, creating neighborhood safe houses where youth can go when threatened, distributing magnets, pins and stickers with public safety telephone numbers, and providing security checks in private residents and businesses.

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- Increase police visibility and communication with the community through the implementation of proactive policing measures. This includes encouraging police to use foot or bike patrols, to actively attend and participate in community events, to visit residents in their homes, and to maintain the confidentiality of persons reporting incidents.
 - Encourage youth to actively assist public safety officials to make the community safer through education programs and work opportunities in partnership with the Public Safety departments. This includes providing mini-planning committees for youth to assist in solving criminal activity problems in the Blackwell Community, create alternatives to school suspension programs such as police ride-along or community job volunteers.
 - Incorporate defensible space techniques in Urban Design Improvements. This may include selective street closings and better lighting throughout the community, and defined private spaces in public housing developments.
 - Improve quality of lighting throughout the community
 - Maintain police presence in community (2nd Precinct, Satellite Office, Bike Patrols)

Improve Social Climate

- Create Neighborhood Employment Council to work with surrounding employers to target jobs for unemployed neighborhood residents. The Neighborhood Employment Council should work in conjunction with existing manpower agencies such as Richmond Career Advancement Center.
- Educate local employers and residents of the benefits of the State Enterprise Zone program.
- Expand community educational and recreational opportunities. This includes the introduction of a fully programmed educational facility and a supervised recreation center.
- Support efforts of RRHA and Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities to provide family self-sufficiency programs aimed at adult education, parenting skills, and job preparedness.
- Implement a series of community festivals as a way of bringing people from different neighborhoods in the community together.
- Vigorously support community outreach efforts by local church institutions.

Eliminate Blighted Conditions

A key need to reestablish the private housing market in the Blackwell community is to "stop the bleeding." This means that the blighted conditions must be eliminated either through renovation or through demolition. Every effort should be made to save existing single family units, particularly those which reflect the historical character of the community. Because of the importance of these needs the following are recommended:

- The City should begin a stepped up code enforcement program for the private renter-occupied housing stock in the Blackwell community with stronger enforcement.
- The City or the RRHA should identify all units with a potential for preservation and identify a time frame and the resource requirements for renovation.
- The City or RRHA should identify all single family and multifamily housing units that are blighted beyond the potential for renovation.
- The City should allocate the funds to begin an immediate process of the demolition of those blighted units.

Create Specific Planning Areas in Community to Empower Residents

The Blackwell community is a fairly large and diverse community with people who have different needs and different issues. It is for this reason that it is difficult for the whole community to reach a consensus with regard to its direction. Since successful implementation is dependant upon reaching a consensus, it might be important to plan at a more micro level so that people with mutual interest can work on their agreed upon problems.

This suggests that the Blackwell Community be divided into three distinct planning subareas, one of which is predominately private single family, the second a transition area and the third predominately public housing. Organizing residents for implementation activities around these three conceptual areas will accomplish the following:

- Provide for more focus around mutual issues
- Create smaller interest groups for consensus building activities
- Reduce the depth of problems that each group has to address

The subarea planning groups would be coordinated by the Blackwell Planning Committee as a part of the overall implementation process.

Create Conservation Redevelopment Area for Blackwell Neighborhood

A number of programs are available from the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority to assist private homeowners or investors in the rehabilitation of their properties. These resources include the following:

- Home ownership Program for First Time Home Buyers
- Private Investor Rehabilitation Program
- Rehabilitation Loan Program for Owner Occupants
- Rehabilitation Grant Program for Disabled or Elderly Home Owners
- Home ownership Rehabilitation Supplemental Grants
- Housing Repair Grants for Low Income/Emergency Repairs
- Home Rental Rehabilitation Program for Investor Owners

In order to qualify for these programs, areas must be designated by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Agency as an RRHA Conservation Area. This is an important designation since these resources will be required to stabilize the housing stock in the Blackwell community. Because of this fact, the designation of all subareas with a significant amount of privately owned housing as RRHA Conservation Areas is recommended.

Privatize a Target Group of Public Housing Units

A major problem faced by the Blackwell Community in restarting market demand for private housing is the number of public housing units that exist in the community. While this plan does not seek to eliminate public housing from the community, it does seek to reduce the amount of public housing through a conversion of some of the units to the private market. To achieve this objective the following actions are recommended:

- The RRHA should identify a select group of public housing units in the Blackwell community that have the potential to be privatized given their current condition and location in the community.
- The RRHA should renovate those units in a manner that reflects the architectural character of similar units within the neighborhood.
- The RRHA should give a priority in the sale of the units to current public housing tenants who are looking for home ownership opportunities
- The RRHA should create incentives for the privatization process through the provision of special grants or loans to potential home owners.

It should be noted that RRHA will have to receive approval from HUD before there can be implementation of these recommendations.

Modernize Public Housing Units

Public housing units that are to remain in the community should be upgraded through the public housing modernization program. The modernization of these units should be designed to achieve the following:

- Exterior improvements to the building structures should be designed to make the architecture more compatible with the surrounding community.
- Removal of all signs or other identification suggesting that they are public housing units. In this regard an effort should be made to create diversity in the architecture of public housing units.
- Upgrading of infrastructure and landscaping.

Introduce Tenant Involvement Concepts to Public Housing

The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority should explore ways in which tenants of public housing can be more fully involved in the public housing modernization decisions and in maintaining the properties after modernization takes place.

Among the ideas considered should be the following:

- Creating Tenant Management Clusters for some of the multifamily units
- Hiring residents for property management positions
- Training and hiring residents to perform maintenance functions
- Organizing and hiring residents to perform security functions

Develop New In-fill Housing

The existing land use plan indicates that the Blackwell Community has a large supply of vacant lots. These vacant lots destroy the integrity of the community and provide opportunities for loitering and trash dumping. The plan proposes that these lots be redeveloped with in-fill housing. The introduction of new in-fill housing would accomplish the following:

- Test the market for new private housing in the Blackwell Community
- Restore the urban design framework of the community
- Attract new residents to the community
- Begin the process of private reinvestment
- Leverage City Public Investments and Increase the Tax Base

Expand Efforts to Revitalize Hull Street Commercial Corridor

Hull Street can be a great amenity for the Blackwell Community or it can become a substantial liability. What is required is a strong plan that recognizes that the corridor will not be a dominant retail and service corridor but can be a multi-use corridor linking the Old Manchester Neighborhood and Blackwell Community. It is in this context that the following is recommended:

- Support efforts to reduce the amount of retail and service space in the corridor to a level that can be reasonably supported by the market.
- Support the creation of parking spaces in locations that do not infringe on the Blackwell community.
- Encourage rezoning efforts that would permit the development of housing in some nodes within the corridor.
- Encourage the development of other uses such as medical practices, private office space, and church institutional uses within the corridor.
- Target businesses in apparel, household equipment and services, and specialty foods.

Introduce New Single Family Housing Development

The land use plan calls for the introduction of new single family housing development in the Blackwell community. This will be important as a means of strengthening the housing base of the community and also as confirmation that other implementation activities have worked to recreate demand for a substantial number of housing units. The following is therefore recommended.

- Monitor and evaluate plan activities over the next 10 years to assess effectiveness.
- If public housing privatization and in-fill houses are being successfully absorbed, conduct a housing market feasibility study in 2006 to determine the number and price range of units that should be introduced in market.

The successful implementation of these ten action areas will result in the revitalization of the Blackwell community. This is obviously easier said than done. Not only will the actions require significant public financial resources but they will require a high degree of leadership coming from the community. It will also require the coming together of a community where people are associated more with the kind of house they live in than the kind of people that they are. Nevertheless, experience has shown that all of these problems can be overcome with good leadership.

Section V. ORGANIZATIONAL PARTICIPATION AND IMPLEMENTATION



Section V. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The key to any revitalization plan is its ability to be readily implemented. And implementation is dependent upon available people and financial resources. The initial people resources can be provided by those persons and community based organizations that have been active in this process and in the community in general. Those organizations and their capabilities most likely to contribute to the implementation program are as follows.

Blackwell Planning Committee

This group has been created to guide development of the Blackwell Revitalization Plan and is committed to the revitalization of Blackwell. They represent a cross section of the various constituencies in Blackwell, including civic groups, tenant councils, residents, merchant associations, churches, and community development corporations. Also affected city agencies such as Schools and RRHA, should continue to be represented on the committee in an advisory capacity. This group, if formally and appropriately organized, should become the overseer of the Plan's implementation and general advocate for the neighborhood.

BBCDC

The Bainbridge & Blackwell Community Development Corporation is a not for profit organization with a mission of providing community based education, health and human services to families and residents of South Richmond in a manner that is comprehensive, accessible, and cost effective.

Imani Intergenerational CDC

Imani is a private, non-profit organization committed to a holistic approach to human service in the Blackwell community. This may include, but is not limited to, housing development, job creation and training, education, economic development, and social services. The broad goal is to establish and maintain a healthy neighborhood that is a stable, self-maintaining place with long term residents and viable businesses and that is a continuing attraction for new households and entrepreneurs. The organization (IMANI) has strong ties to the Blackwell community and has recently undertaken the development of a medical center on Hull Street in conjunction with current commercial revitalization efforts. They also have the potential to play an even stronger role in the community's affordable housing programs as long as their capacity can be strengthened in this area.

SCDHC

Another CDC which has been active in the Old South District is the Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation (SCDHC). SCDHC was incorporated in 1988 as a non-profit community development corporation. Their mission is to improve the quality of life for those families and individuals who have been disenfranchised and subject to substandard living conditions in the Old South District area. They have embarked on a comprehensive strategy that includes affordable housing development and economic development. Their focus and capacity exists primarily in providing affordable housing opportunities for low-moderate income homeowners through new construction and rehabilitation. They are also developing a business incubator program in conjunction with commercial revitalization efforts on Hull Street. They intend to build partnerships within Blackwell to implement the community development initiatives they have already begun in adjacent communities.

Virginia Community Development Loan Fund (VCDLF)

VCDLF administers a micro-enterprise loan program for entrepreneurial businesses in the Old South District. They require borrowers to enroll in their business training courses that provide the technical assistance to improve the business planning and organization skills of the borrowers. They have been established since 1995 and are located on Hull Street.

Private Corporations

Four major corporations are located in close proximity to Blackwell which include Philip Morris (Commerce Road), Crestar Bank (Semmes Avenue), Overnight Transportation (Semmes Avenue), and James River Brick Company (Maury Street). These corporations have a major impact on Blackwell just as the neighborhood has on them. They have the ability to bring much needed people and financial resources to the Blackwell community to implement and support revitalization activities. Specifically, they can bring financial resources, organizational resources, job training programs to facilitate the specific job needs, and employment opportunities for present and future Blackwell residents.

Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority

RRHA, as manager of all the public housing units in Blackwell, plays an integral role in the revitalization plan through their initiatives to improve public housing conditions and therefore, its impact on the rest of the community. In addition, they are the agency responsible for implementation of the City's conservation and redevelopment plans which will be critical in bringing the plan to fruition.

Community Development

As the responsible agency for developing the Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan, Community Development should continue to coordinate implementation of the plan with all other City administration and with the community. Also, Community Development will facilitate all land use and zoning changes contemplated under the plan.

Office of Economic Development

Their role will revolve around the retention and creation of new businesses and job opportunities in the neighborhood. In addition to their city-wide bank participation loan and micro-loan programs, Economic Development's primary revitalization role in Blackwell will be through the continued administration of the Hull Street Commercial Area Revitalization Effort (CARE) program and the South Enterprise Zone program, of which a portion of Blackwell is located in.

Public Works

Their responsibility is all the public improvements within Blackwell. This includes the public streets, rights of way and alleys. Any improvements to or within these public areas will require their input and support.

Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities

This department is responsible for maintaining operation of the recreational facilities (e.g., pool, gymnasium, tennis courts, etc.) and the programs they operate out of the community center. They currently maintain an underutilized large tract of land that is partially vacant with some facilities. Their role in the revitalization process should be to identify the community's facility/program needs and develop more structured recreational programs for neighborhood youth, integrate facilities/programs into the building of the new Blackwell elementary school, and undertake a more efficient use of their land.

Public Schools

They are responsible for maintaining and operating the Blackwell elementary schools (Model and Primary) located in the center of the community. They have identified the need to build a new elementary school in Blackwell and should work closely with the community residents and Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities on creating a multi-purpose educational, recreational, and civic resource for the community.

Strategies For Implementing The Revitalization Plan

The following strategies (programs) are proposed to serve as the means to achieve the revitalization of the Blackwell neighborhood. They include:

Conservation/Rehabilitation/Infill

This strategy would fulfill the need to begin an extensive program that focuses on housing rehabilitation and infill new construction. Because of the number of vacant/boarded houses that are feasible for rehabilitation, the amount of owner-occupied housing that is in poor condition, and the number of vacant lots, a housing rehabilitation and infill program must be undertaken to complement more aggressive redevelopment and clearance strategies. The primary organizations necessary to implement this strategy would be RRHA, Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation (SCDHC), and Imani CDC.

First, establishment of a Blackwell Conservation Area by the RRHA would make the area eligible for low-interest long term loans to existing homeowners and grants to existing senior citizen and handicapped homeowners. The Conservation Area designation would also permit RRHA to acquire blighted property for rehabilitation or new construction purposes. Initial focus of the Conservation Area should be directed to those areas of the neighborhood that have the strongest single-family and homeownership characteristics such as Area 1 (south of Maury). This area is also ideal because of the number of scattered site public housing duplex units that could ultimately be converted to owner-occupancy and several blighted private multi-family developments that could be acquired, and where appropriate, transferred to private developers. Area 2 (north of Maury) should be assessed as well to be included in the Conservation Area.

Secondly, SCDHC and Imani CDC should begin to implement a housing rehabilitation program for affordable homeownership in the Decatur Street area in order to achieve a consolidated area of rehabilitated homes in which to make a major impact on the area. SCDHC and Imani should initiate a partnership (via a memorandum of agreement) to make an even greater impact on the area since SCDHC has the capacity to begin housing development activities immediately and Imani has several properties in need of assistance. Housing activities on Decatur Street would be complementary to the economic development activities occurring on Hull Street and proved an enhanced edge for Hull Street. Focusing initially on Decatur Street is important to "stop the bleeding" that is primarily attributable to the decline of Hull Street. Decatur Street also comprises some of the most historic homes in Blackwell since it was part of the original boundary of Manchester. In addition, the new infill and rehabilitated housing can provide critical mass needed to make a senior housing development attractive between Decatur and Hull as envisioned in the plan. And with assistance from RRHA through

the acquisition of vacant parcels and vacant/boarded-up houses that may be encumbered by defective title or back taxes, SCDHC and Imani CDC can initiate a program of infill housing throughout the Conservation Area and in particular, Area 2 which has the most vacant parcels. **The Plan recommends that the top priority within the conservation strategy should be reserved for increasing homeownership opportunities (either existing, new, or first-time) so that a better balance between single-family and multi-family uses can be achieved.**

Because of the present uncertainty about the City's ability to adequately commit funding to a new Conservation Area, it is recommended that Section 108 Residential Rehabilitation Loan Program funding also be targeted for Area's 1 and 2 so that the momentum of the revitalization process does not stall. This program, administered by RRHA and the Department of Community Development, provides low cost financing housing rehabilitation for homeowners and acquisition of deteriorated single-family housing for rehabilitation. The moneys used in this program are borrowed against the future allocations of CDBG funds to the City and must be repaid. Targeting substantial Section 108 funds to the area would mitigate the political difficulty in creating and funding a new conservation area with CDBG/HOME moneys. Also, the City should submit a proposal that includes the Blackwell area for HUD's "Homeownership Zone" economic development initiative program. This could provide up to \$10 million of grants matched 1-for-1 with Section 108 funds that can be applied to homeownership activities and economic development initiatives. (Provide number of houses that will require rehab assistance or infill possibilities.) It is projected that over the next 15 years, 125 single-family units should be targeted for substantial rehabilitation or infill and 125 units for minor-moderate rehabilitation.

Public Housing Redevelopment and Modernization

There are currently 438 public housing units scattered throughout Blackwell that have, over the last 20 years, severely depressed the economic value of private property in the area. While the buildings are in decent to good condition, it is inconceivable that the revitalization of Blackwell could ever be successful or meaningful without aggressively addressing this issue. To that end, RRHA has applied to HUD's HOPE VI program for \$30 million to demolish, replace, renovate, convert for homeownership, and modernize all of the public housing units in Blackwell. This also could include acquisition and demolition of 100 privately owned dilapidated units. The importance of this type of intervention cannot be overstated too much. The key to Blackwell's rebirth is its ability to return value to private property and homeowners to the area. The HOPE VI proposal represents the best opportunity to do this in the following ways:

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- Demolition of 74 public housing units would be replaced with an equal number of units, half for homeownership and half for public housing. This effort should be concentrated where public housing conditions are the worst, or in this case, Area 3, near Decatur Street.
 - Rehabilitation of 100 public housing units for sale to public housing residents and others who are income eligible. Conversion of the "duplex" units for homeownership would be ideal in Area 1 where homeownership levels are already the strongest and where scattered site units are prevalent
 - Rehabilitation of 264 public housing units for continued occupancy as public housing. A top priority of this effort should be to renovate those units in a manner that reflects the architectural character of similar single-family housing in the neighborhood.

Also, as equally important components of any public housing redevelopment program, is the need to address job creation, employment training, and the full range of supportive services needed to return public housing residents to the work force. RRHA's nationally recognized business and education training programs are the keys to implement such a comprehensive strategy.

Redevelopment and New Housing

As part of the Conservation Area designation, a redevelopment component should be added to the area along Jefferson Davis Highway between Dinwiddie and Decatur. It is here where conservation will not be able to remove the blighted conditions and where major intervention is necessary if the image of Blackwell is to change for the better and attract working families. Redevelopment in this corridor could indirectly take place with the widening of Jefferson Davis Highway to three lanes in the future thus necessitating the creation of public greenway instead of housing. Redevelopment, as implemented by either the RRHA or the State indirectly, should be viewed as a tool to eliminate severe conditions of physical and environmental blight and thereby remove influences that are obstacles to a conservation program and revitalization efforts of the larger community. This strategy involves more substantial lead time to implement recognizing the complications of relocating businesses, assembling properties, procuring a developer, securing funding, and making sure market conditions are right. The priority of transforming Jefferson Davis Highway from general commercial to single-family residential should be viewed as a top priority as long as this area remains an impediment to the marketing of Blackwell. The Broomfield Church at Chicago Avenue should not be included in the redevelopment area.

As market conditions allow, new single-family housing development will be crucial to the overall revitalization. Major opportunity sites have been identified not only

along Jefferson Davis Highway, but also in the New Neighborhood Center Area south of Maury and in the block bounded by Dinwiddie, Chicago, 16th, and 17th Streets. While smaller infill opportunities exist, these represent major investments that could create brand new identities, while increasing property values and homeownership levels.

Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

A meaningful sustainable level of capital improvements is critical to the success of the Blackwell revitalization effort. Without investment of public funds for the upgrade of roads, sidewalks, curbs and gutters, public spaces, lighting, and streetscapes, there is little reason to expect property owners or financial institutions to invest significant funds of their own to upgrade property. Funding should be provided for infrastructure that has been deferred or neglected and to make new improvements that will help facilitate revitalization of the neighborhood in coordination with ongoing housing and commercial revitalization activities. CIP funding for Blackwell should be included for 14th Street widening/landscaping/extension, brick yard buffering, neighborhood-wide sidewalk/curb/gutter repair or replacement, increased landscaping at gateways and throughout neighborhood where appropriate, new elementary school, expanded recreational facilities, renovation of the gymnasium, central park in Area 3, lighting, decorative privacy wall and landscaping along Jefferson Davis, and special paving treatments at Maury and 14th Street

Code Enforcement

Enforcement of housing, building, and environmental city codes is an ongoing city wide program that is used to assure that a minimum level of maintenance to properties will occur. This can be an effective tool when coordinated with programs of conservation and rehabilitation to encourage recalcitrant property owners to participate in the rehabilitation process. While the City is not anticipated to be staffed sufficiently to conduct a concentrated program of code enforcement over an extended period of time, selected code enforcement to compliment the housing efforts of CDCs or RRHA is appropriate. Also, an organized effort by the Planning Committee to prioritize the worst properties for attention could be undertaken immediately and presented to the City for assistance. Otherwise, a subcommittee should be responsible to work with the City identifying building code and environmental control violations on an ongoing basis

Marketing Strategy

The successful marketing strategy for the Blackwell community is one that will chronicle the efforts of the community in reducing crime, removing the blighted conditions and improving the social climate. There can be only one theme for this strategy: "Life is getting better in the Blackwell community." Obviously this message

can be communicated in a number of different ways including the print media, radio and television, community meetings, and through word of mouth of residents of the community.

The point to be made here, however, is that there can be no successful marketing strategy without successful actions on the part of the city, RRHA and the community to improve conditions in the Blackwell community.

The initial targets of the marketing strategy must be residents of the Blackwell community. It is this group of people who are making decisions everyday to either leave the community or stay. When residents who are property owners or renters leave the area, it reduces the amount of purchasing power in the area, the number of households and population, and continues the downward spiral.

The residents of Blackwell must come to see that things can and have changed for the better in Blackwell before this message will be received positively by outside parties.

The second target of the marketing strategy should be the people who guide the resource allocation decisions of city and state government and the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Agency. While relatively small in number the decisions they make with regard to the allocation of resources will be critical to the success of the Blackwell Plan implementation effort. They need to know that there is a serious and genuine commitment from the community to improve itself as demonstrated by organization and leadership.

The third target of the marketing strategy should be the broader community. It is this target that will ultimately make a difference in the success of the strategy in creating new and substantial demand for private housing in the Blackwell community. The community should use every tool that is available to them to get the message out to the broader community that life is getting better living in the Blackwell community.

In order for the strategy to be effective two things must happen. First something positive must be accomplished, and second, someone must tell the world about it. Developing a marketing capacity is all about how the Blackwell community will organize to tell the world of their accomplishments. The following tools for use in the marketing strategy are recommended:

- Press Releases
- Press Conference
- Press Background Briefings
- Community News Letter

Community Organization

Community organization is the strategy that provides the energy and cohesiveness that must exist if any neighborhood expects to undertake a successful revitalization effort. An ineffective, poorly organized, poorly managed community organization will doom any revitalization program. An effective community organization is the conduit for fulfillment of commitments to the community. There are various constituencies represented in the Blackwell community that will need to come together immediately in order to carry out the implementation of the plan and capitalize on the momentum generated by the planning process. The purpose of the organization would be to foster a sense of unity (i.e., "we are all in this together") and become the primary advocate for improving the neighborhood. A diverse group of homeowners, tenants, churches, merchants, long-time residents, new residents, and CDCs from Blackwell have been working since January, 1996 on the Blackwell Planning Committee to guide the development of the Revitalization Plan. While this group must still formally organize themselves with a mission, officers, bylaws, etc., their composition is ideal to unite all Blackwell and represent the neighborhood in the best interests of all stakeholders in the community. If there is ever going to be any progress for the betterment of Blackwell, all the various constituencies, including the City, must become partners in Blackwell's revitalization. The vision, goals and strategies in the Plan are the Committee's road map as they work towards meeting their objectives.

Economic Development

Aside from the physical changes proposed for the Blackwell Neighborhood substantial changes need to take place in the economics of the community. People in the community who are gainfully employed need expanded employment opportunities, people who are not employed need job opportunities. The local CDC's can play a major role in this process. The plan envisions major implementation roles for the Imani CDC, the Bainbridge Blackwell CDC, and the Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation. In addition, the plan anticipates the development of a Neighborhood Employment Council as a partnership between the Blackwell Planning Committee and local neighborhood corporations and the continuation of enterprise zone and CARE efforts by the Office of Economic Development.

SCDHC and Imani CDC can play a major role in in-fill housing in the community and with the commercial revitalization process on Hull Street. In developing projects the CDC should attempt to the maximum extent possible generate job opportunities for local residents in the construction or maintenance of developments. Because the Imani CDC is affiliated with a major church institution in the community, it can play a leadership role in linking physical development activities with human development needs. The Imani CDC has demonstrated this capacity already with its undertaking of

the Hull Street Medical Center (under construction). The commercial development is a partnership between Imani, private sources, RRHA, and the City. The medical center will assist Imani CDC in providing medical services to senior citizens and the children in its affiliated day care facility and bolster Hull Street's revitalization. In addition, the Virginia Community Development Loan Fund, which is affiliated with SCDHC, can play a substantial role in the expansion of micro-enterprise opportunities and training for these jobs.

The Bainbridge/Blackwell CDC has already established a niche in human development. Through its Broomfield Learning Center it now operates a Summer Program, After School Program, an Excel Program for 35 middle school and 35 high school participants, and the Adult Learning Program. In addition, the learning center also conducts an Early Childhood Education Program and a Computer Literacy Program. This human development program has demonstrated its ability to attract support from the private sector and should be utilized by the community to foster a stronger linkage with the private sector community.

The Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation has already demonstrated substantial housing development capability. Because of this experience, it can make a substantial contribution to housing development in the Blackwell Neighborhood. Since a substantial amount of housing rehabilitation and development needs to be undertaken these activities can generate jobs for which residents of Blackwell can be trained. These activities should be initiated through a working partnership among the three CDC's working closely with the Blackwell Planning Committee.

The proposed Neighborhood Employment Council should begin to work immediately with the Bainbridge Blackwell CDC to transition students from the Excel Program who are not going on to college into jobs. In addition, it should be the key neighborhood actor in helping welfare recipients to find good jobs with sufficient benefits. The new Welfare Reform Bills at both the National and State levels demands that local communities create capacities to assist residents in making this transition.

Monitoring and Evaluation Process

The monitoring and evaluation plan for the Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan consist of four components. These components include a timetable of actions, benchmarks, six month evaluations, and corrective action reports. Each of these components should be used to monitor the implementation process and to assure that the activities are completed on schedule.

Time Table of Actions

The Time-Table of Actions represents the implementation plan. This plan consists of an action item, the designation of a responsible agency, and an action date to approve the process. It also includes an implementation date to complete the process, cost benefit evaluation criteria if applicable, estimated cost and the financial resources necessary.

This proposed implementation schedule calls for a program implementation period of 15 years from September 1996 to September 2010. Although each of the components can be implemented over a shorter period, this time table allows for some slippage in the implementation schedule. Slippage can occur because of events that are beyond the city's control or because of the lack of financial resources to implement the plan.

Following is a table of the major action items and the scheduling of the activity.

Table 11. Time-Table of Actions

Action Item	Responsible Agency	Date to Implement	Cost/Benefit Evaluation Criteria	Estimated Cost	Financial Resources
Plan Adoption	Planning Commission	5/96-9/99	N/A	N/A	N/A
Planning Coordinator	BPC DCCD	12/96	Formal Organization	N/A	N/A
Improve Social Climate	BPC BBCDC RPD RRHA	5/97 Ongoing	Reduction in Crime, Lower unemployment, improved test scores	\$100,000	CDBG HUD/DCJ
Eliminate Blighted Conditions	DCCD	1/97-6/98	Number of blighted units demolished	\$500,000	City Private
Create Conservation/Redevelopment Area	RRHA	6/97-6/98	Performance vs. Plan	\$50,000	City/CDBG
Capital Improvements (CIP)	RRHA DOPW RPRCF RPS	5/98-6/2003	Performance vs. Plan	\$668,000	CDBG C-P Funds
Privatize Public Housing	RRHA HUD	6/97-9/99	Performance vs. Plan	\$1,000,000	Hope VI Private Debt and Equity
Modernize Public Housing	RRHA HUD	6/98-6/2002	Performance vs. Plan	\$6,750,000	Public Housing Modernization Fund
Tenant Involvement	RRHA Tenant Council	Ongoing	Performance vs. Plan	N/A	N/A
Housing Rehabilitation and Infill	RRHA Imani CDC SCDHC	6/97-6/2005	Performance vs. Plan	\$3,000,000	CDBG/HOME 108 Loans VMDA
Introduce New Single Family	RRHA SCDHC Imani CDC	5/2006-5/2010	Performance vs. Plan	\$9,000,000	Private Debt and Equity VHDA CDBG/HOME

DCCD- Department of Community Development
 RRHA- Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority
 Imani CDC- Imani Community Development Corporation
 HUD- Department of Housing and Urban Development
 SCDHC- Southside Community Development and Housing Corporation
 BPC- Blackwell Planning Committee
 BBCDC- Barbidge/Backwell CDC
 UPRW- Department of Public Works
 RPD- Richmond Police Department
 RPRCF- Richmond Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities
 RPS- Richmond Public Schools
 VHDA- Virginia Housing Development Authority

Plan Benchmarks

Within each of the major activities there are subsets of activities which are designed as benchmarks to move the process forward. Below is a description of activities and specific subtask or benchmarks within each with an estimated date for completion. As in the case with the general time schedule these are schedule guidelines which are to serve only as a base to monitor the implementation process.

- **Plan Adoption.** A key policy requirement is the adoption of the Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan. While the plan has already been presented to the both the community and Planning Commission more time is needed before formal adoption by the Planning Commission and City Council takes place. Therefore, we have recommended a formal adoption not later than November of 1996. This should allow sufficient time for review and discussion.
- **Planning Coordination.** The plan recommends that the overall implementation activity be coordinated by the Blackwell Planning Committee. This is a group of people representing homeowners, tenants, churches, merchants, and CDC's in the Blackwell Community who have worked with this planning process since January of 1996. This group must now formally organize and be recognized by the city as the designated group to make decisions for the community. Formal organization should take place on or before March 1, 1997.
- **Improve Social Climate.** The plan calls for a number of initiatives designed to improve the social climate of the Blackwell Neighborhood. All of these are Phase I activities and should be implemented during the first two years of the implementation effort. These activities and their recommended implementation dates are as follows:

	Completion Date
1. Create Neighborhood Employment Council	9/1997
2. Educate Employers on EZ Benefits	6/1997
3. Expand Educational and Recreational Opportunities	6/1997- 9/2002
4. Support Outreach efforts by Churches	On-going

-
- **Conservation/Preservation Activities.** The plan calls for the elimination of blighted conditions through the following actions:
 1. **Stepped Up Code Enforcement** On-going
 2. **Identify units to be preserved** 6/1997
 3. **Identify Housing Units to be demolished** 6/1997
 4. **Demolition of blighted housing units** 6/1998

 - **Undertake Capital Improvements**
 1. **Conduct Infrastructure Assessment** 6/1998
 2. **14th Street Widening and Improvements** 6/1999
 3. **Construction of Low Wall along Jeff Davis Hgwy.** 6/2003
 4. **Construction of Park between Stockton and
Everette** 6/2002
 5. **Tree Planting on North South streets** 5/2001
 6. **Brick Crossings and Crosswalks** 6/2001
 7. **Street and Sidewalk Repair** 6/2001
 8. **Lighting Improvements** 6/1999
 9. **Signage at Gateways** 6/1998
 10. **Senior Housing** 6/1999
 11. **New Community Square** 6/1998
 12. **Build New Elementary School** 9/1998
 13. **New Recreation Facility & Renovations** 9/1999

 - **Create Conservation/Redevelopment Area for
Blackwell Neighborhood** 9/1998

 - **Privatize a Target Group of Public Housing**
 1. **Select a Target Group of Public Housing Units** 6/1997
 2. **Renovate Units to make them competitive for sale** 9/1998
 3. **Give Priority to Current Public Housing Residents** 6/1997
 4. **Provide Special Grants or Loans** 9/1998

 - **Modernize Public Housing Units**
 1. **Exterior Improvements to Building Structures** 6/2002
 2. **Removal of Public Housing Images
(Stenciled addresses)** 6/1998
 3. **Upgrade infrastructure and Landscaping** 6/2001
-

-
- **Introduce Tenant Involvement Concepts to Public Housing**
 - 1. Creating Tenant Management Clusters On-going
 - 2. Hiring Residents for Property management Positions On-going
 - 3. Training and Hiring residents for Property Maintenance Functions On-going
 - 4. Organizing and Hiring Residents for Security Functions On-going

 - **Develop New In-Fill Housing** 6/98-6/2005

 - **Introduce New Single Family**
 - 1. Conduct Housing Market Feasibility Study 6/2006
 - 2. If positive, develop housing 6/2007 /Ongoing

Evaluation Process

The plan proposes that there be a formal evaluation and monitoring process designed to assure that the plan for the Blackwell Neighborhood is carried out on schedule. The plan, as outlined, seeks a formal start with the adoption of the plan in November of 1996. However, specific components of the plan will require financial resources that may not presently be available to the city. Consequently, we anticipate that formal approval for specific aspects of the plan may be deferred until the financial resources to support those activities have been identified.

In any case, the plan requires that a formal review procedure be put in motion to review the actual accomplishments versus the proposed plan. This review process would take place within the Department of Community Development. Each action item in the plan would be reviewed. The responsible party or organization would require a status report showing if the target benchmarks have been reached and whether the activity is on schedule or behind the schedule. If any activity is behind schedule, a Corrective Action Report would be required.

The Corrective Action Report would show the actions that need to be taken to put the activity back on schedule. This would include City Council, administrative, or technical actions that need to take place to move the activity forward.

Appendices



Appendix A: List of Interviews

The following is a list of interviews that were conducted during the Blackwell planning process. Generally, the consultants interviewed stakeholders and others that were not anticipated to actively participate in the process, but play a significant role in the neighborhood.

Bainbridge Blackwell CDC

City Manager's Office

First Baptist Church

Imani Intergenerational CDC

Richmond Department of Community Development

Richmond Office of Economic Development

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (Public Housing & Community Development)

Southside Housing and Community Development Corporation

Southside Planning Committee

Appendix B: City-Wide Socio-economic Statistics

Table 1. Population, 1980-1990

	1980	1990	Change 80-90
Gender			
Female	119,776	110,261	-8%
(% of total)	55%	54%	
Male	99,340	97,795	-2%
(% of total)	45%	46%	
Race			
Black	112,357	112,127	-0.2%
(% of total)	57%	57%	
White/Other	106,857	90,934	-15%
(% of total)	49%	43%	
Total Population	219,214	203,056	-7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

Table 2. Age, 1980-1990

	1980	1990	Change 80-90
Age			
Under 5 years	13,965	13,258	-5.1%
(% of Total)	6.4%	6.0%	
5 to 9 years	11,900	12,281	+3.1%
(% of Total)	5.9%	5.6%	
10 to 14 years	10,139	13,825	+26.7%
(% of Total)	5.0%	6.2%	
15 to 19 years	13,126	18,605	+29.4%
(% of Total)	6.0%	8.5%	
20 to 24 years	20,027	25,908	+22.7%
(% of Total)	9.9%	11.6%	
25 to 34 years	39,038	40,735	+4.2%
(% of Total)	19.2%	18.6%	
35 to 44 years	29,001	20,003	-45.0%
(% of Total)	14.3%	9.1%	
45 to 54 years	17,440	20,628	+15.5%
(% of Total)	8.6%	9.4%	
55 to 64 years	17,238	23,106	+25.4%
(% of Total)	8.5%	10.1%	
65 to 74 years	16,935	18,604	+9.0%
(% of Total)	8.3%	8.5%	
75 and older	14,246	12,234	-16.4%
(% of Total)	7.0%	5.6%	
Total Population	203,056	219,214	+8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

Table 3. Households, 1980-1990

Household Type	1980	1990	% Change
Families	46,795	52,227	+10%
(% of total)	55%	61%	
Husband-Wife Fam.	27,061	34,266	+21%
(% of total)	32%	40%	
Female-Headed in H:	16,539	15,394	-10%
(% of total)	20%	18%	
With Children	9,338	8,709	-7%
(% of total)	11%	10%	
Total Households	85,227	85,797	+1.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

Table 4. Income-1990

Income Category	1990
Persons in Poverty	40,103
(% of total)	19%
Low-Income Persons (80% or less of MSA)	112,493
(% of total)	55%
Median Household Income	\$23,551

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

Table 5. Housing Occupancy and Tenure - 1990

Type	1990
Owner-occupied Units	39,516
(% of total)	46%
Renter-occupied Units	45,822
(% of total)	54%
Vacant Housing Units	8,804
(% of total)	10%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1980 and 1990

Appendix C: Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority Programs

The Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority administers the following housing rehabilitation loan and grant programs in its Conservation Areas. Old Manchester is not currently an RRHA Conservation Area. Program details are available from RRHA.

Program	Beneficiaries	Details
Rehabilitation Loan Program for Homeowners	Owner-occupants	Low interest, long-term loans.
Rehabilitation Grant Program for Homeowners	Disabled or Elderly owner-occupants	Grants of up to \$7,500. Can be used in conjunction with loans if improvements exceed \$7,500.
Homeownership Rehabilitation Supplemental Grant Program	Lower-income owner-occupants	Grants of up to \$10,000 by RRHA. Rehabilitation costs must exceed \$40,000.
Housing Repair Grant Program (Emergency Repairs)	Lower-income owner-occupants and tenants	Grants of up to \$7,500 to owner-occupants. Grants of up to \$2,500 to property owners for each tenant-occupied unit.
Richmond HOME Rental Rehabilitation Loan Program	Investor owners	Supplemental loans up to \$15,000. Interest rate of 5% with deferred terms available.
Homeownership Programs for First-time Homeowners	First-time homeowners	RRHA offers property to with low-interest loan package. Five-year occupancy to keep equity.
Private Investor Rehabilitation Program	Tenants and others desiring to rent housing. Renter owners	Property acquired by RRHA is made available to investors. Investors must maintain ownership of property for five years or equity is lost. Investors may sell property to first-time homeowner who must occupy for a minimum of five years.

BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Community Meeting Notes

1/24/96

A community meeting to kick-off the Blackwell Neighborhood Plan was held on Wednesday, January 24, 1996 at the Imani Center at 1504 Hull Street. The meeting began at 6:05pm.

Introduction

Mr. Joe Waddy, President of the Imani Foundation, welcomed all attendants and recognized the attendance of Mr. Larry Chavis, 8th District City Council, Geraldine Evans, Southside Planning Committee, and Oliver Singleton of the Richmond Redevelopment & Housing Authority.

Ms. Selena Cuffee-Glenn, Principle Planner, Department of Community Development, stated the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the community to the planning process, scope of services, and schedule for the plan. She invited all attendants to participate in the planning process and mentioned that transportation to future meetings would be provided for those who are in need. She went on to stress the importance of citizen participation in the strategic planning process which will be vital in creating a vision for the future of Blackwell and to carry out its successful implementation.

The Planning Process

Mr. Bill Elander, Senior Planner, Department of Community Development, introduced the planning process to the participants which will try to answer three main questions:

- **Where is the neighborhood at?**
- **Where do you want the neighborhood to be?**
- **How do you get there?**

The process should take four months to complete before a final document is drafted. Cliff Henry, of Hammer, Siler, George Associates, explained the role of the three consultants that will be involved in the planning process.

- **Hammer, Siler, George** - lead consultant specializing in marketing issues.
- **CBK Architects** - land use planning and housing specialists
- **Gibraltar Group** - local firm handling implementation.

Mr. Henry then went on to explain how this process will involve three community meetings that will follow the steps of the planning process:

- **First Meeting** - get a sense of what the issues are in the community and create a "vision" for Blackwell
- **Second Meeting** - develop alternative concepts for land use, housing, economic development, etc.
- **Third Meeting** - evaluate alternative concepts and choose a preferred strategy to achieve the "vision"

Community Comments

After the presentation of the planning process the attendants were invited to voice their comments regarding the upcoming planning process:

- The desire to get the community more involved in the planning process
- Go door to door to spread the word about the Blackwell Plan.
- Communicate to the community through churches and schools.
- The need for a more active tenant council.
- The importance of bringing the homeowners and tenants together to decide what is best for Blackwell.
- Increased homeowner participation is essential for the successful implementation of this plan
- Bring churches and community businesses into the process
- Ensure that this process brings employment and job training opportunities to the community.
- More youth civic groups
- Crime is a real problem
- On-the-Job Training for youths and young adults.
- Transportation from individuals that can not get to meetings
- RRHA commitment to fix the problem they created.
- Possibility of tenant ownership of public housing units

Conclusion

The attendants were invited to join a planning committee that would meet outside of the regularly scheduled community meetings to discuss issues at greater length and act as an advisory group to the consultant. The meeting was adjourned, and the next community meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, February 28, 1996 at 6:00pm.

BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Community Meeting Notes
2/28/96

A community meeting to create a vision for the future of the Blackwell Neighborhood was held on Wednesday, February 28, 1996 at the Imani Center at 1504 Hull Street. The meeting began at 6:00pm.

Introduction

Mr. Joe Waddy, President of the Imani Foundation, welcomed all attendees and stressed the importance of their input and participation in the planning process.

Ms. Seiena Cuffee-Glenn, Principle Planner, Department of Community Development, thanked everyone for attending the meeting, explained that the planning process is on-going, and urged the community members to continue to take active role in planning for Blackwell's future.

Cliff Henry, of Hammer, Siler, George Associates, asked that everyone relax and enjoy the meeting. He explained that the purpose of this meeting was to get a sense of community wants and needs, and reminded everyone to "Begin with the end mind"

The attendees formed four focus groups to enable everyone to have opportunity to express the thoughts and concerns about the future of Blackwell. The four groups met for over an hour and then each group reported their responses to the following questions:

What are the things you enjoy about living in the Blackwell Neighborhood?

- The people that you know in the community.
- Convenient access to transportation services.
- Nearby schools and daycare.
- It's home. It is still a community.
- Many nearby churches.
- Convenient banking services.
- Close to the Hull Street Library.
- Past experiences, memories of a better time.
- The house that they currently live in.

When you look at your neighborhood today what are the things that concern you the most?

- High crime.
- Many vacant and boarded buildings
- Drugs.
- Outsiders
- Dirt, lots of litter.
- Kids not in school
- Deteriorating condition of homes
- Lack of sufficient lighting
- Unruly neighbors
- Teenagers just hanging out in the streets
- Lack of respect for elders by adolescents.
- Can't relax on your own front porch
- Hull Street does not offer enough services that the community needs.
- More activities for community members.

If your **dream** of your neighborhood came true tonight and you woke up tomorrow, describe the neighborhood that you would see?

- A clean beautiful neighborhood
- Lots of flowers
- No crime
- Hull Street Businesses flourishing
- Friendly multi-cultural neighbors.
- Better postal service, including a post office for the community
- A family restaurant.
- Improvements in local schools
- Kids in school, not on the streets
- Being able to relax on your own front porch.
- Larger role of the Hull Street library in the community.
- Respect for fellow neighbors.
- New homes, more home ownership.
- Overall, a more pleasant living environment.

Conclusion:

Citifi Henry concluded the meeting by commenting on some of the themes that were expressed by the focus groups. He noticed a strong sense of roots in the Blackwell community and a desire to restore Blackwell to the day when it had a pleasant aesthetic environment. The meeting was adjourned, and the next community meeting was tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, March 27, at 6:00pm.

BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Community Meeting Notes

3/27/96

A community meeting to review existing conditions and the vision and goals for the Blackwell Neighborhood was held on Wednesday, March 27, 1996 at the Imani Center at 1504 Hull Street. The meeting began at 6:05pm.

Introduction

Joe Waddy, President of the Imani Foundation, welcomed all attendants and asked that they continue their enthusiasm towards the planning process.

Bill Fiander, Senior Planner, Department of Community Development, explained that we are all here to answer the questions, "Where is the Neighborhood at?", and "Where do you want it to be?" The importance of this phase of the planning process is crucial since this will lay the foundation for recommended changes in the future.

Cliff Henry, of Hammer, Siler, George Associates introduced the consultant team that is working on the project. Ron Foster of the Gibraltar Group, and Cheryl O'Neill from CHK Architects. He advised that the purpose of this meeting is to quantify some of the visions of the neighborhood.

Existing Conditions:

Cheryl O'Neill presented maps that depicted land use, tenure, vacant structures, major crimes, and areas of concern. This was done to ensure that everyone in attendance had an understanding of the existing conditions in Blackwell. Cliff Henry continued by explaining that economically there is a need to "stop the bleeding" and tackle the most troubled areas of the community. He also stressed the need to build from the strengths of the Blackwell neighborhood by identifying areas with potential such as, the area between Dinwiddie and Maury Street, and the Hull Street commercial district.

Vision and Goals:

Bill Fiander returned to review the vision and goals that were developed from focus group responses taken at the previous community meeting and refined by the planning committee. He advised those in attendance that these goals were in draft form and input from the community is needed to clarify them. Community members responded by raising the following issues:

- Why is there a high correlation between public housing and crime?

- How do we solve the crime problem in Blackwell?
- How can we reduce the high density of young people within the community?
- How can more home ownership opportunities be created?
- What about the needs of senior citizens in Blackwell?
- What should be done about the vacant/boarded structures?
- What are some short-term solutions that will enable us to see results quickly?
- What is the future for those who currently live in public housing?
- What are some possible uses for vacant lots within the community?
- Are businesses that sell alcohol disruptive to the community?
- Who are the owners of the vacant/boarded structures?
- Should all dilapidated structures be torn down, or can they be renovated?
- Should we eliminate the distinction between public and private housing?
- Can there be standards for property maintenance and building design?

Mr. Fiander explained that the goals will be revised to reflect some of the issues raised and will be brought back before the planning committee at their next meeting.

Conclusion:

Cliff Henry concluded the meeting by explaining the next steps that will be taken in the planning process. He advised that the community will need to come to a consensus about what it wants and how it views the future of the neighborhood and that we may have to start taking votes to move the process along. At the next meeting, he explained, we will bring back development alternatives and strategies to achieve the goals and vision. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Community Meeting Notes
May 30, 1996

A community meeting to review the Land Use Plan and Housing & Revitalization Strategies for the Blackwell Neighborhood was held on Thursday July 25, 1996 at the Inani Center at 1504 Hull Street. The meeting began at 6:30pm.

Introduction

Joe Waddy, President of the Inani Foundation, welcomed all attendants, thanked them for the effort and thoughts they have contributed to the planning process.

Bill Fiander, Senior Planner, Department of Community Development, explained that the purpose of this meeting is to finalize the direction that the community would like to take in the future.

Revitalization Strategy

Cliff Henry, of Hammer, Silco, George Associates, went over the vision and goals, the strengths and weaknesses of the neighborhood, and the expenditure potential for the neighborhood today, and in the year 2015. He then introduced the housing, retail, and public safety strategies to the attendees.

Housing Strategy

- Target select public housing units for privatization.
- Modify existing public housing by introducing innovative tenant management approaches and limited equity co-ops.
- Demolish blighted housing that is not economically feasible to renovate.
- Establish a new single family core in the community.
- Create specific neighborhoods within the plan area that allow for better community management.

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Retail Strategy

- Establish Hull Street Corridor as a mixed use area with commercial, institutional, and residential uses
- Target apparel, household equipment, and specialty foods niche for commercial development in Hull Street Corridor
- Develop a neighborhood employment council that helps link unemployed residents with jobs

Public Safety Strategy

- Form a Neighborhood Watch program
- Create areas of defensible space throughout the community
- Improve lighting in the neighborhood
- Establish more recreation programs for residents.

Draft Land Use Plan

Cheryl O'Neill, of CHK Architects introduced the Draft Land Use Plan and explained where and how the Revitalization Strategies will affect the community.

In order to clearly explain the Draft Land Use Plan the plan area was divided into 4 areas.

Area 1 (Bounded by Hull Street to the north, Commerce Road to the east, Maury Street to the south, and 14th Street to the west.)

- Modernize existing public housing.
- Create a centralized park with a tot lot.
- Establish a buffer along Maury Street across from Industrial area.

Area 2 (Bounded by Hull Street to the north, 14th Street to the east, Maury Street to the south, and Jefferson Davis Highway to the west.)

- Replace existing commercial uses along Jetf Davis Hwy. with new single family housing.
- New School: locate next to existing primary school, open 14th and Everett Street to through traffic, close 16th Street between Maury and Everett
- New housing located one block north and south of school site.
- Hull Street: Retain character, introduce new uses such as elderly housing and open space.
- Expand 14th Street and create a "boulevard effect"

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Area 3 (Bounded by Maury Street to the north, recreational facilities to the east, Dinwiddie Avenue to the south, and Jefferson Davis Highway to the west)

- Replace existing commercial uses along Jeff Davis Hwy with new single family housing
- Privatize scattered site public housing
- Build new single family housing

Area 4 (Bounded by Maury Street to the north, Commerce Road to the east, Dinwiddie Avenue to the south, and recreational facilities to the west)

- No changes proposed to existing industrial area

Community Comments and Questions

- Parking for Hull Street is important, and cannot be ignored
- Where will municipal buildings be located?
- What is the future of the police precinct?
- The industrial area (brick yard) is dangerous and could have an adverse impact upon the proposed school.
- Everett and 17th Street is a very depressed area that needs to be improved
- What will happen to the many vacant/dilapidated housing units throughout the community?
- Permits to make housing improvements have been very difficult to obtain
- City demolition takes too long.
- Encourage homeowner privatization and Jeff Davis conversion
- When will the plan be implemented?
- Will there be grant money available?
- What is considered to be affordable housing?
- Conservation is important, we need to build on the community's past
- There is a need for a marketing plan that involves former and existing residents
- What financial resources will be used for this plan?
- The school board should share their plans for the new school
- Please post maps of proposed plan in a public place to allow community members to get a closer look.

Conclusion

Attendants were encouraged to make further comments in the coming weeks while a revised draft of the Neighborhood Plan is formulated based upon community concerns. The meeting was adjourned and the next community meeting was tentatively planned for July.

BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Community Meeting Notes
July 25, 1996

A community meeting to review the Land Use Plan and Housing & Revitalization Strategies for the Blackwell Neighborhood was held on Thursday July 25, 1996 at the Inman Center at 1506 Hull Street. The meeting began at 6:30pm.

Introduction

Joe Waddy, President of the Inman Foundation, welcomed all attendants and thanked them for the time and effort they have contributed to the planning process.

Bill Fiander, Senior Planner, Department of Community Development, announced that the purpose of the meeting was to finalize the direction that the community will take in the future. He explained that this would be done by reviewing changes made in the plan since the last meeting and giving the community an opportunity to discuss and make comments regarding the future of Blackwell.

Housing and Revitalization Strategies

Cliff Henry, of Hammer, Siler, George, Associates, went over the ten actions requiring implementation by a partnership between the community, city, local CDC's and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority. These actions are as follows:

1. Reduce Crime/Improve Social Climate
2. Eliminate Blighted Conditions
3. Create specific neighborhoods in community designed to empower residents
4. Create Conservation/Redevelopment Area
5. Privatize a target group of public housing units
6. Modernize public housing units
7. Introduce Tenant Involvement Concepts to Public Housing
8. Develop New In-fill housing
9. Expand efforts to revitalize Hull Street Commercial Corridor
10. Introduce New Single Family Housing Core

Land Use Plan

Cheryl O'Neill, of CHK Architects and Planners, went over the key concepts of the Land Use Plan. She highlighted the area at the center of the community and stressed its importance in developing a community-wide element to the plan.

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Other key concepts that were discussed included:

- Construct a new multi-purpose elementary school in the center of the community
- Create new image of Blackwell Community along edges and gateways
- Increase single family land uses and home ownership opportunities throughout the community
- Concentrate neighborhood commercial uses along Hull Street
- Introduce new infill housing in neighborhood that is sympathetic with the architectural characteristics of existing housing

Community Questions and Comments

Public Safety

- Crime is a problem, the community would like to see more police cooperation
- How will the relocation of the 2nd Police Precinct affect the community?
- When will the relocation take place and Will a police substation be added on Hull Street?
- What effect will the new downtown police precinct have upon the community?
- Abandoned homes are a significant source of crime in the neighborhood
- Community involvement programs work best when many community members are involved
- Get youths more involved in crime prevention
- Urban design improvements would help reduce crime.
- The police are not as responsive to neighborhood needs when they perceive that community members do not care about their community.
- New welfare laws will bring about a reduction of crime in the neighborhood

Housing

- What will be done about the abandoned houses within the community?
- The city should conduct a survey to determine which homes should be demolished.
- State laws need to be changed to hold people who own abandoned houses more accountable for their rehabilitation or removal.
- City Council needs to allocate more funds for demolition/rehabilitation.
- Private CDC housing should be recognized as major player in the redevelopment of the neighborhood.
- The neighborhood should be designated as an official redevelopment/conservation area.
- The RRHA should have an increased role in promoting home-ownership within the community.
- Increasing homeownership levels should be emphasized as a goal

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Citizen Participation

- The community needs to be more involved in the planning and implementation process.
- How will people become more involved in this community with such high center occupancy?
- A large number of civic groups working separately in the community is counterproductive. We need to have one voice.
- A neighborhood organization needs to be created that oversees the implementation of the Neighborhood Revitalization Plan.

Additional Comments

- The number of small churches being created in the community is increasing. What impact will this have on the development of the neighborhood?
- Churches can infringe on the character of the neighborhood.
- A gateway should be included on Dinwiddie Avenue.
- The south-side of Dinwiddie Avenue should be included in recommendations for public housing.
- The community should not be separated into different neighborhoods.

Conclusion

Comment sheets were distributed and attendants were encouraged to make further comments over the next two weeks while a final draft of the Neighborhood Plan is formulated based upon community concerns. The meeting was adjourned 8:00 p.m.

B L A C K W E L L
NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION
PLAN



Amendment No. 1

December 1997

Prepared By:

AS&A

Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

Amendment No. 1

I. Introduction

This document sets forth Amendment No. 1 to the Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan adopted as an element to the Richmond Master Plan by the Richmond Planning Commission, October 7, 1996, and the Richmond City Council, November 25, 1996 (Ordinance 96-286-280). The following text and graphics set forth and illustrate the change to the adopted Plan. These changes were approved at a community wide meeting of Blackwell citizens attended by approximately 200 persons on November 18, 1997. The meeting was held at the Blackwell School for the express purpose of this amendment to the Plan. Section II, summarizes the Plan change and Section III, incorporates the detailed text and graphics that amend the Plan. The original Plan text is highlighted in gray, the amended paragraphs text is presented in italics with new text is presented in italics bold.

II. Summary of the Plan Change

There is one significant change to the Plan. This change does not change the spirit of the Plan but it does change the intent of the Plan in the northeast quadrant of the Blackwell community. The purpose of the land use proposed in the original Plan will be met by the elimination of all public housing in that quadrant of the Blackwell community and a subsequent reduction in the number of persons anticipated to be living in that area following the development of new, private multifamily housing proposed to replace the public housing units. This change also eliminates what appear to be conflicts between the Land Use Plan Exhibit 10, the Concept Plan Exhibit 9, and the Illustrative Plan of the New Neighborhood Center Plan, Exhibit 11.

- The park proposal for the block bounded by Stockton, 19th, Everett, and 11th streets is deleted as the purpose of the proposed park will be eliminated with the clearance of all of the public housing units in the surrounding blocks and the redevelopment of those sites with new, private multifamily housing having a smaller family size. The elimination of the park will not result in a reduction of open space area as the land east of 15th Street between Maury Street and Dinwiddie Avenue is incorporated into the adjacent Maury Street Playground. Expansion of this area as a part of the Neighborhood Center shown on the Land Use Plan, Exhibit 10, will permit the development of the playground for recreation activities serving young adults and adults. The Neighborhood Center area north of Maury Street will continue to serve as an educational center and recreation activities that is primarily oriented toward primary and elementary age level children.
- Apparent conflicts between the Land Use Plan, Concept Plan, and Illustrative Plan for the New Neighborhood Center text and exhibits eliminated by Amendment No. 1 are as follows:
 - All housing as a proposed use on the Maury Street Playground site has been deleted from the Plan.

- A proposed extension of 14th Street through the Neighborhood Center area north of Maury Street proposed to serve as a pedestrian and pedestrian access to the Neighborhood Center area south of Maury Street has been deleted from the Plan to eliminate the "partitioning" of an area that will have a new elementary school, a new community center and a redesigned/dedicated playground for children.

III. Detailed Changes to the Plan

This section describes in detail the changes to the Plan resulting from this Amendment. The original Plan text is highlighted in gray. The new plan text is presented in italics. Revised graphics follow at the end of the text changes. Changes in text and graphics are limited to Section IV. BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN which begins on page 25 of the Plan. Other Sections of the Plan provide background information or are policy and operation oriented.

Section IV. BLACKWELL NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN

IV.1 Concept Plan (page 30)

- Create a new neighborhood center area of new and existing open space, recreation, school, and housing uses to provide a focal point for the community.
- Create a new neighborhood center area of new and existing open space, recreation, and school, to provide a focal point for the community.*

IV. 4 Parks and Open Space (page 35)

- The plan recommends that a central park and open space be located between Everett and Stockton Streets and 10th and 11th Streets. Located towards the center of the multifamily area, this park will serve as a focus for community activity and provide for needed exterior amenities such as passive open space and active recreation areas for young children. This open space will also serve to offset the density which currently exists given the concentration of multifamily land uses.
- The plan recommends that the land area east of 15th Street between Maury Street, Dimmock Avenue, and the Maury Playground be added to the playground. This open space area will provide an adequate amount of land area to serve as a focus for active recreation activities for young adults and adults from Blackwell and the greater community.*

IV. 6 New Neighborhood Center Area (page 35)

- The New Neighborhood Center Area provides for a mix of uses which will create a vibrant new center of activity for the Blackwell community. Located near the geographic center of the existing neighborhood planning area, this area of the site combines institutional, recreational, open space and residential land uses. The combination of recreation and school facilities within this new campus will realize the "community school" concept advocated by the community. The proposed illustrative plan demonstrates a possible layout for such an area.

The New Neighborhood Center Area is divided into two portions. The first, north of Maury Street, allows for institutional, recreational and open space uses. An approximately 14 acre parcel, this site currently contains an elementary school, a primary school, gym, bathhouse and pool. A new elementary school is to be constructed in this site area. Existing recreation facilities within this area are devoted to young children and should be in the future. This plan strongly recommends that detailed site plan of this area including all new and existing school and recreation facilities be developed and reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to ensure the most effective utilization of existing land area and a true integration between the various uses. The success of this new center will be a critical component in the successful revitalization of the Blackwell neighborhood.

A second area within the Neighborhood Center Area is established south of Maury Street and between 15th Street and the existing industrial land. The proposed land uses for this area include recreation and residential uses including single family detached, attached and multifamily. This portion of the site currently contains adult recreation facilities, substantial open space and a number of multifamily units. This area should operate as part of the New Neighborhood Center serving as a key-link between portions of the Blackwell community north and south of Maury Street. The expansion to the existing adult recreation facilities should be accommodated. The remainder of this site area may in the future offer opportunities for new single family housing. The plan also recommends that a detailed site plan of this area be reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to ensure the most effective integration of land uses.

- *The New Neighborhood Center Area provides for a mix of uses which will create a vibrant new center of activity for the Blackwell community. Located near the geographic center of the existing neighborhood planning area, this area of the site combines institutional, recreational, and open space land uses. The combination of recreation and school facilities within this new campus will realize the "community school" concept advocated by the community. The proposed illustrative plan (Exhibit III) demonstrates a possible layout for such an area.*

The New Neighborhood Center Area is divided into two portions. The first, north of Maury Street, allows for institutional, recreational and open space uses. An approximately 14 acre parcel, this site currently contains an elementary school, a primary school, gym, bathhouse and pool. A new elementary school and community center are to be constructed in this area. Existing recreation facilities within this area are devoted to young children and should remain so. This plan strongly recommends that a detailed site plan of this area including all new and existing school and recreation facilities be developed and reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to ensure the most effective utilization of existing land area and a true integration between the various uses. The success of this new center will be a critical component in the successful revitalization of the Blackwell neighborhood.

A second area within the Neighborhood Center Area is established south of Maury Street to Dinwiddie Avenue between 15th Street and the existing industrial land. The proposed land use for this area is active recreation for young adults and adults. This portion of the site currently contains adult recreation facilities, substantial open space and a number of multifamily units. This area should operate as part of the New Neighborhood Center serving as a key link between portions of the Blackwell community north of Maury Street and the greater community south of Maury Street. The expansion to the existing adult recreation

facilities should be recommended. The plan also recommends that a detailed site plan of this area be reviewed by the Planning Commission in order to ensure the most effective interconnectivity of recreation activities.

IV. Additional Recommendations (page 38)

1. Infrastructure

- *Improvements and alterations to existing infrastructure are recommended in order to realize the concepts introduced in the Land Use Plan. Street and sidewalk repairs should be carried out throughout the neighborhood to create a street system of acceptable quality.*

In order for the New Neighborhood Center Area to operate as a true center of activity, it should have strong links to all areas of Blackwell. The current discontinuity of the street grid along Everett Street and along 14th Street within the confines of the New Neighborhood Center Area currently prevent this. As a remedy, a recommendation is made to create either strong automobile or pedestrian connections along 14th Street between Hull Street and Boston Avenue and along Everett Street between 14th and 13th Streets within the area of the New Neighborhood Center Area. Improvements to 14th Street including street widening and brick sidewalks which were performed in conjunction with the new library should be extended to Maury Street. This will provide an important and appropriate access to the Neighborhood Center Area and an appropriately prominent entry for the new elementary school. A child could thus easily walk from school to the library or the recreation facilities. This strong circulation link will strengthen the impact and importance of all of these community facilities. The extension of 14th Street south of Maury Street would be necessary to accommodate new residential development in this half of the Neighborhood Center Area.

Improvements should also be made to Maury Street should adult recreation facilities be enlarged to the south. Such improvements should include the introduction of brick crossings and crosswalks and other features at key intersections. These will help slow down the considerable traffic on that street and provide better connections to the recreation facilities.

- *Improvements and alterations to existing infrastructure are recommended in order to realize the concepts introduced in the Land Use Plan. Street and sidewalk repairs should be carried out throughout the neighborhood to create a street system of acceptable quality.*

In order for the New Neighborhood Center Area to operate as a true center of activity, it should have strong links to all areas of Blackwell. The current discontinuity of the street grid along Everett Street and along 14th Street within the confines of the New Neighborhood Center Area currently prevent this. As a remedy, a recommendation is made to create a strong vehicular and pedestrian connection along 12th and 14th Streets between Hull Street and Maury Street and create a pedestrian emphasis along Everett Street between 12th and 19th

Streets to link the Blackwell area and the areas to the north of Blackwell with the New Neighborhood Center Area. This will provide an important and appropriate access to the Neighborhood Center Area and provide an appropriate entry for the new elementary school and the new community center. It will provide a direct route from school or to the recreation facilities. This strong circulation link will strengthen the impact and importance of all of these community facilities. The extension of 14th Street south of Moore Street would be necessary to accommodate new residential development in any part of the New Neighborhood Center Area.

Improvements should also be made to Moore Street to facilitate the east west movement of trucks serving south Richmond industry and to provide adequate access to the proposed adult recreation facilities. Such improvements should include the introduction of brick curbs and sidewalks and other features at key intersections. These will help slow down the considerable traffic on that street and provide better connections to all recreation facilities.

CONCEPT PLAN

Exhibit 9

Blackwell Neighborhood Revitalization Plan

DESIGN CONCEPTS

- Break down the community into smaller strategic areas by the creation of new centers and edges.
- Introduce new infill housing in neighborhoods that is sympathetic with the architectural characteristics of existing housing.
- Privatize selected public housing units.
- Increase single family land uses and home ownership opportunities throughout the community; decrease multi-family concentrations.
- Create a new image of the Blackwell community along edges and at gateways.
- Support the revitalization of the Hull Street Commercial Corridor as the primary retail / service amenity for the neighborhood.
- Concentrate neighborhood commercial uses along Hull Street.
- Create a new neighborhood center area of new and existing open space, recreation, school, and housing uses to provide a focal point for the community.
- Encourage linkages between all community facilities including schools, library, recreation facilities and open space amenities.
- Provide for the effective layout and use of existing recreation space.
- Maintain and support existing institutional uses within the community.

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