

# CITY OF PINE BLUFF

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### PLAN ELEMENTS



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to the following people who made this plan possible:

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Citizens of Pine Bluff

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Pine Bluff City Council

Go Forward Pine Bluff

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# **GROW PINE BLUFF** **1.0**

# GROW PINE BLUFF

## VISION AND GOALS



### Grow Pine Bluff

For many years, residents of Pine Bluff have moved to pursue opportunity elsewhere. They left behind jobs, family, and a community they once called home. The decision to leave was difficult, but given the promise of a brighter future elsewhere, there were too few reasons to stay in Pine Bluff. As people left to seek a better life they took with them their work ethic, passion, and ability to contribute to the greater good of the community. They had to find opportunity, and met opportunity in places where it already existed.

The quote by Lou Holtz, “In this world you’re either growing or you’re dying, so get in motion and grow” applies to cities as well as individuals. During the period of the 1970’s – 2000’s Pine Bluff stopped growing, its population in decline. Since 1990, Pine Bluff has lost nearly 15,000 people, or roughly 23% of its peak population. Growing Pine Bluff is about more than just increasing population, it is about re-establishing the quality of life that people desire, leveraging current resources and funding in targeted ways that are self-reinforcing.

We have to change our way of thinking about revitalization in Pine Bluff; instead of focusing on the great things that other cities have outside of Pine Bluff, we have to look at our greatest needs and build a new city where opportunity wants to live.

- Pine Bluff needs more funding for basic services.
- Pine Bluff needs to eliminate blight.
- Pine Bluff needs safe schools.
- Pine Bluff needs visionary grassroots leadership.
- Pine Bluff needs to reduce crime and perception of crime.
- Pine Bluff needs to preserve downtown buildings.
- Pine Bluff needs to focus investment in key areas
- Pine Bluff needs to create recreational opportunities for its citizens
- Pine Bluff needs a high quality of life

Where does opportunity want to live?

- Opportunity wants community and congregations that support families.
- Opportunity wants training and education to prepare for work.
- Opportunity wants a fair wages for fair work.
- Opportunity wants acitvely maintained neighborhoods.
- Opportunity wants thriving downtown.
- Opportunity wants shared energy and strength in numbers.

We must align these efforts to Bring Opportunity to Pine Bluff. Good jobs, good education, good quality of life, passion, and hope. To change the perception of Pine Bluff from outside, we have to change the reality within our own minds. We have to exude strength and passion as we reshape the conversation. As we reflect on who Pine Bluff is today, we will see Opportunity emerge from within our individual efforts to reshape the community. Given the right tools, resources,

and determination, the conversation will shift away from what Pine Bluff Needs, to what Opportunity Wants.

These are not short term fixes, this is a generations-long effort. Concentrations of this effort will address the following:

### Goals

1. **FOCUS** [Pine Bluff] by coordinating efforts across municipal departments and between the city and outside organizations, focusing on a limited number of shared projects in order to build momentum, excitement, and cooperation.
2. **STRENGTHEN** [Pine Bluff] through neighborhood regeneration, addressing community-level issues and bringing people together to build human capital.
3. **SUPPORT** [Pine Bluff] by readying the City to be open to business, enabling investment and entrepreneurship, and encouraging residents to shop local.
4. **INVEST** [Pine Bluff] by strategically spending capital that will result in a return on investment, such as investments in streets, drainage, utilities, and a collective investment in real estate to facilitate redevelopment.
5. **CLEAN UP** [Pine Bluff] by supporting public safety initiatives, campaigns to encourage people to clean up their own properties, regular community clean-up, neighborhood watch, as well as implementing Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design techniques.
6. **TELL** [Pine Bluff]’s story, history and future vision, celebrating successes and communicating them throughout the region.

### Vision Statement

**Grow Pine Bluff** by enabling and facilitating opportunities related to investment, jobs, community pride, business opportunity, entrepreneurship, quality of place, and quality of life.

Pine Bluff has successfully controlled its decline, re-organized its government, and built a constituency focused on the city’s rebirth. Now, the way that Pine Bluff chooses to focus its efforts and capital, partner with community organizations and groups, and reform its regulatory structure is critical to shift from reducing decline and into growth. This growth mindset must keep a strong connection with community prosperity and quality of life. The end goal of growth is to improve the lives of Pine Bluff residents, and to celebrate their legacies. Achieving this goal requires focus which must take a disciplined approach to community investment. While every resident is an important community asset, poor and dispersed investment will not spark the city’s renaissance. **The plan provides tools to focus, to evaluate which investments will create sustained community-based returns, and to bring residents, businesses, organizations, and government together with community pride.**



### Types of Growth

Growth can mean several things. The most common types of growth that cities may accommodate include people, local investment, and physical boundaries.

**People.** Changes in the number of people living in a community is a key factor in land use, zoning, infrastructure, and capital planning decisions.

**Home Ownership.** Increasing the rate of home ownership is often associated with increased property values, safety, and community pride.

**Businesses.** Increasing opportunities for small business ownership can result in increased reinvestment into the community, since local business owners tend to support and sponsor hometown events, organizations, and amenities, as well as invest in their town.

**Entrepreneurship.** Enabling entrepreneurial ideas and start-ups can foster creativity, generate excitement, create local identity, and increase local jobs.

**Physical Boundaries.** As population or housing demand grows, if increases in density (such as smaller lot sizes or increased allowances for multi-family housing) do not exist, then expansion of a city's physical boundary is likely to occur.

### Pine Bluff's Growth Over Time

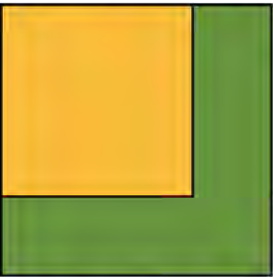
Pine Bluff experienced steady growth from 1940 to its peak in 1970, at 57,400 people. It maintained roughly that same number until 1990, at which time the City began to lose population. In 2017, the population was 44,509, similar to the 1960 population of 44,000.

Comparing 1960 and 2017, housing units increased to accommodate the 1970 peak population. In 2017, there were 46.8% more housing units than in 1960, even though both time periods had similar populations. There was a 27.6% increase in owner-occupied units, a 42.9% increase in renter-occupied units, and a 326.9% increase in vacant housing units between these two periods. With the increase in housing units between 1960 and 2017 including a rise, then decline, in population during this time period, vacant housing units have increased from 6.4% of total housing units in 1960 to 18.6% of the total housing units in 2017.

Similarly, the land area of the city itself grew in size by 444%, but accommodates the same population, resulting in a much lower density overall (from 6.65 people per acre in 1960 to 1.51 people per acre in 2017).

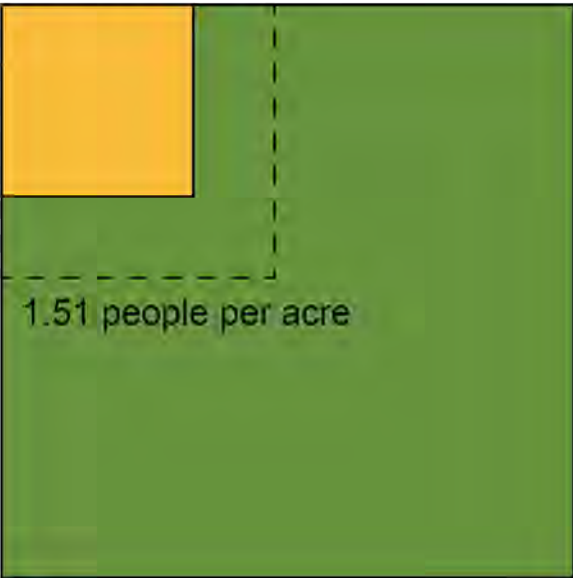
For these reasons, Growing Pine Bluff should focus on the first two types of growth: people and local investment, and should avoid growing its physical boundaries, which often includes increase the burden on infrastructure, city services, and public safety.

Pine Bluff 1960  
Population 44,000  
Square Acres 6,610



6.65 people per acre

Pine Bluff 2017  
Population 44,500  
Square Acres 29,383



1.51 people per acre

# GROW PINE BLUFF

## APPROACH

### Approach

The city of Pine Bluff must keep pace with its peer cities if it is going to be competitive in the future. The ability for a city to grow is as critical as providing for safety and stability for residents. Two parallel activities are necessary for a community to grow:

- Increase population and
- Increase wealth.

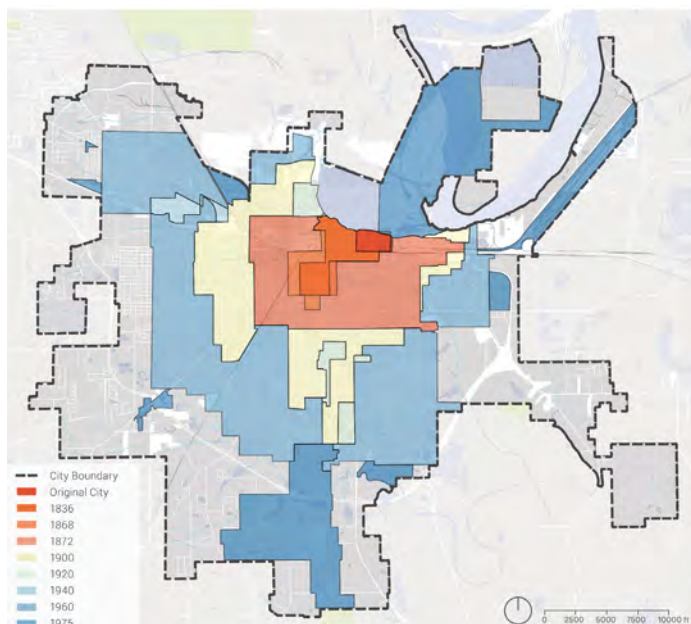
The former is difficult to achieve, but easily measured, the latter is harder to measure, but is the catalyst for improvements across the entire economic spectrum.

**Growing Pine Bluff** means increasing housing density around downtown and key corridors, but does not mean expanding physical boundaries or annexing additional land.

**Growing Pine Bluff** means increasing opportunities for entrepreneurs to start new businesses. **Growing Pine Bluff** means increasing wages to a level that is sustainable and begins to improve living conditions for those most vulnerable.

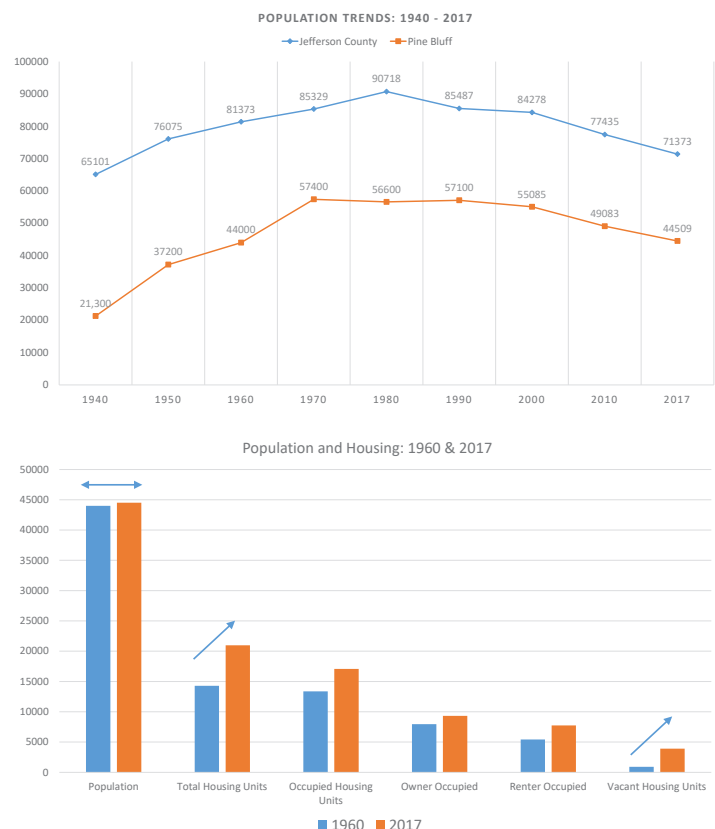
The approach to **Growing Pine Bluff** includes a series of steps utilizing each of the Comprehensive Plan Goals:

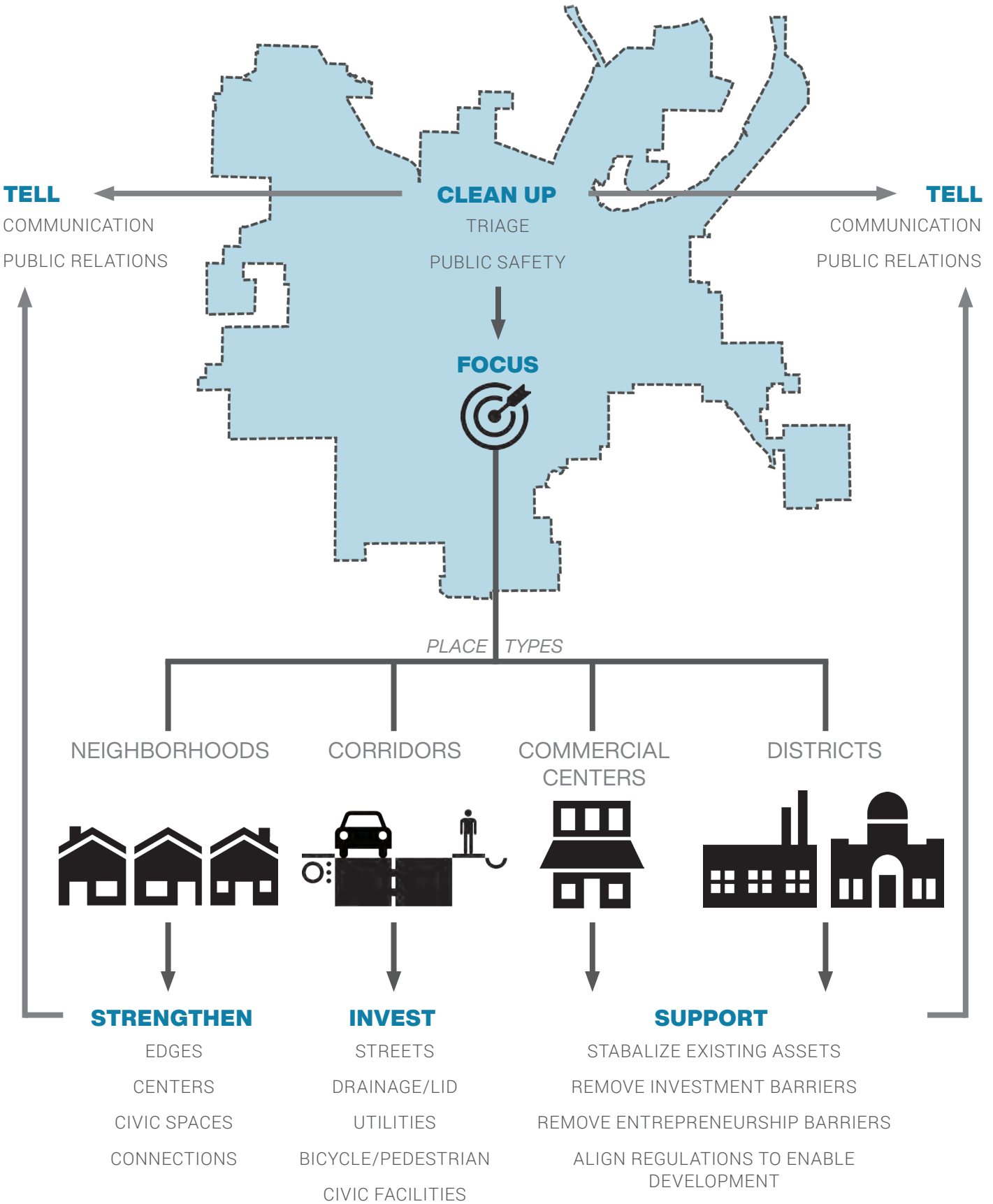
1. Identify areas of Focus and establishing the citywide framework for development and redevelopment [**GROW**].
2. Structure the areas of focus and redevelopment into neighborhoods, main streets, centers, and districts [**FOCUS**].
3. Enhance neighborhoods, main streets, centers, and districts by repurposing vacant lots that add parks, alleviate drainage issues, and diversify housing and business opportunities [**FOCUS**].



4. Strengthen neighborhoods' identity by reinforcing neighborhood edges, centers, civic spaces and facilities, and neighborhood to neighborhood connections [**STRENGTHEN**].
5. Make streets more user friendly for pedestrians and cyclists, and encouraging development that creates walkable and sociable environments in neighborhoods, main streets, civic and downtown district [**INVEST**].
6. Ensure success of mixed-use and special districts by allocating land uses to support district success [**SUPPORT**].
7. Remove barriers to investment, and aligning regulations to ensure that growth creates long term success [**SUPPORT**].
8. Identify high crime neighborhoods. Focus on those first and move outward in phases as progress is seen [**CLEAN UP**].
9. Leverage community groups to assist in public safety efforts [**CLEAN UP**].
10. Communicate with citizens and regional neighbors. Take control of your story [**TELL**].

The interrelationships between each step of the approach are demonstrated on the facing page.





# GROW PINE BLUFF

## APPROACH

### Organization

The approach to Grow Pine Bluff includes a series of topics which are intended to guide success while blurring the lines between public and private sector, individual departments within city hall, and the committees within organizations and community activist groups. The topics are written with **outcomes** in mind, rather than the traditional divisions of comprehensive plan elements organized by stand-alone issues. For example, "Clean Up" addresses not only community image, but also public safety, community facilities, and urban design. "Strengthen" is aimed at strengthening neighborhoods and incorporates issues related to urban design, land use, low-impact development, parks, and infrastructure.

Each topic references to the traditional plan elements that would usually stand alone: Land Use, Public Safety, Facilities, Parks, and Open Space, Community and Neighborhood Regeneration, Economic Development, Utilities and Infrastructure, Transportation and Circulation, Sustainability and Low-Impact Development, and Urban Design. Most plan elements are addressed in each topic, however, some are more prominent than others. Listed below are each topic with the primary plan elements addressed within each.

	<b>GROW</b>	Vision, Goals, Approach, Organization, Future Land Use
	<b>CLEAN UP</b>	Public Safety, Urban Design
	<b>SUPPORT</b>	Economic Development
	<b>INVEST</b>	Transportation & Circulation, Parks & Open Space, Wayfinding, Drainage, Sustainability & Low Impact Development
	<b>FOCUS</b>	Urban Design, Transportation & Circulation
	<b>STRENGTHEN</b>	Neighborhood Regeneration, Land Use, Parks, Open Space, & Community Facilities
	<b>TELL</b>	Communications, Public Relations

Each topic described as part of the Grow Pine Bluff process is detailed to answer these basic questions:

<b>WHAT</b>	Description of each topic
<b>WHY</b>	Each topic's purpose
<b>WHERE</b>	Application of each topic - is it to be applied citywide? In certain place types? In specific focus areas? With certain target groups?
<b>HOW</b>	Action steps to implement the topic
<b>WHEN</b>	Implementation timetable for each action step
<b>WHO</b>	Responsible party(ies) for each action step

### Application

Growing Pine Bluff is a city-wide effort, with a strong focus in existing neighborhood and commercial areas within the city limits, and more specifically within the core city. Pine Bluff's growth proceeded outward in three stages:

1. the pre-1900's growth which remained concentrated mostly north of Harding Avenue and east of Catalpa Street;
2. the pre-1920's growth which extended principally south towards Bayou Batholomew, west towards Blake, and north to UAPB, and
3. the post-1920's when the city boundary expanded substantially over the next century. [map on page 93 of the assessment]

To grow population, Pine Bluff needs to revive its core. Much of the pre-1920's city is built upon a healthy and flexible urban structure, with a traditional and walkable form. These areas are most able to accommodate growth that is valuable for city budgets, marketable, and accessible by foot and bike to downtown and revivable neighborhood centers. While all residents and areas are important, focusing on the core city first is imperative to rebuild the city economy and generate the funds necessary to more broadly improve resident quality of life.

The following pages illustrate how incremental growth and redevelopment can be achieved through Place Types, Focus Areas, and Future Land Use.

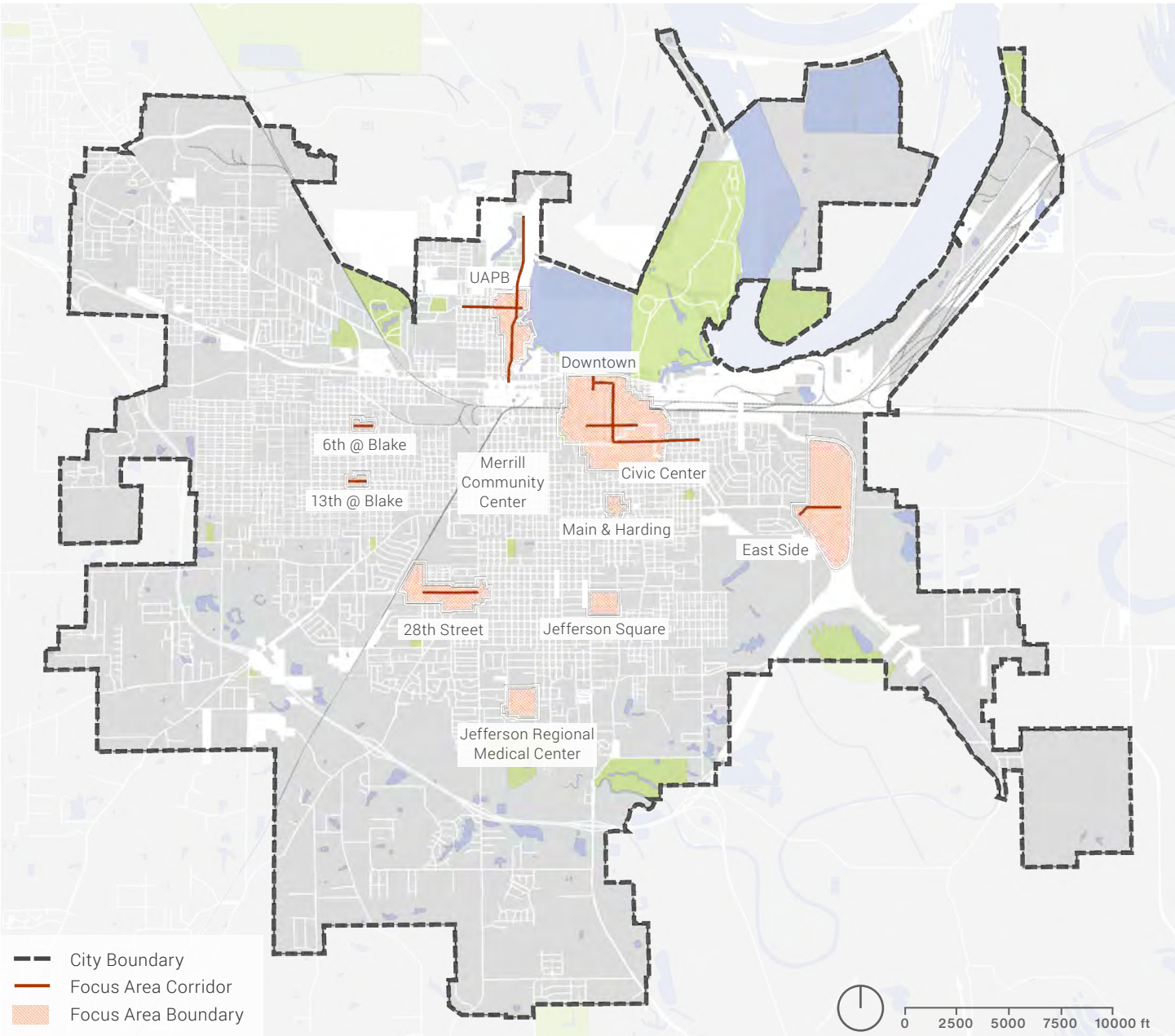


### Focus Areas

Redevelopment efforts can be sparked by focusing attention, resources, and partnerships in and around key community spaces that support economic activity and impact placemaking and identity. By utilizing a targeted approach to community investment, focus areas are positioned to accommodate redevelopment efforts while supporting the neighborhoods adjacent to them.

Development types, density, design framework, and specific corridor design treatments are addressed within each focus area.

Refer to FOCUS, beginning on page 118, for a detailed approach addressing each focus area.



# GROW PINE BLUFF

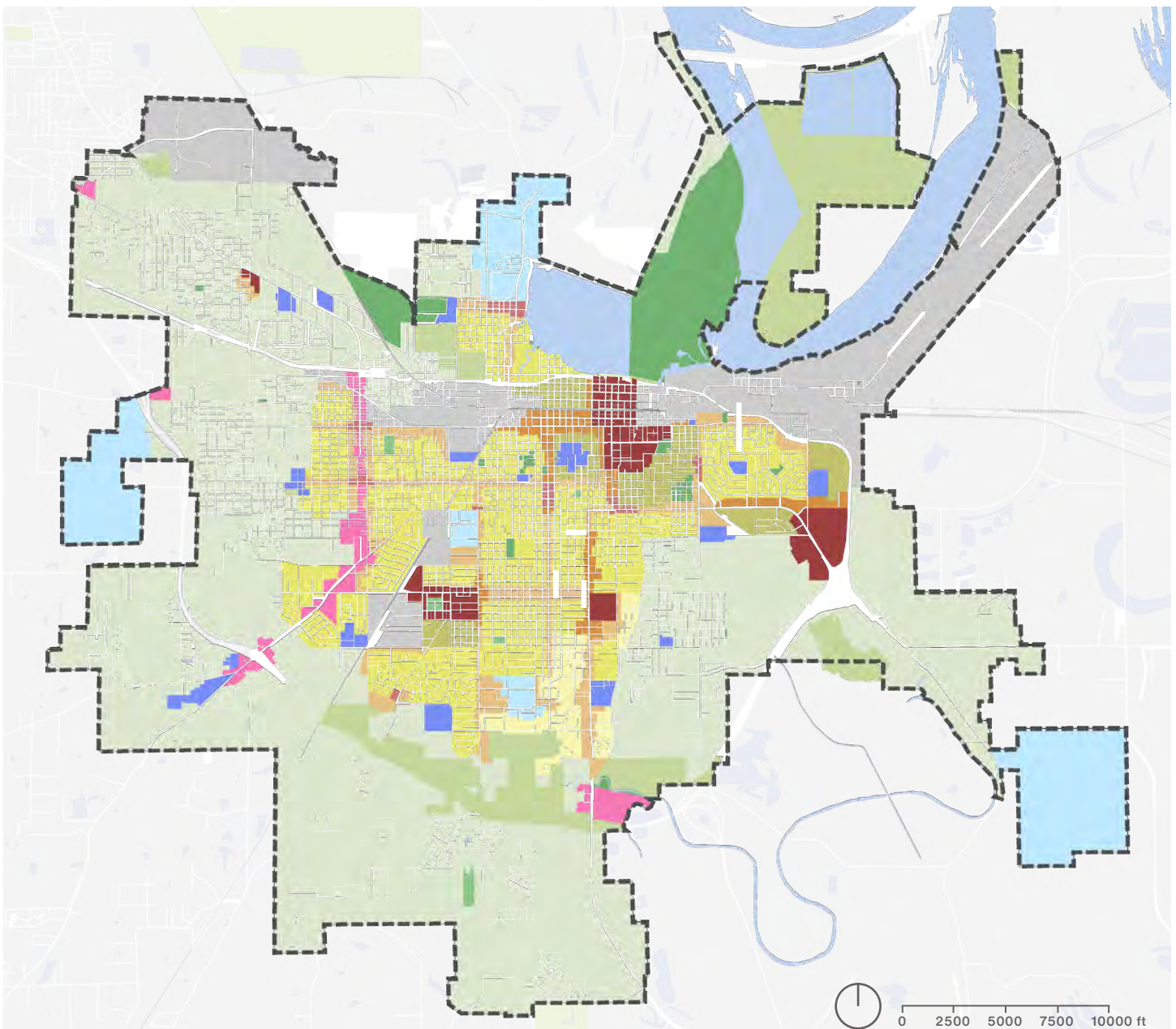
## FUTURE LAND USE

### Future Land Use

Future Land Use (FLU) maps policies to specific locations throughout the city. This plan establishes land use categories that correlate to the structure of the community -- neighborhoods and centers -- rather than a more specific use -- single family housing and shopping center -- as are

common land use categories in similar plans. This achieves a number of goals: avoiding conflicts between zoning and the comprehensive plan which can increase the cost of development, creating a more legible and simple land use map for public legibility, clarifying the growth and investment policies of this plan, and focusing attention towards the physical structure of the City of Pine Bluff.

- |                            |                       |                     |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| — City Boundary            | Neighborhood - High   | Civic               |
| Mixed-Use Center           | Neighborhood - Medium | Special District    |
| Neighborhood Retail Center | Neighborhood - Low    | Industrial District |
| Neigh. Seam - High         | Park                  | Suburban Corridor   |
| Neigh. Seam - Medium       | Open Space - Other    | Rural               |





Clearly identified in the future land use map (FLUM), and throughout this plan's policies and narratives, is a focus on the Core City. Future investment and redevelopment must first occur in the center of Pine Bluff, strengthening the city physically, culturally, and fiscally. While focused on the Core City, growth at the periphery is discouraged. No clearer is this priority articulated than in the powerful Safe Routes to Schools report circa 2011. Fiscal analysis of land use patterns completed as part of this plan further reinforces the need to focus on the Core City, restrict poorly performing forms of development, re-establish Downtown Pine Bluff, and rebuild the city's central neighborhoods with a variety of housing options across all income levels.

To achieve this, future land use clarifies the structure of Pine Bluff's neighborhoods, and identifies the seams between them. Today these seams are defined by larger roadways that can be dangerous to residents of all ages and abilities. Tomorrow neighborhood seams should be the glue that connects Pine Bluff, neighborhood to neighborhood, and neighborhoods to nearby retail and mixed-use districts where residents can work, find items they need daily or weekly, be entertained, and socialize.

Along with what occurs on private property, transportation and other municipal services must meet the needs of future land use. These services are intended to support the city's residents and businesses. Too often, and certainly in Pine Bluff's past, transportation and municipal services have been used to divide communities and serve short-sighted goals. Transportation within the Core City should require vehicles to slow and provide residents with facilities to walk and bike. Municipal services within the Core City should be easily accessible and equitably distributed. Growth patterns of the past have pulled services away from the core and into an inefficient structure that requires private automobile ownership. Growth patterns in the future should relocate services to areas they are most efficiently and effectively utilized.

This scale of change takes time, patience, commitment, and community action alongside municipal efforts. Yet each action towards this goal is a small victory. Along the way, the community, municipal staff, and leadership should remember to celebrate. The hard work is not for today; it is for the legacy of Pine Bluff and the opportunity that a city may provide to its residents.

## Public Resources

### Parks

Parks are an essential public resource, particularly at the neighborhood level, tied closely to public health issues like obesity and mental health. Existing parks, and those to acquire, are identified on the FLUM in order to visually verify whether neighborhoods are well served with or lacking these resources.

### Schools

Schools are an essential public resource, and should be located to serve neighborhood residents. Elementary schools should be common throughout the Core City, on smaller campuses and within neighborhoods. Middle schools should be located where multiple neighborhoods come together, on campuses large enough to provide athletic facilities. These facilities are best shared with the community. High schools are less frequent but should still be easily accessible by foot or bike to most residents. They require larger campuses and their athletic facilities may be less easily shared, though shared use should be allowed.

School location has unfortunately been used in the past to disenfranchise communities who have the greatest need for education quality and easy physical access. This pattern has been clearly observed in Pine Bluff. While this plan cannot reverse these actions, it may influence future decisions concerning where and how schools are allocated.



Park



School



Cemetery



Other Resources



Mixed-Use Center

### Cemeteries (Open Space - Other)

Cemeteries are an often overlooked public resource. Originally located at the edge of communities, cemeteries quickly become surrounded by the city, unable to expand. The city should identify peripheral locations for large cemeteries, and reserve that land well ahead of the need. On the Future Land Use Map, cemeteries are included in Open Space - Other.

### Other Resources

The City provides many other public resources beyond those listed above. Rather than list them as individual land uses, they are instead included in other, more broad land use categories. Major civic services like city hall, libraries, social services, and the primary police station should be located in mixed-use centers, which are places residents should interact with on a regular basis. Supportive civic services like police substations and fire stations should be located in neighborhood seams where they are accessible from multiple neighborhoods. Cluttered, dusty, and noisy services like public works should be located in industrial districts. And recreational facilities and services like youth centers, pools, and sports facilities should be located in parks.

### Centers and Districts

#### Mixed-Use Center

Mixed-use centers are the economic engines of the city. Dense and full of a broad mix of uses, these centers build from the synergy of activities, cross-shopping, workplaces, and events. Downtown Pine Bluff was once active and dense, but it has been eroded over time as most American downtowns have in the 20th century. Rather than concentrate activity in Downtown, Pine Bluff has spread its commercial enterprises throughout the city, a mistake that reduces their economic potency. A limited number of mixed-use districts have been selected to concentrate Pine Bluff's businesses, governmental agencies, along with apartments, mixed together in a walkable format. These mixed-use centers are located in Downtown and in a few additional locations that can support this intensity of activity. Zoning in mixed-use centers is critical and must be reformed to ensure buildings are located along sidewalks, with plenty of glazing, uses are broadly allowed, and parking is minimized and hidden. Mixed-use centers are also neighborhoods in their own right, and require access to parks, schools, and other public resources. Intensity should only be limited by building height, at 4 to 5 stories maximum, a critical control to ensure the economic potential of the mixed-use center is not concentrated in a single building. Exceptions may be made to this height limit for buildings that contribute to the district's beauty, in the manner that protecting the civic importance of public buildings is the motivation for height limits in Arkansas law, but not in a manner that sacrifices the district's potential for active streets by deadening frontages with surface or structured parking, blank walls, or service areas.



### Neighborhood Retail Center

Neighborhood retail centers are small mixed-use areas that provide places for employment, goods, and services within walkable distance of neighborhoods. They are located along neighborhood seams, between neighborhoods, where they benefit from access to a broad population. Neighborhood retail centers are small and should be distributed throughout the city. Like mixed-use centers, neighborhood retail center intensity should only be limited by building height restrictions, at a somewhat lower scale of 2 to 3 stories. Streets within and around neighborhood retail centers should be slow-speed with wide sidewalks, on-street parking, and shading from street trees. Like mixed-use centers, zoning is critical to ensure buildings are built along sidewalks, facades are well glazed, and parking is minimized and hidden. Neighborhood retail centers may also include housing of a moderate intensity (townhomes and apartments) but should preserve ground floors along the primary main street for businesses.



Neighborhood Retail Center

### Special District

Special districts are areas of specialized uses such as colleges, hospitals, and airports. Due to the complex nature of special district activities, planning and zoning cannot predict their needs and constraints. Rather, these areas require their own specialized master plans, initiated by the institution and closely reviewed by the city. Special district plans have a tendency to turn their back on the city, allocating parking, stormwater, and service areas along their edges. City review of special district plans should be principally concerned with the compatibility of the district edge with the fabric of the city surrounding it.



Special District

### Industrial District

Industrial districts are areas where businesses and governmental activities that produce excess dust, noise, or light, collect materials or waste outside, generate high volumes of truck traffic, or require railroad access should be located. At one time, industrial uses were permitted within neighborhoods, designed to devalue residential property; there is evidence of this past in Pine Bluff. Into the future, uses that qualify for inclusion in industrial districts should be limited to locating only in industrial districts. Those qualifying uses that are currently outside of industrial districts should be encouraged to relocate into industrial districts. Concentrating these uses improves the quality of neighborhoods and centers, and improves the efficiency of transportation spending that is designed to accommodate and direct truck traffic and other shipments.



Industrial District



Neighborhood Fabric - High



Neighborhood Fabric - Medium



Neighborhood Seam

## Neighborhoods

### Neighborhood Fabric: High, Medium, and Low

Neighborhoods are the primary building blocks of a city. Where towns only have one or just a few neighborhoods, cities have many. City neighborhoods vary in intensity from less dense neighborhoods at the periphery, like those near Bayou Bartholomew, to high intensity neighborhoods located near mixed-use centers. Each neighborhood is made up of 'fabric', the majority of the neighborhood, lined with seams, and includes civic and recreational destinations like churches and parks, which serve as the neighborhood's center. Neighborhood fabric is principally made up of housing located within blocks. In low intensity fabric, housing is mostly single unit detached and blocks are relatively large. In high intensity fabric, housing is mostly multi-unit or single unit attached, and blocks are relatively small. Medium intensity fabric is in-between, with a broad mix of housing and a mix of block sizes. While neighborhood fabric includes institutions like churches, commercial uses should be located in seams and centers, not the fabric. However, home-based businesses are common. Neighborhood fabric should be broken up by seams and centers every ½ mile to 1 mile in order to define separate neighborhood identity, balance the housing mix, and provide residents with access to jobs, goods, and services.

### Neighborhood Seam - High and Medium

Neighborhood seams are located between neighborhoods, typically along more heavily trafficked roads. They are also located between neighborhood fabric and more intensive use areas like centers and districts. Neighborhood seams are primarily housing of a higher intensity than the adjacent neighborhood fabric, but may also include occasional neighborhood-serving businesses. Seams are divided into high and medium intensities, allocated according to the intensity of uses or infrastructure that the seam is providing the neighborhood a buffer from. Seam intensity should be limited by building height restrictions - 3 and 4 stories - minor building setbacks, and restrictions on business size, no more than 5,000 sq.ft. per tenant. With higher intensity housing and businesses, parking location restrictions are critical, ensuring buildings are located along streets and parking is hidden. Neighborhood seams are a high priority location for sidewalks.

**Refer to Figure 5.31 located in Chapter 5: Focus, for a visual representation of Neighborhood Structure.**



### Peripheral Land Uses

#### Suburban Corridor

Suburban corridors consist of automobile-oriented businesses located along large and high trafficked roadways. This form of land use performs poorly fiscally, with low value buildings typically designed to be replaced in about 20 years. Unfortunately the process to improve the performance of suburban corridors is expensive and difficult. While new and expanded suburban corridors should be discouraged, those that exist are unlikely to change substantially. The suburban corridors identified in the FLUM are generally associated with exits along I-530 and along Blake Street. Other suburban corridors that perform particularly poorly are included in the rural category. Suburban corridors within the Core City that can be more easily reformed are included in centers and seams.

#### Rural

Rural areas are an important regional pattern defined by a lack of development and lack of intensity, often areas in cultivation, silviculture, and preservation. Historically, the interface between cities and surrounding rural areas was abrupt. Today that edge has been eroded by disorderly suburban development located haphazardly throughout the rural landscape. That pattern is neither rural nor the city, and it is a drain on municipal finances, paying far less tax than is consumed in services and infrastructure. Rural areas should remain rural and low intensity, a stark contrast to the city proper. In rural areas, new development is discouraged, and that which does occur should be very low intensity. Additional infrastructure should not be extended to rural areas with city funds. Once the Core City is re-established, growth into the rural areas may be reconsidered, which is likely to be well beyond the anticipated horizon of this plan. Continued commercial development along Dollarway may also be tolerated, but it should initially be concentrated in the mixed-use district at Hutchinson. A new, more urban and walkable format for the Dollarway mixed-use district is intended to stand in contrast to the low value producing strip commercial that occupies this space currently. Should this district be developed, the existing housing that surrounds it may transition to full neighborhood status. Aside from this exception, rural areas should remain rural, avoiding suburban patterns of separated land uses and disconnected street networks. To the east of S Georgia St, a rural land use has also been specified due to the clear stormwater issues exacerbated by development along drains and wetlands.

#### Private Recreation (Open Space - Other)

Private recreation includes large facilities for recreational use that are not owned or managed by the city, principally the golf course. Small private recreational facilities, like the one and two diamond Little League facilities, are not included in this land use as they are facilities embedded into neighborhood fabric.



Suburban Corridor



Rural



Private Recreation

# GROW PINE BLUFF

## ACTION, TIMEFRAME, RESPONSIBLE PARTY

### Action Steps



#### 1. Grow the Local Economy

Residents of Pine Bluff may not be direct investors in the various businesses around town, but ARE nonetheless investors through their everyday purchasing and encouraging friends and family to shop locally. The key to growing the local economy is to focus on locally owned businesses that need increased traffic to generate a profit, and to encourage local entrepreneurs to pursue their passions and work together with each other and the community. When local businesses generate a profit, they in turn reinvest that money in the local economy in a greater proportion than national chains that collect profit generated in Pine Bluff to reinvest in other communities.

With enough outreach and support by local residents, businesses can begin to thrive and eventually generate profit to perpetuate a cycle of reinvestment in Pine Bluff. On an individual basis, this cycle seems far fetched, but Pine Bluff residents regularly spend significant amounts of money outside of the city, which could be spent in the community if opportunities exist.

Pine Bluff residents are integral to supporting locally owned businesses by connecting, communicating, and steering their friends and family to these businesses. More than shifting their consumption from national chains to mom and pop shops, residents of Pine Bluff have to create a new economy from scratch by shoring up existing businesses before starting new businesses that duplicate services, or cannibalize existing demand. To begin this cycle, the power of local support should be publicized. In the past, many products were made in Pine Bluff. Can residents make the choice to shop in Pine Bluff? If not, who will fill the demand gap by with Pine Bluff Enterprises? Local economy is built with local pride and community.



#### 2. Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner

The physical growth that Pine Bluff requires must be clearly focused on improving residents' quality of life and the structure of the community. Growth for the sake of growth alone will further damage the city. Growing outward can spread municipal infrastructure which must be maintained for decades to come. Growing upward can have unintended consequences at the ground, ruining streets with excess parking and blank walls. And growing everywhere at once disperses growth's positive effects, creating a perception that investment is not taking place in the community. Every neighborhood, school, park, and street corner in the city would benefit from investment. But spreading investment

means that it comes everywhere at a trickle. Growth must be targeted, carefully selected, and designed to create value to be reinvested in the community.

The heart of Pine Bluff must first benefit from growth and investment. Pine Bluff's downtown, civic center, and its' most historic neighborhoods like First Ward need careful and compassionate attention. Growth should be targeted to strengthen the Core City, through new housing, businesses, institutions, and investments in parks, facilities, roads, and stormwater solutions. But even this growth must be well designed and consider its long-term effects. Pine Bluff's neighborhoods have seen commercial and industrial encroachment in formats incompatible with the neighborhood - large areas of surface parking, no trees, no sidewalks, long blank walls, bright lights, and outdoor storage of goods and refuse. Similarly, vacant and abandoned properties are poor neighbors, perpetuating disinvestment. Both conditions are exacerbated by zoning rules that enable the bad while disabling investment in housing. Yet as this changes, care must be taken to avoid displacement of existing residents from their neighborhoods. Beyond avoidance, existing residents should benefit from growth and are the ideal candidates to become small developers. Doing so requires cooperation from local lending institutions, area design and construction professionals, and city zoning and building officials.

Between neighborhoods, the city's major streets have also seen encroachment of commercial and industrial uses in a suburban format. While downtown feels empty, the city is full of businesses, they have simply been built in the wrong places and in a suburban format incompatible with their urban context. As a result, each business has built their own parking lot and set back from the street, which creates a spiral of decline fueled by block after block of surface parking lots. Businesses must be clustered to be both commercially viable and land efficient. Downtowns and other mixed-use districts achieve this as do neighborhood retail districts. Linear commercial corridors do not. Over time, businesses should be encouraged to locate within targeted districts, mixed with multi-family housing, and corridors should be encouraged to redevelop with housing at a higher intensity than surrounding neighborhood fabric. This change will reinvigorate downtown, create valuable neighborhood destinations in the community, and stitch back the edges of neighborhoods that have been degraded by poor land use regulation.

Beyond the Core City, investment and regulatory change must also coordinate with other major community investments by non-governmental organizations. Both the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and the Jefferson Regional Medical Center are preparing for near-term investment. Regulatory changes and infrastructure investment on the part of the city should be coordinated in these areas, despite being slightly





## GROW PINE BLUFF

### ACTION, TIMEFRAME, RESPONSIBLE PARTY

outside of the core. This level of coordination is mutually beneficial, and may encourage the institutions to improve the format of their investments.

But growth and investment must not be spread far and wide. Pine Bluff's land area has continued to grow while its population has not. This common pattern of growth through annexation is often short-sighted, where the long-term maintenance of infrastructure and community facilities in outlying areas is not accounted for, later draining municipal finances. Across the country this pattern has played out, extending infrastructure to outlying areas, developed in a disconnected and inefficient pattern that generates insufficient tax revenue to pay for ongoing maintenance. Pine Bluff has followed this pattern. In order to build a fiscally sustainable city, growth in peripheral areas and annexation needs to halt. The city must focus on its core, and on decisions that will create sustainable returns, both financially and for the community's quality of life.

#### Timeframe and Responsible Party

The implementation tables in each chapter are intended to speak to a wide range of City Staff, Business Leaders, University Partners, local Organizational Leaders and the General Public to broadcast the detail and extent of work that needs to be done. Most importantly it is necessary to put in front of the public the action steps needed to create change and provide accountability to all responsible parties.

These tables are arranged in short term, medium term, and long term goals to provide everyone a clear understanding of their role in the larger effort. It is not intended to create division between groups causing a "You do your job, and I'll

do mine." These tasks are intended to inspire collaboration: "Here are where my goals and your goals overlap, let's work together every step of the way!" The effort of city building crosses boundaries of departments and organizations, as it does between government, private enterprise, and the community at large.

Add to the challenge of supporting change the budgetary difficulties caused by the current economic climate, as well as future economic volatility. Some change may be achieved through community action - small efforts like repairs and tactical urbanism, changing the way the space of the city is used, holding low-to-no cost events, and supporting local businesses. In these cases, local government should support and permit community action. Similarly, the community should make efforts to support investments made on their behalf by local government, such as patronage of the new library and aquatic center, and participation in decision-making by attending public meetings and being active in civics with local non-governmental organizations.

To achieve meaningful change, efforts by all parties need coordination and shared vision. These implementation tables address issues that all can work towards together. They do not cover every issue in every corner of the City; rather they focus on key issues to avoid further decline and to establish the opportunity for a viable local economy. By using relatively abstract term "Short Term" goals as opposed to "Long Term", this indicated priority and sequence - these short term activities should take place before the next step can be taken. Sequence is important since Pine Bluff is financially constrained, and City leaders need the flexibility to reprioritize as necessary without jeopardizing the overall community revitalization continuum.





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# **CLEAN UP** **2.0**

# CLEAN UP

## OVERVIEW

Clean Up refers to the physical changes in Pine Bluff that will improve the appearance, social value, and sense of community. Simple things like picking up trash, mowing high grass and weeds, painting over graffiti, and boarding up broken windows all contribute to improving the physical landscape that affects how we feel and interact with our community.

While the City of Pine Bluff cannot take responsibility for this alone, it can do its part in partnership with local organizations and individual citizens.

Law-abiding individuals need to know that someone is watching and cares about outside activities. Feeling safe and secure in their own neighborhoods and homes is essential to creating a thriving and expansive community. Criminals need to know that someone is watching, as well. Creating an environment where everyone feels safe and comfortable pulls the community together and pushes away criminal activity. This is a fundamental element that has a ripple effect on almost every other part of this plan.

Throughout this plan we discuss the need for residents to walk freely throughout the community using infrastructure that enhances the pedestrian experience, and encourages law-abiding citizens to participate in the public realm. This chapter approaches “Clean Up” on three fronts:

1. Triage: Image & Maintenance
2. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
3. Public Safety/Crime Reduction

**Goal #5: SUPPORT** [Pine Bluff] by readying the City to be open to business, enabling investment and entrepreneurship, and encouraging residents to shop local.





### Triage: Image & Maintenance



#### Overview

Triage actions result in outcomes that demonstrate to residents and visitors that there is a reason to take pride in Pine Bluff. By not keeping up with triage, the city faces the risk of being perceived as unloved and neglected.

#### Purpose

When private property is left to deteriorate, it reflects poorly on the neighborhood as a whole and discourages neighbors from making new investments. When enough neighborhoods begin to deteriorate, then the entire city suffers. Turning this trend around will take both concerted efforts from the City and individual action from every resident in Pine Bluff. While the economic challenges are addressed later in this document, the cultural challenges are closely linked with the lack of economic opportunities.

While many improvements depend upon private individuals making substantial investments in their own property, triage includes simple actions that are relatively easy, mostly low-cost, and critical to begin implementing. Triage seeks to achieve visible change that lifts community spirit and encourages further involvement from residents.

There are also strategies to help leverage neighborhood associations to identify meaningful ways to make improvements. The most impactful example in Pine Bluff would be identifying select vacant lots which can be targeted for better maintenance - such as disposing of litter, mowing

grass and weeds, and planting clovers to minimize future plant growth. Such lots can be targeted for updated maintenance by both community groups and the City.

The purpose of improving specific areas of Pine Bluff is to provide residents safe places where the community can once again engage with their neighbors in conversation, have constructive dialogue with city leaders, and begin to shift the epicenter of community investment from City Hall out into the community.

#### Application

Unfortunately, resources are limited. For example, while code enforcement can play a key role in getting properties to acceptable condition, strict enforcement of all codes is unrealistic under current circumstances. Similarly, not all places can be targeted for concerted maintenance. Prioritization is needed in order to maximize short-term efforts to support longer-term, significant improvements, and help ensure that areas that are heading toward decline can be helped to recover.

Wherever local property owners and groups take active responsibility for improving their properties or neighborhoods, the City should work to support them. Beyond that, the 12 target neighborhoods identified in the plan are the most obvious baseline focus areas for intensified improvements. As each of the areas are targeted for other types of investments, this triage approach can be used to support them.



Central Park area



Central Park area

Based on our team's observations, the blocks immediately around Central Park area would likely be one of the most logical starting points for this type of focus. This area contains both major assets and challenges which could be well-addressed by this approach. The neighborhood includes a major city park, a substantial stock of solid housing, and many long-term residents who are active in their community. Lot and house condition is mixed, with both well-maintained and poorly maintained houses and lots. The area has a large number of police complaints, but it also may have the assets to turn things around in a visible manner. Some targeted investments in this area could be transformative.

Other specific areas are detailed in FOCUS, page 118, and are centered around schools, parks, commercial nodes, and places where improvements to the appearance and character of Pine Bluff will have the greatest impact.

### Action Steps

Triage: Show citizens and visitors alike that residents and local government take pride in their community

1. Replace light bulbs along city streets in downtown and in city parks [City]
2. Clean the downtown sidewalks: Remove glass, debris, and unsafe canopies in downtown [City and local organizations]
3. Remove trash from storm drains and drainage swales that impact the effectiveness of the drainage system [city and local organizations]
4. Inventory collapsed drainage lines [City] - See also INVEST, pages 99-102.
5. Improve waste management collection (couches, trash on curbs) [City and local organizations]

6. Increase code enforcement [City and local organizations]
  - Add strength to code enforcement efforts by mailing fines, rather than notices, for repeated non compliance, or invoices for city labor to mow or secure properties. Place liens on properties if fines are not paid within a reasonable time period.
  - Properly staff code enforcement to effectively address violations
7. Ensure that all traffic signals are operational; notify ARDOT of vehicular and/or pedestrian signals that are not functioning properly along state roads. [City]
8. Initiate neighborhood/street/block cleanup days [City, local organizations, volunteers]
9. Implement vacant lot impact fees to increase accountability [City]

To make triage sustainable on the grassroots level, the city's many community groups must have resources, including officer/staff time and money. Modest sources of funding should be allocated for community groups to conduct neighborhood cleanup, safety and security improvements, and—where the location warrants—surveillance systems to deter crime.

Here, the cleanup effort, combined with community events and local entrepreneurship, can improve the local economy. The effort crosses all boundaries, and is equally reliant upon community support as it is upon municipal efforts. By cleaning up and maintaining the streets and vacant properties in these neighborhoods, the perception of safety and community pride can be shifted, and spur reinvestment. Local government should work together with neighbors and local organizations to clean up and to keep neighborhoods tidy. This job is beyond the scale of the City alone.





Triage should also be considered throughout the municipal budget. Funding may be allocated towards public works to manage the cleanup effort, or other departments such as life safety may be tasked with cleanup responsibilities



Promoting and celebrating even modest successes will be key (refer also to TELL, page 172). City leaders should be a visible part of these efforts. The City should document specific examples of triage, incorporating “before and after” photos and videos to share with the public and demonstrate success.

### Triage and Return on Investment

Unfortunately, resources are limited. Not all places can be targeted for concerted maintenance. Prioritization is needed, leveraging the impact of change towards areas that have the most opportunities for more significant improvements based upon short-term efforts, and areas that are heading towards decline yet that decline can be avoided.

From a strict ROI standpoint, initial triage efforts should be oriented towards increasing opportunity and halting decline. The Core City, a focus of existing City efforts fits both of these priorities. The City’s heart needs attention first - concentrated and swift - so that the rest of Pine Bluff can receive the attention that it also deserves. Areas ripe to increase opportunity are found in Downtown, the Civic Center area, and at UAPB. Here, the cleanup effort combined with community events and local entrepreneurship can improve the local economy. The effort crosses all boundaries, and is equally reliant upon community support as it is upon municipal efforts. The other areas of early focus are those neighborhoods seeing increasing disinvestment and deterioration yet are close-in and connected to City resources. By cleaning up and maintaining the streets and vacant properties in these neighborhoods, the perception of safety and community pride can be shifted, and spur reinvestment. Local government should work together with neighbors and local organizations to clean up and to keep neighborhoods tidy. This job is beyond the scale of the City alone.

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing (to be completed with Implementation phase)

### Responsible Party

City of Pine Bluff, neighborhood associations, merchants associations, residents, business owners, faith leaders, and other non-governmental organizations (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Measuring Success

Determining the success of clean up efforts will be gradual and perpetual. A sea change must occur among Pine Bluff residents to empower everyone to keep the community clean and safe. Punitive penalties for residents would have the opposite effect due to the difficulty to identify and fine violators, that the greatest need for improvement may be in the lowest resourced places, and that the responsibility shifts to the City if the community is not incentivized to do so on their own.

- Inventory and increase the number of free public trash bins, and regularly monitor their capacity. The presence of trash cans is the single greatest indicator of trash disposal by residents. Dumpsters should also be available to neighborhoods on a rotating basis, to collect larger items.
- Measure the number of resolved complaints by residents. A reduced number of calls does not mean improvement, but the reduction in complaints that results in positive action by the community over time will be an improvement.
- Track hours spent addressing residents’ complaints by parks and maintenance staff as well as hours of clean up conducted by volunteers to determine the “cost” of trash, high grass and weeds, graffiti, and petty crimes. Specifically track time from the initial complaint to the follow up with the resident who made it. This time lag is critical to show the public that their concerns are being heard.
- Survey residents periodically to assess their perceptions of neighborhood image and maintenance
- Measure volunteer activity at city cleanup events, and through other organizations working to clean up and improve neighborhood conditions. The city’s investment in time and money to clean up should inspire help from the surrounding community.



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### Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design



#### Overview

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED): affecting human behavior through modifications to the physical environment.

The physical environment has an extraordinary influence on our behavior as a society. There is a reason there are “safe spaces” that feel comfortable and relaxing, and “unsafe spaces” that make us feel unsafe and insecure. The physical environment is composed of buildings, landscaping, parking lots, fences, street lighting, sidewalks, creeks, streams, and a lot more. These elements can make us feel differently depending on the context.

CPTED, discussed in detail in the Technical Assessment, is based on several principles. The most important of these is Natural Surveillance, otherwise known as “eyes on the street”. The idea is that, while police are necessary to maintain order, they cannot be everywhere at once. Potential criminals must be known that their behavior in the public realm can be seen by law-abiding citizens, and that those citizens will intervene (at minimum by calling the police) in case of misbehavior.

#### Purpose

As reflected elsewhere in this document, crime is the number one concern for citizens in Pine Bluff. While random violent crime between strangers is rare in the city, the perception is that the streets and public realm is dangerous. For that reason, many people are reluctant to be in public. Among other problems, this reduces the likelihood that those with ill intent would be seen when committing crimes.

In addition, vacant, abandoned, and unkempt properties create problems that impact the entire city. Vacant buildings can be occupied by illicit users, and empty lots filled with debris and overgrowth provide hiding places for various activities. While not every lot can become an active, productive, and attractive use, steps should be taken to bring parcels in this direction. Neighborhood associations can be proactive in these efforts to inform the City and organize volunteer efforts.

# CLEAN UP

## CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

### Application

Citywide, particularly transitional neighborhoods

### Action Steps

#### 1. Training

There are various opportunities to integrate CPTED principles into Pine Bluff. CPTED training should be integrated into PBPD training, allowing police to work with the community to identify opportunities to intervene in the public realm.

#### 2. CPTED and Safety Walks

Similar to walk audits for accessibility, CPTED and safety walks are a way to engage residents in the conversation of observing the environment around them with intent. An exploration of a safe neighborhood would highlight clean properties, intact windows and doors, and residents who actively talk with their neighbors about ongoing activities. An unsafe neighborhood will include broken and boarded up windows, unkempt properties, broken down vehicles, and overgrown vegetation.

#### 3. Architectural Design

CPTED can also inform the design and improvement of housing. As one example, the presence of front porches on homes is one of the clearest indicators of communities that can have safe streets. A front porch provides the ability to observe and monitor adjacent properties from inside, or outside from a safe distance. When a street has multiple active front porches this will provide residents a shared perspective for events that occur along the street.

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing. Improvements to environmental design should be coordinated in conjunction with other public and private infrastructure projects (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Responsible Party

City of Pine Bluff, neighborhood watch groups, faith groups,

businesses (to be completed with Implementation phase)

### Measuring Success

A number of metrics may help to assess success:

- Number of projects with CPTED “point improvements”
- Lots or site where CPTED principles are applied
- Officers or City staff with CPTED training
- Neighborhood group members trained in CPTED principles
- New public or private projects which incorporate CPTED checklists
- Number of neighborhood public safety audits throughout







### Public Safety / Crime Reduction



#### Overview

The vast majority of Pine Bluff residents are law-abiding. As noted elsewhere in this document, a small number of individuals are responsible for most of the homicides and other serious crimes that have sullied Pine Bluff's reputation and quality of life. That said, there are various groups of criminals who undermine the good work being done in the community.

A successful approach to community safety will require not only improvements in traditional policing approaches, but new ways to address active problem-oriented policing (POP), a broad approach that combines traditional crime prevention with creative problem solving, violence prevention, and community services.

This will require strong partnerships between departments, as well as a closer reliance on neighborhood watch programs, faith-based organizations, and others who can do useful work in the community. The team's discussions with the community revealed many citizens who can be active parts of the solution - if given modest support and resources to do so.

#### Purpose

During the late spring and summer of 2020, there was a series of protests across the United States against police brutality. Policing tactics that have often been taken for granted as necessary to control crime have proven counter to the values many communities hold dear, and have actually created greater distance between law enforcement and the public. In that context, many citizens have reappraised the role and function of the police.

The Pine Bluff Police Department (PBPD) has challenges in retaining quality officers, largely due to issues of pay. As a result, the patrol force is made up of younger inexperienced officers and it is difficult to fill secondary positions, such as detectives. This creates challenges in PBPD's ability to create community outreach programs and handle special projects.

While this is a challenge, it is also an opportunity. A new effort must emerge that is integrated with the everyday needs of the general public. These decisions are difficult to undertake without strong leadership and support from the community for more engaged law enforcement.

# CLEAN UP

## PUBLIC SAFETY / CRIME REDUCTION

### Application

Individual neighborhoods will require different resources to reduce crime and increase public safety. Specific needs for each neighborhood should be targeted evenly, with coordination with neighborhoods experiencing high property damage, and those identified in this plan for future redevelopment.



### Action Steps

1. Reduce the fear of crime through increased police visibility in neighborhoods.
2. Increase capacity for neighbors to evaluate neighborhood conditions and report problems to police.
3. Provide residents the confidence and knowledge that petty crime is being addressed and eliminated.
4. Promote successes - City officials should work closely with the PBDP Public information officer to promote successes and counterbalance negative perceptions.
5. Reduce crime
  - a. Allocate appropriate resources to police: computers in cars, body cameras, etc.
  - b. Take a "saturation" approach to target areas, in conjunction with enhanced youth engagement and other community programs.
  - c. Where there is community support, take an incremental approach, with strict enforcement starting on a block or small area and moving outward
6. Improve Data - In particular, both the police and fire departments have expressed the need for better access to GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapping data, in order to better assess changing conditions and challenges.
7. Work to actively strengthen on-the-ground Neighborhood Watch resources at the grass-roots level.
  - a. Continue to support and renew interest in Neighborhood Watch toolkits and training for residents in trouble areas. (see <https://www.nnw.org/toolkit-training>)
  - b. Specifically identify neighborhoods where there may be limited or no representation.





- c. Connect neighborhood watches to potential partners (local organizations, programs for at-risk youth, businesses, faith-based organizations, institutional partners)
- 8. Where possible, support direct interaction of police with neighborhood residents to increase rapport and trust
- 9. Promote strong youth engagement programs
- 10. Build continuity of neighborhood-oriented policing with close contact between officers, city administration, and neighborhood watch representatives.

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Responsible Party

Elected Officials, City Leadership, Police Department, Public School Administration, Teachers, Faith Leaders, Neighborhood Watch Groups (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Measuring Success

- Success will be measured through the reduction in crime, reduced repeat arrests, reduced recidivism, and reduced police calls. This can be assessed through comparing “hot spots” of intensified focus with the overall crime trends in the city, and seeing how this integrated approach can be compared.
- Further success through increasing job opportunities will have the net effect of providing opportunities to rise out of poverty and experience the prosperity other communities enjoy.
- An additional measure of success can be found in budget allocations that prioritize crime prevention and community-based funding ahead of militarization tactics that further separate the police from the community.





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# 3.0 SUPPORT



**Goal #3: SUPPORT** [Pine Bluff] by readying the City to be open to business, enabling investment and entrepreneurship , and encouraging residents to shop local.

### Overview

#### Stop and Restart.

Pine Bluff must first address the conditions that have created population decline and disinvestment. Recognizing that individual decisions over a period of decades have created a city-wide problem, it is critical (read: absolutely necessary) that **a singular vision of the City's role in redevelopment be written, shared, and adopted at all levels of government.** This means every agency, department, office, staff, worker, and contractor knows and understands how their work impacts the city at large. This "restart" must first be introspective and look inward at city operations, management structure, and efficiency. By self-assessing what works and what does not, the city must refocus on managing decline with critical awareness and honesty.

Pine Bluff should borrow from the technology industry and adopt a "startup" mindset that will pervade every corner of operations. Once the city staff has fully assessed its own capacity, it can then turn outward toward the public and begin the process of implementing a new model for retooling city services. This means that the old way of doing things is called into question and where appropriate, new ways of delivering services are tested as redevelopment occurs. As THE City - *the only city government in Pine Bluff* - each employee must do their part to accept responsibility and see their role in the redevelopment of the city as personal

and integral to their stewardship of the public trust. This can happen rapidly for some programs and positions, but will require time and resources for more departments.

Here are some important questions:

- What is Pine Bluff doing well?
- What is it doing poorly?
- What resources do staff members need to complete tasks?
- Who controls the resources they need?

This plan describes how the City of Pine Bluff will lead this change with other government, private, and business partners. As the sole source of authority for administering the City Government, the City of Pine Bluff bears a unique and solitary responsibility unlike other agencies in that it sets policies, enforces ordinances, and prioritizes funds to uphold the mission of the City. This is not a small responsibility. Performance will not be measured at the end of this effort, but incrementally along the path towards financial health, and social equality.

- Core service improvements vs. High visibility projects
- Real change vs. rebranding and relabeling
- Foundational work vs. Band Aid solutions
- Adhering to all codes vs. selective implementation
- Teamwork Solutions vs Department under-reach





### Purpose

There is no substitute for a pro-business mentality at City Hall, especially with the cascade of factors that make starting a new business incredibly difficult. A pro-business attitude isn't a give away to business owners, but rather a recognition that community investment must start at a small scale to prove the concept, and then grow the business into a self sustaining concern. Barriers to forming new businesses are caused by inconsistent code interpretation and unnecessary complexity to navigate city administrative procedures, essentially getting the "run-around" from multiple departments. City staff should walk through the process of opening a restaurant or retail store as an exercise in understanding where barriers need to be removed, and when ordinances or policies make the process more difficult.

Measuring the success of a new business is difficult because of low activity and lack of documented growth in sales across a short period of time, especially when the first few years are still in the honeymoon phase.

It is critical for City Staff that intersect with the general public and the business community to practice enhanced communication tactics that serve the goals of this plan. Returning phone calls, emails, and stewardship of communications with the public is vital to establishing trust and unlocking potential investments.

Inefficiencies in the development process lead to frustration for business professionals that serve the construction and development community; frustrations that could result in them taking their business elsewhere. Even small delays in returning phone calls have the effect of further suppressing the potential for a business to be successful. Time is money.

There is a value to having a "one stop shop" for certain public information, but also realize there are safety and security considerations that must be addressed when publishing private address information on a public forum. Improved data sharing between City administration and Police and Fire departments will simplify neighborhood improvement activities and coordinate efforts to reduce crime, and increase community safety. A central dashboard for past and ongoing service calls, crime reports, and zoning violations is important for all departments to access frequently and easily.

For further information on turning around these conditions see the "Surplus of Hope" in INVEST: Purpose, on page 40.

### Application

This plan outlines specific areas of physical redevelopment that should take priority over others. Supporting redevelopment where it will have the lowest long term cost coupled with the highest return for the community is an absolute necessity. Where the City of Pine bluff is charged with supporting the individual residents' right to live free and prosper, there should be no distinction drawn between residents of one part of Pine Bluff and another. All residents are equal. While this may seem obvious, it must be clearly articulated that there is no part of Pine Bluff where people will go unsupported by city services through this plan. There are however parts of Pine Bluff that have historic floodplain issues, lack of municipal water or sewer services, and emergency response times that are higher than average. Areas and neighborhoods that have exceeded the functional reach of municipal operations related to the cost of services must be evaluated on an ongoing basis to continually rebalance the priorities of the City to maintain core services and stay financially solvent.



# SUPPORT

## PREPARING THE CITY TO DO BUSINESS

Creating a city that is ready to do business is harder than it sounds. The following steps outlined below were created during the Community Charrette based on input from Pine Bluff residents.

### Action Steps

Prepare the City to “Do Business”

1. Work Together as One (City organization and management)
  - a. Reorganize to remove departmental silos and to move resources in the right direction
  - b. Connect projects across departments
  - c. Identify agencies working at “mixed odds” and connect them to outcomes
  - d. Make decisions in an efficiency-focused direction
  - e. Align government effort to be highly effective at specific tasks that unlock latent human and economic potential
  - f. Improve response time for written and verbal communications and maintain attention to detail to support continuity between business groups.
2. Support Private Sector Investment
  - a. Create efficiencies in the development process
    - Require a pre-development meeting on all new development projects to include representatives from zoning, public works (streets, sewer, and private utilities), building inspection, as well as the project architect and engineer to provide clear direction on development requirements and expectations, the development process, and key point personnel.
    - Create a staff position to be the development “point person” to coordinate across departments and move the development process forward in a more timely fashion
    - Simplify development application forms to make them more understandable for small business owners
    - Create consistency in development forms across departments
    - Ensure that all departments are following the same development process flow chart
    - Simplify the development process for rehabilitating existing structures
  - b. Create and empower the Public Information Office
  - c. Create programs and access to financing to support locally-owned small businesses
  - d. Focus on jobs that provide a mix of income scales that utilize skills aligned with SEARK programs
  - e. Support pop-ups and innovation for lessons learned

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Responsible Party

City of Pine Bluff (to be completed with Implementation phase).







### Measuring Success

It may be difficult on the outset to measure the success of improved support for the business and the development community. We have to do the best we can with existing resources, and existing relationships to move projects forward. Success may be saying “yes” to a challenging project and working closely with them to knock down barriers. Other times, success may be getting out of the way so the business community can run at full speed. The City of Pine Bluff can reduce the cost of doing business by paying attention to the way the system works best.

There are “doers” and “connectors” in every entrepreneurial system. The doers are the ones who take risks and get things done, while the connectors help navigate the systems to get people paired up with like minds and resources. The City of Pine Bluff has to “feed the system” a little every day with a positive, helpful attitude to push the doers and connectors to stand on their own and inspire others.

When Pine Bluff begins to see an increase in business activity, a few metrics can be used to measure success. They include:

- A reduction in sales tax leakage to other communities, measured by increasing sales tax collections to local businesses.
- The increase in transactions between local businesses can be measured by internal sales tax collections.
- Decreasing the time to issue permits and say “yes” to new business measured in days from submittal.
- Remove red tape to new residential development and renovations can be measured by utility permits (plumbing and electrical) as well as new complete building permits.



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**4.0**  
**INVEST**





**Goal # 4: INVEST [Pine Bluff]** by strategically spending capital that will result in a return on investment, such as investments in streets, drainage, utilities, and a collective investment in real estate to facilitate redevelopment.

### Overview

The concept of an “investment” is used widely in society but is never put into realistic terms for most people. Economic Markets require a balance of supply and demand to function and sustain economic conditions. Pine Bluff is a situation where limited resources abound and demand for services are high. Investment thinking is not a natural condition. From a historical perspective, when basic resources are scarce, investments take the form of collecting value-added commodities for later use. This means: storing flour before the winter, knitting sweaters during the summer, or buying fuel in bulk when it’s cheaper. The key difference here is these commodities are not prepared for resale. Investments are intentional. Buy something, hold onto it, and expect that the sale price will exceed the sale price of some other item over the same period of time. Investments are designed to expect calculated returns.

Investments made in physical infrastructure should provide decades of reliable use to optimize the significant investment. Cutting corners on projects can do more long term damage than short term good. Abandoned buildings, utilities, and roadways are an asset that once put into service should have an expected functional life. When these investments are not used, or not used to capacity, their cost burden is multiplied. When roads and bridges continue to fail before

their expected end of life, the cost of replacement is a burden on systems that are also critically reaching their end of life. In this case, Pine Bluff must wrestle with the differences between Investment and Abandonment.

### Purpose

Leaders of Pine Bluff at all levels must engage with this Plan with a **Surplus of Hope** that they are exercising the will of the public and using their resources wisely and judiciously.

The significant investment in the Casino and the area surrounding it will completely reshape the public perception of Pine Bluff. This development will attract a variety of national retailers, hotels, and businesses that will refocus the “center” of Pine Bluff if not managed appropriately. The urban design principles described in detail in this plan should be THE guidebook for creating a masterplan for the area around the Casino. Without a strong and carefully managed masterplan, investment will be fractured, inconsistent, and haphazard. This will further impede new business growth and uncertainty in the development community of which “plan” the city is following.

The location on the eastern edge of the city does present an opportunity to draw visitors across downtown where they can pass by retailers that offer the authentic downtown experience. A strategic retail masterplan can accommodate developments near downtown as well as the Casino.

It's difficult to establish priorities where there are limited resources, but cities across the United States have been successful in setting clear and achievable goals and aligning the city budget to tackle the hard problems and find success. Pine Bluff is no different. The shift in thinking embedded within the plan is that the economic programs, cultural and social initiatives, and capital improvement plans, should follow the framework established in this Comprehensive Plan. The value here is not being self referential, but to give a preeminent guide that is apolitical, informed by the public meetings and charrettes, and guided by residents who have shared their life experiences and shaped this plan into its present form.

Changes in leadership within a community are essential to the continuation of progress. Within this plan are the guidelines for all elected and appointed officials to follow concerning capital improvements, budget expenditures for infrastructure, major capital projects and a distinct focus on parts of Pine Bluff that will sustain value long-term.

### Approach

#### Understanding Land Productivity: Value per Acre

Cities have the power to implement master plans and allocate resources to a wide variety of community needs. To fund improvements for a specific area, cities need the data to measure the value this area contributes to the community, and set a baseline for future economic gains. This improvement in value will be returned in the form of sales tax, property tax, and the net increase in jobs. Cities have the power to create positive economic returns, but seldom use that leverage to achieve the type of revenue "yield" that attracts outside investment.

Within the Pine Bluff municipal boundary are properties that to varying degrees contribute to the ongoing operation and maintenance of Jefferson County, the City of Pine Bluff, and other government agencies. Some properties may only be taxed \$200 while others pay well above \$10,000 per year or higher. All non-exempt property owners contribute, and all property owners benefit.

This land is the city's commodity that it leverages to supplement the varying cycles of sales tax collections, federal grants, and all other sources of revenue that comprise the municipal budget. There is an enormous distinction between small "city lots" that pay a certain amount per acre, and "suburban lots" that may pay more per lot, but not when indexed to a per-acre basis. A per-acre basis provides an "apples to apples" comparison of land costs (infrastructure) and land returns (property tax, sales tax, and jobs).

"Don't wait to buy real estate. Buy real estate and wait." - Will Rogers



Farmers calculate maximum potential yield and work tirelessly to maximize production. Cities should likewise understand the productivity of the land in its boundaries in a comparable manner.



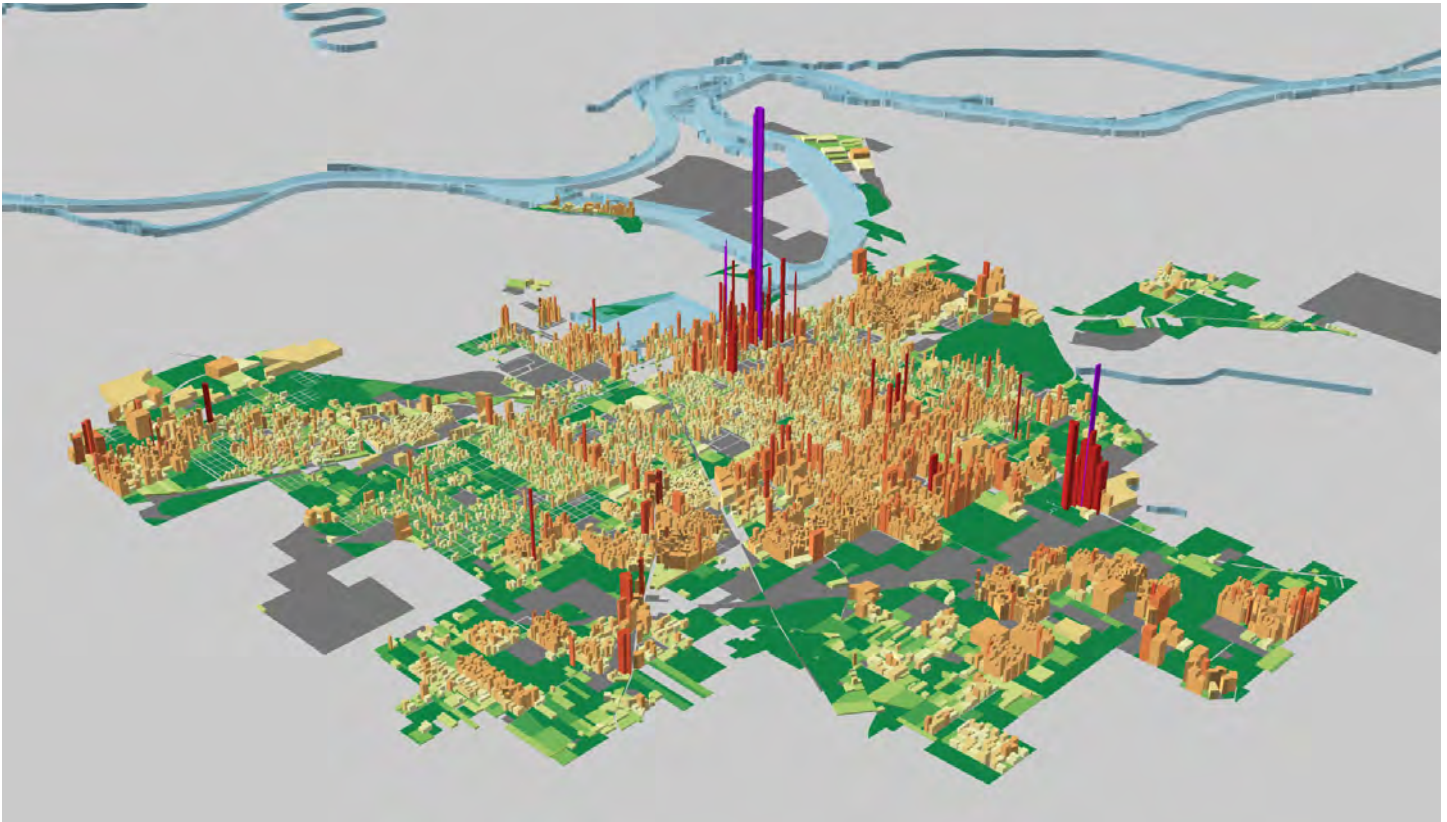


Figure 4.1: Value per Acre

### Value per Acre: Pine Bluff

The model above demonstrates that well planned and accessible development pays more in property tax compared to the services they are provided, but on the whole, these businesses benefit more from the proximity of adjacent businesses and the “centrality” of their downtown location. The tradeoffs are not directly related to their property tax payments, but to the interrelatedness of how downtown is special, and therefore greater in value than commercial properties along the periphery of town that pay far less per acre. This inverse relationship creates a financial burden for downtown businesses, and subsidizes suburban development which costs more to support with water, sewer, roads, police, fire, and other government services.

If we measure how productive each commercial business in Pine Bluff is on a per acre basis, we can clearly see that downtown contributes more per acre than suburban businesses. If we were to build more “downtown” type businesses, those with smaller lots, different types of businesses and housing on the upper floors of mixed use buildings, we create a more productive form of development. This form of development is not new to the United States, or urban development, but is the exact form of urban life that is common in cities across the world.

Refer to Technical Assessment, pages 174-184, for more information.

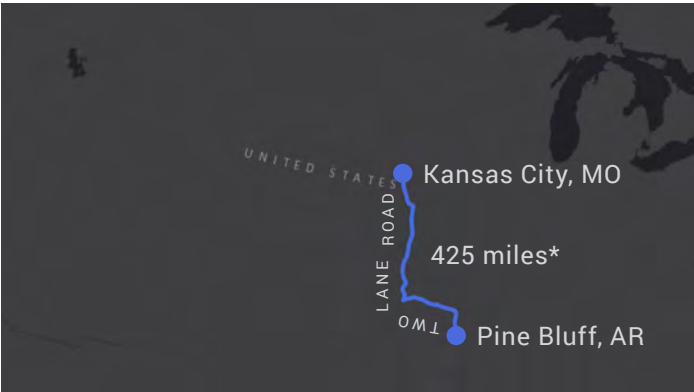


Streets & Infrastructure

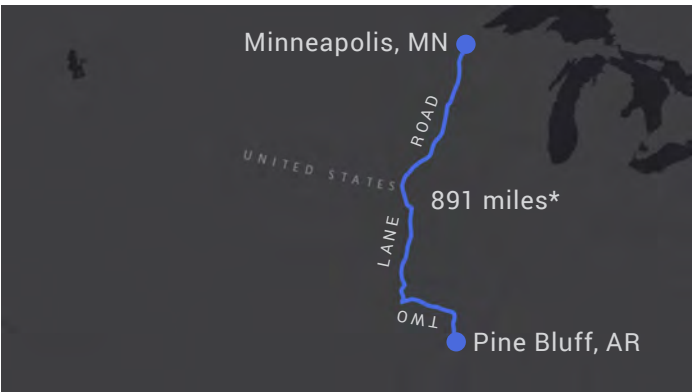
Safe and accessible sidewalks are essential to every healthy and thriving community. Without sidewalks residents must adventure through an environment that was not designed for pedestrians, but for moving cars quickly from one place to another, often at dangerous speeds. Laid end to end, existing lane miles of streets in the City of Pine Bluff would equal a 2-lane road from Pine Bluff to Kansas City, Missouri. Using the same measure, existing lane miles of roads in Jefferson County would equal a 2-lane road from Pine Bluff to Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Mult-modal streets (Streets with sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian signals) will only appear to be expensive when taken out of context of their benefit to the health, connectivity, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled. Cities like Pine Bluff benefit from a well established street grid which was originally designed well before the automobile. This plan consistently advocates for the shift in mindset from “roads, roads, roads” to “neighborhoods, people, connectivity”. It’s not enough to just agree. The funding priorities of the City must reflect this basic understanding to create meaningful change.

The construction and maintenance of streets is one of the largest single expenditure items in the city’s Capital Improvement Budget. There is no argument that existing streets should be maintained and accessible to thriving



\*Length of 2 lanes of road put end to end



\*Length of 2 lanes of road put end to end

PAYING FOR STREETS & PIPES: JEFFERSON COUNTY VALUE PER ACRE

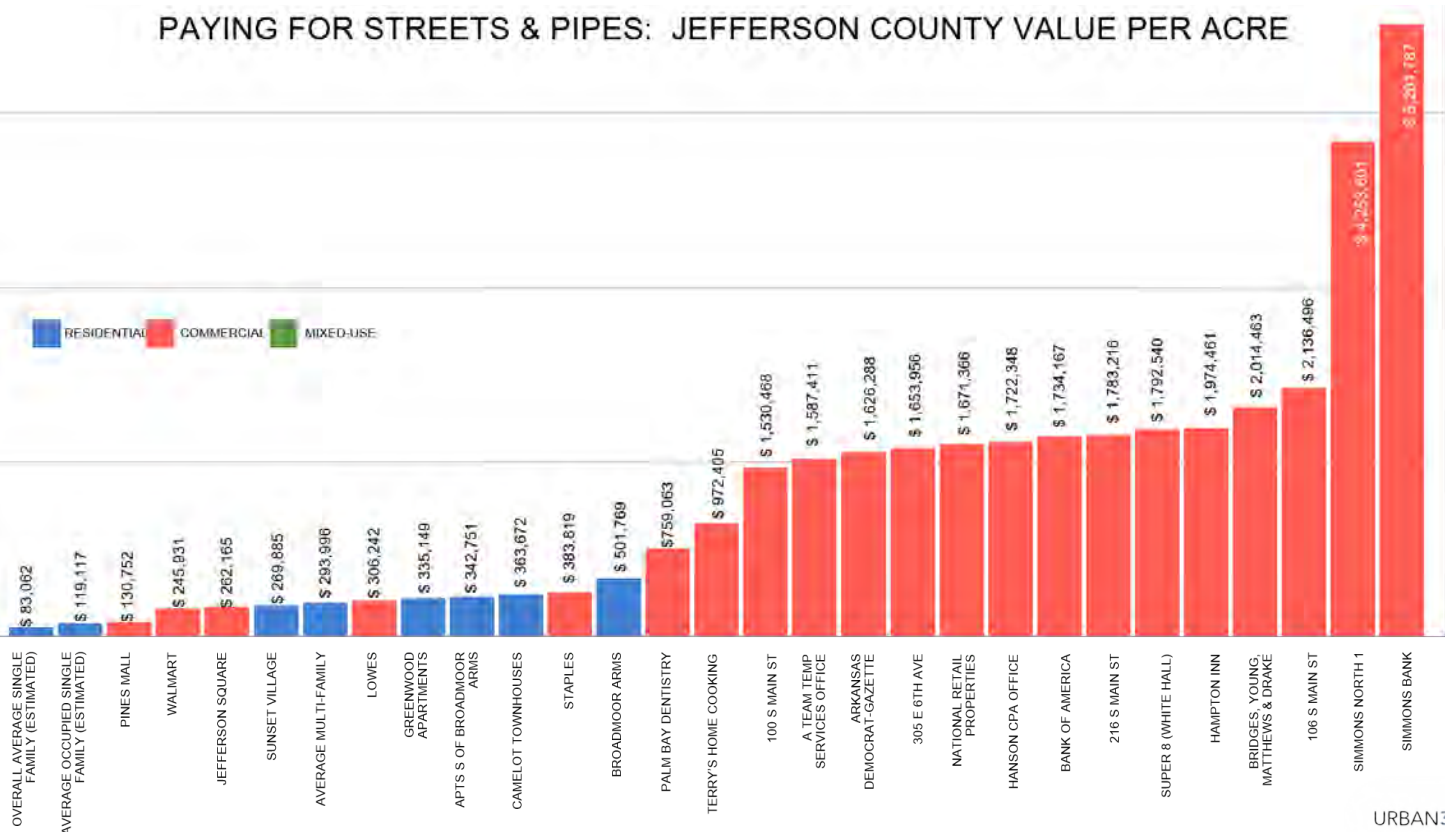


Figure 4.2: Paying for Streets & Pipes, Jefferson County Value per Acre

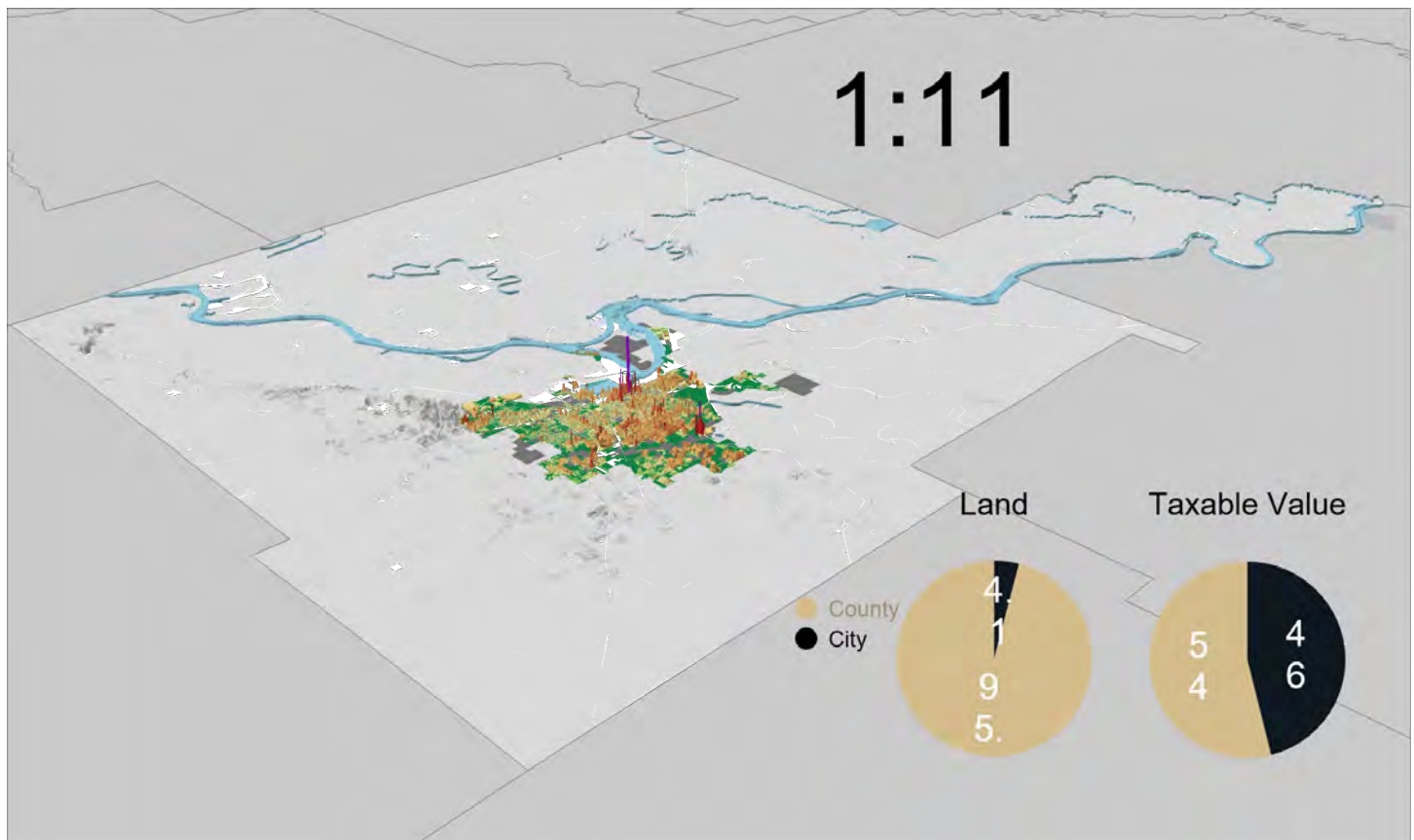


Figure 4.3: Share of Land vs. Land Value Comparison

properties whose owners pay their property taxes. Where the tax system breaks down is where the cost of expanding an already overly designed street is greater than the contribution of adjacent property owners that benefit from direct access to that street during the project life cycle. What we have found through this detailed analysis is that poor and working class neighborhoods are subsidizing wider and faster roads in places that are already over built, but well under their design capacity.

This smarter approach to ongoing multi-modal street design and maintenance is to avoid unnecessary new maintenance burdens when the alternative achieves better outcomes. Projects that add lane miles or widen lanes without bike lanes and sidewalks carry a long term maintenance burden that draws down the contribution of adjacent tax paying properties, and decreases health and neighborhood outcomes. These smart investments do not minimize the need for drainage improvements, accommodating challenging turning movements (steep grades at ditches, culverts, schools and parks), or safety improvements that increase pedestrian safety and visibility.

### Share of Land vs. Value

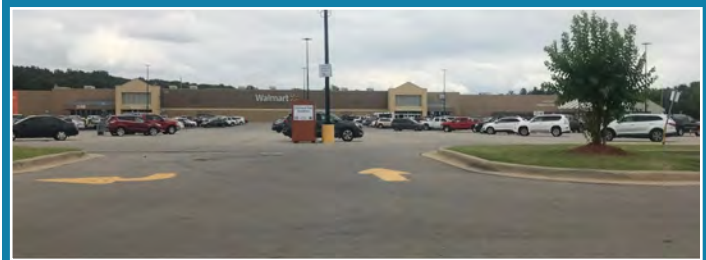
The property-tax-generating land within Pine Bluff (excluding property exempt by government, schools, parks, streets, and the faith community) account for 4.1% of all of Jefferson County. This may seem like a small percentage, but this land accounts for 46% of the taxable value within Jefferson County. This further proves the point that Jefferson County will benefit from a more concentrated development scenario that increases the development potential of Pine Bluff while maintaining the rural character of the remainder of Jefferson County.

### Big-Box Retail

Big box stores and strip malls are designed to be served by automobile traffic. As the square footage of stores increased over a span of decades, the amount of parking required was expanded as well. As little as 30% of many big box stores is actual occupiable space. The remaining 70% is parking, drive lanes, loading zones, and queuing spaces to enter and exit the site. These large parcels inherently push adjacent businesses farther apart, increasing distances between stores to a point where it only makes sense to drive from one storefront to another. By eliminating the opportunity to walk between businesses, sidewalks are no longer necessary and the downward spiral towards isolated, disconnected parking lots is fulfilled. This pattern of development not only generates bad health outcomes and isolationism, but also provides a lower return on investment to the community as a whole.

**This plan fully recognizes the importance of having a wide range of retail opportunities to provide the City of Pine Bluff sales tax revenue that would be spent in another city.**

The distinction is that development decisions to subsidize development on the periphery of town has a devastating effect on the viability of downtown businesses. These downtown businesses provide a healthier mix of shops, restaurants, and activities that support overall community character.



Walmart: \$245,931 per acre



Goody's Strip Mall: \$95,021 per acre



Superfood 1 Strip Mall: \$198,995 per acre



28th Ave Strip Mall: \$245,536 per acre



Super 8 (White Hall): \$1,783,216 per acre



Hampton Inn & Suites: \$1,792,540 per acre



Mallard Loop Strip Mall: \$2,038,794 per acre





Walmart: \$245,931 per acre

### Local Commercial

Comparing the property tax collections from a big box store with dozens of smaller downtown buildings highlights that smaller more compact development is a smarter pattern to follow. Obviously historic buildings were constructed to meet the economic needs of the business climate at the time. This does not prevent Downtown Pine Bluff from updating the development code to allow for bigger box stores, but that the design of those new larger stores must match the character of the place, and include all the features that make other downtowns across the United States a success.

Infilling between existing buildings is the easiest way to accommodate new business and provide much needed new investment in Downtown. It is critical to preserve the history of Pine Bluff and stop the further deterioration of historic buildings. While it is possible to rebuild with similar materials and style, there is no substitute for historic structures that have inherent qualities that create value for the community.



Indigo Blue Coffee:  
\$141,885 per acre



Unique Cakes:  
\$178,082 per acre



Pop's Barber Shop:  
\$425,563 per acre



RJ's Sports Grill & Bar:  
\$633,446 per acre



100 S Main: \$1,452,834 per acre

### Residential: Single Family & Multi-Family

In Pine Bluff, single family properties are assessed at an average valuation of \$82,017 per acre. Since single family homes are the predominant property type, it is important to understand the balance between maintaining housing affordability, and establishing a minimum threshold for property tax assessments that adequately support services. When properties get larger, their assessments do not increase proportionately, but have an inverse relationship. This pattern of devaluing larger lots on a per acre basis creates a disincentive to much needed housing densities. Positive housing density is critical to providing a natural transition between commercial development to other lower density housing.

The apartment building examples shown here are not outliers for their higher valuation, but reflect the compactness and housing density that begin to fit the pattern that is much more sustainable than single family zoning.

The complete reevaluation of development patterns indicated in this Comprehensive Plan are the roadmap to creating a community that makes wise investments, incentivizes private developers to follow this pattern, and uses existing resources to extend the life of public infrastructure. No single decision can be taken in isolation; (density vs. sprawl, safe streets vs. traffic, quality vs. quantity) without taking into account the true costs of development and the long term return on investment to the entire community.



Walmart: \$245,931 per acre



Pine Bluff: All Single Family Average: \$82,017 per acre

Pine Bluff: Occupied Single Family Average: \$119,117 per acre



Pine Bluff: Estimated Multi-Family Average (All): \$262,344 per acre



Greenwood Manor Apartments: \$335,149 per acre



Camelot Townhouses: \$363,372 per acre

### Application

Focus on key corridors and nodes identified in this plan, prioritizing corner lots and larger parcels for purchase and combining properties. Property not within a clearly articulated corridor or node are not considered for reinvestment.

Focus on key personnel from outside Pine Bluff, but have extensive experience working in culturally rich communities. Bring in outside experts is a strategic asset when the lens of their work is to re-establish a community that is new and different for everyone involved.

### Action Steps

INVEST: Orient economic development opportunities with community building

1. Identify gaps in the "Schools-Jobs-Housing-Quality of Life" continuum.
2. Fully realize the potential of Urban Renewal Programs
  - a. Build public trust in the critical issues and articulate a clear pathway to action steps.
  - b. Seek legal counsel for programs used by other Urban Development Authorities that can be localized by PBURA without additional authority being granted.
3. Establish housing trust fund from property tax assessments to fund low interest loan program.
4. Improve cellular service reliability across town (public safety issue for PBPD).
5. Upgrade water infrastructure in downtown to increase water pressure.
6. Invest in targeted street improvements to accommodate active mobility while accommodating existing vehicular trips: refer to Streets, beginning on page 51.
7. Invest in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provides connectivity between neighborhoods, neighborhood centers, neighborhood retail centers, and community attractions: refer to Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, beginning on page 71.
8. Prioritize investments and capital improvements in existing parks that serve as neighborhood centers or LID facilities to alleviate stormwater management issues: refer to Parks & Community Facilities, beginning on page 83.
9. Obtain strategically-located land for new parks to serve as neighborhood centers or urban greenspace in lower-density areas of town, until such areas are developed with a population density to create the need for a more developed park: refer to Parks & Community Facilities, beginning on page 83.
10. Invest in a wayfinding system to guide visitors to community destinations: refer to Wayfinding, beginning on page 93.
11. Invest in tools, strategies, and improvements to alleviate drainage and stormwater issues: refer to Drainage, beginning on page 99.
12. Invest in Low Impact Development strategies and applications to aid in the collection and infiltration of stormwater to reduce the strain on the existing drainage system: refer to Sustainability, beginning on page 103.

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Responsible Party

City of Pine Bluff, neighborhood associations, merchants associations, residents, business owners (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Measuring Success

There are a number of ways to determine how much value is being lost each year from property tax collections. Given the declining property values and vacancy rates, the trend is not likely to reverse quickly, and the City has not yet hit the bottom. There is a counterintuitive argument for the City of Pine Bluff, Jefferson County, or another tax-exempt entity purchasing or taking ownership of vacant and abandoned properties. If properties are held by private owners there is at least the potential for collection of property tax. Held in public accounts, the property is exempt from tax collections and will not generate income for the public entities.

Declining assessments occur the following reasons

- Age and condition of structure
- Condition of neighborhood
- Sale of property for less than assessed value
- Demolition of structure, leaving only vacant land
- Purchase by non-profit or tax exempt entity
- Lots combined with adjacent parcels

Increasing assessments occur for the following reasons

- Construction of new buildings
- Renovation or expansion of existing building
- Natural increase in assessed valuation
- Improvements made across a neighborhood that influence comparable properties
- Sale of a property above market value

Additional data will be necessary to understand more finer grained details of the following:

- New Business Licenses
- Home-owner occupied homes for 18-30 y/o
- Building permits (new and renovations) near parks and schools
- Also measured by demolition permits and meters turned off



### Guide to Investing in Public Infrastructure

Simply put, money spent on unnecessary infrastructure projects is not only a waste of money now, but a long term maintenance burden that will cost Pine Bluff more for decades to come. Widening roads to reduce congestion is the same as buying bigger pants to lose weight. It does not work.

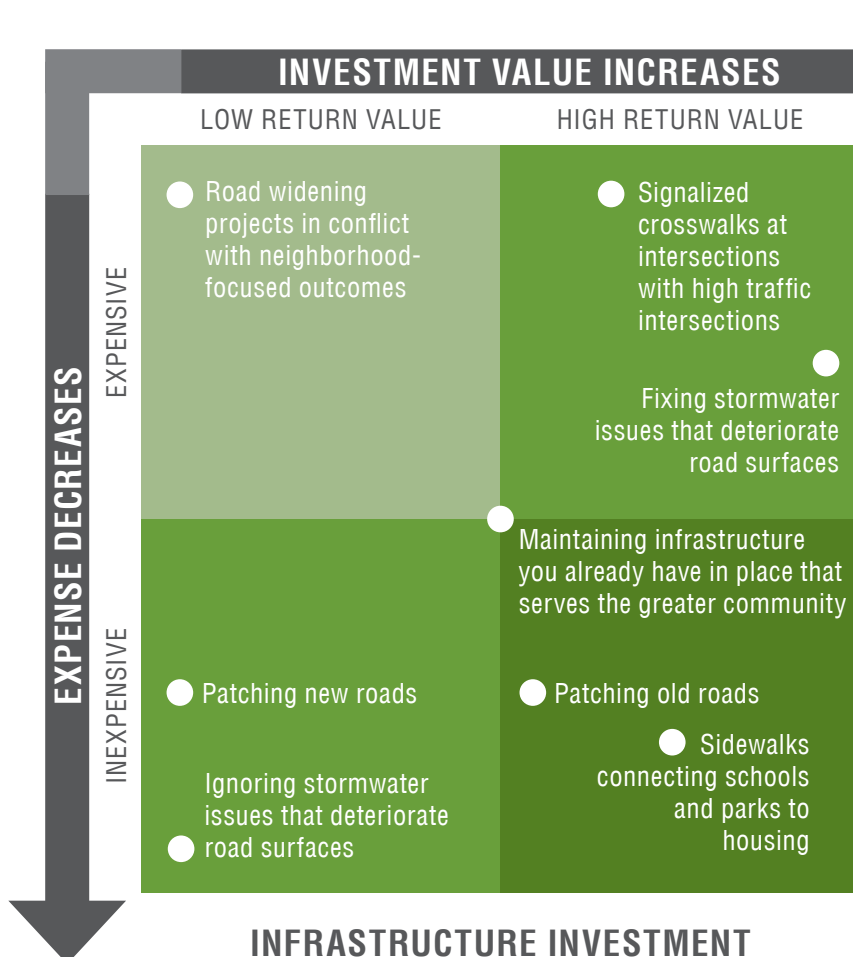
Enormous capital investments in projects that cannot be justified either on a cost-benefit scale, or on a volume of traffic (ADT) basis are obviously a poor investment. Communities that have moved capital improvement funds from road widening projects to sidewalks, bike paths, trails, and parks have seen an increase in safe pedestrian activity that also leads to a reduction in vehicle miles traveled, eliminating the need for lane widening! We see communities that have moved these investment dollars from car-only projects to neighborhood-wide projects increase goodwill among voters, and increase health outcomes, reduce crime, and stabilize home values. These issues alone are more than enough for Pine Bluff to reimagine major capital investment projects on a smaller scale that is more neighborhood focused.

New guidelines for neighborhood scale investing in public infrastructure have proven a higher return on investment than street projects that pull neighborhoods further apart.

The decision-making matrix needed to evaluate these projects is far more complex than looking at one simple metric to justify the capital investment. The matrix draws a distinction between Good Investments and Bad Investments, measured against Inexpensive Projects and Expensive Projects. Each project is measured against this Comprehensive Plan, and prioritized based on the ongoing revenue available to systematically forward the progress of Pine Bluff.

While Pine Bluff does have some headwind in making progress on difficult issues, the aim of this plan is to place Pine Bluff on the path to success.

The steps are clearly outlined; the strategies are clearly detailed; the priorities are clearly aligned with the needs of the community.



The Strategy is this:

1. Focus first on the Neighborhood, which bonds the people and the family together.
2. Connect the Neighborhood with worship, schools, parks, stores, and entertainment to build community.
3. Connect the Community with purpose, quality jobs, recreation, events, and learning that lasts a lifetime.
4. Connect the Generations with leadership, stewardship, and the passion for Pine Bluff to be a better place for the next generation.

It's essential that every year when budgets are reviewed that the priorities outlined in this plan are reviewed and discussed at length. The easy way is to give up and go along with the status quo of doing just enough to get by. The better decision is to hold onto the long-term strategies that are proven to be successful and stand your ground for Pine Bluff.

Figure 4.4 Infrastructure Investment Matrix

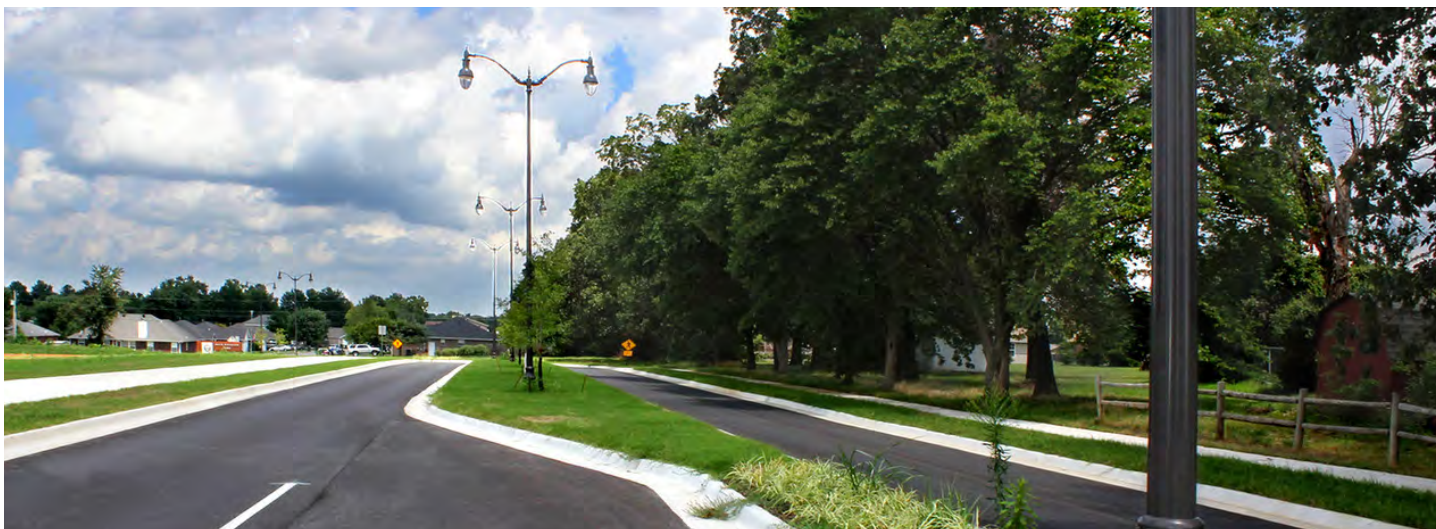


*Photo: Jesse Orrico, unsplash.com*

### **Economically-Based Decision Making Toolkit**

Making difficult decisions with limited resources is a challenge to communities across the United States. An economically-based decision making toolkit is important to maintain continuity of services across budget years, election cycles, and fluctuating sales tax collections. The toolkit which will be detailed in the Implementation Plan as a how-to guide for prioritizing the qualitative needs of the community with fact-based metrics to provide the wider community necessary oversight.

## Streets



## General Considerations

## The Street Network and Decision-Making Approach

Streets connect with each other to form a network. This statement may be obvious, but street design decision-making often ignores the influence that a street network has on its function. At the most basic level, street networks are either highly connected in an urban grid or infrequently connected in a rural network or dendritic suburban pattern. Throughout the later half of the 20th century, most new streets were built within dendritic or rural networks, and the standards utilized by transportation agencies were written to suit that system. But these standards were also applied to cities made up of urban grids, which function quite differently.

Within infrequently connected or dendritic networks, streets are sorted into three categories: arterials, collectors, and locals - setting aside interstate freeways. This Arterial-Collector-Local (ACL) system assumes that traffic will generally flow from local streets where people live or work, to collectors which are larger streets nearby, to arterials which are the largest streets in the area that drivers use to cross long distances towards their destination. The term dendritic describes this system, where streets become smaller and smaller as they branch away from the arterial. Local streets are generally discouraged from connecting with arterials, the access to which is limited in order to reduce the number of intersections that cause traffic to stop and increase potential dangers within that system. As a result destinations tend to be extended far from



Figure 4.5:  
Connected Street Network



Figure 4.6:  
Disconnected Street Network



# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: STREETS

each other, which extends the length of trips and reduces the effectiveness of walking or cycling (Refer to Figure 4.7: Functional Classification).

Within highly connected street networks, each street connects with many other streets along its trajectory and street types have rarely been substantially differentiated. In a highly connected network, each trip from home to work or other destinations may occur along many different paths. Rather than concentrate traffic onto larger and larger roadways, connected networks distribute traffic throughout the network. There remains a hierarchy of slightly larger streets within connected networks that attract longer-distance trips, however delays along those routes can easily be avoided by navigating the network in a different direction. When the

size of blocks is small, as in the Core City, highly connected networks also function very efficiently for pedestrians and cyclists, who often navigate more direct yet jagged routes towards their destinations. The combination of car traffic disbursement and increased mode share (car + pedestrian + bike) reduces the amount of car traffic along each street. Less car traffic allows the pavement for cars to be reduced and more space provided for pedestrians, bikes, landscape, and stormwater.

Until very recently, the ACL system utilized in infrequently connected networks has been applied to all streets, regardless of network type and land use context, which we will later discuss. At the time of this writing, significant change is being made to transportation management within highly

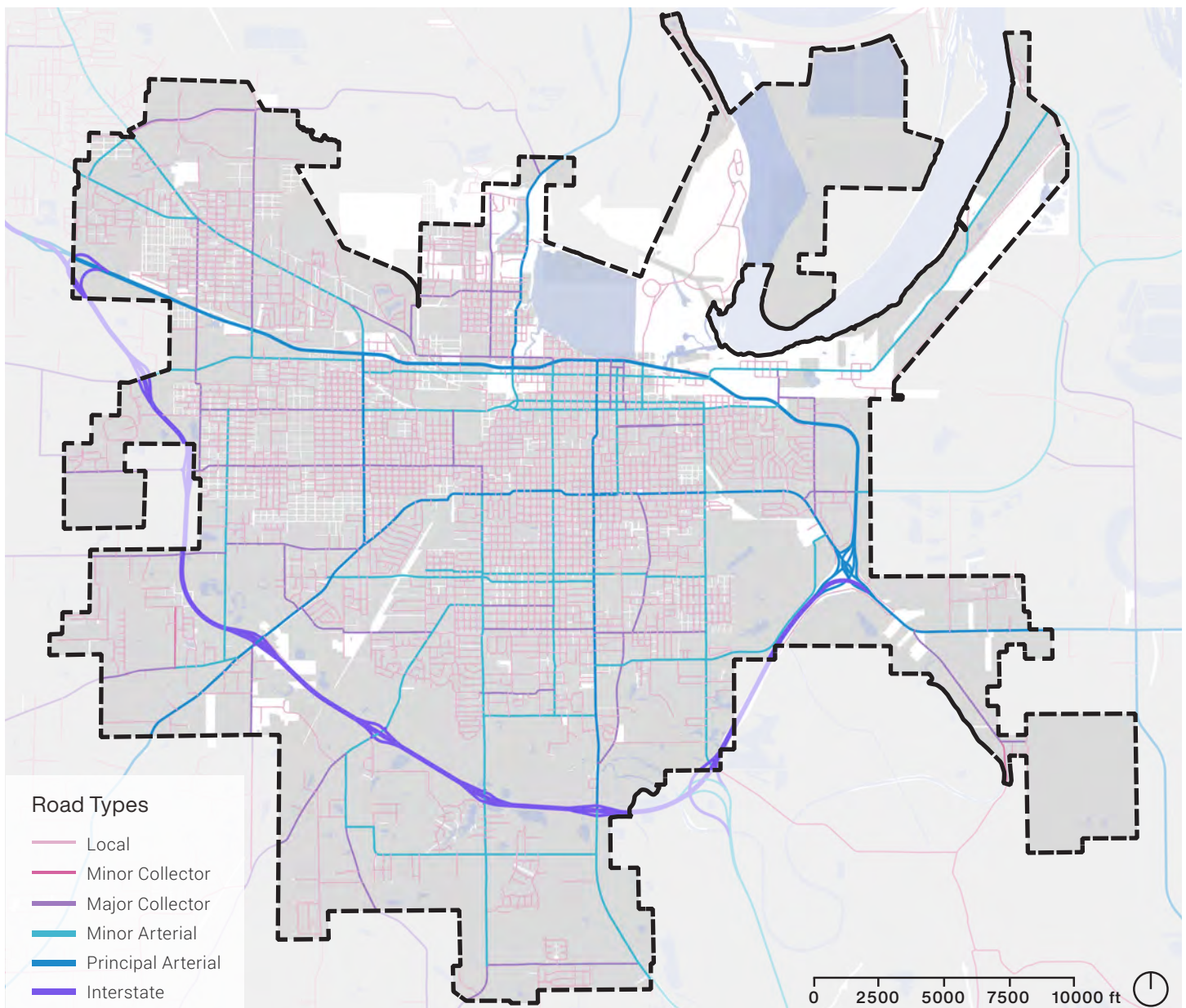


Figure 4.7: Functional Classification of Roads





Figure 4.8: Florida Department of Transportation Context Classification

connected networks. At the forefront of advocacy is the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO), composed of transportation departments in many cities across the US who have seen the damage brought to cities by applying dendritic standards and measures to connected city networks. NACTO's advocacy has brought about significant change. In parallel, the State of Florida is replacing their statewide street standards with a system that recognizes the difference between urban, suburban, and rural areas, and changes street standards according to their context. Pine Bluff should be proactive in adopting this context-based approach, and this plan provides the means of achieving change. Refer to Figure 4.8: Florida Department of Transportation Context Classification diagram.

Cities do not exist alone in the landscape, and do not control all of the roads that are within their boundaries. The State of Arkansas Department of Transportation (ArDOT) controls many key routes within Pine Bluff, such as Martha Mitchell, University Drive, Blake, and Olive. ArDOT plans to turn Hwy-190 / 6th Ave over to the city, which allows Pine Bluff to repair serious damage done to the Downtown / Civic Center area. The city should also attempt to control Olive and the state's short connected segments along Harding and Main Street. University Drive is another key acquisition target, however due to a lack of alternative routes, the state is not likely to turn over that roadway, and it will continue to divide UAPB from the lake and degrade the University Park neighborhood. Lastly, the state controls Dollarway, Blake, and Camden. Improving Blake would help repair the divide between the Core City and the West End, however the opportunity to do so is beyond the timeframe of this plan.

The state Department of Transportation (ARDOT) and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) cannot be faulted for their standards or approach. The portion of state and county managed roads that travel through urban areas is miniscule compared to the total length of roads they must maintain. At the county and state levels, the primary concern is to quickly and safely move vehicles. The standards and measures that they use to do so have been developed and published by the engineering profession and adopted across the country. But the city must be an advocate for the safety and quality of life of their residents and the success of their business districts. The local approach is often at odds with the county or state level focus.

Pine Bluff must utilize these tools in their decision making, and advocate for their results when considering both city-owned streets and in advocacy along routes outside of their jurisdiction. The MPO's Transportation Plan is being revised concurrently with this plan, and affects a number of streets within the Core City. Typically the Transportation Plan carries-forward roadway projects that were not completed from prior plans. However the assessment document accompanying this plan finds flaws due to the discrepancies enumerated above. Rather than widening streets many streets within the city should be narrowed, and available funding put towards sidewalks, crosswalks, street trees, and bike facilities. In coordination between this plan and the MPO Transportation Plan, we hope to strike a balance between the anticipated needs of cars and those of the community.

### Purpose of Streets

Streets are the largest public asset owned by the city. Like parks are programmed, streets should also be programmed to respond to the needs of the surrounding community. A well designed street connects neighbors, helps kids get to school and the park, creates gathering spaces to continue communion after church, provides space to dine among friends, and becomes space where communities come together, both in celebration and grieving. A poorly designed street divides the community, creates excessive noise and dust, degrades property value, and in many instances endangers the lives of residents. Streets should not be designed to make it easier for the larger region to benefit from Pine Bluff's businesses, industries, and institutions. Streets should be designed to reinforce Pine Bluff's community by interconnecting the city and creating places where people feel comfortable and safe.



### Land Use Context

The intensity and character of the space through which a street is located influences the design of that street. Streets that pass through the countryside are designed much differently from those within a downtown. In rural areas, more trips occur by car than by foot due to the long distances traveled, and the limited number of streets means that trucks need to use a relatively high percentage of those streets. In an active downtown, more trips occur by foot than by car due to the adjacency of many destinations, and the frequency of streets means that cars are well dispersed and traffic generally low, allowing more space to be provided for sidewalks, trees, and benches than is necessary for cars. There are more than just these two settings for streets, rather a number of different contexts exist that influence street design. Principally, context is the result of land use, or the way that land is developed and used. Rural areas are made up mostly of land in cultivation, preservation, or very infrequent housing on large properties. Downtowns are made up of relatively tall buildings on small properties, close to

Land Use Category	Pedestrian	Cyclist	Automobile	Truck	Low-Impact Development
Mixed-Use Center	1	2	3	4	5
Neighborhood Retail Center	1	2	3	5	4
Neighborhood Seam	1	3	2	5	4
Neighborhood Fabric	2	3	4	5	1
Industrial District	4	3	2	1	5
Suburban Corridor	3	4	1	2	5
Rural	4	3	2	1	5
Special District	Determined on a case-by-case basis				

Table 4.10: Land-Use Context: User Prioritization

each other and filled with many different types of specific uses like apartments or restaurants or stores. This plan provides a Future Land Use Map that specifies land use in this manner, based upon the intensity of activities and the proximity of buildings to each other and to the sidewalk. Decisions concerning street design should be different when a street is within each of these land use categories.

### Street Users and Modes

Street design must consider all users and balance the needs of each based upon the land-use context of the street. Within principally residential neighborhoods, street priority should be given to pedestrians first, followed by cyclists, green infrastructure, cars, and lastly to trucks. Along rural collectors, priority should be given to trucks first, followed by cars, cyclists, pedestrians, and finally green infrastructure. Many traffic engineering decisions are made by a measure called Level of Service (LOS), which ignores the land-use context as well as street users that are not cars. A somewhat superior measure has been used in some jurisdictions called

the Multi-modal Level of Service, which measures other street users like pedestrians, cyclists, and public transportation. The Multi-modal LOS is better than plain LOS, but it still ignores context. Both the standard LOS and Multi-modal LOS are applicable to streets within the ACL system, which is focused principally on car movement. But in a city, a bad LOS grade (based on an A-F measure) can be desirable to slow cars for pedestrian safety, ease of crossing streets, and to increase exposure of businesses to customers. Street design decisions in Pine Bluff should not focus on level of service, rather they should be made based upon land use context user prioritization (Table 4.10). This means that in a Mixed-Cse Center, pedestrian accommodations are the top priority, even if that means car traffic is delayed. In other land-use contexts, the prioritization will differ. Additionally, green infrastructure is included within the prioritization system to determine if more space should be given to stormwater management if that means another mode must sacrifice space. Note that within Special Districts, user priority must be carefully considered based upon the street users common to that district.



### Short-term Action for Long-term Change

Budgets are constrained and street construction is extremely expensive. Yet the lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, street parking, and bicycle facilities have a negative impact on the community nonetheless. In the city's current fiscal condition, every dollar earned through taxes and fees has to go further than before. Rather than queue-up major road construction projects, pushing action on those capital improvements further into the future, many street improvements can be made first with paint, moveable barriers, and other non-permanent materials. The cost of rebuilding one intersection might instead pay for re-stripping a handful of streets. Most of the street improvements recommended in this plan, below and in the Focus chapter, include an optional re-stripping step which can be completed with minimal cost in comparison with the high cost of street reconstruction. Cities across the country have been making small improvements with paint in order to test progressive roadway design and give car space back to pedestrians. This inexpensive first step signals change and investment without drawing down the city budget.

Stepping outside of the normal role of cities in public spaces, the city may not always be the best actor to initiate change within those spaces, including streets. Even when the city is making good decisions, a neighborhood may wish to prioritize change where it is not a priority for the city overall. And there are far too many changes to be made in proportion to the city's capacity to achieve that change, fiscally and through staff capacity. Yet local institutions and groups may

assemble volunteers and donors to initiate change if they have a mechanism to do so. In addition to using paint as a first step, Pine Bluff should adopt policy that allows institutions and residents to make change in their own communities, in the streets and other public spaces. Cities across the world have adopted tactical urbanism processes which enable local action with a small degree of city oversight to ensure that change does not endanger residents. Similar policy in Pine Bluff will enable the community to participate directly in its betterment.





# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: STREETS



### Missing Connections

Throughout Pine Bluff, there are numerous streets which exist on paper but are not built. In less developed areas, missing streets are to be expected. But within the Core City many of these connections are necessary to connect residents to nearby services, fully connect neighborhoods, and to properly frame parks and public spaces with streets rather than the backs of properties. When improvements are made to parks, missing street connections should be made, with a full street or multi-use path, in instances that properties back onto the park. Large parks should connect streets to each other with paths through the park. And streets should be completed when adjacent new developments occur.

Not all streets should be completed, however. Many streets are platted over wetlands and drains, waterways that should not be further impeded by streets. Occasionally short streets, such as Short 13th Ave, are unnecessary, the result of haphazard platting or roadway realignment. Where undeveloped, these streets may be abandoned, the property divided among neighboring lots. As a general rule, blocks should be two properties deep, with buildings facing onto streets on both long sides of the block. Square blocks, also common in Pine Bluff, should be faced by the front or sides of buildings. Where the street pattern results in houses that face their rear to the street and that street is not built, it should be removed or converted to an alley, reduced in size over time.



### Grid Shifts

Pine Bluff was developed much like historic cities of its era - by the hands of many different land owners who subdivided their property with little coordination. Evidence of this pattern is written all over Pine Bluff's street network, with streets that do not align with each other and others that end abruptly. While an orderly street grid has desirable qualities, it can also be monotonous and encourage speeding. Many of Pine Bluff's grid shifts are advantageous, making streets feel intimate, that they are only a few blocks long and do not continue for miles. Along neighborhood seams, grid shifts help to encourage car movement along the seam street, like S Main St, where the concentration of pedestrians and cars can improve the exposure of businesses and institutions. In some instances, very minor grid shifts should be corrected when intersection improvements are considered. But the advantages that grid shifts provide to neighborhood tranquility and business exposure should be considered. A smooth and convenient path for cars should not always be the priority, as described previously in this section.

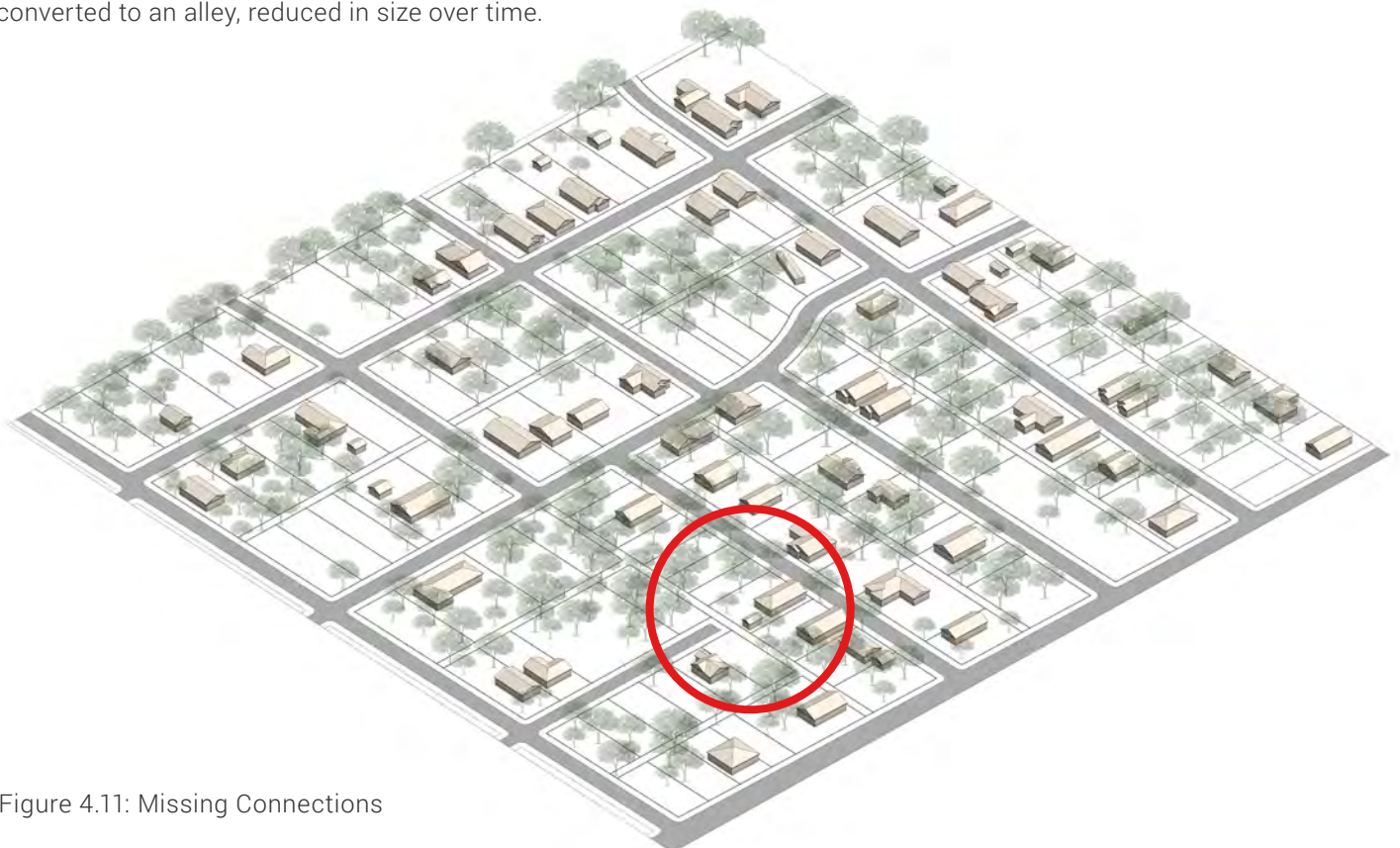


Figure 4.11: Missing Connections

## Alleys

Very few alleys have been constructed in Pine Bluff, however alley rights-of-way exist in most of the Core City. While alleys are not needed everywhere, they are a valuable tool in higher intensity areas. As a general rule, parking should always be located behind buildings relative to the street (except in suburban corridors). When a property is less than 50 feet wide, fitting a driveway next to a house is difficult and as a result garages are instead placed in front of the house. A street that is dominated by driveways is dominated by cars, not people. Smaller and smaller properties exacerbate the problem, and the presence of frequent driveways interrupts sidewalks and eliminates the ability to line streets with trees. Yet smaller and smaller lots allow development of housing that is more affordable and of types that are in demand but not part of the housing supply: multi-family housing, townhomes, and cottages. Further, in mixed-use districts, alleys are important places for garbage collection and deliveries, activities that seriously degrade commercial main streets. Within mixed-use districts and neighborhood retail districts, alleys should be retained and built along with the development of property at their edges. Within neighborhood seams and high intensity neighborhood fabric, alleys should be built along with businesses and any housing that would otherwise result in driveways more frequently than every 100 feet. Within medium intensity neighborhood fabric, alleys rights-of-way should be retained, but they may remain unbuilt. Elsewhere, alley rights-of-way may be abandoned. Like other street considerations, alleys should be evaluated based upon the land-use context, built where needed, retained where they may be needed at a future date, and removed where they are not necessary.

## Facility Design Considerations

### Jurisdiction/Ownership

The first step in facility design is determining whose jurisdiction a street falls within. This is fairly simple in Pine Bluff, with only the categories of State and Local jurisdiction. Elsewhere in the country, the County also has jurisdiction over some roads within cities, but in Pine Bluff, the county's jurisdiction ends at the city boundary. However, roads that enter Pine Bluff from county jurisdiction require coordination with the county concerning their operation and design. The local to county and local to state interaction is coordinated by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Streets within Pine Bluff that do not extend outside of the city are able to be broadly controlled and designed by the city, with few restrictions imposed. Streets owned by the state are not likely to be substantially modified, and are likely to be designed with an automobile-centric priority. Streets coordinated between entities by the MPO can strike a balance between user priorities based upon context. Refer to the Technical Assessment, page 118, for more information.



Figure 4.12: Grid Shifts



### Design Speed and Safety

Speed kills people. This simply put fact is often overlooked in street design, and many state departments of transportation have made lowering speeds very difficult once they are posted. More detailed information on this subject can be found in NACTO's Urban Street Design Guide, summarized here. Cars and trucks are very large and very heavy. Fast moving vehicles inflict substantially more damage than slow moving vehicles when they hit pedestrians, cyclists, and even other vehicles. Additionally, fast moving vehicles take much longer to stop than slow moving vehicles. The targeted operating speed of vehicles must be coordinated with the Land-use Context Target Speed Tool below to determine whether high levels of pedestrians and cyclists should be expected along a street. Those land-use contexts where pedestrians and cyclists are dominant should be targeted for very low vehicle speed, while places that pedestrians and cyclists are rare may be targeted for higher speed.

Within this text and tool, the term "target speed" is used, which requires further specificity. There are three common terms when setting speed for streets: Operating Speed,

Design Speed, and Posted Speed. In automobile-centric design practice, these speeds are not typically the same, it is assumed that the road should be designed for a speed above what is posted. However most drivers travel above the posted speed, closer to the design speed. The elements of a street - lane width, presence of parked cars, trees, presence of pedestrians and cyclists - and the land use context - buildings near the street or buildings far away from the street - influence the speed that people drive more than the posted speed. Best practices for street design within cities is to coordinate the design speed with the posted speed so that driving behavior achieves the desired operation. To do so, street design begins with a target speed which influences the design of street elements like travel lane width, and that speed is what should be posted on signs. Within cities, Target Speed = Design Speed = Posted Speed.

### Average Daily Traffic/Volume

Traffic volume, or the number of cars that use a street over a period of time, is the primary reason that streets are widened beyond two lanes. The standard measure of traffic volume is the average daily traffic (ADT), measured in thousands of vehicles. Once a street hits a certain threshold of ADT, it is often widened to allow those higher volumes of vehicles to move through the city quickly. Unfortunately, widening streets does not often alleviate congestion, instead it encourages more trips to occur on the wider street, inducing additional traffic. In a low connectivity or dendritic network, the larger street is often the only option available and widening is unavoidable. However, highly connected street networks are able to distribute traffic to alternative routes when congestion occurs, alleviating the need to widen streets. There are legitimate reasons to widen some streets, such as a third lane on Hazel St south of 38th Ave to aid emergency vehicle traffic. But widening streets within cities simply due to traffic volume should be approached with caution.

Fortunately, traffic volume throughout Pine Bluff is low, and street widening is generally not needed. There are a few spikes above 15,000 ADT along Blake, 28th Ave, and for a few blocks along Olive which meet the consideration for 4 lanes, but the land-use context should first be considered. 28th Ave is a particularly complex condition which is already wide but has been recommended for narrowing in this plan (refer to FOCUS, page 162). While 28th Ave meets a 4-lane threshold, it is targeted for transformation into a Mixed-use District, a land use context that prioritizes pedestrian and cyclist needs above those for cars. As a result, the recommended configuration for 28th Ave is narrowing to three lanes. The Land-use Context Lane Allocation Tool should be considered when determining whether to widen or narrow a street. Refer to the Technical Assessment, page 116, for more information.

Land Use Category	Target Speed
Mixed-Use Center	20 - 25 mph
Neighborhood Retail Center	20 - 25 mph
Neighborhood Seam	20 - 30 mph
Neighborhood Fabric	20 - 25 mph
Industrial District	30 - 45 mph
Suburban Corridor	35 - 50 mph
Rural	40 - 55 mph
Special District	Determined on a case-by-case basis

Table 4.13: Land-Use Context: Target Speed Tool



SPEED (MPH)	STOPPING DISTANCE (FT)*	CRASH RISK (%)†	FATALITY RISK (%)†
10–15	25	5	2
20–25	40	15	5
30–35	75	55	45
40+	118	90	85

\* Stopping Distance includes perception, reaction, and braking times.

† Source: Traditional Neighborhood Development: Street Design Guidelines (1999), ITE Transportation Planning Council Committee 5P-8.

Table 4.14: Driving Speed Fatality Risk. *Source: Urban Street Design Guide, NACTO*

Land Use Category	< 12,000 ADT	12 - 16,000 ADT	16 - 22,000 ADT	> 22,000 ADT
Mixed-Use Center	2 lanes, consider shared space	2 lanes	2 - 3 lanes	3 - 4 lanes
Neighborhood Retail Center	2 lanes, consider shared space	2 - 3 lanes	3 - 4 lanes	3 - 4 lanes
Neighborhood Seam	2 lanes	2 - 3 lanes	3 - 4 lanes	3 - 5 lanes
Neighborhood Fabric	2 lanes	2 lanes	Reclassify Land Use to Neighborhood Seam	
Industrial District	2 - 3 lanes	3 lanes	3 - 5 lanes	5 lanes
Suburban Corridor	2 lanes	3 lanes	3 - 5 lanes	5 lanes
Rural	2 lanes	2 - 3 lanes	3 - 5 lanes	4 - 5 lanes
Special District	Determined on a case-by-case basis			

Table 4.15: Land-Use Context: Lane Allocation Tool

### Existing Right-of-Way and Pavement Width

Most streets have already been platted and built in Pine Bluff. Street modifications are limited by the space available, both the right-of-way width from property to property and the width of pavement for vehicular travel and on-street parking. Enlarging the right-of-way and changing the pavement width are both expensive processes, and should be reserved for rare occasions that will result in better pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, add on-street parking in districts, and slow car traffic. A key example is Hwy 190 west of Blake, which has a right-of-way that is less than 50 feet in some areas, which is too narrow for one of the primary east-west streets in the city. Presently, Hwy 190 has two lanes and drainage swales to either side. The ADT remains low and additional lanes are not needed, but a sidewalk is needed and in a small segment on-street parking as well, specified in the Focus chapter. To provide these, additional right-of-way is required in a few limited areas. Pavement width should be handled similarly, only adjusting in places where the investment is critical. In most cases, the existing pavement width can be used differently by adjusting the street striping and painting. Examples in downtown are provided in the Focus chapter

which use painting to add on-street parking and narrow travel lanes. However, if other requirements necessitate that the road be rebuilt, at that point paving should be adjusted to fit the street's operations. The Land Use Context Pavement Width Tool provides guidelines useful for restriping and repaving.



### Context-Based Street Investment

Street investment decisions must consider the land-use context a project is located within to approximate the potential return on investment (ROI). Because street construction projects are expensive, they are rare. Spending on streets is often driven by ADT rather than ROI, resulting in high cost and car-focused construction projects that fail to produce additional tax revenue. In fact these projects simply increase the municipality's future maintenance liability. Rather, investments should be made in areas that have a high ROI, with little or no influence from ADT. When investments are made in districts and seams, the tax ROI potential is high, which can pay back the investment and potentially fund

Land Use Category	Travel Lane Width	Center Lane Width	Parallel Parking Width
Mixed Use Center	9 - 10 ft	10 - 11 ft	7 ft
Neighborhood Retail Center	9 - 10 ft	10 - 11 ft	7 ft
Neighborhood Seam	10 ft	11 ft	7 ft
Neighborhood Fabric	9 ft or 2-way yield at 14 ft	n/a	7 ft
Industrial District	11 - 13 ft	12 - 13 ft	n/a
Suburban Corridor	11 - 12 ft	12 ft	8 ft
Rural	10 - 12 ft	12 ft	n/a
Special District	Determined on a case-by-case basis		

Table 4.16 Land Use Context: Pavement Width Tool

further investments in high return areas. This process builds sustainable long-term municipal revenue. One such low ROI investment that has been proposed is a round-about proposed at the intersection of Hazel and Ridgeway. Both streets have low ADT and Ridgeway is connected to Olive and fairly directly to Old Warren as well. While a round-about is an appropriate intersection solution in this context, the investment will not generate additional revenue. Alternatively, the investments planned for streets in downtown have the potential to generate substantial returns. Exceptions to this general rule are necessary from time to time based on a limited set of needs: excessive pavement degradation, utility repairs and replacement, emergency services needs, school needs, and public transportation needs. Utility repair and replacement should always be a top priority, but as discussed in the assessment, the location, age, and operations of Pine Bluff's underground utilities has not been surveyed.

Return on investment varies by context in the following order from high to low:

- Mixed-Use Center - highest
- Special District
- Neighborhood Retail Center
- Neighborhood Seam
- Industrial District
- Neighborhood Fabric
- Suburban Corridor
- Rural - lowest



### Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities are integral to street design within cities. Like other design elements, bike/ped facility design changes according to the land-use context along with other considerations. The section concerning Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Investment provides detailed guidelines for use along with other street investments. The need for such facilities is so dire in Pine Bluff that an entire section of this plan has been devoted, beginning on page 71 of this chapter.



### Stormwater Management and Low Impact Development

Streets, the more substantial property owned by the City, should contribute to improved stormwater management citywide. The section concerning Drainage and Sustainability provides citywide detailed information for use along with other street investments, beginning on pages 99 and 103 of this chapter. Low-impact development (LID) stormwater management within streets must consider land-use context as with other design elements. However, LID has a two-way relationship with land use. Where land uses are intense, buildings cover most of their lots and streets are paved edge to edge. This creates high levels of stormwater runoff. But LID solutions within high intensity areas are often incompatible, creating tripping hazards where pedestrians are the most concentrated, blocking visibility of shops, restricting street crossing opportunities, and providing a convenient place for people to throw trash. In low intensity areas there is ample opportunity for LID solutions and they are quite compatible with that land use. But buildings take up relatively little space on their lots and there is not substantial stormwater runoff. This conundrum requires solutions that begin at the citywide scale first, followed by the subregion, and finally the site scale, as described in the Sustainability section.

In the Core City, flooding is a serious problem. Streets that may be lined with low intensity development, in neighborhood fabric, have an opportunity to contribute LID solutions despite the intensity-appropriateness conundrum. Streets within neighborhood fabric should be considered at the citywide and subarea scale where they can provide stormwater capacity using bioswales, and adjacent vacant properties can provide more substantial methods. In Mixed-Use Centers and Neighborhood Retail Centers, LID should be integrated sparingly and in methods compatible with the district's character. Along pedestrian-oriented streets lined with retail permeable pavement can be widely employed but bioswales should be avoided. Rather, district strategies utilizing vacant properties and open spaces are preferred to avoid compatibility issues along these streets. Exceptions should be made where specific land uses in mixed-use districts are not retail focused such as the Civic Center area which is broadly compatible with most LID strategies.





### Street Network Plan

#### Functionally Classified Roadways

Within the Core City, functionally classified roadways should be demoted wherever possible to the minimum viable classification. While demoting the roadway may be difficult with state owned streets, advocacy for modifications should be pursued with the MPO. Functionally classified streets in city ownership and within the Core City should be designed and managed according to the section Streets in the Core City that follows. Due to the very low ADT along most streets in Pine Bluff, reclassification should be minor. Lowering the functional classification of streets allows their design to be modified in a manner that can slow traffic, increasing safety. In the overall street network plan the following functional classifications should be changed:

#### State Ownership

- Hwy-190, 5th and 6th Ave: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Franklin Street: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- Olive, 39th Ave to Harding: Principal Arterial -> Major Collector
- Harding, Olive to Main Street: Principal Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Main Street, Harding to 5th Ave: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Texas St, 6th Ave to Martha Mitchell: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Ohio, Harding to 5th Ave: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Harding, Main Street to Ohio: Principal Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Harding, East of Ohio: Principal Arterial -> Major Collector
- University Drive, North of Martha Mitchell: Principal Arterial -> Minor Arterial

#### City Ownership

- Olive, Harding to Martha Mitchell: Principal Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Miramar Drive, W 17th Ave, W 16th Ave, W Harding Ave: Principal Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Ohio, I-530 to Harding: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Hazel, North of I-530: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- Country Club Lane, Hazel to Olive: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector

- E 38th Ave, East of Olive: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Cherry Street: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- 6th Ave, Hazel to Olive: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- 5th Ave: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- W Barraque, I530 to Blake: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- W 2nd Ave, Blake to University Drive: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- W 2nd Ave, East of University Drive: Minor Arterial -> Local
- Hutchinson St, Barraque to Martha Mitchell: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- University Drive, 6th Ave to Martha Mitchell: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- Main Street, Harding to Barraque: Minor Arterial -> Local
- E 8th Ave, Main Street to Ohio: Major Collector -> Local
- Pine Street, 6th Ave to Martha Mitchell: Major Collector -> Local
- State Street, 6th Ave to Martha Mitchell: Major Collector -> Local
- Barraque Street, Pine to State Streets: Major Collector -> Local
- Commerce Road: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- Market Street: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- Georgia Street, Harding to E 34th Ave: Major Collector -> Local
- Main Street, South of E 34th Ave: Major Collector -> Local
- 34th Ave: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- 31st Ave, Hazel to Cherry: Major Collector -> Local
- 31st Ave, Old Warren Rd to Hazel: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- Old Warren Rd, I-530 to 31st Ave: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- Fir St, 13th Ave to Hwy-190: Major Collector -> Local
- Oakwood Road, South of Hwy-190: Minor Arterial -> Minor Collector
- Bryant and Franklin Streets: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- Jefferson Parkway, Dollarway to Sheridan Roads: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector

- Fluker Street: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- L A Prexy Davis Drive: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- Union Ave and 34th Ave West of Old Warren Road: Major Collector -> Minor Collector
- Sulphur Springs Rd, East of Chapel Heights Drive: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector
- Ridgeway Drive and Middle Warren Rd North of Ridgeway: Minor Arterial -> Major Collector

### Truck Routes

Truck routes direct semi-trucks through the city. Presently, the city's truck routes as shown on the MPO's truck route map directs trucks through numerous residential neighborhoods where there are viable alternative routes. Rather than send trucks through neighborhoods, the routes should be reduced to make truck routes more efficient and reduce residential impact. Alternative routes rely upon Martha Mitchell and I-530 which ring the Core City, making most cross-city truck traffic unnecessary. Additionally, many truck route segments do not connect with high intensity, industrial, or institutional destinations requiring semi-trucks. The following streets should be reclassified, removing their truck route designation:

- 27th and 28th Avenues, from Hazel to Olive
- Cherry Street, its entire trajectory
- W 34th Ave, West of Old Warren Road
- Old Warren Road, South of I-530
- W 17th Ave, East of Hazel
- Main Street, North of Olive
- 5th and 6th Avenues, East of University Drive
- Bryant and Franklin Streets
- Hutchinson Street, South of Barraque

### Streets in the Core City

In the Core City, streets should be considered quite differently than those in the Periphery; in their design, context, and also their typology. As discussed previously in this section, the Core City has a highly connected street network, and common ACL terminology and design strategies are not appropriate for the land-use context. Instead, new terminology is needed to properly discuss the characteristics of different streets. The street types in Table 4.17 are appropriate for use within specific land-use contexts contained principally in the Core City. Street terminology has unfortunately been misallocated across the country; many proper terms like avenue have been misapplied. Pine Bluff currently uses a system that repeats in some cities, with the title street for north-south oriented roadways and avenue for east-west orientation. However the term avenue has a specific meaning historically. To avoid conflict with Pine Bluff's current naming conventions, some terminology adjustment is provided below.

A single street, like 8th Ave, may change its typology along its length. This is seen where 8th Ave gains and loses a median. Similarly, a street may change from a residential character to a commercial character as it passes through a neighborhood retail district. In this manner, the street design responds to the land use context.

### Streets in the Periphery

In peripheral areas, streets should be treated much like they have been to date. These areas are primarily rural and car-dominant. In some instances a shared-use trail or sidewalk should be provided for access to schools and other important destinations. Peripheral streets are categorized into arterial, collector, and local as is common transportation engineering practice. Truck movements and stormwater conveyance are priorities for peripheral streets.

Suburban corridors within the periphery may be considered for exceptions, perpendicular to the heavily trafficked street. Examples of this condition include Hwy 190 and Hepburn near to their intersections with Blake, as detailed in the Focus chapter. Here the streets perpendicular to the highly trafficked suburban corridor may become narrow, walkable, and active main streets, not impeding the operation of the arterial. Hutchinson and Bryant Streets, near their intersections with Dollarway Road should also be considered for exceptions to common street design practices in the periphery. These streets should be designed following standards for commercial and seam streets within the Core City. Similarly, streets perpendicular to Camden Rd and Sulphur Springs Rd, and Hazel St in the rural area, may be modified near intersections to concentrate the area's supportive retail in small main streets. This pattern of small main streets in the countryside is common across the country.



Street Type	Land Use Context	Purpose
Parkway	Mixed-use District and Neighborhood Retail District use only along the district edge, Neighborhood Seam, Special District	To carry long distance car traffic through walkable areas maintaining compatibility with a park-like character.
Boulevard	Mixed-use District, Neighborhood Retail District, Neighborhood Seam, Special District	To balance long distance car traffic with high levels of pedestrian activity and intensive land uses.
Civic Avenue	All	To connect two important destinations, commonly civic buildings. Civic Avenues are typically limited in trajectory, terminating or deflecting at the destination.
Drive	All as an edge condition	A street through open space or a park, often lined on one side with development.
Commercial Street	Mixed-use District, Neighborhood Retail District, Special District	To provide multi-modal access to businesses and for general use within mixed-use contexts.
Seam Street	Neighborhood Seam, Special District	To balance medium distance car traffic with high levels of pedestrian activity and intensive land uses.
Fabric Street	Neighborhood Fabric, Special District	To provide short distance car access, medium distance bike and pedestrian access, and a space where children feel safe to play in the street.
Alley	Mixed-use District, Neighborhood Retail District, Neighborhood Fabric - High, Special District	To provide car and truck access to properties, and a place for garbage pickup to keep streets clean.
Rear Lane	Neighborhood Fabric, Special District	To provide car access to properties and a place for garbage pickup to keep streets clean.

Table 4.17: Core City Street Types



Character	Example
Travel lanes are divided by a large landscaped median. The trajectory of each lane is independent and naturalistic, varying the shape of the median space. The median space should be used for recreation and include trails and bikeways.	No simple local corollary, however Harbor Oaks Dr exemplifies the naturalistic trajectory.
Travel lanes are divided by a treed median and lined with on-street parking. Sidewalks are wide with large street trees along the curb, given ample root volume.	4th Ave, with a train at the center rather than a median. Martha Mitchell should also be reconfigured to be a boulevard.
Travel lanes are divided by a wide treed median and lined with on-street parking. Sidewalks are lined with large street trees along the curb, given ample root volume.	E 10th and E 11th Ave pair, an ideal Civic Avenue, but the termination to either side should be grand or civic buildings, not parking lots.
Where abutting park or open space, drives are not curbed and pedestrians and bikes are separated in trails. Where abutting development, drives have on-street parking, curbing, and a sidewalk lined with large street trees. Both conditions may be combined on either side of a drive.	The many drives within Pine Bluff Regional Park.
Travel lanes are as few and narrow as possible, lined with on-street parking on both sides and curbing. Sidewalks are very wide. Street trees may be omitted where streets are narrow or businesses are frequent or have ample galleries, canopies, or awnings.	Downtown streets, however all require some modification.
Travel lanes are as narrow as possible, lined curbing and on-street parking on both sides in most instances. Sidewalks are a little wider than fabric streets and lined with large street trees that increase pedestrian comfort on sidewalks.	Cherry Street, with the addition of frequent street trees.
Travel lanes are few and narrow, ideally yield-movement with very narrow paving, mostly given to on-street parking. Sidewalks are provided along with frequent street trees.	Most streets throughout the Core City, the most complete example being W 25th Ave between Locust and Ash Streets.
Alleys are paved edge-to-edge and intended to be utilitarian. There are no lanes, separation of users, or signage. Alleys should be 20-30 feet wide.	Many such alleys exist in downtown but they are too narrow for the intensity of buildings.
Rear lanes function like alleys but are in places of lower intensity. Paving should be as narrow as possible, typically 12 feet wide. There are no lanes, separation of users, or signage. Rear lanes should be 20-30 feet wide.	Many rights-of-way exist but few rear lanes are built. One active example is a rear lane between Oak and Beech Streets and 2nd Ave and Barraque.



### Specific Street Design Recommendations

The following streets have been specifically redesigned at a conceptual level to better accommodate a variety of transportation types while responding to its adjacent land-use context. These streets include the following, which are also part of larger area plans as discussed in FOCUS, on page 118:

#### Central

##### Downtown

Street design recommendations in downtown are recommended adjustments to the plans currently underway by Go Forward Pine Bluff. These street designs are an improvement over the existing condition, but they make a few mistakes that should be corrected. It would be unfortunate to suggest that now is too late to change when the cost of a design change is minor in comparison to the impact that the change will have on future value. Two key mistakes are made in the current designs: parking lanes are much too wide and the tree planter is a continuous grass strip. The parking lanes should be reduced to 7 feet wide, the standard for parking lanes. The current design will encourage speedier traffic and the extra width is better added to sidewalks. In urban areas, planters need to be either tree pits or long planters, which are approximately 6 feet wide by 14 feet long with paving between each. Grass strips will collect trash and be trampled making it difficult to keep the grass clean and alive. These recommendations should be used as a template elsewhere in downtown, Mixed-Use Centers, and Neighborhood Retail Centers.

Streets included: Main, Barraque, Walnut, and Pine. See pages 122-124 for design details.

##### 6th Avenue

6th Ave has also received specific attention in the Focus chapter due to pending ownership changes transferring from state to city. Both 5th and 6th Avenues should change to 2-way streets, and both should be adjusted to meet the needs of their context. Where they are within neighborhood fabric, they should be treated according to Figure 5.14. Where they are within mixed-use districts, they should be treated according to Figure 5.12. Figure 5.13 provides recommendations for restriping should improvements not be fully funded, with a long planter design that is appropriate for Neighborhood Seams and Neighborhood Fabric - High. See page 125 for design details.

##### Civic Center

Street design recommendations in the Civic Center area are focused on improving streets surrounding City Hall. These are intended to present a civic character by removing car-focused design elements and balancing streets to meet the needs of

all users. This district should prioritize a broad and healthy tree canopy while also utilizing spaces for stormwater in this section of town that was previously a lake. Main Street should also be improved through the Civic Center, following the recommendations discussed for downtown.

##### 8th Avenue

Adjacent to the Convention Center, a series of design options are provided for 8th Ave at different price points and different stormwater management capacities. All options reduce the number of travel lanes and provide space for on-street parking, reducing the need for surface parking lots, trees, and some provide bike facilities. Many trade-offs must be considered when redesigning this segment of 8th Ave, but all should recognize that the street sees very little traffic on a normal basis and should respond to this rather than the peak condition during an event. Between the Convention Center and First Ward, 8th Ave provides no space for pedestrians. Two designs are provided here, one which can be accomplished with paint and the other by reconstructing the street. See page 132 for design details.

##### Texas Street

Texas Street is much larger than necessary for its typical traffic volume, encouraging speeding. Adjacent to Texas is the parking lot for City Hall. The design of these spaces, considered together, is extremely inefficient. Recommendations are provided to make efficient use of both spaces retaining or increasing parking capacity, and reducing pavement to provide space for stormwater and trees in civic lawns. As with many other streets, options for full reconstruction are provided alongside a less expensive option to accomplish part of the modification with paint. See page 133 for design details.

##### 10th Avenue & 11th Avenue

On either side of a large open space, 10th and 11th Avenues are redundant. Additionally, their travel lanes are very wide, encouraging speeding. A design recommendation is provided to convert these streets, from Main Street to Texas Street, into a one-way pair on either side of a central green, achieved with paint. The new design provides significant on-street parking which may be utilized to reduce surface parking at City Hall. The central open space should be modified where possible to accommodate stormwater. See page 133 for design details.

##### State Street

While a design drawing has not been provided, State Street should be converted from one-way to two-way operation. As a general rule, one-way streets, alone or in pairs, should be avoided and returned to two-way operation where possible. Exceptions are paired one-way streets on either side of a central feature like an open space or train tracks.

## Main and Harding

Street design recommendations at Main and Harding are intended to enable the intersection to become a neighborhood retail district, connecting adjacent neighborhoods. Main Street should follow the design recommendations specified for Downtown. Harding requires significant transformation as detailed below.

### Harding Avenue

Multiple design modifications are provided for Harding Ave to address its different land-use contexts. Near Main Street, Harding is designed as a rural road. East of Ohio, Harding is designed as a suburban arterial. Design recommendations and options are provided for each context. The segment of Harding between Main Street and Ohio requires reconstruction, and doing so provides safer pedestrian and bicycle access of which there is currently none. Reconstructing Harding east of Ohio would be prohibitively expensive. Here a restriping recommendation is provided to reduce travel lanes and provide space for bikes and pedestrians. See page 139 for design details.

## North

### University Park and UAPB

Street design recommendations aim to bring the University Park neighborhood and UAPB together. A Neighborhood Retail District is proposed along Fluker Street to serve both the neighborhood and university. And recommendations for University Drive are provided to slow traffic and improve pedestrian safety, connecting the neighborhood and university to Lake Saracen.

### University Drive

Unfortunately, little can be done to University Drive since it is a state-owned primary arterial with no alternative route to alleviate the routing of traffic. Yet its design severely damages the area. Assuming little can be done, commercial activity should be discouraged on University Drive and concentrated on a perpendicular street. Design recommendations are provided nonetheless, for advocacy purposes. These include options for reconstruction and restriping. See pages 143-145 for design details.

### Fluker Street

Fluker Street is identified as a new pedestrian-oriented main street to be lined with businesses and higher intensity housing, as a connection between UAPB and University Park. A street design has been proposed which utilizes the existing pavement, adding sidewalks and street trees that are appropriate for a commercial main street. Some intersection improvements will also be required, for ADA accessibility at a minimum. When those are completed, the curb return radii should be reduced to 10ft. See page 143 for design details.

## South

### 28th Avenue

Due to its relatively high traffic volume and central location, the 28th Ave commercial district is proposed to change from a Suburban Corridor district to a Mixed-use District, which is much more vibrant and valuable. In order to support this change, 28th Ave needs to be modified, adding on-street parking and consistent street trees and sidewalks. In the process, 28th Ave is reduced from 5 lanes to 3. Despite its high ADT, the reduction is designed to increase business traffic by slowing cars. Initially, this can be completed by restriping. Eventually the sidewalk space needs to be enlarged which can either be accomplished by moving the curbs to widen the available space or expanding the right-of-way. The former is drawn in the Focus section but the latter is preferred so additional space can be provided. See page 165 for design details.

## East

### Market Street

To take advantage of traffic generated for the upcoming casino, a redesign of Market Street is proposed. This redesign changes the street from a high-speed way to get from I-530 to the casino into a commercial main street. This redesign requires reconstruction, and the area is proposed for high intensity development which can fund the roadway change. However the change should be made sooner as rebuilding the street will be difficult once the casino is operating. See page 166 for design details.

## West

### 6th Ave / Hwy 190 and 13th Avenue

In order to facilitate better connection between the Core City and the West End, changes are proposed along 6th Ave, from Oleander to Bois D'Arc, and 13th Ave, initially from Fig to Bay. 13th Ave improvements are also proposed elsewhere and should similarly be considered for 6th Ave, other portions of which are discussed in the Downtown section. In many places, street improvements will require right-of-way acquisition. Near Blake, modifications are intended to create short Neighborhood Retail Districts perpendicular to Blake. These benefit from the traffic along Blake but can be built in a tight and intimate fashion which works better for retail. The remainder of 13th Ave is recommended for a Neighborhood Seam street treatment, with somewhat wider sidewalk and street trees in long planters. Both 6th and 13th are key connections to the West End, with improvements targeted to ease pedestrian and bicycle movement across Blake. See page 160 for design details.





### Facility Selection Guide

This plan outlines recommendations for street improvements to coordinate land-use context with the design of transportation facilities. Presently there is little coordination between the two, save historic conditions that established Pine Bluff's oldest streets over a century ago, some nearly two. When land-use and street design are not coordinated, both suffer. Buildings close to fast streets without on-street parking cause businesses to fail. And buildings far from neighborhood streets with parking in between degrade the quality of neighborhoods. Streets that are too large and fast that cut through neighborhoods damage the quality of life of residents. Changing Pine Bluff's approach to street design is a critical step required to encourage and improve development and upkeep of private properties. These investments should be made carefully and strategically within the city's strategy to improve municipal revenue and resident quality of life.

This investment guide is a prioritization tool. Details concerning physical design decisions are enumerated throughout the street section. The investment guide assists in determining which investments should be made based upon their cost and return on investment. Some investment returns are intangible, like adding sidewalks in Neighborhood Fabric, which improves quality of life substantially but not monetary returns. Most dots on the matrix include both intangible and tangible returns in considering their horizontal position. Low-cost and high-return items should be implemented quickly. Higher-cost and high-return items should be implemented, but may take time to provide budget for. The importance of restriping and tactical interventions are clear through this matrix - they provide high-return without excessive cost while the alternative route of rebuilding streets has higher returns along with much higher cost.

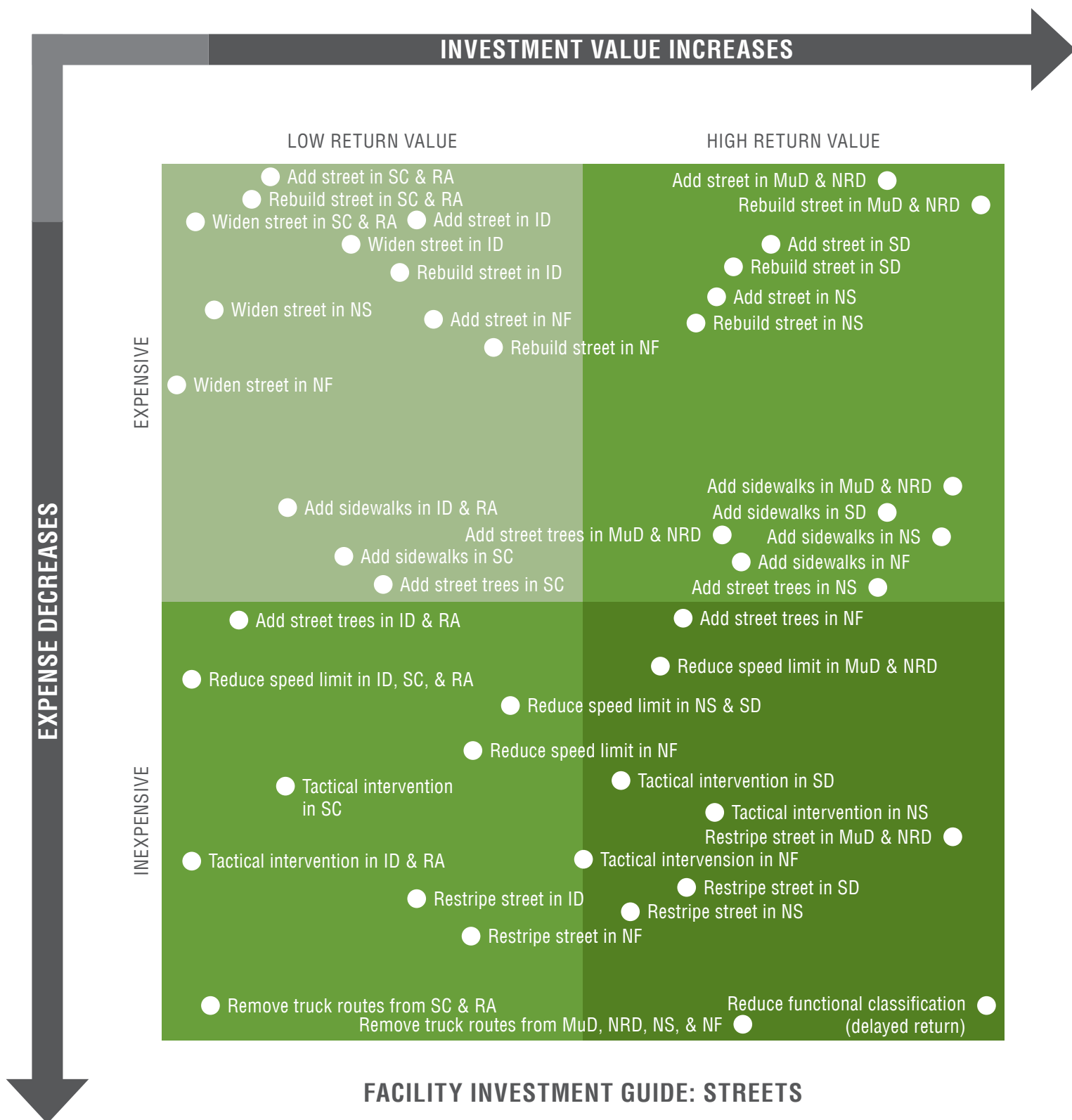


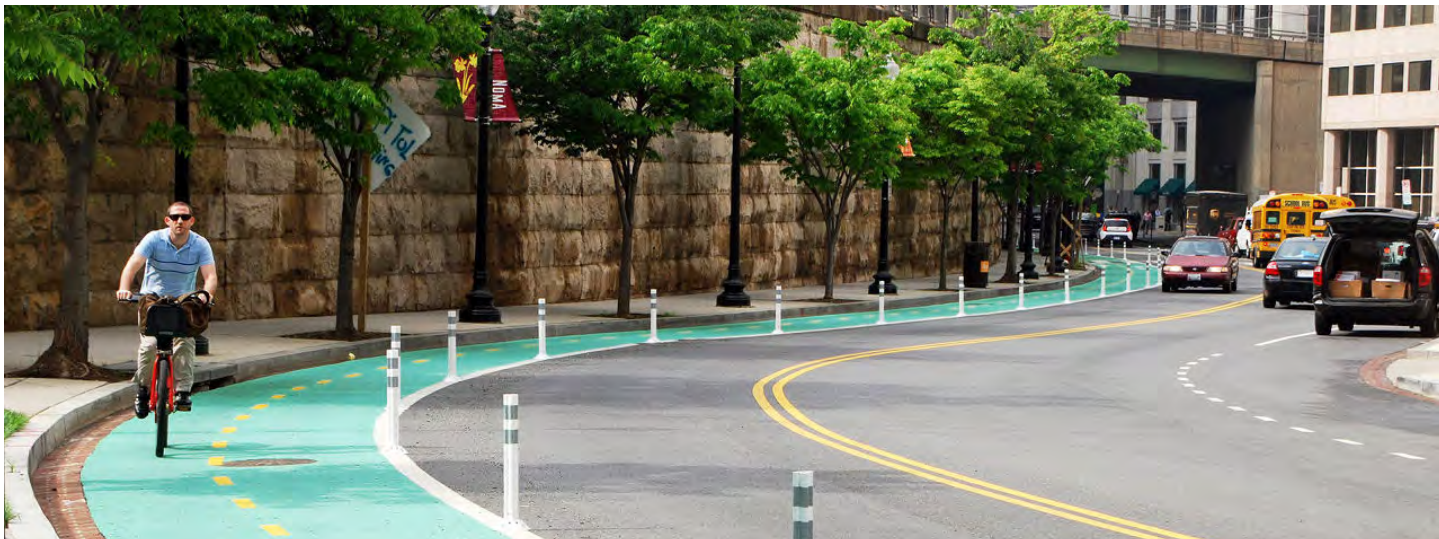
Figure 4.18: Facility Investment Guide: Streets



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### Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities



#### General Considerations

##### Appropriateness of Corridors for Bicycle Facilities

Specialized bicycle facilities are not necessary along every street. According to Arkansas law (A.C.A ss 27-49-111), “Every person riding a bicycle...shall have all the rights and all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle” which includes cyclists as legitimate and rightful users of the public streets and highways (source: Bicycle Safety in Arkansas, c. 2013 by the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism (sic)). However, it is not necessary to include bicycle facilities along every street.

A wide range of bicycle facilities can be utilized to create a bicycle-friendly network within a community. These facilities are selected and should be implemented based on user needs along specific corridors, street type, vehicular volume, lane and roadway widths, vehicular speed, the adjacent land use context, and the proximity to bicycle and/or pedestrian trip generators.



##### Redesign of Existing Corridors: High-Volume Streets

Streets with higher speeds and greater traffic volumes should be carefully considered for their appropriateness for bicycle traffic. Often, these streets provide direct connections to commercial areas, institutional amenities, or citywide attractions. Reducing wider vehicular lanes (lanes greater than 11’ in width) may result in enough room to retrofit with bicycle facilities, however, high speed, high volume roads often necessitate more extensive redesign to provide safe, separated bicycle facilities. These major routes are designated on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities map as Primary Bikeways. In some cases, existing corridors may be retrofitted

to reallocate space to accommodate bicycles. In other cases, major corridors will need to be reconstructed to provide the necessary space for bicycle facilities. Primary Bikeway design treatments are discussed within “Facility Types”, below.



##### Retrofitting Existing Corridors: Low-Volume Streets

In some cases, neighborhood connections can be accommodated through simple retrofits to existing streets. Low-speed, low-traffic streets may be appropriate for combining bicycle and vehicular traffic, through sharrows, bicycle lanes, or traffic calming measures such as yield streets or advisory bicycle lanes. Streets that are suitable for such treatments have been designated on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities map as Secondary Bikeways. In some cases, the accommodation of Secondary Bikeways will require street reconstruction to provide a safe facility. Secondary Bikeway design treatments, as well as definitions for all terms, are discussed within “Facility Types”, below.

Additional future, non-designated street retrofits may be considered as bicycle travel patterns emerge, new neighborhood centers are developed, or amenities are added.



##### Specific Street Design Treatments

Some corridors have been specifically redesigned at a conceptual level to better accommodate a variety of transportation types while responding to its adjacent contextual issues. These corridors include the following, which are discussed in “Streets”, beginning on page 51:

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

### Central

- Barraque from Walnut to Main
- Main from Barraque to 8th
- 8th from Main to Ohio
- Harding near Main

### North

- University from Martha Mitchell to Watson
- Fluker from Willow to University

### South

- 28th from Catalpa to Hazel

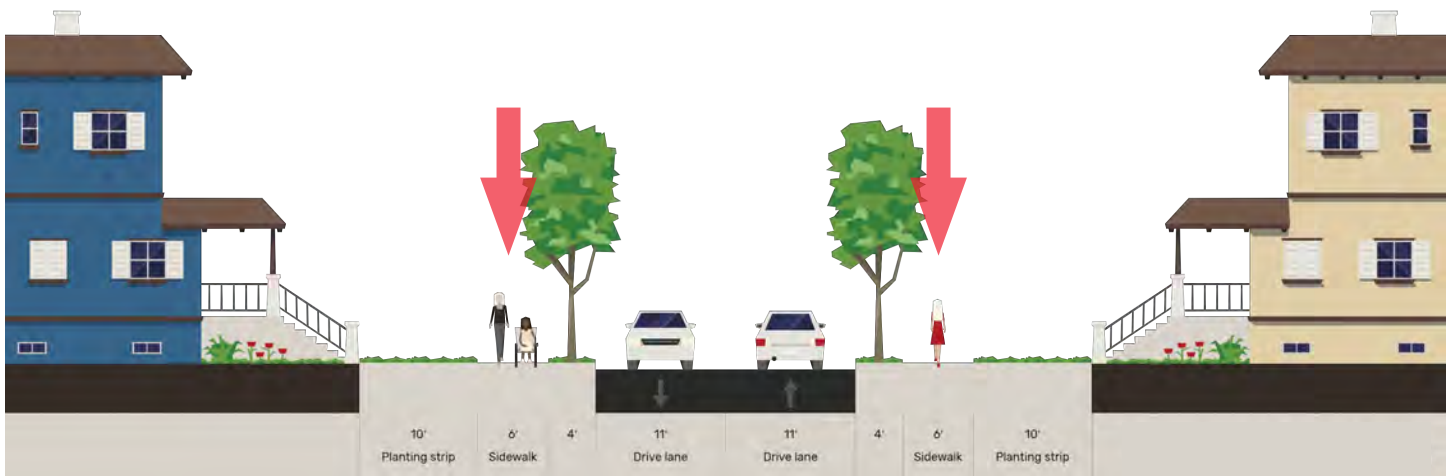
### East

- Market from Harding to River Pines

### West

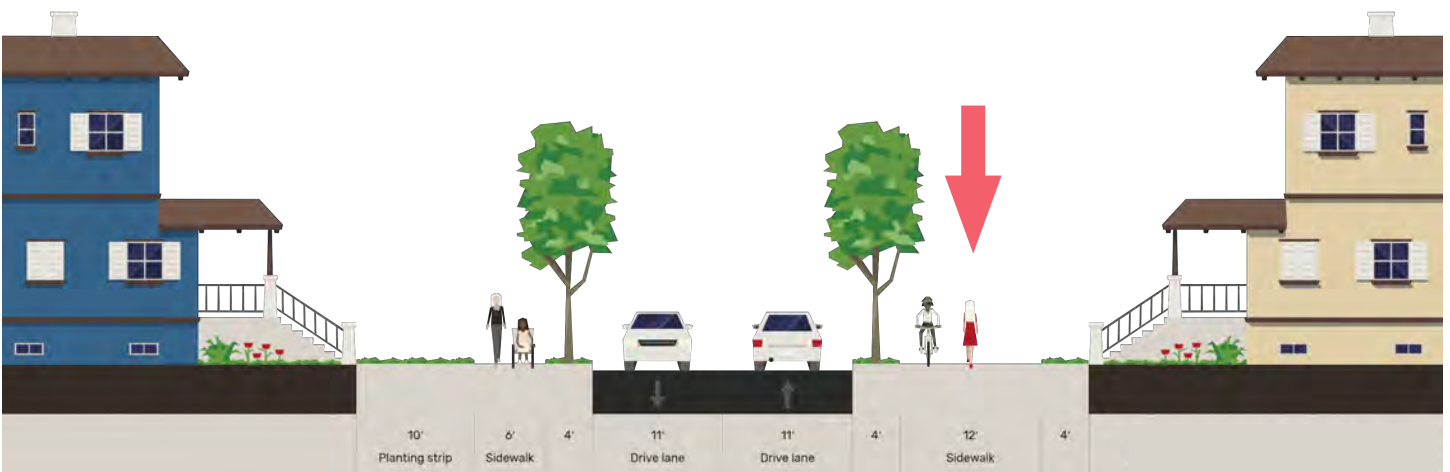
- 13th Street from Fig to Bay
- 6th from Oleander to Bois D'Arc

### Facility Types: Pedestrian-Only Facilities

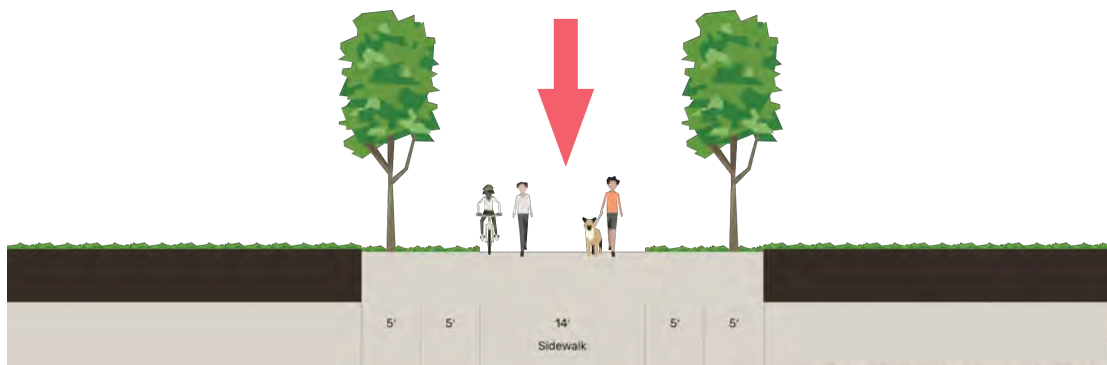


**Sidewalk (above):** Sidewalks should be 4'-6' wide (6' preferred) and located on each side of the street to minimize mid-block pedestrian movements.

### Facility Types: Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

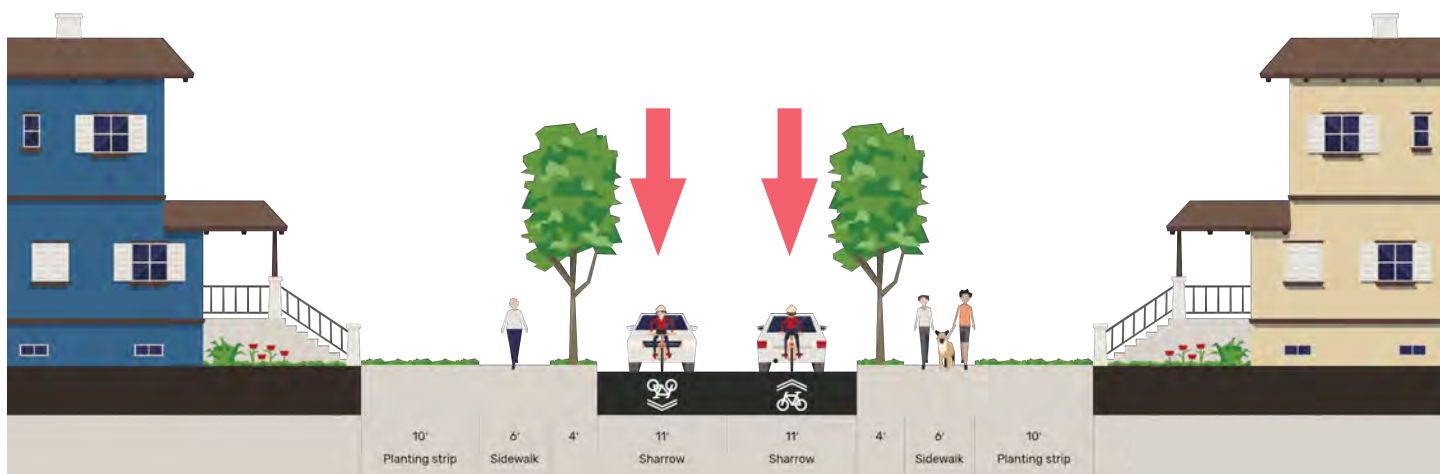


**Side Path (above):** A multi-use sidepath accommodates both pedestrians and cyclists within a street right of way. Typically located on one side of the street, a side path should be 10'-12' wide (12' preferred) to reduce pedestrian and bicycle user conflicts. Asphalt or concrete is suitable, depending on municipal and user preference. In practice, side paths look like wide sidewalks, but with the addition of a center dash to designate direction of traffic flow in two directions.

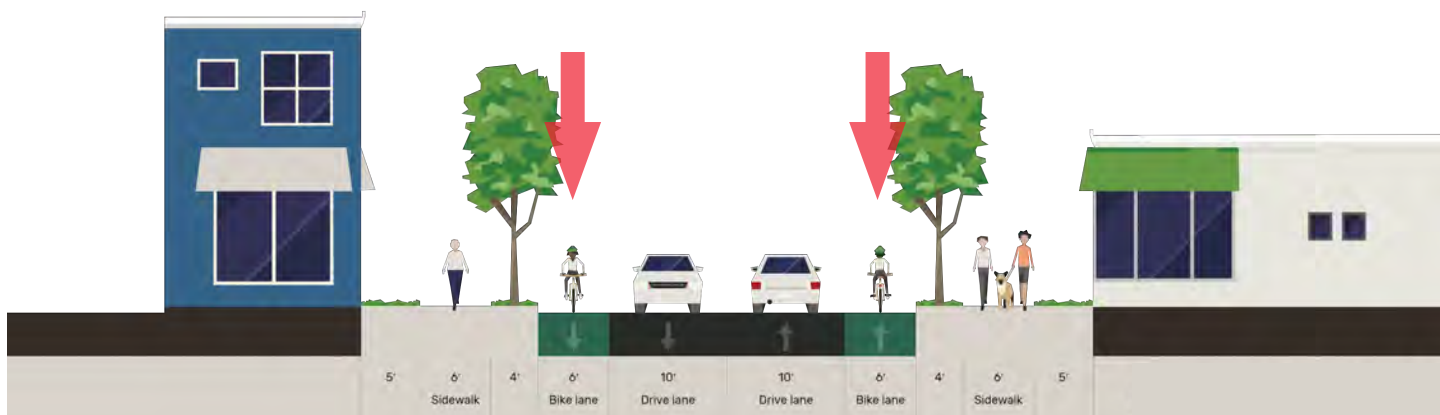


**Separated Trail (above):** A separated trail accommodates both pedestrians and cyclists independent of a street right of way. Often located along riparian or utility corridors, a separated trail should be a minimum of 12' wide, 14' or wider preferred, particularly in higher-volume locations to reduce pedestrian and bicycle user conflict.

### Facility Types: Bicycle-Only Facilities: Standard



**Sharrows (above):** "Share the Road arrows", or sharrows, are typically located along low-volume, slower-speed residential and local streets. Sharrows symbols should be placed in the center of the lane in each direction of traffic flow, and reminds vehicular drivers of the bicyclist's shared use of the travel lanes.



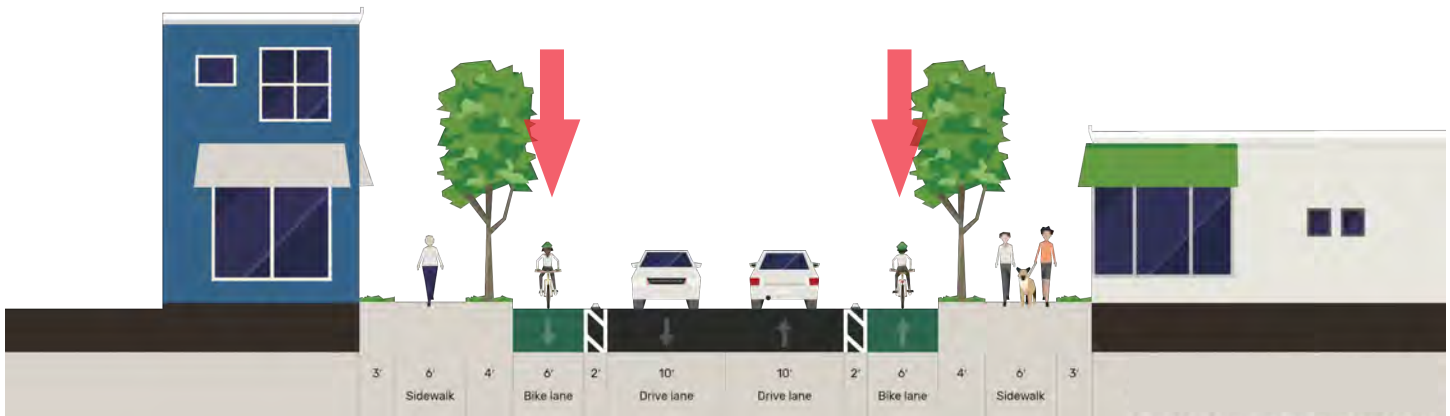
**Bicycle Lanes (above):** Traditional bicycle lanes should be located in each direction of traffic flow, and should be a minimum of 4' (not including the curb and gutter pan of the street) and preferably 6' in width. Bicycle lanes are appropriate on residential or local streets with slightly higher traffic volumes than those where sharrows are appropriate, however, bicycle lanes may not provide the desired level of user comfort if they are too narrow or if passing vehicles travel at excessive speeds.



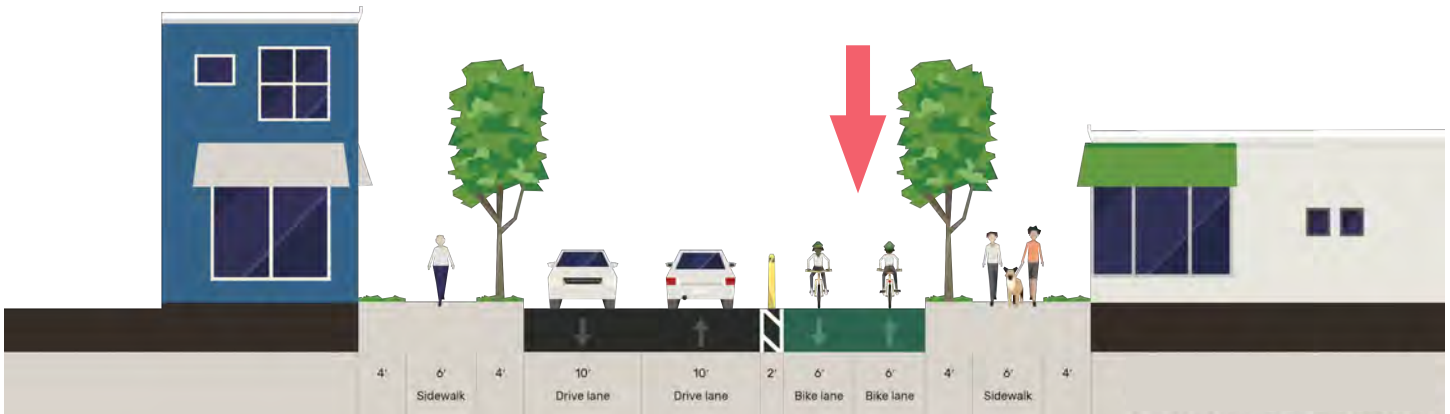
# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

### Facility Types: Bicycle-Only Facilities: Protected



**Buffered Bicycle Lanes (above):** Buffered bicycle lanes are similar to traditional bicycle lanes, with the addition of a buffer between the bicycle lane and vehicular lane. This buffer should be a minimum of 18", with more generous widths preferred to enhance user safety and comfort. The buffer should be clearly delineated, such as striped pavement and include traffic exclusion domes or breakaway bollards, or may be a raised physical barrier separating bicycle and vehicular lanes. Buffered bicycle lanes are located in each direction of vehicular traffic.



**Cycle Track (above):** Cycle tracks are similar to buffered bicycle lanes, with the exception of location. Cycle tracks are buffered bicycle facilities that accommodate both directions of bicycle travel on the same side of the street. The buffer should be clearly delineated, such as striped pavement and include traffic exclusion domes or breakaway bollards, or may be a raised physical barrier separating bicycle and vehicular lanes.



### Facility Selection Considerations Overview

Several factors are considered when determining the appropriateness of various bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure types. Each factor detailed below presents opportunities and/or challenges for the development of a bicycle and pedestrian transportation network. No single factor should be considered on its own; rather, the factors should be collectively analyzed to create a cohesive, functioning, safe, and comfortable network.

#### Jurisdiction/Ownership

The governing agency who has jurisdiction over a street is an important consideration when planning a bicycle and pedestrian network. While City-maintained streets have the most flexibility in terms of design modifications or retrofits, often times state roads have wider lanes or shoulders that are desirable for conversion. Understanding which agency controls a road aids in routing decisions. Refer to "Assessments", pages 116 and 158, for a map of streets jurisdiction in Pine Bluff.

#### Average Daily Traffic/Volume

Average Daily Traffic, or ADT, indicates the volume of traffic each street serves on a daily basis. Lower-volume streets are generally neighborhood streets, while higher-volume streets are typically well-connected major collectors or arterials. Traffic volumes are important to consider when determining routes, cross street connections, and appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facility accommodations. Cyclists will often seek lower-volume streets, however, if higher-volume streets are necessary to be utilized due to connectivity issues, more robust bicycle facilities are necessary to maintain user safety and comfort. Refer to "Assessments", page 114, for a map of Average Daily Traffic in Pine Bluff.

#### Posted Speed

Posted Speed Limits are a preliminary indicator of traffic behavior within a street network. Lower-speed streets tend to be smaller, more local streets, which can accommodate simpler bicycle facilities than higher-speed, larger roads that typically handle larger traffic volumes and would require more robust bicycle facilities. Traffic calming measures for streets that consistently have excessive speed issues can make the corridor more inviting for multiple user groups.

#### Existing Number of Lanes and Existing Road Widths

The number of vehicular lanes is useful in both understanding which streets may be major corridors or through routes, as well as which streets may be over-built when compared to their Average Daily Traffic assessments. In some cases, streets with multiple lanes for a single direction of traffic flow may be candidates for restriping (narrowing) to accommodate the provision of bicycle facilities within the existing cross section. Refer to "Assessments", page 159, for a map of existing roadway lanes in Pine Bluff.



#### Context

A street's context lends several clues to the appropriateness of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along it. For example, a commercial street with numerous curb cuts and potential vehicular/bicycle conflicts should be designed differently than a lower-volume, lower-speed residential street. Likewise, streets with predominantly industrial uses and heavier truck traffic may consider off-street bicycle facilities rather than on-street infrastructure. In addition to land use, building placement and its relationship to the street is also a critical consideration. Streets with buildings located within tight setbacks should avoid off-street bicycle facilities that might incur conflicts with building door-swing with pedestrians entering or exiting them. Often times, a bicycle or pedestrian facility along a corridor will be modified to more appropriately respond to atypical conditions along it. Furthermore, aligning bicycle and pedestrian facility decisions with the Future Land Use Map and its designations aids in determining the appropriateness of each proposed improvement. Refer to Table 4.19: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Considerations: Land Use Context and Table 4.22: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide.



#### Street Types

Understanding the correlation between bicycle and pedestrian facilities and the classifications for the street types on which they occur is a critical step in the decision-making process. As described in Streets, on page 62, recommendations include lowering the functional classification of several streets, based on a history of over-built infrastructure and low traffic demand. With this in mind, decisions for street improvements regarding the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities should be made with an understanding of the current street cross section and the intended future plans for the street. With that in mind, appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facility types have been correlated with the Street Types outlined within this plan. Refer to Tables 4.20 and 4.21 outlining considerations for Street Types and Functional Classification.

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

Land Use Category	Sharrow	Bicycle Lanes	Buffered Bicycle Lanes	Cycle Track	Sidepath	Wide Sidewalk (8' or greater)	Sidewalk (under 8')
Mixed Use Center	✓	Optional		Optional		✓	✓
Neighborhood Retail Center	✓					✓	✓
Neighborhood Seam		✓	Optional			✓	✓
Neighborhood Fabric	✓						✓
Industrial District			✓	✓	Optional		✓
Suburban Corridor					✓		✓
Rural					✓		✓
Special District		Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	Optional	✓

Table 4.19: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Considerations: Future Land Use Context

Note: The considerations presented in Tables 4.19 through 4.20 are intended to support and further define the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide, Table 4.22, on pages 78-79. The above tables outline broad conditions within which to frame bicycle and pedestrian decision-making. More specific street and context consideration, absent specific land use or street type categories, is presented in Table 4.21.

Street Type	Sharrow	Bicycle Lanes	Buffered Bicycle Lanes	Cycle Track	Sidepath	Wide Sidewalk (8' or greater)	Sidewalk (under 8')	Signed Bicycle Route
Parkway			✓		✓		✓	
Boulevard			Horizontal Buffer Only		✓	✓	✓	
Civic Avenue	✓	✓	Horizontal Buffer Only	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Drive	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
Commercial Street		✓	Horizontal Buffer Only		✓	✓	✓	
Seam Street		✓	Horizontal Buffer Only		✓	✓		
Fabric Street	✓	✓					✓	
Alley								
Rear Lane								
Rural Road					✓			✓

Table 4.20: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Considerations: Street Type

Functional Classification (ACL System)	Sharrow	Bicycle Lanes	Buffered Bicycle Lanes	Cycle Track	Sidepath	Wide Sidewalk (8' or greater)	Sidewalk (under 8')	Signed Bicycle Route
Local Street: Residential	✓	✓						
Local Street: Commercial	Low ADT Required	✓	Horizontal Buffer Only		✓	✓	✓	
Minor Collector		✓	✓		✓		✓	
Major Collector			✓	✓	✓		✓	
Minor Arterial				✓	✓		✓	
Principal Arterial					✓		✓	
Rural Road					✓			✓

Table 4.21: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Considerations: Functional Classification System

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

### Facility Selection Guide: Bicycle & Pedestrian Network

This plan outlines recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the following forms:



1. As a part of larger policies to meet the vision and goals within the broader citywide context (refer to GROW, pages 6-11)



2. As part of the specific corridor recommendations within focus areas of concentrated effort, in which the design of the street responds to the larger context of surrounding development (refer to FOCUS, pages 118-169)



3. As part of connecting destinations and supporting neighborhood regeneration (refer to STRENGTHEN, pages 178-186)



4. As part of a Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan (page 80) that considers current and proposed destinations within Pine Bluff as part of the Pine Bluff Comprehensive Plan.

However, to accommodate decision making as new developments or redevelopments create new destinations, or as additional efforts generate demand for alternative transportation options, the following table should be used



			FOR A STREET WITH THESE CONDITIONS 		
			Jurisdiction	ADT	Posted Speed Limit
CONSIDER THIS FACILITY 	On-Street Integrated Facilities	Sharrow (bicycle only)	Local	under 2,500	under 30 mph
		Bicycle Lanes (bicycle only)	Local	under 5,000 preferred	over 25 mph
			Local	under 5,000 preferred	over 25 mph
	On-Street Separated Facilities	Buffered Bicycle Lanes (BBL) each direction of travel (bicycle only)	Local/State	5,000 - 15,000 VPD	n/a
		Cycle Track (bicycle only)	Local/State	5,000 - 15,000 VPD	n/a
		Sidepath (bicycle and pedestrian)	State	n/a	n/a
	Pedestrian Facilities	Sidewalk (pedestrian only)	All	n/a	n/a

Table 4.22: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide



to guide decisions for the appropriate inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

As a general rule, facilities should create connections within the community. They should have logical beginning and end points, and not end abruptly leaving no safe travel option for the cyclist or pedestrian to continue their journey. Facility types may be modified along a single corridor to accommodate special conditions, obstacles, or opportunity; however, a concentrated effort should be made to create consistency in user safety and comfort. In other words, a facility along a higher-volume road should maintain its level of safety, even if the type of facility varies along it. Avoid the

use of facility types that are only appropriate for lower-volume roads in an effort to create a cheaper, easier solution or a particular obstacle along a higher-volume street.

The table below indicates street conditions horizontally across the top, with the appropriate bicycle facilities in response along the vertical axis on the left. As an example, sharrows are appropriate along local streets with very low traffic volumes, low posted speed limits, and fewer lanes. Conversely, investing in buffered facilities (buffered bicycle lanes or cycle tracks) is prudent along higher-volume, higher-speed streets that may have more vehicular lanes.

Total # Lanes	Total Roadway Width	Context	Applicable Street Type	Other Considerations
2	n/a	Neighborhood street; residential	Low volume, low speed streets	Place sharrow in center of drive lane
2	30' minimum; 32'+ preferred	Neighborhood or minor collector	Moderate-volume, moderate-speed streets	4' minimum width, excluding gutter pan
3	40' minimum; 42'+ preferred	Minor collector	Moderate-volume, moderate-speed streets	4' minimum width, excluding gutter pan
3-5	10' lanes, 8' BBL in each direction of travel (46', 56', or 66')	Collector, minor arterial	Higher-volume streets	Consider curb cut frequency
3-5	10' lanes, 14' cycle track (44', 54' or 64')	Collector, minor arterial	Higher-volume streets	Consider curb cut frequency
n/a	6' buffer, 12' sidepath	Suburban commercial, urban or suburban residential, industrial; avoid in urban commercial with small or no building setbacks	Applicable on all street types; consider ROW requirements	Not necessary on low-volume, low-speed neighborhood streets where smaller on-road facilities suffice.
n/a	6' buffer, 6' sidewalk	All streets should include sidewalks along both sides of the street.	all	If a sidepath occupies one side of the street, a sidewalk should be present on the opposite side.

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan

The network plan for bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the City of Pine Bluff demonstrates the interrelationship of specific facility types as well as the destinations they connect, including existing schools, popular parks, and commercial centers, as well as proposed neighborhood centers (see also STRENGTHEN), community focus areas (see also FOCUS), and future parks (this chapter).

The plan is presented as a hierarchy of Primary and Secondary bikeways, without prescribing a particular facility type, refer to Table 4.24 for more information). Primary bicycle facilities

are proposed along corridors that provide major connections, and as a result, may also have higher volumes of vehicular traffic as well. This system is located in the core of Pine Bluff and connects neighborhoods from the UAPB area in the north as well as the Country Club area in the south to downtown as well as other proposed redevelopment areas, as described in FOCUS. Secondary bikeways are proposed along smaller local streets to connect neighborhoods to each other, future neighborhood centers, and schools. Secondary Bikeways extend the network of Primary Bikeways further to the north, south, east, and west. These smaller bicycle facilities provide an alternate to utilizing the larger, more direct Primary Bikeways.

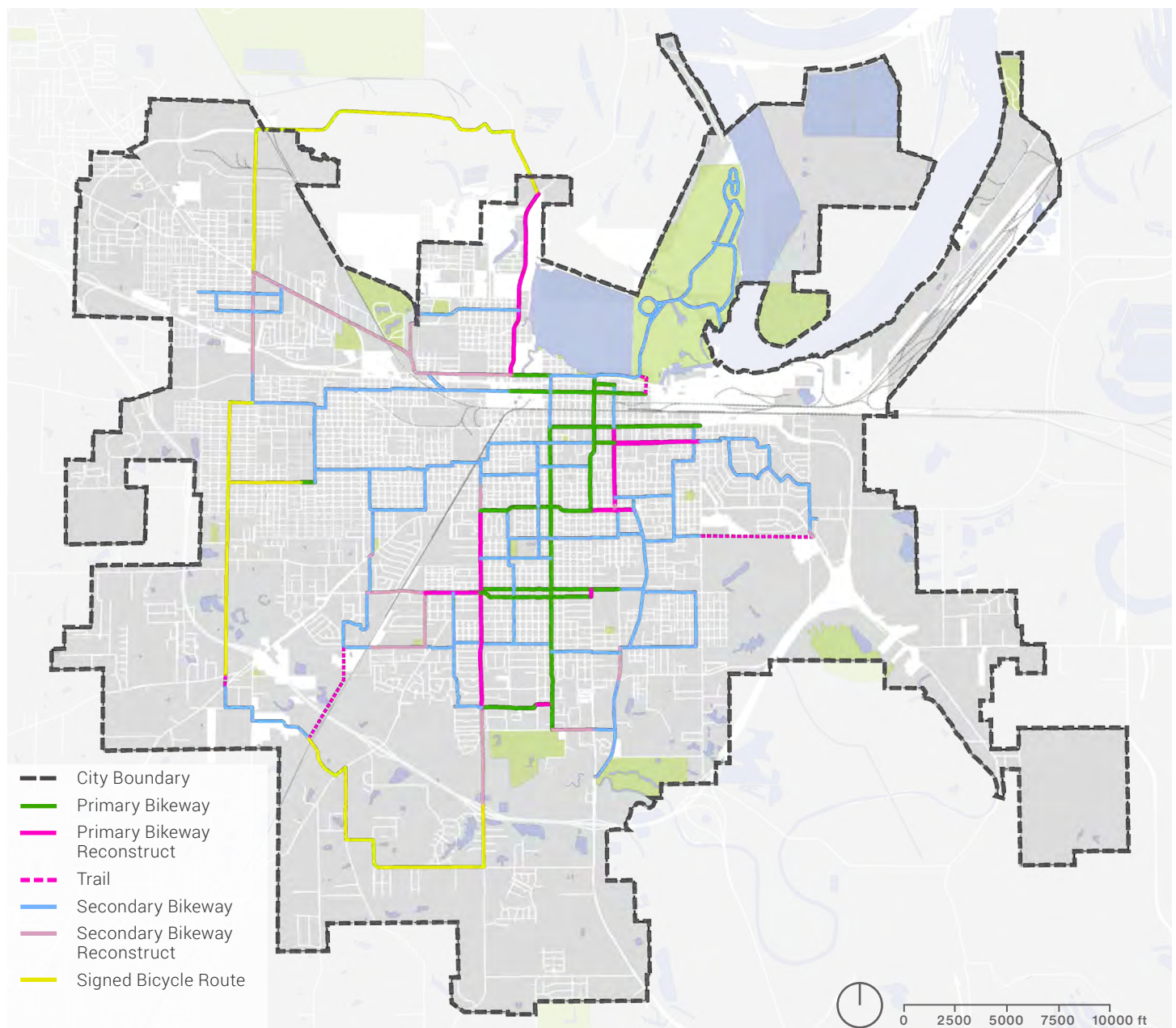


Figure 4.23: Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan

In addition to bicycle facilities along corridors, intersections and other street crossings will require careful consideration to provide a safe and comfortable network. All streets that include sidewalks should include ADA ramps at their intersections, and those streets with more than 2,500 average daily traffic (ADT) should also include crosswalks. Any pedestrian mid-block crossings should be signed and designated appropriately. All intersections along bicycle facilities should also include appropriate intersection treatments to direct the flow of vehicles and cyclists through the intersection. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) as well as the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) both provide guidance on appropriate intersection design for bicycle and pedestrian applications.

The bicycle and pedestrian network identifies the following specific facility types as they relate to Pine Bluff.



Buffered Bicycle Lane with horizontal buffer

### Primary Bikeway

A Primary Bikeway is a proposed major connector through the city. This connection type should be achieved with the implementation of an On-Street Integrated Facility or On-Street Separated Facility (refer to Table 4.19: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide) that should be achievable by reallocating lane widths through reconfigured pavement markings. Preferred treatment would include the creation of Complete Streets along these corridors, providing space for both bicycles and pedestrians (via sidewalks).

### Primary Bikeway Reconstruct

A Primary Bikeway Reconstruct is a proposed major connector through the city that will require street modification to implement, but will provide a major connection upon completion. The bikeway should consist of an On-Street Integrated Facility or On-Street Separated Facility (refer to Table 4.19: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide). Furthermore, the preferred street cross section would provide space for both bicycles and pedestrians (via sidewalks) to create a Complete Street.

### Trail

A trail refers to a separated, multi-use trail that is located primarily independent of a street right-of-way. For purposes of this plan, trails are only indicated in areas where connections are needed where no roadway currently exists.

### Secondary Bikeway

A secondary bikeway is a proposed minor connector through the city. This connection type should occur predominantly along lower-volume, lower-speed local streets and can be achieved through pavement markings, such as sharrow. Refer to Table 4.22 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide.

Facility Type	Sharrow	Bicycle Lanes	Buffered Bicycle Lanes	Cycle Track	Sidepath
Primary Bikeway		Subject to ADT	✓	✓	✓
Primary Bikeway: Reconstruct		Subject to ADT	✓	✓	✓
Secondary Bikeway	✓	✓			
Secondary Bikeway: Reconstruct		✓	✓	Dependent on Context	✓

Table 4.24: Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan Designations and Applicable Facility Type



# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

### Secondary Bikeway Reconstruct

In some cases, streets along Secondary Bikeways may need to be widened or reconstructed as a spot treatment to safely implement a connection. Examples include school zones where additional queuing lanes are present, a jog in a larger Secondary Bikeway route onto a higher-volume street to connect to another neighborhood street, or a higher-volume street utilized for a secondary connection when no other connections are available. Lower-priority connections that occur along higher-volume streets due to lack of other connectivity options will require appropriate separated on-street or off-street bicycle/pedestrian facilities, such as sidepaths, buffered bicycle lanes, or cycle tracks. Sharrows

and traditional bicycle lanes are not appropriate on high-volume, high-speed, five-lane roads. Refer to Table 4.22: Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Selection Guide and Table 4.24: Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Plan Designations and Applicable Facility Type

### Signed Bicycle Route

A signed bicycle route is typically utilized along lower-volume roads where connectivity is desirable but traffic volume does not warrant a more formal bicycle facility. These routes are designated by street signage to alert drivers to the potential presence of bicycles, and are typically utilized in more rural settings.



Cycle Track in Springdale, Arkansas



Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) at a mid-block crossing



### Parks & Community Facilities



#### General Considerations



##### **Distribution of Parks & Community Facilities at a Walkable Scale**

All parks, no matter the size, should include an allowance for pedestrian mobility. Neighborhood parks should be located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the majority of a neighborhood to create a walkable destination. Often times, park users access neighborhood parks by foot or bicycle, rather than by car. Siting parks so they are easily accessed must also mean they do not require travel along or across major vehicular corridors.

Additionally, trails provide a place for recreation as well as connect neighborhoods and surrounding land uses to one another. Trail sizing must be appropriate to accommodate walkers/cyclists in a safe manner. This includes paths wide enough to accommodate walkers as well as wide enough for physically challenged users in mobility devices to safely pass as well. Refer to Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities, beginning on page 71.



##### **Parks & Community Facilities contribute to Neighborhood Structure and encourage Neighborhood Regeneration**

The location of small parks within a neighborhood is critical to the health of the neighborhood as well as the health of the residents. Parks provide an opportunity to gather, interact, recreate, and contemplate, among other things. The neighborhood takes on the identity of the park as it becomes the heart of that area. The proximity of the park, regardless of size is a key factor in how it is used. When residents can walk or bike to a nearby park it becomes part of their daily/weekly life. Residents are far more likely to protect and care for the park if it's close to their homes and well used by the surrounding neighborhood.

Parks should be placed within a neighborhood so they are highly visible. In many cities, properties that face or abut parks or open space are in higher demand and often enjoy higher property values. Refer to STRENGTHEN, beginning on page 178, for more information on parks' role in strengthening neighborhoods.



##### **Appropriate Programming of Facilities to Encourage Use**

Parks should provide respite and/or encourage activities for the park user based on the facilities provided. Regardless of what facilities are present, each park should include basic human comforts to help activate the spaces and encourage use by the local residents and visitors. These comforts include shade, formal and informal seating, trash receptacles, lighting, and visibility to promote safety (refer to CLEAN UP, beginning on page 22). Tree-shaded open spaces with walking trails and benches encourage different types of use (passive uses) than parks with playgrounds and open play fields (active uses). Ideally, parks are programmed to include both passive and active uses to attract a variety of citizens.



##### **Open Space for Environmental Benefit**

Pocket parks, neighborhood squares and even urban plazas should be designed to accommodate water runoff. This can be achieved by incorporating rain gardens or bioswales into the park design. These low impact development elements support plant growth for an aesthetic appeal as well as provide water retention and filtration benefits for the surrounding land uses (refer to SUSTAINABILITY/LID, beginning on page 103). Riparian and semi-aquatic plant material will thrive in the rain garden if the design and selection is appropriate for the use.



# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: PARKS & COMMUNITY FACILITIES



Pocket Park (photo: roxboroughpa.com)



Neighborhood Square (photo: sctrails.net)



Playground (photo: mymorrisonranch.org)



Neighborhood Park (photo: dcla.net)



Community Park (photo: Unsplash.com)



Sports Complex (photo: visitfrisco.com)



Regional Park (photo: explorepinebluff.com)



Aquatics Park (photo: Crafton Tull)



Farmers' Market (photo: Crafton Tull)



Major Natural Area (photo: Crafton Tull)

### Facility Types

#### Neighborhood

Neighborhood parks and facilities serve residential or commercial areas in close proximity are typically walk-to destinations with limited on-site parking as space allows. These smaller parks may include pocket parks, which are often located in urban areas to fill in “missing teeth” between adjacent buildings or on small vacant lots within residential neighborhoods. Pocket parks may be formal or informal, depending on their surroundings, and should include seating, shade, gathering space, and one or two recreational amenities, particularly if located in a residential area. More formal pocket parks may be configured to serve as a neighborhood square, particularly when homes face the park on multiple sides. Playgrounds may be included in pocket parks or neighborhood squares, or may be standalone facilities. Neighborhood parks are slightly larger, typically located within a 5-minute walk of the area which it serves, and typically includes a playground, practice fields and/or open play fields, and courts. Most range in size from 1/2 to 5 acres.

#### Community

Community Parks and Sports Complexes serve a larger area of the community, drawing users from distances greater than what are considered walkable by some. As a result, they should accommodate multiple modes of transportation access. They are larger facilities that may include multiple playgrounds, fields, courts, open spaces, trails, pavilions, and may include additional cultural or community-based resources. Most range in size from 20 to 50 acres.

#### Citywide

Citywide facilities are generally specialized in nature and serve the entire community or surrounding region. Such facilities may include large regional parks (50+ acres in size), major natural areas, aquatics facilities, zoos, golf courses, indoor or outdoor performance facilities, and farmer’s markets, for example.

### Facility Selection Considerations Overview

Several factors are considered when determining the appropriateness of park types and their placement. Each factor detailed below presents opportunities and/or challenges for the development of a comprehensive park system. No single factor should be considered on its own; rather, the factors should be collectively analyzed to create a cohesive, functioning, safe, and utilized system of parks and open spaces.

#### Context

What are the park site's surrounding uses? Smaller-scaled parks in residential areas function differently than pocket parks in urban commercial areas. The former may include grassy areas, playground, and open play fields, whereas the latter may accommodate gatherings, outdoor events, and passive spaces within a more compact area with hardscape, moveable furniture, umbrellas, and formal planting areas. Both should include shade. In addition to the components within the park, its connectivity to adjacent and walkable distances should also be considered. Both experience more success when they are visible and inviting, and both should include pedestrian connectivity. Siting within residential areas should be easily connected to a larger service area ( $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile), whereas an urban pocket park may only need to serve several square blocks.

#### Land Area

How large is the park and what geographic area does it/ will it serve? Neighborhood parks should be designed to accommodate the neighborhood in which it is located. It should be highly connected for pedestrian or bicycle access, but provide a few parking spaces as well. Community or citywide facilities serve larger areas of the community, and therefore must accommodate more vehicular access in addition to pedestrian and bicycle connectivity for adjacent areas.

#### Desired Function/Use

What is the main focus of the park (active or passive recreation) or will it have numerous focuses? Many parks offer a variety of uses, from ball fields, courts and/or playgrounds that are active recreation to picnic pavilions, amphitheaters or sitting areas that are considered passive recreation. Understanding the programming of the park is essential in park siting and park size.

#### Location

Where is the park located within the broader context of the city? Does it attract and serve residents of an area located near the park or will the residents come from all areas of the city? Location and context are often interconnected, and larger community parks that also serve a neighborhood park role should be designed with proper facilities and access points to function as such.

### Connectivity

How will park users access the site? Is it possible to link the park to an adjacent neighborhood, a nearby school or another park via a trail network? Can residents access the park site by non motorized means or do must they drive to the park to enjoy the amenities due to the proximity or size? A good system of parks strengthen the neighborhoods they serve, reinforce neighborhood identity, and provide spaces that encourage socialization and physical activity while offering environmental benefits such as stormwater management. Great park systems create a network of such spaces that are interconnected with trails, greenways, or other bicycle and pedestrian facilities so users can travel from one space to another, and access open spaces easily from their neighborhoods.

### Frontage

What elements are located along the park's streetsides? Is the park land adjacent to a busy road or vehicular parking? Or is it located adjacent to a local neighborhood street with houses fronting it? Park frontage is directly tied to context and the park's relationship with its edge land uses. Larger parks, which may front larger, higher-volume roadways, should offer safe street crossings and well-planned entry points to promote safe access.

### Facility Selection Guide: Parks, Open Space, and Community Facilities

This plan outlines recommendations for parks in the following forms:



1. As part of the larger policies to meet the vision and goals within the broader citywide context (refer to GROW, pages 6-11).



2. As part of supporting, enhancing, and strengthening neighborhoods to maintain stability of existing neighborhoods and create value in declining neighborhoods (refer to STRENGTHEN, pages 178-186).



3. As part of the citywide effort to reduce flooding and manage stormwater runoff through the utilization of open spaces and managing flood-prone areas (refer to Sustainability and LID, pages 103-111).

4. As part of supporting and promoting physical health and activity through outdoor recreation.

This guide should be utilized in determining appropriate siting criteria of future parks, as well as the effectiveness of current park properties and facilities according to the role they were intended to serve. Refer to Location Criteria (page 88) and Reallocating Park Resources (page 88) for more information.

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### Facility Selection Guide



			IN AREAS WITH THESE CONDITIONS 		
			Context	Land Area	Desired Function/Use
CONSIDER THIS FACILITY 	Neighborhood	Urban Square or Plaza	Commercial center	Under 1 acre	Urban gathering space, hard surface
		Pocket Park	Commercial or residential	Under 0.25 acre	Gathering, passive recreation
		Neighborhood Square	Neighborhood	Under 1 acre	Neighborhood gathering space
		Playground	n/a	Under 0.25 acre	Free play
		Neighborhood Park	Neighborhood	Under 5 acres	Free play, multiple options
	Community	Community Park	Commercial or residential	20+ acres	Active or passive recreation
		Sports Complex	Lighting levels typically not desirable near residential areas	20-50 acres	Active recreation
	Citywide	Regional Park	Any	50+ acres	Destination facility
		Special Facility	Any	Varies	Varies
		Major Natural Area	Any	Varies	Destination facility

Table 4.25: Park Facility Selection Guide



Location	Connected To	Frontage	Typical Facilities
Among downtown buildings	Nearby buildings	Commercial buildings or houses	Seating, shade, open areas for gathering, stage, fountains, etc.
Strategically-located vacant lots in commercial or residential areas	The bicycle and pedestrian network	Commercial buildings or houses	Seating, shade, small socialization spaces
Central to a neighborhood	Other neighborhood squares or neighborhood centers as well as the bicycle and pedestrian network	Houses	Playground, seating, shade, open play field, walking path; typically more formal than a neighborhood park
1/4 mile from the furthest point of the area served	Houses within a 5-minute walk	n/a	Playground, seating, shade
1/2 mile from the furthest point of the neighborhood	Surrounding neighborhood and part of the bicycle and pedestrian network	Houses	Playground, seating, shade, open play field, courts, formal or informal areas, walking path
Easily accessible by vehicle, bicycle, or walking from neighborhoods within a 2-mile radius	The bicycle and pedestrian network	Adjacent structures	Multi-use practice fields, open play fields, game fields, courts, playgrounds, splash pads, natural features, trails, water, restrooms
Visible and easily accessible for tournaments	Entire city	Adjacent properties; not specific	Game fields or tournament facilities, courts, support facilities (restrooms, concessions, playgrounds, perimeter trails, pavilions, etc.)
Where suitable land is available	Entire city or the larger region	Adjacent properties; not specific	Large-scale destination playgrounds, splash pads, water access, large open areas for passive or active recreation, sports fields, special facilities, camping, trails, natural areas, restrooms and other support facilities
Visible and easily accessible from the bicycle and pedestrian network	Entire city or the larger region	Adjacent properties; not specific	Golf course, aquatics facility, community center, botanical garden, zoo, etc.
Dictated by the location of the natural feature	The larger region	Varies	Nature trails, boardwalks, interpretive areas, boat launches, informal gathering spaces, restrooms, pavilions, facilities to highlight and support the natural attraction

### Location Criteria

#### Appropriate Pocket Park Applications

Pocket parks are the smallest of the city open space options. There are both urban pocket parks which can be a simple as a plaza between buildings on a vacant lot. In suburban settings, a pocket park can be just large enough to house an inclusive playground or a patch of grass with a shade tree. The context of the pocket park along with the potential users will help to determine the park's program (elements).

#### Walkability/Access

Whenever possible parks should be linked to neighborhoods, schools and/or other parks via bike lanes, trails or other bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Walkability to and within parks are important if the City wishes to encourage healthy options and increase economic development and land value around the park site. Access must be for all park users, which means there must be an emphasis on barrier free accessibility regardless of the park's size. Grade changes should be addressed with ADA ramps and curb cuts and crosswalks need to be employed to ensure user safety.

#### Creating Neighborhood Centers

A neighborhood center is a park or open space surrounded by streets with houses fronting on the opposite sides. However, some centers can have just one street frontage and have houses abutting its property lines on four sides so access is limited to one entry point. This center becomes the "living room" of the neighborhood. It becomes the place where residents gather or play together, where eyes from surrounding houses monitor the park's activities and is often the location of block parties and holiday get togethers. The neighborhood center should be centrally located within the area of homes with good access for all residents. This access may be in the form of trails, sharrows or bike lanes leading to and from the park. Refer to STRENGTHEN, page 178.

#### Vacant Lot Assimilation for Parks

Neighborhood Centers or even some pocket parks require more than one lot to be assimilated in order to have enough usable open space. If a full block of lots is not available, the open space lots may be internal as long as there are good access points to allow ingress/egress to the park without having to cross another lot to gain access to the park. Likewise, the ingress/egress must be accessible to citizens with physical challenges to avoid excluding any park users. Keep in mind the park may grow in phases if a limited number of lots is first available but other adjacent lots may be assimilated at a later date.

#### Visibility

Parks should be sited in high visibility areas, where there are more opportunities for "eyes on the park". Avoid placing

parks on dead-end streets, in areas with a high concentration of vacant lots, or in other isolated areas.

#### Reallocating Park Resources: Quality over Quantity

Providing well-designed, well-programmed parks in appropriate locations results in increased use, focused maintenance efforts, and overall park success. Focus on creating fewer high-quality parks incrementally, one neighborhood at a time. Remove old, obsolescent, or unsafe equipment in the near term to avoid liability. Successful parks can create neighborhood centers, while underutilized parks should be de-prioritized until such time that redevelopment in the areas they serve is realized. Parks that are intensified as well as those that are underutilized may both accommodate low-impact development facilities to aid in the reduction of storm water runoff, refer to page 110.



#### Focus on Neighborhood Centers

Several existing parks across Pine Bluff are underutilized, due to location, lack of proximity to park users, lack of visibility, or lack of appropriate park facilities. Additionally, there is a need for parks in neighborhoods that are currently not in close proximity to a park. Several of these neighborhoods lack neighborhood structure or identity, and the addition of neighborhood centers can organize and provide focus to a residential area (see "Creating Neighborhood Centers", left, and STRENGTHEN, page 178). Parks and other community facilities can fulfill the role of creating neighborhood centers.

#### Current Neighborhood Centers

Two resources currently serve as neighborhood centers: **Central Park** (7.5 acres) and **34th Elementary** (9 acres) both provide structure and identity to their surrounding neighborhood. Active schools often serve the role of neighborhood center, since historically many neighborhoods were often developed with an elementary school at its heart. Such schools that can serve in this role include Broadmoor Elementary and Southwood Elementary.

#### Proposed Neighborhood Centers: Repurposing Schools and Parks

In some cases, a school that was previously a neighborhood center but closed has left a gap in its respective neighborhood. Careful consideration should be given to utilizing Indiana Street Park and Forrest Park Elementary as future neighborhood centers. Buildings on these sites may be reused or demolished. Specific recommendations include:

- Indiana Street Park: Ample space on this 6-acre property lends itself to a wide variety of uses. The school structures should be considered for demolition, and

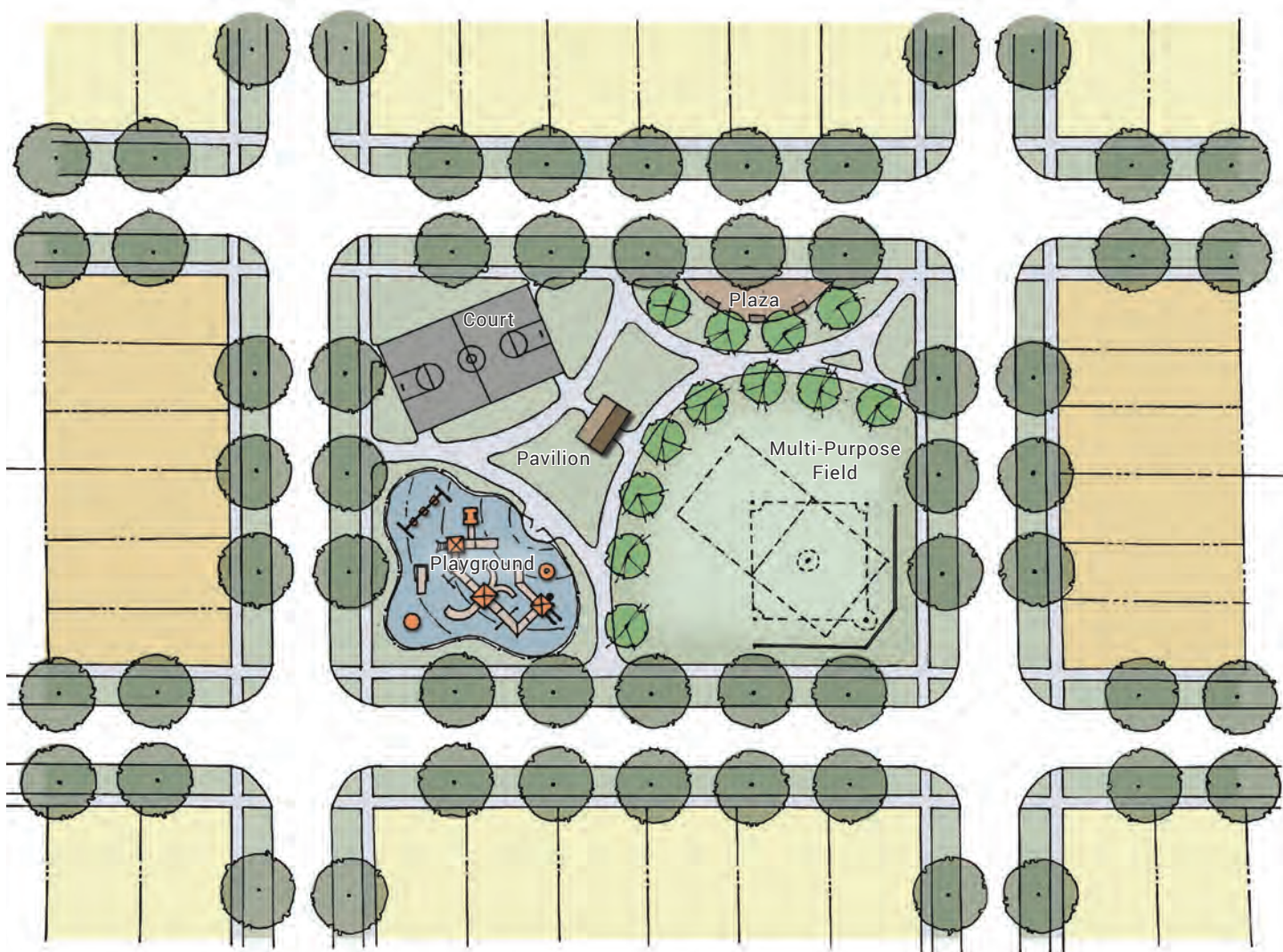


Figure 4.26: Prototypical Neighborhood Center

more appropriate structures replace it. Space allows for both formal and informal active and passive uses, such as formal gathering spaces, pavilions, updated playgrounds, open play fields, and courts. The addition of numerous deciduous shade trees will make the space more inviting during summer months and allow plenty of sunlight during winter months. Park frontage should address both 16th Street and South Indiana Street.

- Forrest Park Elementary: This 4.25 acre site is fronted by houses on three of its four sides. West 34th Avenue, along the property's southern border, is designated on the proposed Bicycle and Pedestrian network, refer to page 80. As recommended for Indiana Street Park, obsolete structures should be considered for demolition and replaced with a combination of formal and informal active and passive recreational uses, including plenty of seating and shade. Prototypical redevelopment of these and other neighborhood center sites may resemble Figure 4.23, above.

Four existing parks should be utilized for future neighborhood centers: Central Park, which already fulfills this role, J.C. Jeffries Park, Merrill Community Center, and Bryant Street Park. To become functioning neighborhood centers, the following recommendations apply to each facility:

- J.C. Jeffries Park: Additional shade, seating, and walking trails, with continued maintenance and updating of park elements such as playground equipment and pavilions.
- Merrill Community Center: Merrill Community Center and its site provide multiple opportunities to the neighborhoods surrounding it. Its location and center programming make it a natural "neighborhood center". Renovations to the Community Center are in progress. The site lies within the 100-year floodplain, and includes land that is not currently programmed. Ultimately, the site should be redesigned to locate the community center out of the floodplain to alleviate its recurring flooding issues. This move opens the remainder of the site for



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the addition of outdoor spaces for gathering, recreation, and socialization (refer to Figure 5.54). In addition, space is available on site to accommodate low-impact development approaches to handling storm water (refer to Low-Impact Development recommendations, page 108).

- Bryant Street Park: Updated playground equipment and the addition of walking trails and pavilions or spaces to accommodate gatherings and socialization can help promote use of this tree-covered park. Refer also to Figure 4.26.

### Proposed Neighborhood Centers: Additional Sites

“Future” neighborhood center locations have been designated in areas where parks or schools do not currently fulfill this need. In some cases, desirable vacant lots are designated. In other cases where no vacant lots exist in areas that would adequately serve a neighborhood, vacant land adjacent to church parking may provide adequate space for a neighborhood center, if such property can be acquired or joint use agreements established. Refer to “STRENGTHEN” on page 180 for more information on future neighborhood centers. Of note is a site at 6th and Sycamore, which if acquired, could become a sizable neighborhood center and park.

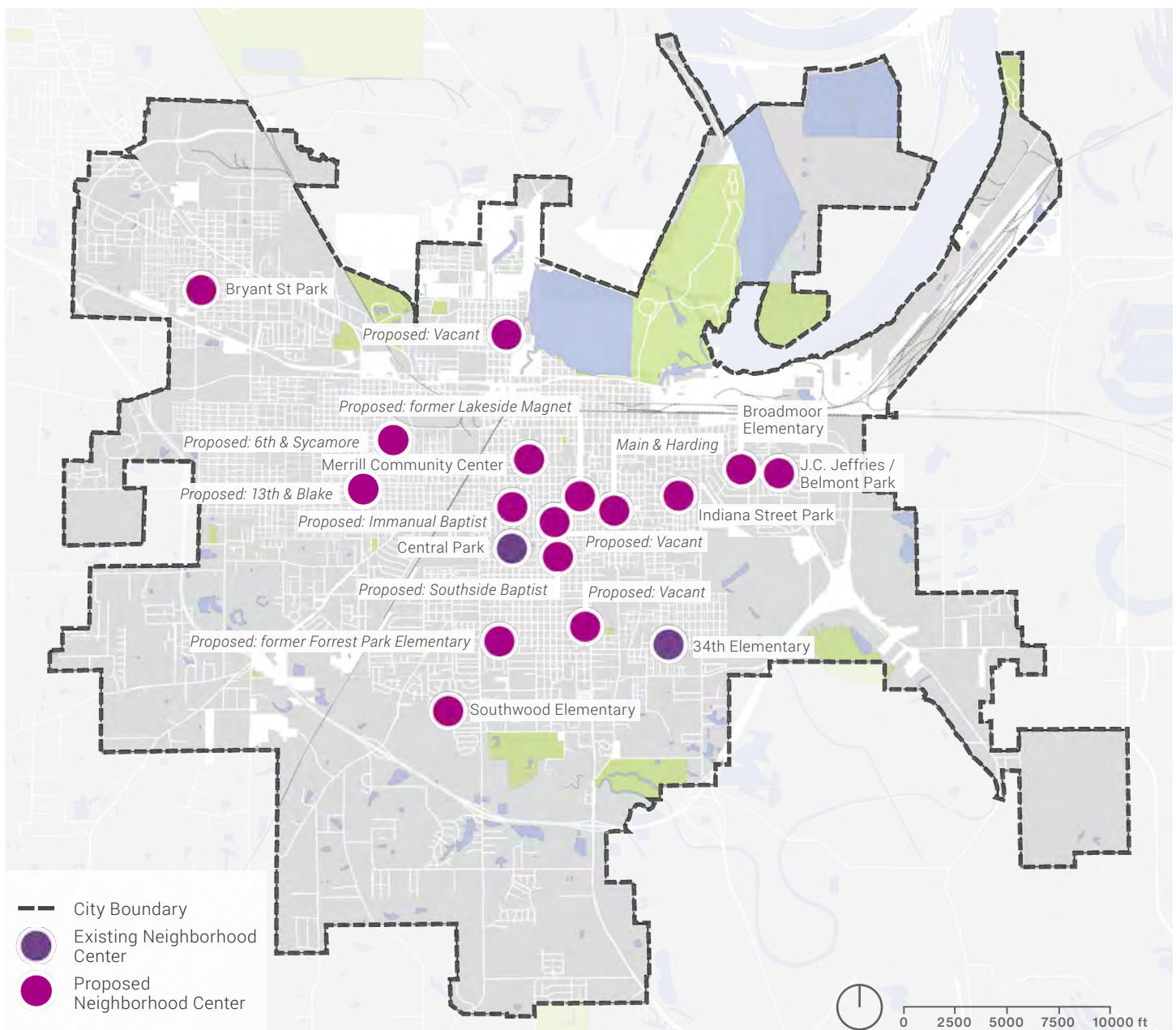


Figure 4.27: Neighborhood Centers



### Reduced Focus on Underutilized Parks

As a result, some parks that do not fulfill this role and are otherwise under utilized may be considered for reduced capital and maintenance expenditures, so an effort can be made to concentrate park resources where the need is greatest. Reducing focus on certain park properties would include removing obsolete or unsafe equipment without replacement, with existing parking and permanent structures to remain. The parks would continue to receive “mow and blow” maintenance until such time that development focus is given to these neighborhoods and the properties can be activated and programmed as neighborhood centers.

Coordination with adjacent residents and/or neighborhood associations to adopt the park and assist with maintenance is encouraged. Such parks include the following:

- Irene Holcomb Park (Dog Park to remain active)
- Hutson Park
- Packing Town Park
- 3rd and Grant Street Park
- 33rd and Mississippi Park

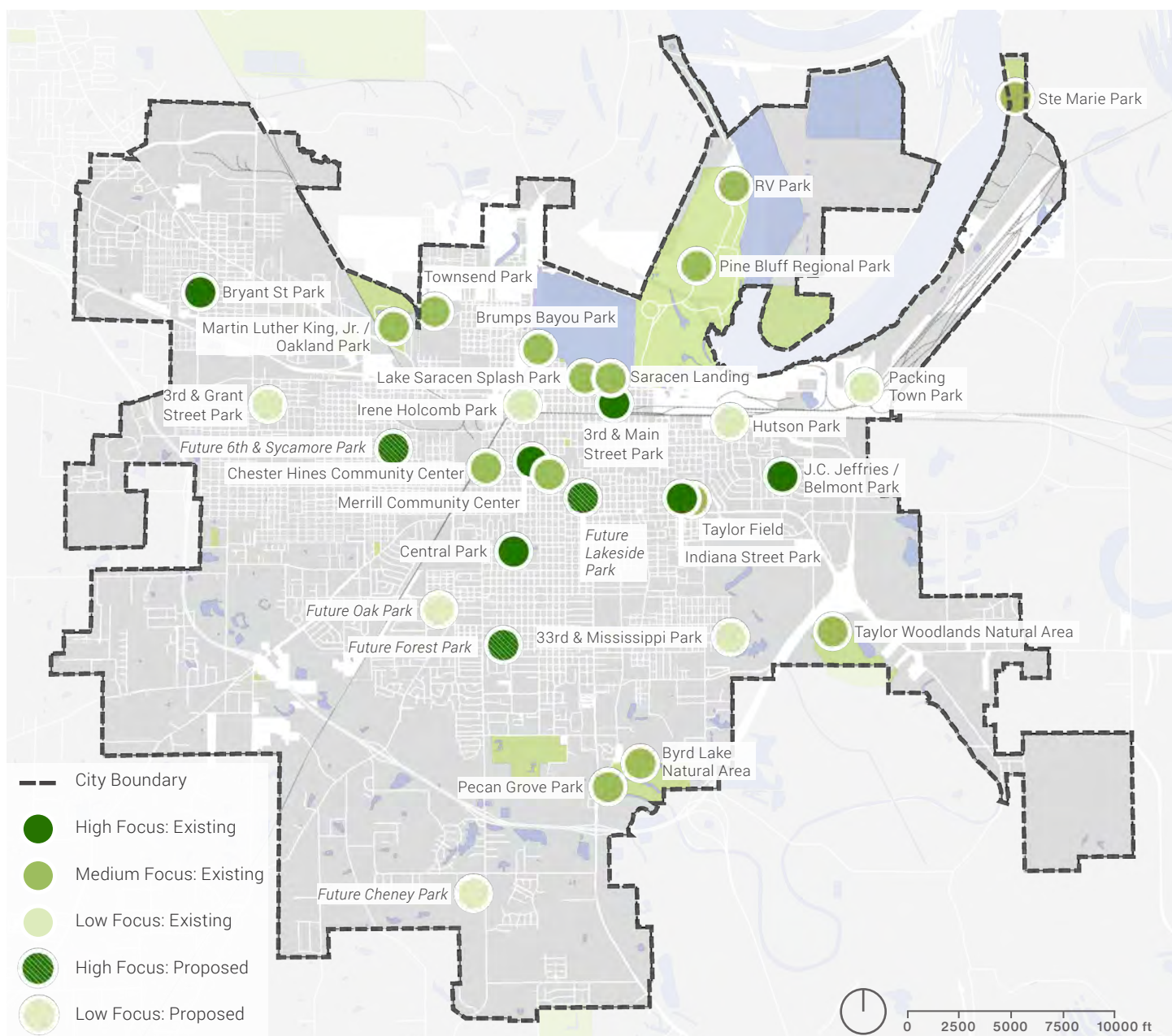


Figure 4.28: Existing and Proposed Park Focus

### Focusing on the Future of Parks

With a consistent goal of providing park land and recreational facilities to fulfill the social, physical, and recreational needs of the residents of Pine Bluff while recognizing capital, maintenance, and operations budget constraints, the following guidelines for the City's park system are recommended:

1. Recognize the value of parks and open space as an amenity to the stabilization, revitalization, growth, and development of the City.
2. Carefully allocate resources to parks and recreational facilities that will encourage a return on that investment as a strong amenity for the community.
3. Focus on those parks that have the opportunity to create stronger neighborhoods or encourage neighborhood stability, and incrementally improve additional parks as funds become available.
4. Strategically acquire properties as urban greenspace now that can be further developed in the future.

To achieve these guidelines, existing parks in Pine Bluff have been categorized by **focus of use** as well as **focus of capital and maintenance expenditures**, as follows:

#### High Focus

Focus attention on the parks that currently serve as neighborhood centers in existing neighborhoods, or can serve as such once programmed appropriately, as discussed earlier in this section in "Creating Neighborhood Centers" and in STRENGTHEN, on pages 180-181.

- Central Park
- Merrill Community Center
- J.C. Jeffries / Belmont Park
- Bryant Street Park
- Indiana Street Park
- 3rd and Main Street Park

#### Medium Focus

Stay the course on maintenance, facility upgrades, programming, and operations of these parks to continue to stabilize the neighborhoods around them and as an asset to the entire city. Do not let maintenance and upkeep suffer in these parks while focusing on high priority parks.

- Pine Bluff Regional Park
- Lake Saracen Splash Park
- Saracen Landing
- Chester Hynes Community Center
- Martin Luther King, Jr. / Oakland Park

- Townsend Park
- Taylor Field
- RV Park
- Pecan Grove Park
- Brumps Bayou Park
- Ste Marie Park
- Byrd Lake Natural Area
- Taylor Woodlands Natural Area

#### Low Priority

These parks are largely underutilized, do not have a strong neighborhood fabric surrounding them, or have not been adequately maintained for some time. These parks should be handled as described in "Reduced Focus on Underutilized Parks" on the previous page.

- Irene Holcomb Park (Dog Park to remain active)
- Hutson Park
- Packing Town Park
- 3rd and Grant Street Park
- 33rd and Mississippi Park

### Future Park Sites

In addition, some properties may be considered for acquisition and development as future parks. These fall into two categories:

1. Future Neighborhood Centers: two decommissioned school sites situated strategically in neighborhoods that can once again serve as the neighborhood center, as well as one additional targeted site, including
  - Lakeside Magnet Elementary
  - Forrest Park Elementary
  - 6th & Sycamore

These sites become High Focus, as other neighborhood center parks described above. Proposed neighborhood centers on currently vacant lots may be placed under the purview of the Parks Department as they come online.

2. Urban Greenspace for Future Development: two decommissioned school sites have been identified that provide large sites with mature tree cover and the opportunity to become future developed parks. If acquired, they should remain urban greenspace with passive recreational programming (Low Focus) until such time that an adjacent population density justifies their development into fully programmed park properties.
  - Oak Park Elementary
  - W.T. Cheney Elementary



### Wayfinding



#### General Considerations

Wayfinding is designing a hierarchy of signage and landmarks to guide people through the built environment toward intended destinations. Many cities welcome guests with a monument sign that tells them they have arrived but fail to direct or provide cues on how to find important destinations beyond. A system of wayfinding signage should be well planned and implemented to give directional information to visitors that are driving through town as well as walking near an important destination. The five principles of effective wayfinding are as follows:

1. Create an identity at each location
2. Use landmarks to provide orientation cues and memorable locations
3. Create a well structured path (don't give too many choices)
4. Create regions of differing character
5. Provide signs at decision points (turn opportunities to redirect)



#### Providing Visual Clues

If you think of wayfinding like a scavenger hunt with clues that lead the hunters to the most found items (destinations) then you can visualize why it is important to have those visual clues for the visitors to follow. Those clues can be signage with directional arrows and distances, but they may also be a different type of visual element or series of elements that lead the way to a destination. For example, if the City wanted to lead visitors to Saracen Landing, they could commission a sculpture or series of sculptures and strategically place them along streets or roads that lead to the lakeside park. This could be done in conjunction with directional signage and in place of buying billboard ads to do the same thing. Some towns use a certain species of a unique flowering tree, which can be a little more subtle but may still lead the eye into a direction or desired location. Improvements, and specifically, public art, along corridors instinctively cue a user that they are traveling toward a special place.





### Corridorwide Applications

#### Corridors to Downtown

Downtown Pine Bluff is on the rebound with new amenities like the Main Library and the Aquatic Center coming online recently and soon respectively. Those amenities, combined with other existing cultural and historical destinations, make a visit to downtown a must. So how does the City get visitors to find these Pine Bluff gems? Wayfinding! The following are corridors, in order of wayfinding importance, that will guide visitors to downtown.

6. Wayfinding signage at I-530 and Martha Mitchell to direct visitors traveling into town from the north (from Little Rock)
7. Wayfinding signage at I-530 / Hwy 65 interchange on the south east side of town for visitors traveling from the south (from Dumas)
8. Wayfinding signage at Martha Mitchell and Hwy 79 / Market Street to direct visitors from the Saracen Casino to downtown (place signage to face the casino to catch visitors that are leaving the casino parking lot)
9. Wayfinding signage at Martha Mitchell and Texas Street to direct visitor north to Regional Park or south to the Pine Bluff Convention Center, City Hall, and the Pine Bluff Aquatics Center
10. Wayfinding signage at Martha Mitchell and N. Walnut Street to direct visitors south into downtown then immediately one block again east onto W. Barraque Street then to Main Street (3 signs or markers needed)
11. Wayfinding signage at Market Street and Harding Avenue to direct visitors to downtown via west on Harding to Main Street (this intersection is the Main & Harding neighborhood center detailed elsewhere in the plan, which may be a destination on its own once redevelopment occurs)
12. Wayfinding signage at Harding Avenue and Main Street to guide visitors from Harding north up Main Street to the amenities
13. Olive Street at I-530 to direct visitors north up Olive toward downtown, via the Main & Harding intersection.
14. Harding at Olive Street to direct visitors east toward Main Street.
15. University Drive at Martha Mitchell to direct visitors coming from the north to go east toward downtown

#### Amenities along Martha Mitchell

Martha Mitchell (Hwy 65 Business) stretches from I-530 on the northwest side of Pine Bluff through town to the

southeast side where it intersects I-530 again. This business route touches many of Pine Bluff's amenities since it was the original route through town prior to the bypass loop's construction in the 1990s. When visitors enter Pine Bluff from the north on I-530 they have two choices: they can exit onto Martha Mitchell (Hwy 65 Business) which will take them toward many destinations before they ultimately end up at the new Saracen Casino, or they can remain on I-530 and miss them all. The goal is to direct visitors to make the first choice.

Amenities from west to east along (or accessed from) Martha Mitchell:

- University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- Lake Saracen Landing
- Downtown Pine Bluff
- City Hall
- Pine Bluff Convention Center
- Arkansas Entertainers Hall of Fame
- Pine Bluff Main Library
- Pine Bluff Aquatics Center
- Arts & Science Center of South Arkansas
- Pine Bluff Regional Park & Harbor Oaks Golf Club
- Gov. Mike Huckabee Delta Rivers Nature Center
- Arkansas Railroad Museum
- Saracen Casino

If visitors were going to the Saracen Casino and they chose to take the I-530 southern loop, they would miss out on most of what Pine Bluff has to offer. That is why wayfinding is important. It is what can make or break a visit to town based on directing them to see, spend, taste, stay, and create memories. If they don't know what Pine Bluff has to offer and take the easiest path along I-530, they might unknowingly miss out.

#### Downtown Connection to the Casino

As mentioned above, it is advantageous for the City to direct casino guests to downtown for economic reasons. The goal should be, through the use of wayfinding action items listed above, to provide visual clues along a logical route. The worst thing that could happen is the casino patron hopping back on I-530 to loop around town and miss the downtown amenities. The City may wish to select one billboard along I-530 to advertise the downtown attractions which will, in conjunction with the wayfinding to guide them, help the visitor's decision to explore downtown.

### North - South Corridors

Since Pine Bluff's street network is a north-south & east-west grid, it is easy to direct visitors to a location, like downtown, from entry points off of I-530 that loops around the southern edge of the city following Bayou Bartholomew. Most of the streets into downtown are north to south corridors that will allow visitors a straight shot or at least an easy route to follow.

#### Hazel Street north to Harding Avenue

The I-530 interchange at Hazel Street takes visitors past Jefferson Regional Medical Center before they travel north to Southeast Arkansas College (SEARK), then to intersect with

W. 16th (Harding) Avenue. This route is primarily residential in nature until they reach SEARK. The next section of the route along Harding to Main Street is also residential and low traffic. The route takes its final turn north at Main Street.

#### Olive Street (Hwy 63 Business) north to Harding Avenue

The I-530 interchange at Olive Street is a more direct route to downtown, but the visitor will encounter a busier five-lane road that routes them past Jefferson Square to Harding then to Main Street just blocks to the east. This route is more direct and therefore easier to place wayfinding to guide the visitor.

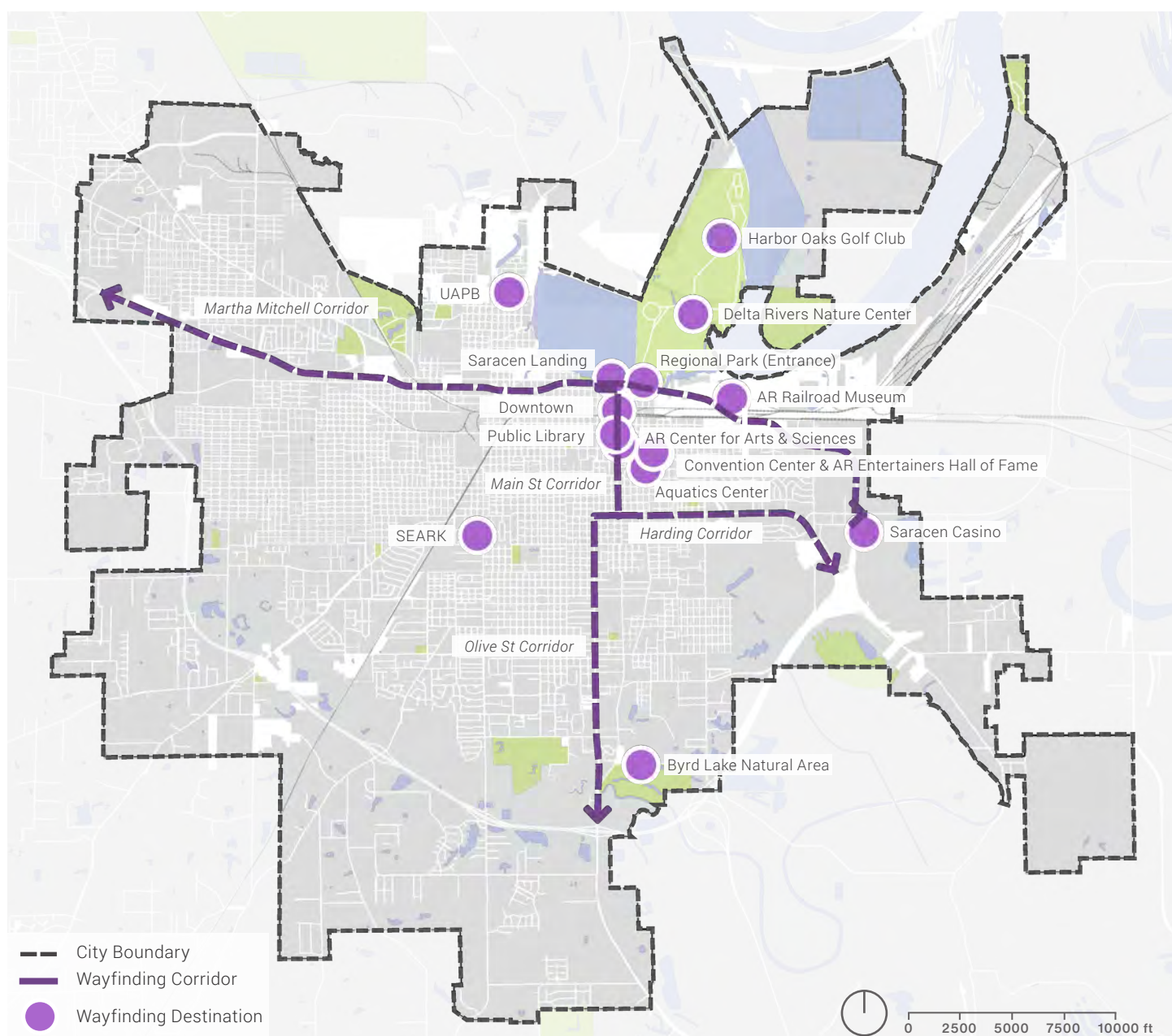


Figure 4.29: Wayfinding



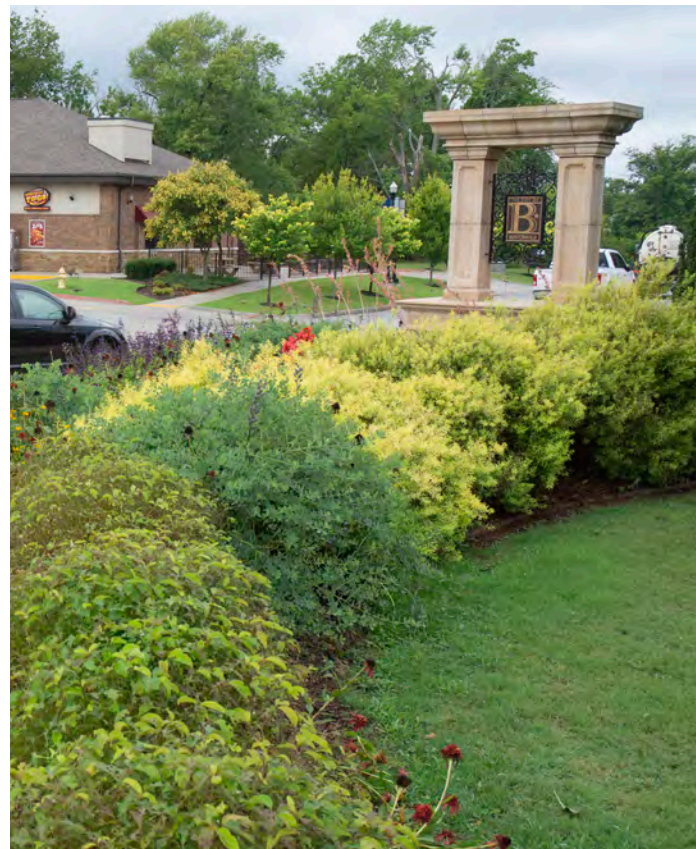
### Signage Hierarchy & Application

#### Gateway Monument Signage

As mentioned above, it's important to tell visitors they have arrived in Pine Bluff. These gateway monument signs should be strategically located at main entry points into the city and be large enough to make a statement. The more unique, but tastefully done, the more memorable it will be. Location of these gateway monuments should be prioritized based on volume of travel into the city. Pine Bluff has two main entry points that accommodate larger volumes than the other four.

- Monument at I-530 for vehicles entering from the north
- Gateway monument along Hwy 65 for vehicles entering from the Southeast.

Knowing that visitors will be coming to Saracen Casino on the east side of town, the location of the monument is key. Coordination with ARDOT will be necessary to determine a location outside of their highway right of way as well as coordination with the current land owner. Purchase of an easement, if land donation for the monument isn't an option, may also be necessary unless the City or County own the selected property.



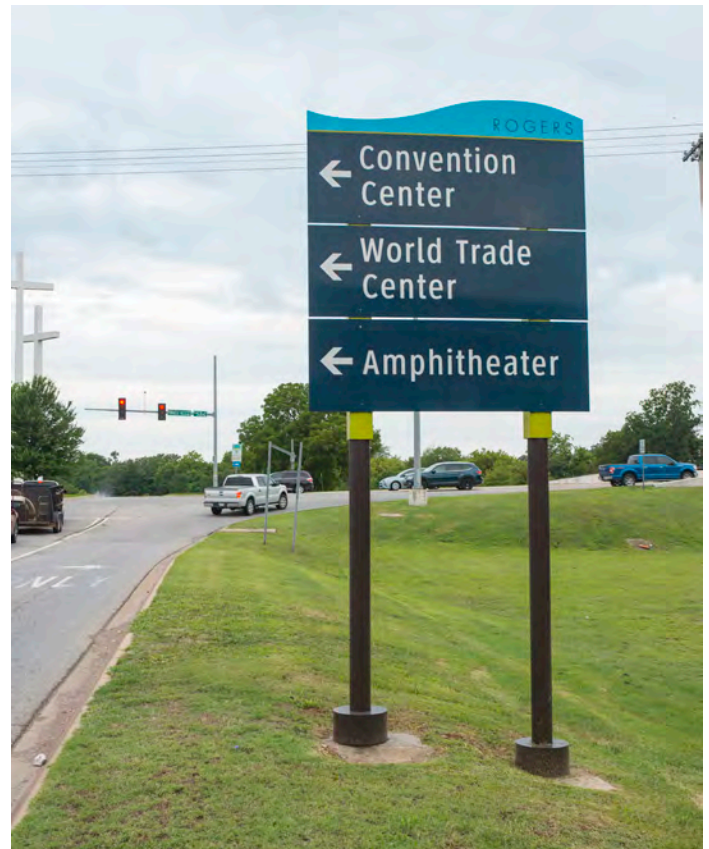
Typical Monument Sign

#### Primary Vehicular Wayfinding

These signs are directional signs that may list more than one destination with an arrow and mileage (or even better, travel time) to provide information on how to get to the town's amenities. There will be more of these primary signs than the two monument signs since more are needed around town. A wayfinding study and master plan may be needed to not only design the look of the signage system but also show the strategic locations. Northwest Arkansas (Fayetteville to Bella Vista and towns between, including Siloam Springs) all used the same system with matching signage so visitors to the region know what to look for even if they are traveling in adjoining towns. Some communities in Arkansas use A&P (Advertising and Promotions) to plan and implement a wayfinding system.

Signage for the following amenities of should be considered:

- Downtown
- Saracen Casino
- Saracen Landing
- Regional Park and Harbor Oaks Golf
- Delta Rivers Nature Center



Typical Primary Vehicular Wayfinding Sign



- Art & Science Center of SE Arkansas
- Arkansas Entertainers Hall of Fame
- Arkansas Railroad Museum
- Jefferson Regional Medical Center
- University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
- Southeast Arkansas College

Note: Not all of these destinations are to be on one sign or in one location. The names of the amenities should be placed at locations along primary routes to provide direction strategically. Since some of these destinations are not city owned entities, coordination with regard to approval, funding assistance and other details will need to occur prior to implementation.

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff already has their wayfinding system, coordinated with ARDOT and their monument sign at University and Martha Mitchell. The city may want to add UAPB on a primary sign on the edge of town but once a traveler is on Martha Mitchell they will have the necessary clues to find campus.

Wayfinding to guide visitors to any location should occur on multiple sides of that attraction. If visitors wish to find downtown, the primary wayfinding signs should be located in these locations:

- Martha Mitchell (both south and north ends), at points along the
- University Drive at Martha Mitchell
- I-530 bypass at Olive Street
- Harding Avenue at I-530 and Hwy 65 interchange

### Secondary Vehicular Wayfinding

Similar to the primary signage only it lists more destinations within an area. This signage will help strengthen the downtown brand by listing all the amenities that downtown has to offer. For instance, Downtown has multiple destinations to list that will overwhelm a primary wayfinding sign so a secondary sign can list more detail specific to the downtown area. Attractions in the downtown area to consider are as follows:

- City Hall
- Pine Bluff Convention Center
- Art & Science Center of SE Arkansas
- Pine Bluff Aquatic Center
- Pine Bluff Main Library
- Pine Bluff Historical Museum
- UAPB Business Incubator

The location of these secondary vehicular signs should be planned strategically as well to provide direction to visitors when a turn or change of direction is needed to find an amenity listed on the primary sign.

Once the visitor finds the desired amenity location and leaves their vehicle, they become a pedestrian or cyclist, and the size of the wayfinding signage is reduced in scale to accommodate that mode of travel.

### Pedestrian Wayfinding

Once visitors are out of their vehicle and traveling on foot or by bicycle, directional information can be provided via signage at a smaller scale or through visual elements that provide landmark cues. Examples of pedestrian signage use in downtown to provide information on elements of historical or cultural significance are as following:

- Historical Buildings (ie. Saenger Theater or Hotel Pines)
- Historical Monuments
- Historical sites/plaques (ie. Battle of Pine Bluff on Barraque)
- Murals of Pine Bluff



Typical Pedestrian Wayfinding Sign

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: WAYFINDING

Some communities develop another level of information through the use of a phone app to provide details that a sign or plaque cant. The app is connected to the community's wayfinding system so once a visitor is at the desired location, they can listen to details about that location via an audio or video narrative. This kind of system can be as specific as location and history of the murals with a narrative on each artist, date of the mural, importance etc. or as unique as locations of well known Rhythm and Blues artists that played in Pine Bluff, where they played or lived and samples of their sings via the app.

Additionally, pedestrian wayfinding can be achieved through the use of a repeating element with color. A good example is to signify a trail entry point via bright red bollards (posts) at different locations where the paved trail crosses a road or at the trailhead parking area. It is important to use the same bollard and the same color so it establishes a brand for the trail system.

### Kiosks

Defined as small structures (or digital stanchions) in public areas that provide information via a map or digital screen. These are often found at locations of interest where additional information is needed once a pedestrian arrives. They are common at Convention centers, airports or museums to provide details that a wayfinding system does not include.



Typical Kiosk



### Drainage



#### General Considerations

Establishing drainage guidelines, and developing the tools necessary to implement them will start a framework to better identify drainage issues that need attention and how to prioritize the actions necessary to control drainage runoff.

Drainage facilities need to be sized and function appropriately to ensure storm water runoff is contained during most rain events. Engineering standards typically size local inlets and underground storm sewer systems for a 10-year storm. As runoff continues downstream to larger culverts, and channelized flow, a 25-year storm design becomes more appropriate. In all cases, the 100-year flood should always be considered to avoid flooding of occupied structures.

#### Drainage Facility Types

Drainage facilities may be manmade or natural. Low-Impact Development, or LID, facilities are man made solutions that emulate the natural environment or provide more natural opportunities to hand storm water runoff and infiltration.

##### Man Made Drains

1. Inlets – Collect local runoff that typically discharge into an underground facility or channel.
  - a. Curb Inlets – Installed along streets or parking lots and are in line with a concrete curb.
  - b. Grate Inlets – Installed in parking lots or yards to collect local drainage.

- c. Pipe Inlets – The end of a pipe that is exposed to the surface for collection of runoff. This could be a headwall, or flared end section, or just the end of a pipe.

##### 2. Underground Facilities

- a. Piped storm sewer – collects runoff from inlets and discharges to a larger box culvert system or open channels.
- b. Box culvert system – collects runoff from other piped storm sewer systems. These are larger structures similar to the Harding Drain.
- c. Man made drainage channels – open channels that have been constructed.
- d. Detention facilities – retain water during a storm event with the intended result of releasing less runoff than what is flowing into it.

##### Natural Drainage Channels

Natural drainage channels (streams, creeks, rivers, bayous, etc.) are open channels that have developed naturally over time.

##### LID Facilities

Low-Impact Development facilities use or mimic natural processes that result in water infiltration, improving water quality or managing stormwater. Refer to LID, beginning on page 103).





### Recommendations

Investment needs to be made in various forms to identify drainage issues, create systematic approaches to decision making, implementing drainage projects, and managing information and processes to oversee continued and long-term system maintenance. The following list contains recommendations, in order of importance, for managing stormwater related issues in the City of Pine Bluff.

#### Invest in Tools

##### 1. Drainage Manual

The City of Pine Bluff has some drainage provisions for storm drainage improvements (Sec 25-97) and storm drainage criteria (Sec 25-98) in Chapter 25 – Subdivisions in the current city code. As new development occurs and improvements are needed for existing infrastructure, following a specific guideline to control storm water runoff is important. A professional that is employed by the City who understands these guidelines and theories behind the regulations can enforce them to ensure compliance.

A comprehensive drainage manual would provide the guidelines necessary to provide engineers and developers the necessary tools to properly design new drainage facilities in a consistent manner needed for proper flood control.

##### 2. City Engineer

City Engineers who are employed directly by a municipality will provide the expertise to not only administer the ordinances

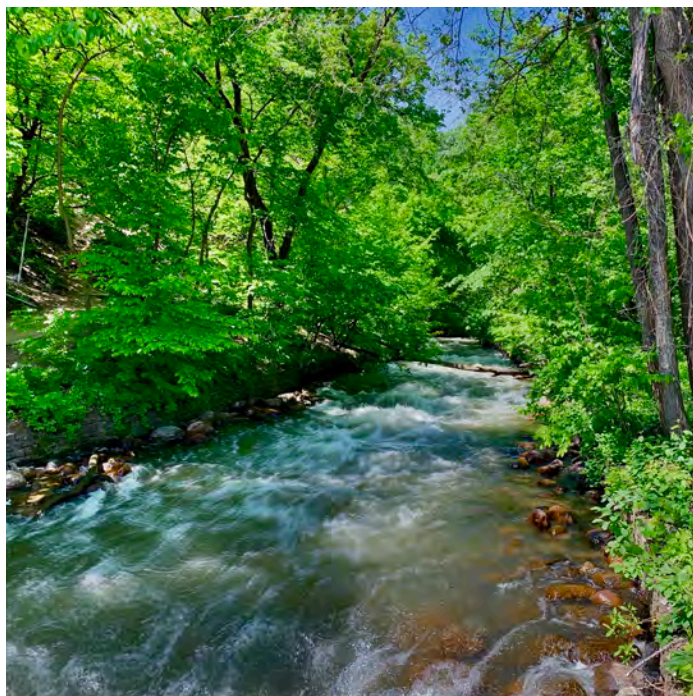
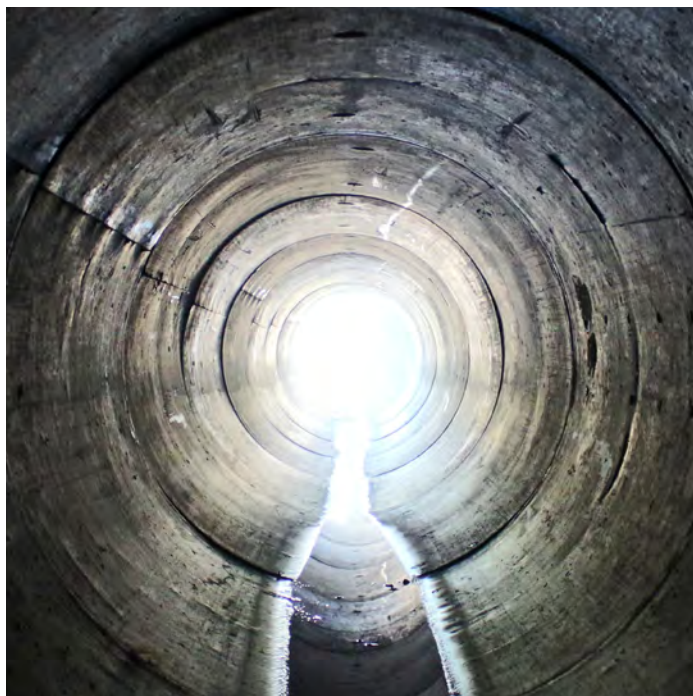
and design criteria, but they can also provide the necessary oversight to see that storm water management designs are implemented on behalf of the City as construction is completed.

##### 3. Citywide 2' Contour Mapping

One of the primary tools needed to properly design drainage systems are good topographic maps. Using aerial photography, the city can be mapped to develop 2' contours economically. The time to do this work is during the winter months when the photography can be obtained while there are few leaves on the trees and little vegetation is on the ground. These maps will allow the engineer to develop accurate drainage areas for sizing of drainage ways and facility types previously discussed. This is a great tool for planning purposes and the investments made for this work is highly recommended.

##### 4. Inventory of Storm Drain Systems

Using GPS or other types of survey equipment, an inventory of the existing storm sewer system will help identify and map potential issues. The data should be created by survey and stored in a geographical information system (GIS). Mapping the existing storm sewer system is a requirement of metropolitan areas that follow MS4 guidelines published by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). This task can be done in segments of the city and as funds are available. As the storm sewer systems are mapped, the condition of the system should be evaluated in the field. All this data should be consolidated within the city's GIS system.





## **Invest in Drainage Improvements**

### **5. Drainage Way and Facility Improvements**

A framework of tools is necessary to appropriately design drainage ways and facilities to help control runoff and reduce flooding. Rehabilitation of drainage ways and facilities can be accomplished in a consistent and appropriate manner once all selection guidelines are considered.

Increasing the size of and developing an improved drainage way may consist of installing new inlets or storm pipe systems, channel improvements, or installing a detention pond. However, prior to investing in these types of capital improvements, the tools outlined above should already be developed and the selection process has been considered.

Implementing storm water detention practices throughout the City of Pine Bluff can provide some of the best methods of controlling peak runoff rates. As impervious areas are added throughout the city, detention should be provided. The design guidelines for sizing detention facilities should be part of a City-approved drainage manual.

The City has access to several vacant properties where it may be possible to construct local or regional detention ponds to help reduce flooding downstream. A detailed study to properly size these detention ponds will need to be provided prior to construction. The design work will need to be provided by a registered engineer.

### **6. Harding Drain Improvements**

A detailed study was completed for Harding Drain in October 2019. The full study can be found on SEARPC.com website. The Harding Drain is a combination of open ditches and underground culverts that flow from west to east through the central area of the city. This was a system developed by the Corps of Engineers to provide flood control. The purpose of this study was to evaluate alternatives, where investments could be made, in order to help reduce the current flooding that is occurring along this drainage system.

The first alternative looked at basic cleanout and removal of overgrowth in the channel. This could be achieved with little capital investment utilizing city crews and equipment to keep costs at a minimum. Although the hydraulic models did not show much improvement in reducing base flood elevations, these models typically look at the larger storm events. For a short duration storm, or flash flood events, it is possible to see significant improvement when these systems are free of debris.

The second alternative looked at constructing a regional detention basin. More capital investment and property is needed in order to construct this system. This was discussed earlier in putting your investment dollars at work and is common practice in many cities at controlling flooding.

The model did show this alternative as having the greatest effect in reducing flood elevations. This option would need to carefully consider the location of such a facility, as this drain serves a very urbanized area of the city where such a drainage storage system may not be appropriate in the existing context of the built environment.

The third alternative discussed constructing a tri-plex pump system. A mechanical system of this nature would be the largest capital investment needed including ongoing maintenance. If not maintained properly, these systems are prone to failure.

The Harding Drain Study does provide improvement alternatives that are backed by hydraulic models. This is a primary drainage system that runs through the downtown area and needs to function properly and provide the necessary flood control. The studies are completed, and as funding is available, implementation is necessary.

## **Additional investment Considerations**

### **7. General Cleanup and Control of Overgrowth**

Over time, drainage ways will tend to build up debris that are both natural and manmade (trash). Overgrown vegetation along open channels and ditches should be thinned on an annual basis. Inlets and underground pipe culverts should be cleared of washed up debris after large rain events. One of the most basic needs and cost effective solutions is providing excellent maintenance of existing drainage ways. Not only does this help provide for better flow of runoff, it shows the citizens that the City cares and keeps Pine Bluff looking nice. General maintenance of the public drainage ways throughout the city should be part of the annual budget of the City.

### **8. Floodplain and Mapping (FEMA)**

The City of Pine Bluff and local floodplain administrator should ensure FEMA standards are strictly enforced. This will allow the local jurisdiction to apply for federal funding to update mapping on a regular basis. Updating hydraulic models and flood insurance rate maps will help identify flood prone areas as drainage ways can change over time. The local jurisdiction can use the Flood Mitigation Assistance program to receive these grants.

The Flood Mitigation Assistance program is authorized by Section 1366 of the National Flood Insurance Act of 1968, as amended with the goal of to reduce or eliminate flood risk of severe repetitive and repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The program provides funding to states, territories, federally-recognized tribes and local communities for projects and planning that reduces or eliminates long-term risk of flood damage to structures insured under the NFIP.



### Guide for Prioritizing Improvements

#### Prioritizing General Drainage Improvements

When analyzing where capital funds should be spent to mediate stormwater management issues, priority should be given to the following areas, in order:

1. Areas where chronic flooding leads to property damage
2. Areas where economic activities are impeded or discontinued as repeat flooding occurs
3. Areas where clean out, spot treatments, and/or LID approaches will resolve the issue
4. Areas where nearby vacant properties, city land, or undeveloped land can be utilized to alleviate capacity issues
5. Areas where a drainage study has already been conducted and solutions outlined
6. Areas of growth and development or redevelopment potential

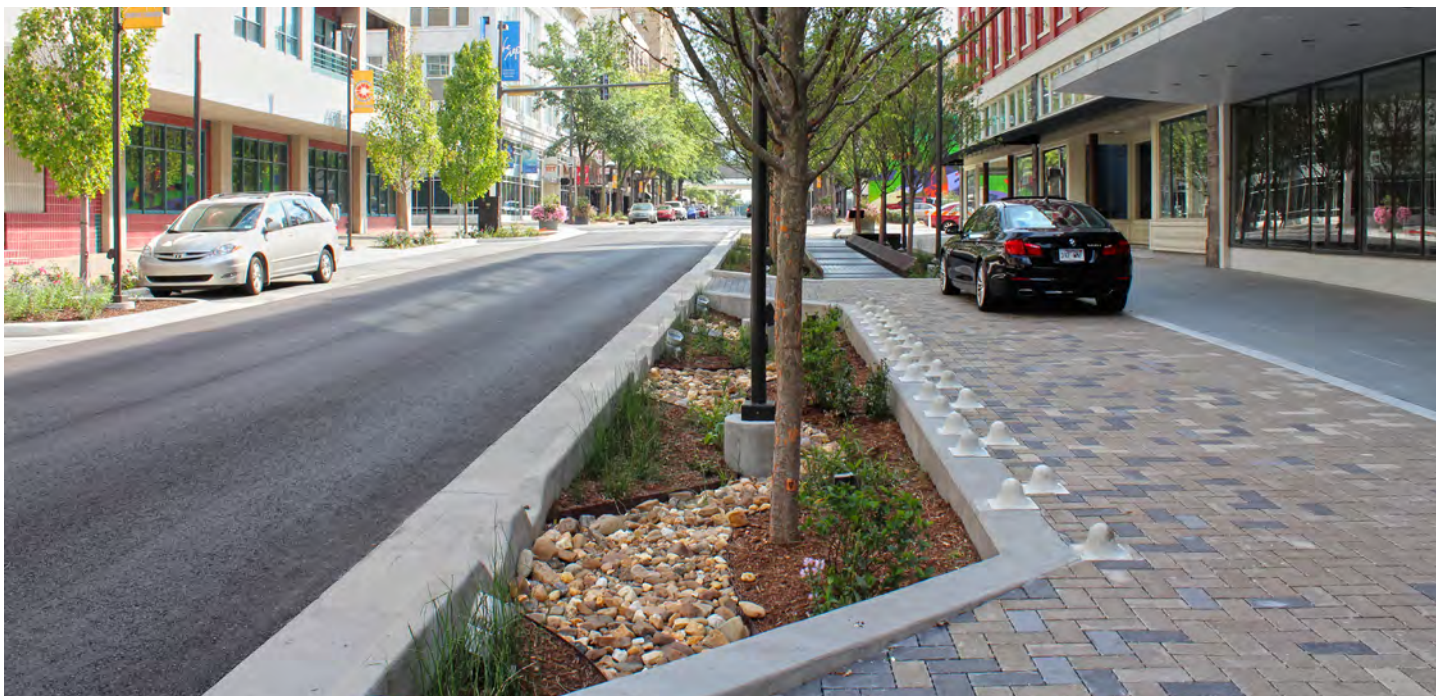
#### Prioritizing Road Improvements to Eliminate Ditches

When analyzing where to designate capital funds to improve drainage along street rights of way, the following corridors should be given priority:

1. Where drainage is not functioning properly and underground facilities would increase storm water capacity
2. Where surface LID opportunities are not available to alleviate drainage issues
3. Where increased traffic counts create a safety concern
4. Where bicycle and pedestrian facilities are designated but have no room for accommodation in the existing right-of-way
5. Where additional on-street parking is needed but cannot be accommodated in the presence of open drainage ditches
6. Where connections between neighborhood centers or other community attractions are designated



## Sustainability and Low-Impact Development



The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines low-impact development (LID) as “systems or practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in water infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality and associated aquatic habitat.” This is different from the term green infrastructure that is “the management of wet weather flows using these processes, and to refer to the pathwork of natural areas that provide habitat, flood protection, cleaner air and cleaner water.”

There are many design tools in the LID tool box that can be used to mimic the natural process, such as bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels (to collect rain runoff), and permeable pavements (both permeable concrete and asphalt). More information on LID solutions may be found here: <https://www.epa.gov/nps/urban-runoff-low-impact-development>.

### General Considerations

Low-impact development can influence the infrastructure of a community in different ways based on the scale of the area, the issues that require a solution, and the chosen approach to remedy those issues. These solutions can be applied at three scales: citywide (community or region), neighborhood or district scale (small area) and individual sites (under 5 acres).

### Citywide Application

Starting with the largest, citywide issues may be regulated by policy and in some cases have some oversight by a public agency (i.e. the Corp of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, or other state and local agencies). Bayou Bartholmew, the longest bayou in the world, meanders through Pine Bluff. This once pristine stream has become polluted and over-sedimented in certain sections. LID solutions on a citywide level, with regard to storm water runoff, water filtration, and even reforestation, can help restore and preserve the bayou's natural systems. Low-impact development policies and incentives can be established at the City level to preserve particular watersheds or manage stormwater capacity issues, for example.

### Neighborhood / District Application

The next level of focus presented below is neighborhood / district scale that will likely require cooperation from multiple landowners in a subregion approach. Good examples are the industrial parks, campuses, and neighborhood associations within the city limits. These areas may have a committee hierarchy that can fund and direct efforts that impact a large area of the community.

### Site Application

The third scale is the individual site where the appropriate LID technologies may be applied to impact a smaller area but can affect the greater system when many landowners employ similar solutions to exponentially make a difference.



# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: SUSTAINABILITY



*Dry Swale (photo: Crafton Tull)*



*Retention Pond (photo: Crafton Tull)*



*Surface Sand Filter (photo: Flickr.com)*



*Filter Strip (photo: Crafton Tull)*



*Green Roof (photo: ASLA.org)*

### Facility Types

#### Dry Swale

A gently sloped strip that retains runoff in a series of check dams during each storm event. Water filters through the subsurface sandy loam bed in the swale to underdrains and the swale is quickly dewatered.

#### Retention Pond

Bodies of water designed with additional storage capacity to decrease surface runoff during rainfall events.

#### Surface Sand Filter

An offline (separate from flow) sediment area, either wet or dry, that is used for pretreatment of runoff. Pollutants are trapped or strained out at the surface of the filter bed.

#### Filter Strip

An area of sloped vegetation adjacent to parking or other paved surface where water sheet flows across the entire planted strip to slow the flow runoff and filter out sediment and other pollutants from urban stormwater.

#### Green Roof

A roof system that involves water proofing, root repellent system, drainage system, filter cloth, a lightweight growing medium and plant material. The plants selected must be shallow rooted, heat resistant and thrive with xeric (low water) conditions.



### Pervious Paving

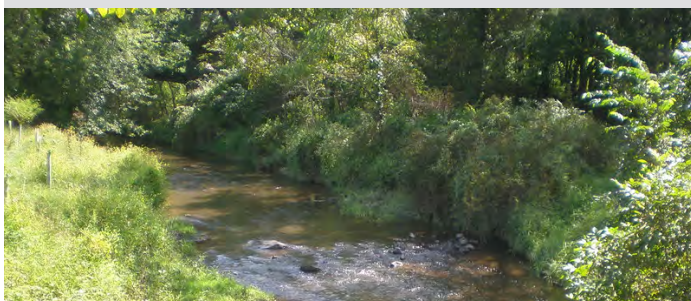
Pervious (or permeable) paving is a specific type of pavement with high porosity that allows rainwater to pass through into the ground below. This may be in the form of pervious concrete, pervious asphalt or evenly spaced pavers with sand/cement swept joints set on a base that permits percolation.



*Pervious Paving (photo: Crafton Tull)*

### Riparian Buffer

Natural vegetation on the edge of a stream bank that serves as a buffer to pollutants entering a stream from runoff, controls erosion, and provides habitat and nutrient input into the stream.



*Riparian Buffer (photo: Flickr.com)*

### Rain Garden

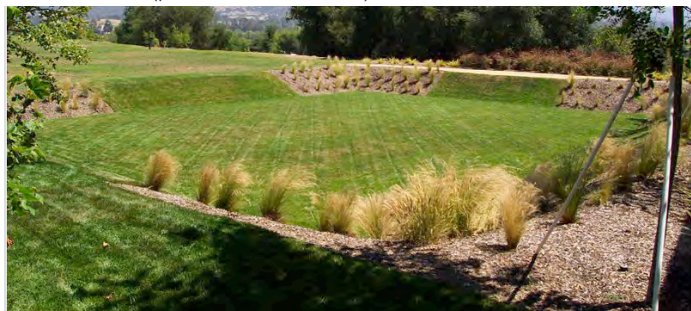
A planted area of native shrubs, perennials, and flowers in a small depression, which is generally formed on a natural slope. It is designed to temporarily hold and soak in rain water runoff.



*Rain Garden (photo: Crafton Tull)*

### Infiltration Basin

Stormwater infiltration basins that are open facilities with grass or sand subsurface designed to handle all runoff from a typical storm and allow water to soak into the ground. These facilities are managed like detention ponds but with a greater emphasis on maintaining the ability to infiltrate stormwater.



*Infiltration Basin (photo: Flickr.com)*

### Bioswale

Channels designed to concentrate and convey stormwater runoff while removing debris and pollution, which can also be beneficial in recharging groundwater. Bioswales are typically vegetated, mulched, or xeriscaped. They consist of a sloped drainage course with gently angled sides (less than 6%).



*Bioswale (photo: Crafton Tull)*





### Facility Selection Criteria: Application

Low-impact development solutions can be used individually or combined to address issues based on the scale of the application. The Facility Selection Guide (Table 4.30) groups the low-impact development issues and depicts potential solution approaches based on scale of the application. The issues addressed include flood reduction, water quality improvement, water reuse, water conservation, and energy efficiency.

#### Reduce Flooding

LID solutions may impact a citywide system or even regional systems by reducing flooding and improving water quality on a large scale. A community that relies solely on capturing runoff via subsurface infrastructure may have a capacity issue (not enough pipes or enough storage) and won't be recharging the groundwater at key locations but rather pushing the outfall to certain locations which may result in erosion after heavy rain events. With regard to urban runoff, systems and practices that mimic the natural processes and result in infiltration or use of stormwater in order to protect water quality are considered low impact development. The goal of LID is to reduce runoff directed to man made systems. This is important in communities like Pine Bluff, that are relatively flat with few grade changes, where high rain events often cause ponding in many of the low lying areas. When man-made system's ability to hold and drain runoff surpasses peak capacity then flooding is the result.

Detention, through the use of regional detention basins, is appropriate for large systems, while shared detention basins are better for neighborhood sized systems. Flooding in Pine Bluff after large rain events is a major issue. Mechanical flood control devices and oversized pipes can aid in reducing flooding by manipulating the rate of flow and ability to handle the volume of potential flooding. However, devices or pipes

should not be the sole solution to deal with large amounts of runoff. Rain gardens and bioswales, as detention basins, are best for sites under 10 acres.

Infiltration to recharge groundwater is the natural process when water moves directly downward from surface water to groundwater. Too often, the urban built environment gets over-paved with a patchwork of city streets, surface parking lots and rooftops. These impervious elements prevent infiltration and often result in downtown flooding. Introducing riparian and infiltration buffers to be used for large to medium systems greater than 10 acres can help with infiltration. The use of pervious paving, rain gardens, infiltration trenches and green roofs are recommended for sites under 10 acres in size.

System care is vital if the drainage design is intended to do its job properly.. Trash and debris removal for citywide, neighborhood and smaller sites is a key factor in maintaining the drainage system by deterring contaminants from interrupting the intended flow patterns. This will allow surface drainage to flow to low impact development facilities such as bio-retention installations. Dry swales, which can look like decorative dry creek beds but are designed to handle heavy runoff, may also be appropriate for small individual sites to collect drainage for water infiltration.

#### Improve Water Quality

Water filtration can be achieved on a large citywide system by utilizing plant material as filter material when located in drainage swales or when drainage flows through constructed wetlands to treat surface runoff. On smaller sites, surface sand filters or underground sand filters can be utilized for water filtration for areas greater than 10 acres. Bioswales, filter strips and even green roofs act as effective filtration systems for small sites.

Water Treatment occurs when water flows through aquatic



biomes in natural and constructed wetlands. The plant material and soil mixture act as a sift to naturally screen contaminants on large and medium size areas over 10 acres. The use of infiltration basins and/or rain gardens on smaller individual sites like residential or commercial sites. The basins and rain gardens act as detention areas while drainage filters through their subsurface material. These also act as screens to sift out contaminants and heavy metals found on driveways, roads and surface parking lots.

### Water Reuse

Water reuse & collection, often called rainwater harvesting, can be achieved in downtown or urban areas through the use of rooftop water collection systems installed to act as catchments. The rainwater is collected in tanks and used for toilet flushing, helping reduce water consumption and save on energy and reduce other costs within the buildings. Outside the downtown, for large to medium sites, retention ponds work well for sites as large as 10 acres in size. Individual land owners or residential applications can impendiment rain barrels to harvest and store rainwater for use in irrigation systems or on community gardens under 10 acres in size. This water is usually referred to as “grey water” when not potable (drinkable) but, nonetheless, valuable for a multitude of natural uses like irrigation for landscape or community gardens.

### Water Conservation

Water conservation through voluntary policies for water use reduction can be effective to help a community. For instance, during summer months, some communities issue a voluntary irrigation use restriction to lessen the amount of water residents and businesses use on their landscape. This conservation tool is carried out on a site by site basis yet enacted as a communitywide initiative. At a citywide

level, a municipality may test for water line leaks and do scheduled maintenance on water lines to reduce water use by reducing waste. On small, under 10 acre sites, the use of drip irrigation in planting beds and/or low-flow toilets inside the facility can conserve water usage over time.

### Energy Efficiency

Fossil fuel reduction can be achieved on a large scale through city fleet vehicles and bus service that incorporate CNG or other alternative fuel options. With regard to public transit, the best way for residents to reduce use of fossil fuels is through ride sharing (car pooling) and promoting active transportation options like cycling, and walking. With regards to construction, the use of locally sourced materials that don't require being shipped in from great distances are preferred for large and small sites alike.

Reducing the heat Island effect caused by an overabundance of paved parking lot or impervious roof tops can make an impact on energy usage. One of the best ways to remedy this effect is by planting more trees to increase the canopy cover of the city. This urban forestry technique not only cuts down on the heat island effect but also helps moderating climate, conserve building energy usage, improving air quality, control rainfall runoff and flooding, lowering noise levels, harboring wildlife, and enhancing the attractiveness of the city.

Vegetated roofs (also called green roofs) will likewise reduce heat island issues on downtowns and other smaller sites. The green roof movement is often found in urban areas where multiple rooftops contribute to a combined heat island effect, much like large parking lots. Through the use of shallow depth native plantings and controlled or no irrigation, green roofs can make a substantial impact on the facility's energy usage as well.



### Facility Selection Guide


		TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE 			
		Reduce Flooding			
		System Care	Flow	Detention	Infiltration
<div> <div>CONSIDER THIS FACILITY</div> <div>SCALE OF APPLICATION</div> </div>	Citywide (Large Systems)	Trash/debris removal	Bank stabilization with natural materials	Regional detention basins	Riparian buffers
	Subregion (10-100 Acres)	Trash/debris removal	Channel improvements using BMPs	Shared detention basins	Riparian buffers Infiltration basins
	Site (Under 10 Acres)	Trash/debris removal	Replace damaged or crushed culverts Regrade for proper site drainage	Rain gardens	Pervious paving Rain gardens Green roofs Infiltration trenches

Table 4.30: LID Facility Selection Guide

### Location Recommendations

Prioritization of low-impact development facilities should target the most critical areas of concern, particularly stormwater management. Additional LID approaches should be considered and implemented as they are feasible.

#### Citywide Application

Regional changes may require policies and coordination with public agencies to affect citywide or larger areas with respect to flooding and floodplain protection.

#### Change through Vacant Property Acquisition

Acquire vacant lots along city drainage channels that are in the 100-year floodplain or are prone to flooding. Assemble adjacent (often vacant) lots in areas where

additional storm water collection is needed. The goal is to relieve the existing drainage system on a regional scale. There are also properties over or adjacent to the major drain channels (i.e. Harding Drain) that should be acquired to incorporate various stormwater management techniques (see above) to mitigate flooding in the area.

#### Change through Policy

Policy changes can often set positive efforts in motion at a city leadership level. Some examples of this are, to reduce energy usage, a city policy to use compressed natural gas (CNG) on fleet vehicles or reduce the use of fossil fuels by carpooling may be an effective 'lead by example' approach. As mentioned above, the city could help organize a street tree planting program that might include volunteers to help



Investing in Public Infrastructure: Sustainability					
Improve Water Quality		Water Re-Use		Water Conservation	Energy Efficiency
Water filtration	Water treatment	Water collection	Gray water use	Water use reduction	Fossil fuels reduction Heat island reduction
Native plant materials	Constructed wetlands	Retention ponds	Irrigation	Water line maintenance	Alternative transportation options Increase tree cover
Surface sand filters	Constructed wetlands	Retention ponds	Irrigation	Xeriscape	Local construction materials Increase tree cover Green roofs
Underground sand filters	Bioswales Infiltration basins	Catchment basins Wet vaults			
Filter strips	Bioswales	Rain barrels	Irrigation	Low-flow toilets	Local construction materials Increase tree cover Green roofs
Green roofs			Water features	Drip irrigation Xeriscape	

plant trees if the city provides materials and young shade trees. The City should consult the UA Extension Service or a Landscape Architect to determine the appropriate tree species to plan. The Arbor Day Foundation and the US Forest Service may help with funding or provide young trees.

Development policies that protect the urban canopy and discourage building on inappropriate sites is worthy of consideration. A tree protection policy is a good way to ensure that valuable shade trees stay healthy and continue to play their part in mitigating the heat island effect. An Engineer can provide details that show how to protect trees when construction projects occur nearby. A policy that discourages development within the 100 year floodplain are appropriate countermeasures to stormwater management and

reducing flooding. This policy would fall under the planning commission's review during the site plan approval process.

### Change through Incentives

City leaders or corporate sponsors may provide incentives to property owners who implement LID practices. The incentives may range from water credit for use of water conservation technologies (rain barrels, drip irrigation etc.) to neighborhood recognition for parts of town that coordinate their water reuse/conservation efforts. The City may reward these areas with supplies or staff to assist at their community garden or corporate partner funding that can be used to buy playground equipment for their neighborhood park.

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: SUSTAINABILITY

### Neighborhood / District Application

Utilize LID technologies to add capacity to reduce flooding on city-owned land, special districts (ie. Industrial park & school or medical campuses), along corridors and a coordinated approach by adjacent property owners in neighborhoods. The size of the solution depends on the amount of available land. A large retention pond or infiltration basin may be appropriate in the industrial park where a smaller site would not have the acreage available for the same LID technique. Neighborhoods and denser urban environments may opt for LID solutions like bioswales, pervious paving and/or green roofs.

The use of infiltration basins that can detain the stormwater in a high rain event while allowing it to soak into the ground through a sand subbase. In dryer times the basin will simply appear as a grassy depression on the site's low point or adjacent to the drainage channel. This solution requires enough acres that may not be present on residential sites, unless vacant property in a neighborhood is combined. The three examples to illustrate this point are the Merrill Center, east of the Convention Center or the City material storage site west of Ohio and north of Taylor Field. The goal of these areas is to incorporate stormwater management solutions to add capacity to areas prone to flooding in order to reduce the load

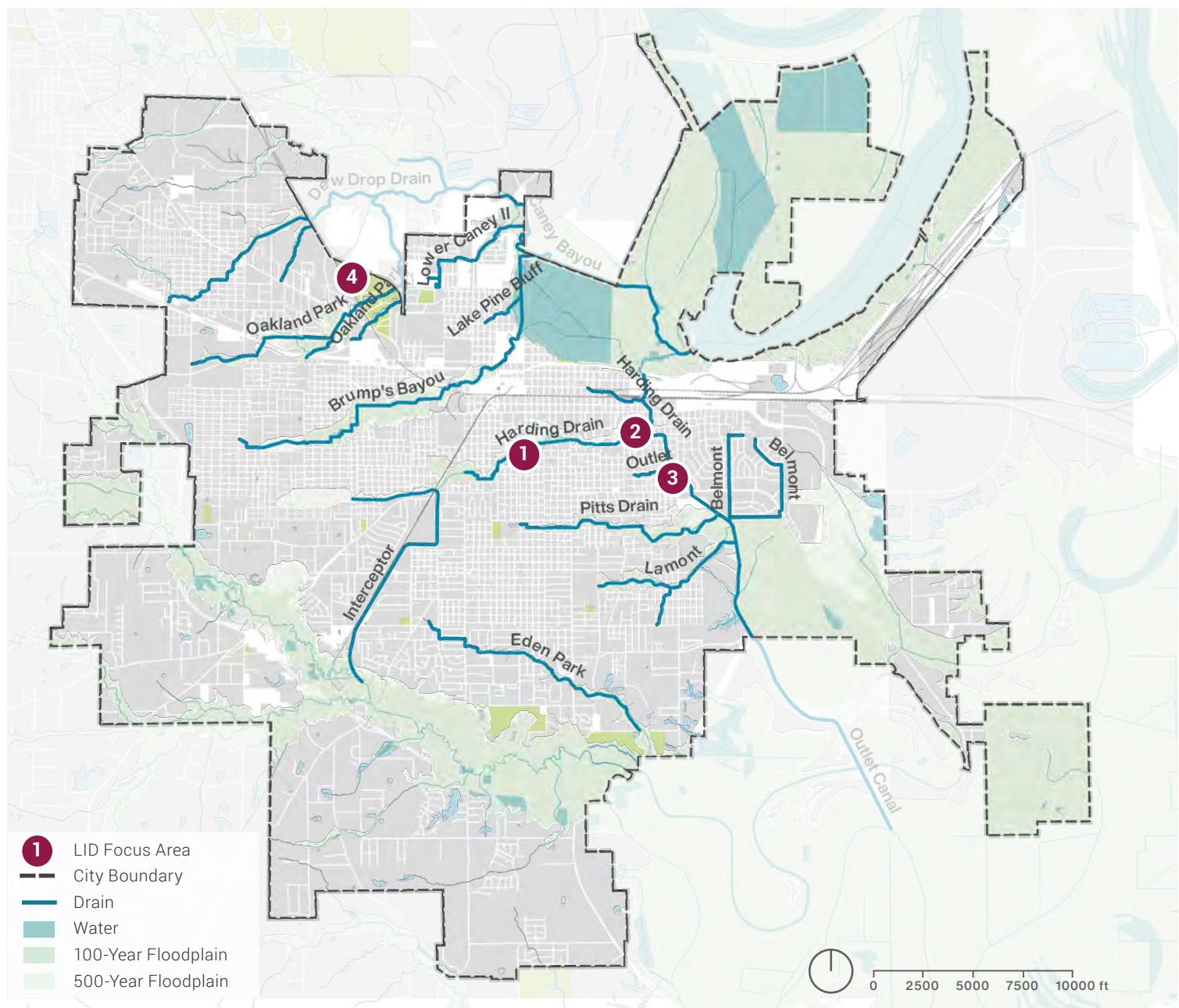


Figure 4.31: LID Opportunities

on the current drainage system. Please note that these are high level planning suggestions so further engineering study will be required prior to acting on these specific solutions.

#### 1. Merrill Community Center (Seabrook Youth Center)

The current community center was built within the 100 year floodplain which explains the frequent flooding in and around the building. The Harding Drain open channel runs diagonally through the park site as it flows east toward downtown. Stormwater management on the site doesn't mean it can't be an active park with a quality facility. See the Merrill Youth Center - Area Plan in the x section for a proposed redesign sketch of the site. The proposed solution is to relocate the youth center out of the floodplain, to the northeast corner and add active play courts and elements to the remainder of the site. A low infiltration basin in the center of the site will retain and filter stormwater in high rain events but act as a grassy open-play field in the dryer months of the year.

#### 2. Civic Center / Convention Center - East Parking

The Harding Drain pipes daylight just east of Missouri street and south of E 8th Avenue at the east end of the Convention Center Facility. A north-south section of the Harding Drain meets this downtown line to form a Y channel right where Indiana Street terminates into a cul de sac. This location is the perfect place to implement two LID solutions on one site. The paved parking lot just east of S. Missouri street should be removed and replaced with pervious asphalt with appropriate sub surface material to allow runoff to recharge the groundwater directly below the parking lot rather than its current design which is to sheet flow runoff into the drainage channel therefore causing flooding on high rain events that overloads the drainage system. A second stormwater management solution that would reduce flooding is to incorporate an infiltration basin adjacent to the current channel to retain and filter runoff in this low area thus adding additional rainwater storage capacity to the existing drainage system. The location of this basin would be just north of the terminus of S. Virginia Street.

#### 3. City Materials Storage & Lay Down Yard

The city land just north of Taylor Field sits atop the outlet line that feeds into the north-south Harding Drain channel that crosses under Ohio Street (the Pine Bluff Street Department compound is on the east side of this channel). The city owned land north of Taylor Field should be converted into stormwater management solution due to its proximity to the Harding Drain which would require moving the lay down & storage yard to another location. The Street Department and the storage yard would better serve the city if they were near arterial roads for ease of access to Martha Mitchell Expressway or Hwy

65 loop rather than this current inner-city location. The city owns a large tract of land with adjacent vacant agricultural property that would be a possible location at W Scull Avenue just north of Martha Mitchell.

#### 4. Oakland Park

The two baseball fields and associated parking and open space (overflow parking) have standing water after large rain events. LID solutions can help remove the surface water issues. Remove the current asphalt drive and replace with pervious asphalt on a gravel and sand base that will all for better percolation. Add a bioswale along the northern edge of the drive with two dedicated culverts to permit vehicular access (land bridges) to the overflow parking. These bioswales will capture any sheet flow runoff that does not pass through the pervious paving. The asphalt should be gently sloped toward the swales and away from the fields. The ball infields should be replaced with a new surface, slightly elevated to drain off toward the fences, with an amending subsurface that allows water percolation to occur after rain events.

#### **Site Application**

Individual residential sites that are under five acres don't have the available land to incorporate an infiltration basin, retention pond or some of the larger LID solutions but these sites can collectively help mitigate flooding and reduce water consumption across the city nonetheless.

#### Residential Sites

As mentioned above, the use of rain barrels to collect and reuse captured rainwater as well as the use of rain gardens with appropriate plantings that can handle wet roots can be added to any residential landscape. Drip irrigation in the plantings beds will conserve water usage if an irrigation system is included. The UA extension office is a great resource for home owners who wish to incorporate plant material that use less water or native/adaptive species that are drought tolerant (xeric plants)

#### Community Gardens

Vacant parcels in neighborhood blocks can make the perfect community garden that the adjacent residents can enjoy the fruits of their labors. Raised beds are ideal for smaller plants and provides access for all users, including wheelchair gardeners that had trouble reaching in-ground plantings. However, larger row crop plantings may require more room. Again, drip irrigation tubing is the perfect solution for beds with smaller plantings, to avoid the loss of water to wind via broadcast spray heads.





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## General Considerations

Although transit is not the primary focus of the Pine Bluff Comprehensive Plan, it is an important city service discussed briefly herein. Several key issues have been mentioned thus far in the plan which the City will need to overcome in order to move forward. Pine Bluff Transit may be underfunded, understaffed, and underequipped, but the present reality is that many residents rely on their services to meet their transportation needs. The importance of this fact should be recognized and applauded. The overarching recommendation of this section is for the transit system to continue utilizing best practices, and as the city grows, add additional funding for the proposals below.

### Serve more of the City with a Diversity of Routes

The goal for a municipal transit network is to provide the city's population with mobility and access to employment, education, retail, health, community, and recreational facilities. Through a diversity of routes and frequency of service, Pine Bluff Transit can increase ridership for those who depend on busses to deliver them to their desired destinations. A comprehensive operational analysis, by qualified transportation planners, should be conducted to assess how the current transit system can better serve the community.

### Maintain Federal, State, and Local Compliance

In order to maintain federal, state and local compliance, it is recommended Pine Bluff continue proper utilization of State and Federal funding, as they have in recent years. Similar to

many municipal transit systems, Pine Bluff Transit received Federal Transit Administration CARES Act (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) grants in 2020 and 2021. These substantial supplements to the transit budget should be kept in mind. Although CARES Act grants from the FTA were allocated for 2021, the City should be prepared to operate without these additional funds in future years.

### Increase Transit Ridership and Fare Revenue

As a community's population changes and destinations within the city come and go, so must the transit network change. The comprehensive operational analysis, mentioned above, will analyze job and housing centers, note local origin and destination patterns, identify unmet needs, analyze the productivity of existing routes and recommend incorporating new services. The outcome will be a ridership-focused new network design featuring community shuttles, a vanpool, and other unique services. A tailored design will meet the needs of the city's riders, increase ridership based on new options offered, and should result in higher fare revenue once fully implemented.

### Improve the Customer Experience

Like any other city service, a bus ride is a product utilized by its customers. As of the writing of this plan, the Pine Bluff Transit has no digitized map nor online schedule available for its riders. Furthermore, no arrival time nor schedules exist in physical form at each bus stop. Creating and disseminating this vital ridership information in the form of a smartphone app and appropriate signage should be a top priority. This

# INVEST

## INVESTING IN PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSIT

information should be further utilized in a format which can be utilized by Google Maps and other information services to provide riders with route information. Google provides route information for buses where facilities exist, but Pine Bluff Transit has yet to coordinate this technology with such services.

Another important step Pine Bluff Transit should take is to expand its services for the disabled community. Currently, riders certified as paratransit-eligible under the Americans with Disabilities Act may qualify for origin to destination bus service. However, the allowed geography is restricted within three-quarters of a mile of any given bus route. It is recommended that Pine Bluff Transit seek additional funding that allows on-demand paratransit service to meet the needs of the disabled community within the City.

Finally, transit users should be provided QR codes at stops or on seat backs on buses to give feedback for the purpose of the Pine Bluff Transit to continually improve riding experience.

### Build Community Support for Public Transit

Increasing ridership and building loyalty for the local transit system is the best way to ensure future security. As Pine Bluff Transit examines methods of improving its user experience, it is important to gather data as to what prompted each rider to begin using the service in the first place. By understanding the ways in which the agency is meeting the needs of its riders, the department will be able to expand its base and reach new clientele. Yearly marketing campaigns with signage promoting Pine Bluff Transit's dedication to the community would be a starting point. Providing avenues for word-of-mouth positivity in the form of fliers or vouchers would also build rapport between the agency and community.

### Overcome Fleet Challenges

Best budgetary practices within the Pine Bluff Transit operations should be constantly reevaluated, including examination of current routes for efficiency. Capital purchases have risen in 2020 and 2021 due to the purchase of new equipment and replacement parts, and as a result, expense totals exceeded revenue totals. It is recommended that the agency continues operating within the confines of its operating expenses and consistently maintaining its fleet of buses.

### Retention of Employees with Competitive Pay

One of the greatest challenges facing Pine Bluff Transit is retention of drivers. The school district's competitive salaries are the primary reason for this issue. There are two recommendations to combat this economic challenge. The first is to raise the salaries of city bus drivers to that of the school district, emphasizing the additional benefits of working for the city. If this strategy is not feasible, it is

recommended to decentralize the number of drivers within the agency, creating more shifts that can be covered by a greater number of people at a lower cost per driver.



### Network Considerations and Adjustments

A transit system's network is of first priority. Pine Bluff Transit has several important issues that should be resolved to create a more connected and user-friendly network and serve every area of the city equitably.

First, increase route frequency from weekdays to include weekends. Providing these additional days will allow the same population served by existing routes to go to the store for groceries or retail goods, increasing local investment in the local economy. Second, an inventory should be conducted of general accessibility at bus stops. Are there wheelchair ramps at bus stops, or sidewalks? What about shelters to protect riders from the rain while they wait? Considerations for every demographic of its ridership should be taken into account.

The current route system does not reflect inclusion of all centers of populations within the Pine Bluff Transit service area. Although higher costs might be associated with the following recommendations, they are considered of high importance. First, represent the southwest area of town by extending the Miramar route as will-call or demand route along US 79B to LL Owen Elementary and Watson Chapel Junior High and High Schools.

Second, expand the Main Street service route to include South Olive, or create a separate Olive Street Route. Walmart, retail, and restaurants are accessed by the current Main Street Route, but it bypasses Jefferson Square. This addition will allow the entire population served by the Main Street Route to shop for essential goods without requiring access to their own car.

Third, adding a centralized transfer station would provide a location for all bus riders in Pine Bluff to get on a new route and connect seamlessly to other destinations in the city. A combined route alignment and transfer facility location study should be conducted, placing an emphasis on the downtown area.

Finally, add an on-demand route off the Main Street Route coordinated with the local Greyhound busing schedule at the stop on the corner of 8th Avenue and South Texas Street.



### Recommendations

1. Digitize maps and schedules and display at transit stops and online.
2. Publish schedules in a format that Google and other information services can use to provide riders with route information.
3. Examine the balance of user fees, city budget, and other funding sources necessary to maintain fleet vehicles and provide competitive pay for drivers.
4. Examine current routes for efficiency.
5. Support access to educational opportunities.
6. Improve frequency of routes to every day.
7. Add paratransit service for on-demand needs of the disabled community.
8. Add the Olive Street Route, serving Jefferson Square and Walmart.
9. Add a southwest route.
10. Study combined route alignment and transfer facility locations, placing an emphasis on downtown.

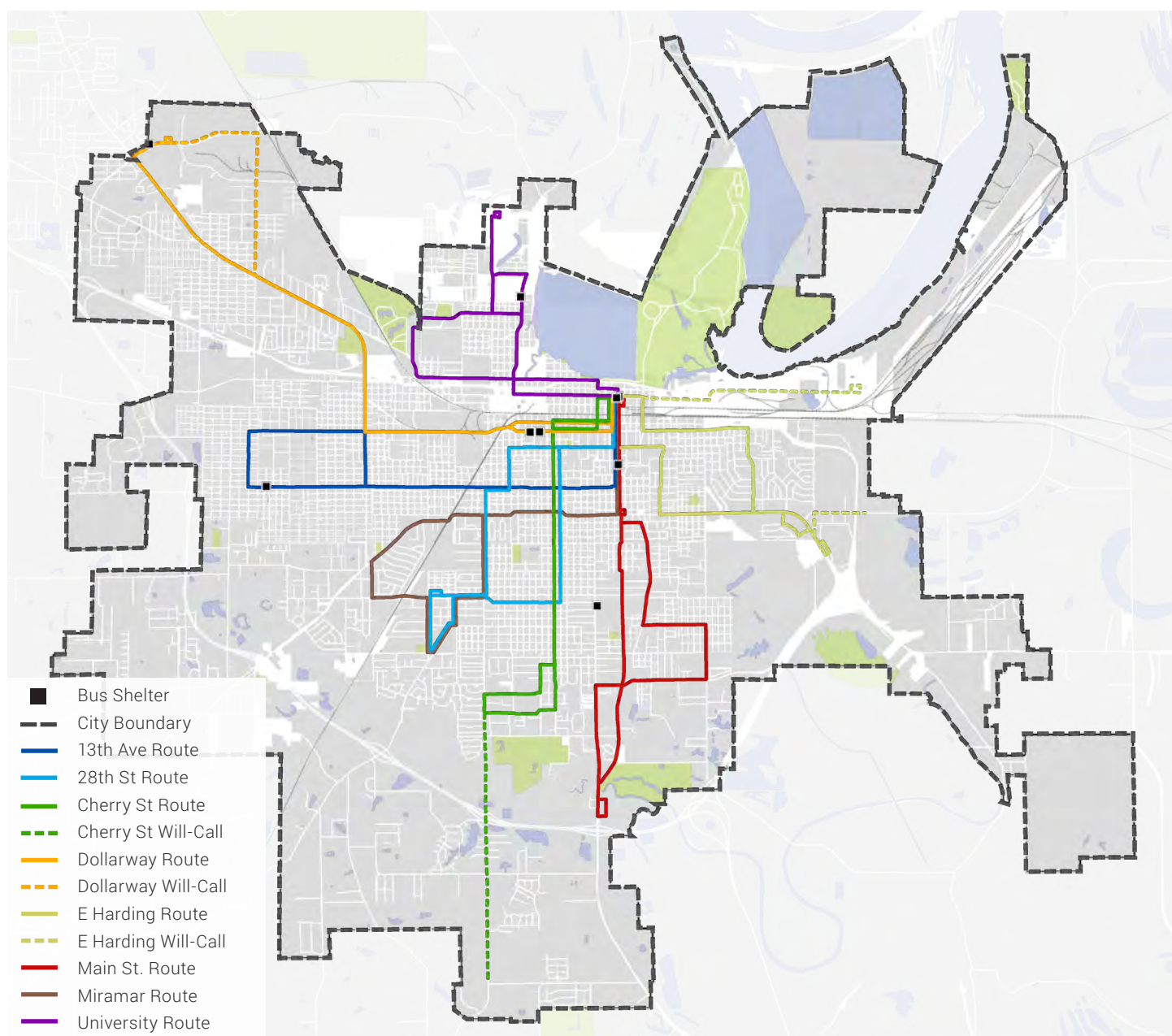


Figure 4.32: Existing Transit System



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# 5.0 FOCUS



# FOCUS

## UTILIZING A FOCUSED APPROACH



**Goal #1: FOCUS** [Pine Bluff] by coordinating efforts across municipal departments and between the city and outside organizations, focusing on a limited number of shared projects in order to build momentum, excitement, and cooperation.

### Overview

Interest in improving Pine Bluff motivates many groups and individuals, along with city staff. Hundreds of efforts underway, small and large, illustrate intense commitment to the city's future. Unfortunately those efforts will fall short without a focused and methodical approach. Pine Bluff does not lack individuals with motivation and heart, there is simply far too much work to be done to match peoples' dreams for the future of the city. As a result, many isolated efforts are moving forward independently, which slows progress.

Community building requires community cooperation for success, an effort shared between residents, the municipality, churches, non-profits, businesses, and developers. Pine Bluff was built in this manner initially, as were most cities. Map plates from the 19th century express the hopes of these community investors, depicting future plans and visions alongside the day's dirt streets and sparse buildings. Nearly every city grew this way. From Washington, D.C. to San Francisco, cities grew from a collective ambition, motivating and coordinating individual efforts.

Many cities have recovered from ruin as well. Detroit's Grand Circus, Woodward Avenue, and Campus Martius were laid out after a devastating fire. Rome has been rebuilt upon its ruins countless times. San Francisco was once flattened by a crushing earthquake. Chicago and London were nearly leveled by great fires. Throughout recorded history cities have suffered and recovered from declines and disasters. While Pine Bluff may seem to have an overwhelming number of problems, many places have come back from much worse.

Most of today's rebuilding efforts, in Pine Bluff and elsewhere, are from a failed suburban experiment, not from ruin and devastation. Nearly every city in the United States was all but evacuated of investment and economic opportunity between

1950 and the start of the 21st Century. The public was hooked on a carefully crafted vision of modernity. Businesses left cities and in time those people with the means to do so left as well. Little Rock and Memphis are nearby examples of the same, a fate which extended everywhere.

Rebuilding requires focus and patience. This lesson is informed by numerous rebuilding efforts from small towns to major cities over the past 40 years. Investing everywhere at once is a noble goal, but unachievable. Rebuilding requires a plan and process, focused on momentum. Over time small investments can add up, motivating others and building a stable financial foundation. The long term future vision raises all boats in the city. But getting there means being disciplined through focused interventions and careful investments, working together between individuals, the city, churches, non-profits, businesses, Go Forward Pine Bluff, and developers.

This section identifies 6 short-term areas of targeted effort that the city should actively participate in and 5 areas to support or prepare for investment by others. While these areas are more in number than practical, they were chosen for their transformative potential and their dispersal. Some efforts are complex while others are not. When completed, each area will contribute to stabilization, providing the means to invest more broadly in the future.

To achieve positive change, the city must exemplify focus and coordination internally. Departmental divisions should simply be organizational structure, not barriers. Cross-departmental familiarity concerning functions, resources, and activities keeps tasks from being dropped and protects against the loss of key assets. Pine Bluff is lucky to have excellent and informed staff, but rather than being gatekeepers of information, they should help others with history, knowledge, and information access.

### Action Steps

Steps towards a focused municipality:

1. Nurture a culture of yes through discrete tasks, collaboration, and communication.
  - a. Focus on the positive stories of resilience and hope in Pine Bluff. Specifically identify the hard working and caring community leaders that may go unnoticed.
  - b. Relocate public meetings to a more accessible and open space.
  - c. Use social media, videos, and public communication platforms to interact with the public more easily, and more frequently.
  - d. Meet residents in the community, at houses of worship, restaurants, and the grocery stores to listen to residents concerns.
  - e. Supplement ongoing community programs created by churches, non-profits and community groups where goals and objectives are aligned.
2. Cross train personnel between departments and offices.
  - a. Reskill all job roles with up to date policies and procedures to empower City of Pine Bluff employees.
  - b. Provide regular training for new systems prior to roll out.
  - c. Build institutional knowledge across departments, ages, and skill levels to reinforce the Go Forward Pine Bluff message and initiatives.
  - d. Codify critical administrative functions and sub categories of essential staff.
  - e. Remove burdensome tasks not specifically mandated by ordinance or regulation.
  - f. Implement Lean Management Methodologies and team-sharing of responsibilities.
3. Focus on outcomes using key performance indicators (KPIs).
  - a. Measure response time for applications and permits, timely responses to emails and written requests for information, regularly publish raw data on the city website in an editable format.
  - b. Adopt a philosophy of continuous, incremental improvement.
4. Regularly review KPIs and engage staff to improve performance.
  - a. Build career ladder within City Administration.
  - b. Provide this plan in its entirety to City Staff for review and comment.
5. Invest in data retention, digitization, and access - internally and public.
  - a. Train staff within each department for data management protocols, and designate timelines for regular review.
  - b. Maximize use of technology; customer self-service, resident training and participation in feedback on technology challenges.
6. Engage staff in budget development and tracking.
  - a. Tie budget priorities to areas where change is most effective according to this plan.
  - b. Make work in progress and problem solving visual and interactive.
7. Analyze fee structures and the cost of services.
8. Create cross-departmental task objectives to pursue focus area projects.
  - a. Avoid unnecessary meetings.
  - b. Avoid duplication of effort.
  - c. Focus and communicate goals.
  - d. Freely push forward primary directives from City Council based on adopted ordinances.
  - e. Enforce check and balances to ensure that projects/ activities/programs are completed to the satisfaction of community residents.
  - f. Regularly go out into the community and meet with residents and hear first hand the challenges your department is trying to solve.

### Key areas of focus:

1. Downtown Pine Bluff
2. Main & Harding
3. UAPB & University Park
4. Jefferson Square
5. Merrill Center
6. Jefferson Regional Medical Center
7. Blake & 13th
8. 28th Street
9. East End / Pines Mall
- Future
9. Central Park
10. Indiana Street

### Downtown Pine Bluff

#### Where

Where is Downtown Pine Bluff? A simple question with a difficult answer. Today, Downtown includes a very large area from City Hall and the high school, north to Martha Mitchell. While any downtown may be an arbitrary size, large or small, its definition affects a perception of success. Typically a downtown includes intense multi-story businesses and housing in close proximity, along walkable streets. Where other parts of a city may have main streets that span one or more blocks, downtowns are larger districts made up of multiple mixed-use streets.

Downtowns serve as a center of activity and commerce for a larger city or region. The scale of a downtown is relative to the region that supports it. Pine Bluff should have a relatively small downtown area to match the scale of the city and region. Presently the perception of Downtown Pine Bluff is too large. Right-sizing the downtown area helps concentrate non-residential uses where they can work together to create an active district. When these uses are spread out, they fail to create a district, often resulting in vacant storefronts and properties due to insufficient demand for commercial space.

The current Downtown area should be divided into two districts: Downtown and the Civic Center (See Fig. 5.01). Downtown is the area bounded by 6th Avenue, Texas Street, Lake Saracen, and Olive Street. The Civic Center is the area bounded by 6th Avenue, Olive Street, 12th Avenue, and Missouri Street. The area west of Olive Street has historically been a neighborhood, the individual identity of which should be supported and restored.

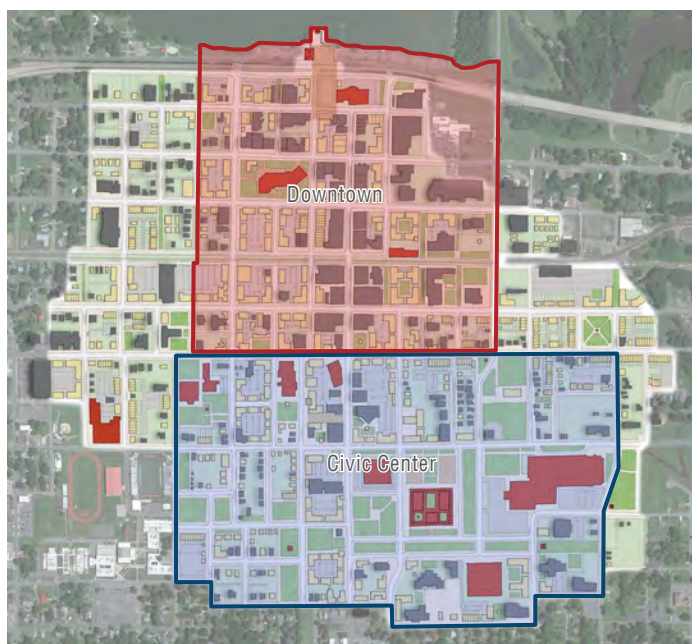


Figure 5.01 - Downtown and Civic Center Districts.

#### Purpose

Downtowns are the economic engine of cities. The decline of downtowns across the country was fueled by targeted policies designed to build suburban America. This has caused severe economic decline among most cities. As the economic engine of the city, downtown investment produces continual returns, when well executed. Even today, the per acre value of Downtown Pine Bluff eclipses any other area of the county (See Fig. 5.02). A healthy downtown produces the sustained tax revenue necessary to invest in municipal staff, emergency services, parks, youth centers, and citywide infrastructure. A healthy and active Downtown Pine Bluff will produce the revenue necessary to invest in the rest of the city.

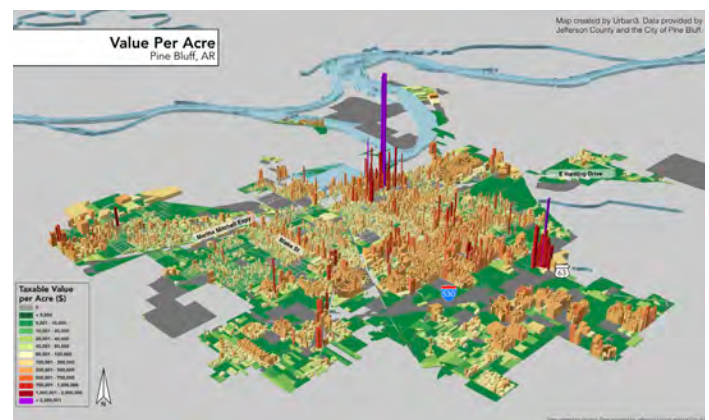


Figure 5.02 - Taxable value per acre in Pine Bluff illustrating the potency of Downtown.

Change in the Civic Center area serves a different set of purposes. Downtown and the Civic Center differ in context, ideal uses, and intensity. Where Downtown should be active and high intensity, the Civic Center should transition intensity from Downtown to surrounding neighborhoods. Limiting the spread of commercial uses within the Civic Center helps to concentrate this activity within the core Downtown. An area of transition between Downtown and nearby neighborhoods, the Civic Center area should accommodate housing at a higher intensity than surrounding neighborhoods, yet lower than downtown. Housing provides eyes on the street for safety, and a nearby population to support Downtown businesses. Additionally, formerly the site of a lake, the Civic Center area requires significant investment in stormwater management. Left unmanaged, stormwater events will continue to damage devalue properties.



### Action Steps

Luckily, this is an area that Pine Bluff has begun to focus with Go Forward. The effort has assembled a working task force and leadership, and a revenue stream. To date, the majority of investments being pursued by Go Forward are well selected. This plan aims to round these out with policy changes and strategic design interventions. Additionally, the toolkit section should be consulted concerning streets, green infrastructure, and other specific investments in Downtown and the Civic Center.

### Downtown

1. Adjust the design of Main Street, Barraque, and other street redevelopment plans currently being pursued. Investment in these streets is worthwhile, however the current designs are not appropriate for Downtown. Current designs will encourage traffic that is too fast and welcome places for litter. Minor changes to the design of Main Street, West Barraque, Walnut Street, and 6th Avenue create a viable pedestrian loop upon which Downtown should rebuild. While 6th Avenue has not yet been analyzed for (See Fig. 5.03 and 5.04-5.11).

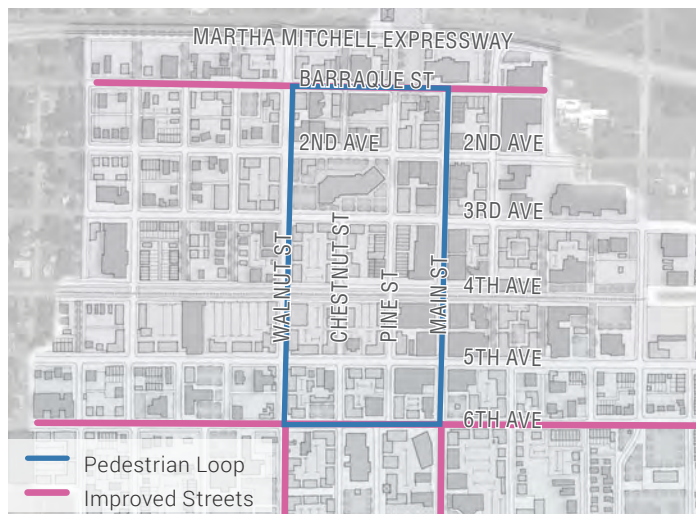


Figure 5.03 - The Pedestrian Loop and Improved Streets

2. Pursue a redesign of 6th Avenue for ArDOT's upcoming redevelopment. 6th Avenue is a key street along the Downtown pedestrian loop, and point of transition from Downtown to the Civic Center. ArDOT has agreed to give ownership of 5th and 6th Avenues to the City, once they have reconstructed the street. At present, the design of 6th Avenue is inconsistent with surrounding land uses and encourages drivers to speed. ArDOT's redevelopment intent is an opportunity to kick-start the area's redevelopment. If 6th Avenue is rebuilt in its current configuration, this will have serious long-term, detrimental implications to the district. The greatest cost of roadway redevelopment is the location of drainage. Setting the appropriate curb-to-curb width is imperative as relocating curbs is very costly. The proposed redesign is illustrated on page 125, differentiating the segments of 6th Avenue that should be commercial from those that should be residential and institutionally oriented. While the avenue's function will initially remain 2-way, once the City has control, the one-way pair of 5th and 6th Avenues should be converted to 2-way function. One-way streets tend to encourage speeding and by splitting morning and evening vehicle movements, they reduce retail viability. The 2-way design should concentrate traffic on 6th Avenue, which connects to Martha Mitchell (See Fig.'s 5.12-5.14).

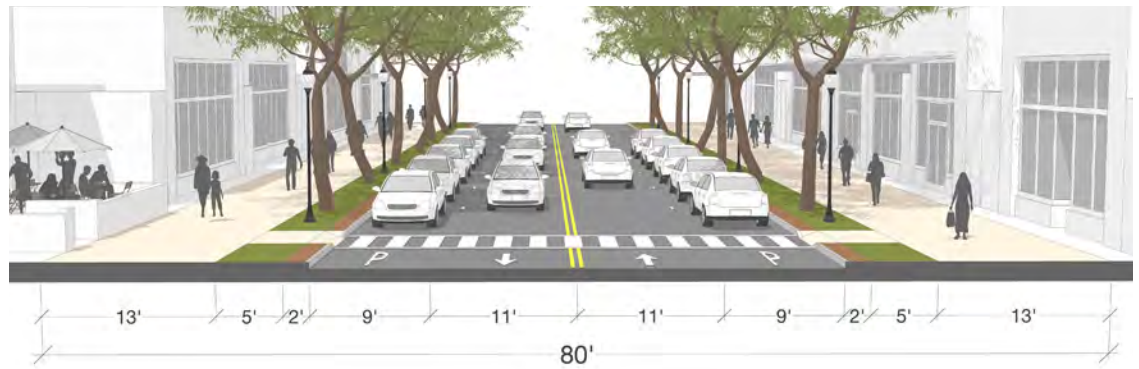


Figure 5.04 - Main Street Improvements - Existing Redevelopment Plan

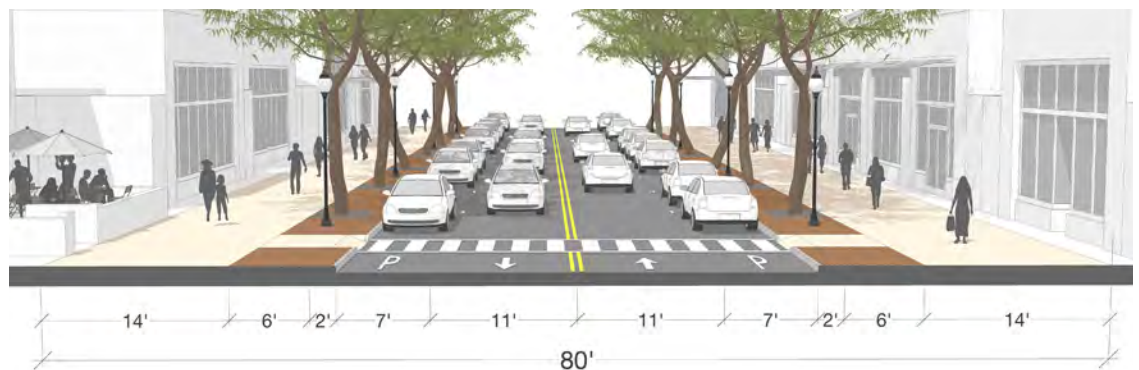


Figure 5.05 - Main Street Improvements - Future Proposal

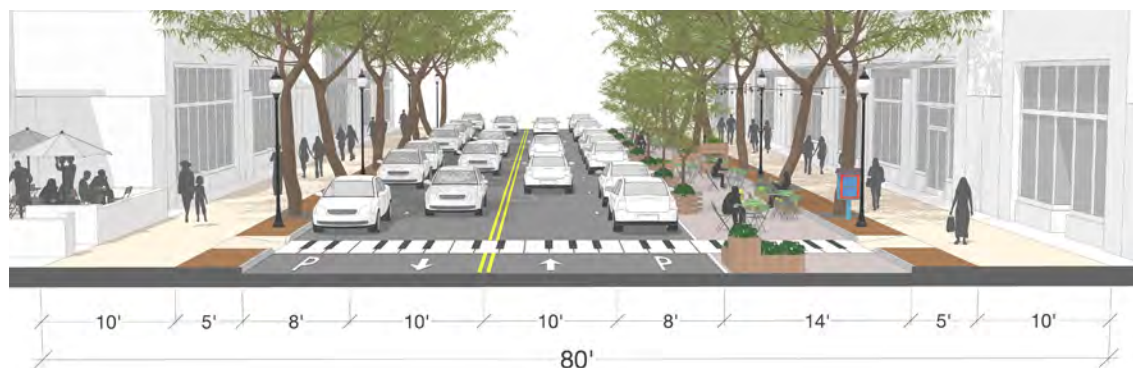
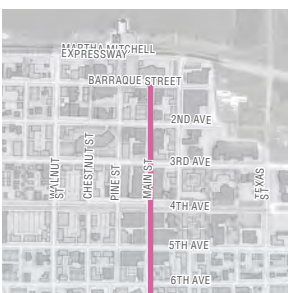


Figure 5.06 - Main Street Improvements - Temporary Restriping Option



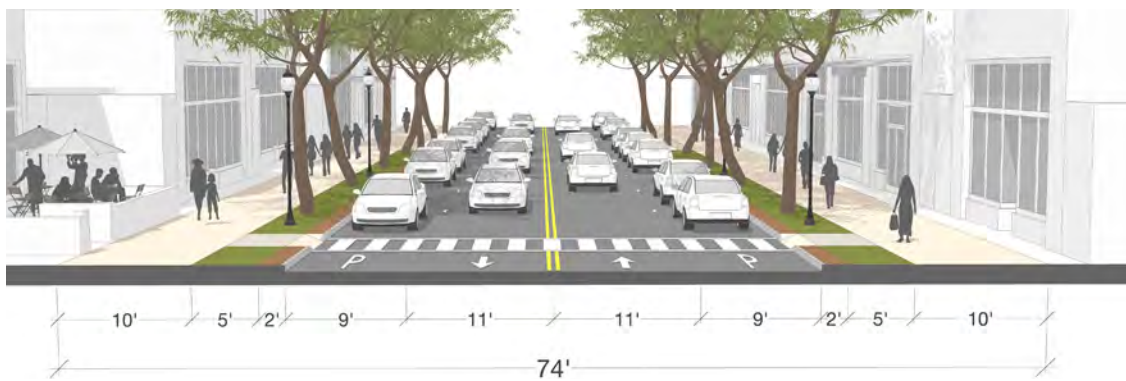


Figure 5.09 - West Barraque Improvements - Existing Redevelopment Plan

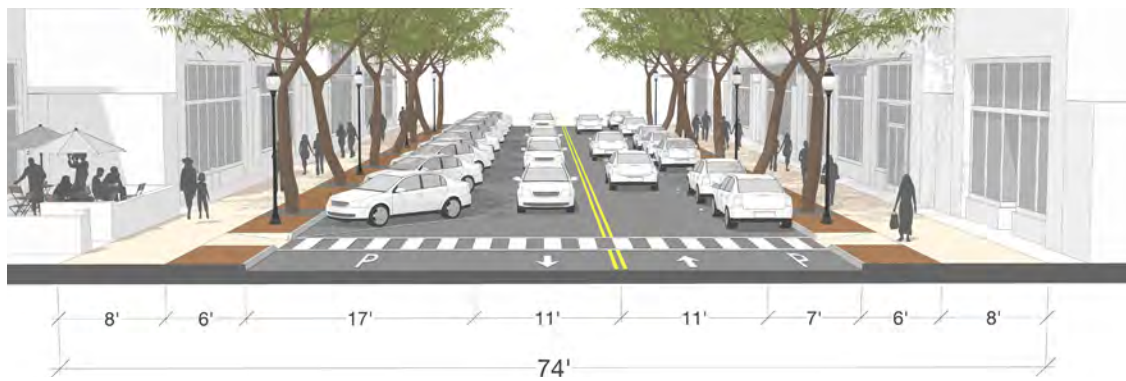


Figure 5.07 - West Barraque Improvements - Adjustments to Future Proposed Conditions

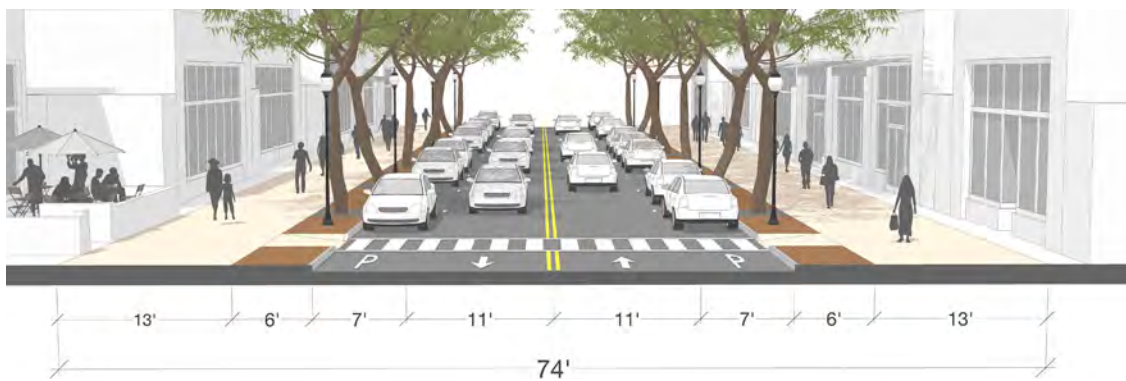
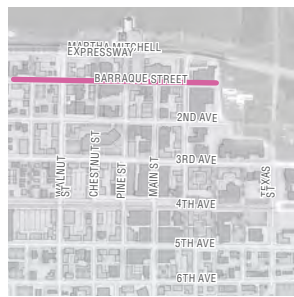


Figure 5.08 - West Barraque Improvements - Short Term By Re-striping





# FOCUS

## DOWNTOWN & CIVIC CENTER

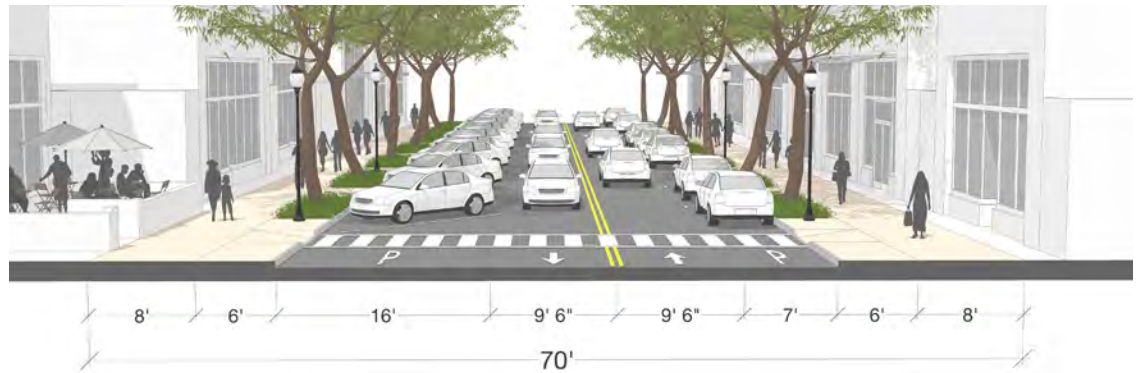


Figure 5.10 - Walnut Street Improvements - Temporary Restriping Option

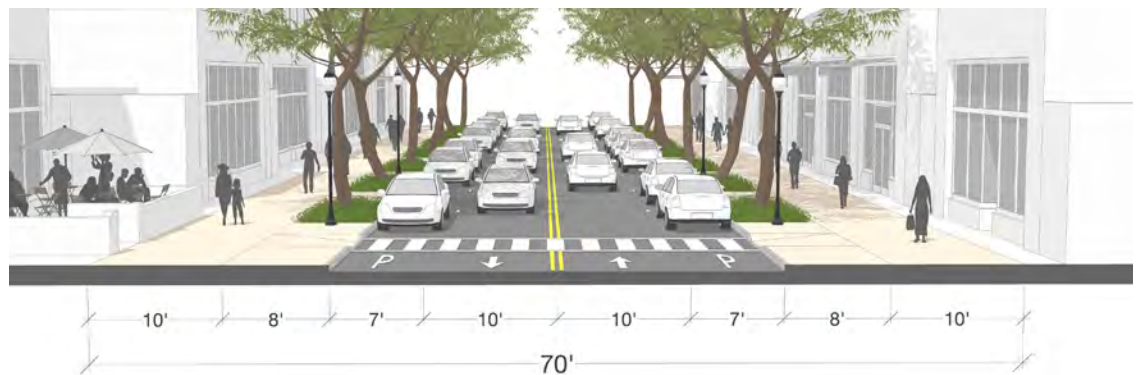
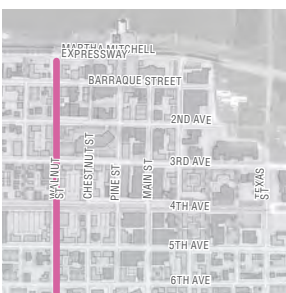


Figure 5.11 - Walnut Street Improvements - Proposed Modifications to Reconstruct Plan



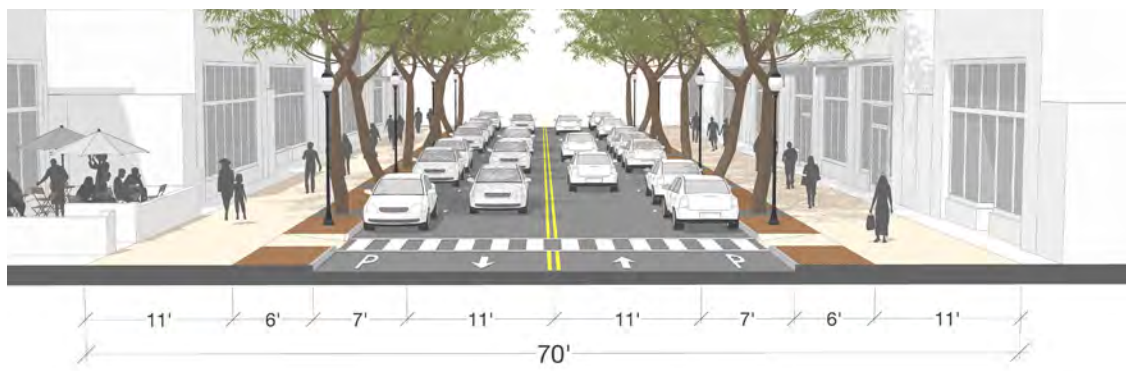


Figure 5.12 - 6th Street Improvements - Proposed Condition in Commercial Areas

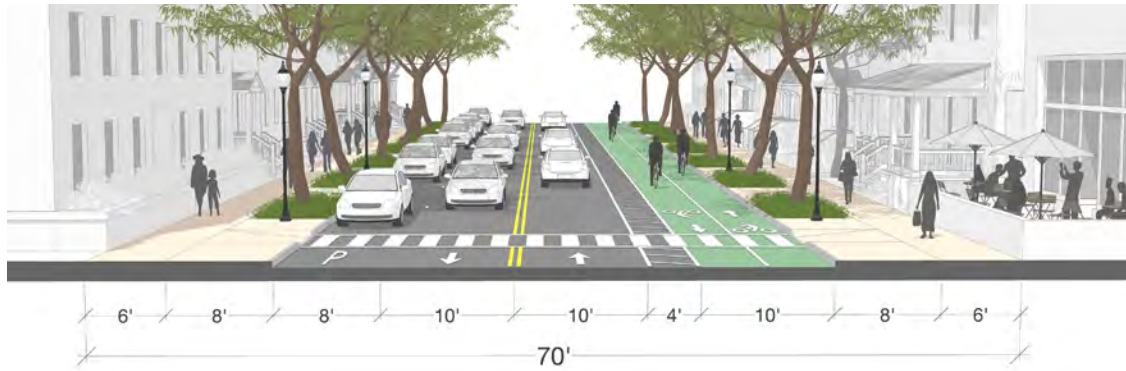


Figure 5.13 - 6th Street Improvements - Proposed Condition in Residential Areas By Restriping

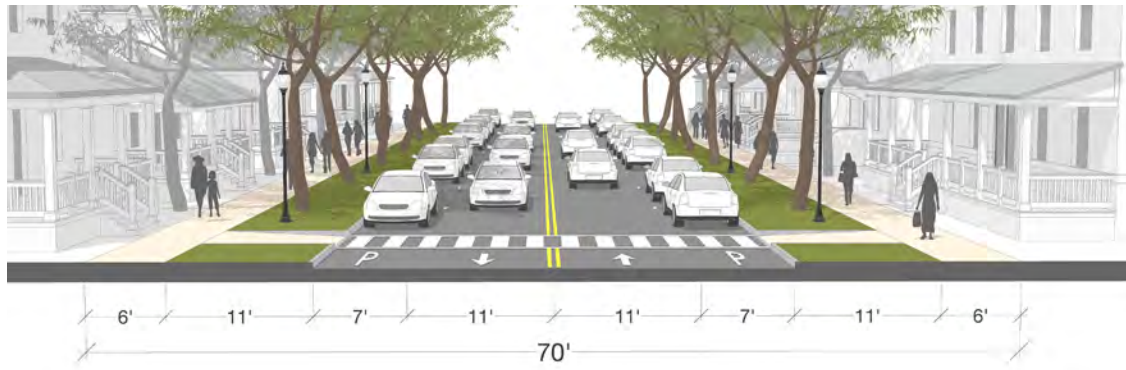
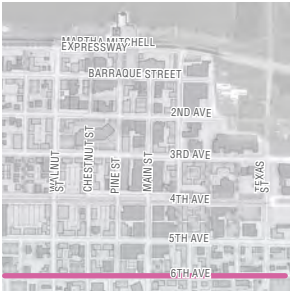


Figure 5.14 - 6th Street Improvements - Proposed Condition in Residential Areas by Reconstruction



3. Create new zoning standards for Downtown to direct street-oriented development, minimizing barriers such as density, use restrictions, and parking requirements. While current zoning standards are simple, they do not direct development to create the form needed for a downtown. In fact, some recent buildings within Downtown have been set back from the street, eroding the area's opportunity to redevelop. These standards should include a requirement for ground floor non-residential along Main Street, Baroque, Walnut, and 6th Avenue, ensuring a consistent non-residential loop (See Fig. 5.03). Elsewhere, allowed uses should be broad and at the discretion of the applicant. Additionally, parking requirements should be removed from Downtown where there is not currently a lack of parking.
4. Consider a Pink Zone for Downtown. Pink Zones are low red tape areas that are designed to make it easy for owners to renovate older buildings and open new businesses. Lowering red tape requires a careful look at adopted codes, applications, and fees, including buildings codes and life safety codes where there is room for more lenient local discretion.
5. Partner to establish a fund for use in Pine Bluff Opportunity Zones which protects the City's interests in redevelopment and avoids exploitation of Opportunity Zones. Two of the three Opportunity Zones in Pine Bluff fall within key redevelopment areas. There are clear advantages to this fact as these areas are in dire need of investment. However the Federal Opportunity Zone standards provide little oversight and protections to ensure that the outcomes help the community. The City should work with local financial institutions to create a local Opportunity Zone fund that carries additional reporting requirements and outcomes for use of that fund, including levels of affordability, contribution to public facilities and open spaces, and other City goals. The Downtown zoning code modifications are also necessary to ensure Opportunity Zone investments meet City goals (See Fig. 5.15).

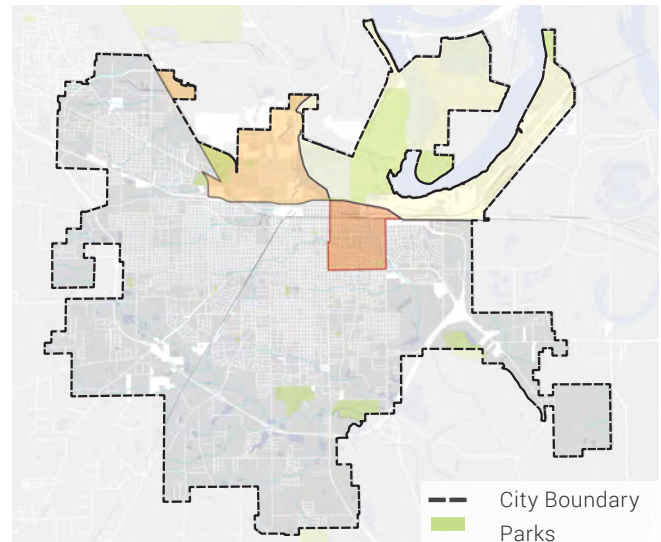


Figure 5.15 - Opportunity Zones

6. Restripe Downtown streets to expand on-street parking, add bicycle facilities, and reduce the number and size of vehicular travel lanes. Most Downtown streets are too wide, encouraging speeding and discouraging pedestrians. While rebuilding streets is expensive, streets can more easily be restriped. No street in Downtown should be one-way, and no one should be more than two total travel lanes. The extra space should be given to parallel or angled parking, and bicycle facilities. Adding on-street parking will reduce the need for future off-street parking, which wastes economically productive land in downtowns (See Fig. 5.16).



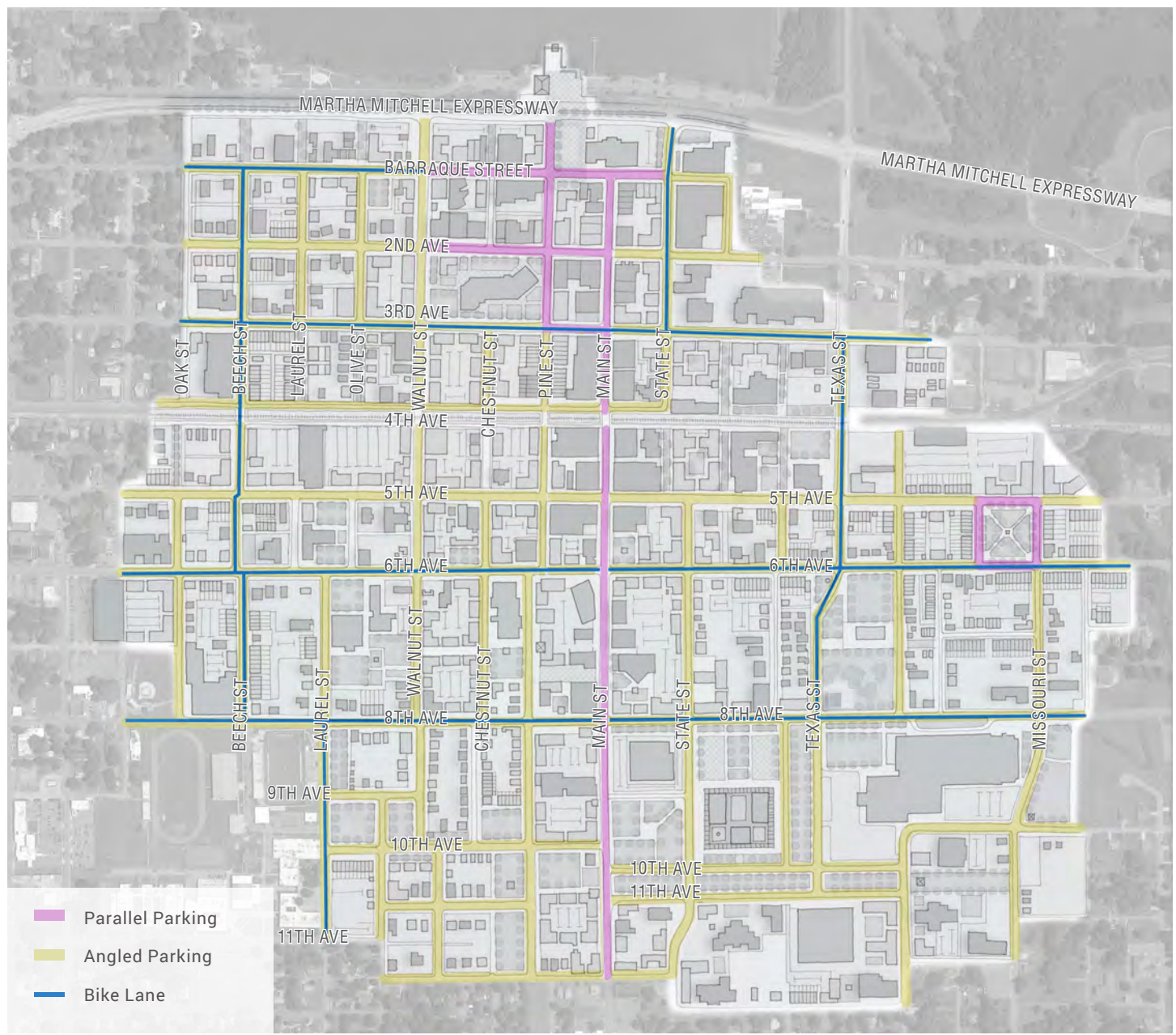


Figure 5.16 - Temporary Restriping Plan

# FOCUS

## DOWNTOWN & CIVIC CENTER

7. Invest in housing within Downtown in mixed-use buildings, stand-alone multi-family, and townhouses. Downtown not only lacks businesses, it lacks a permanent population. Housing within downtowns contributes to activity and safety, providing convenient customers and eyes on the street. A variety of housing should be available within Downtown, providing opportunities for students, singles, couples, and families.
8. Create a public plaza along Pine Street and the west side of the County Courthouse, connecting across Martha Mitchell to Lake Saracen with an enhanced pedestrian crossing. Downtown lacks a central public space. Due to the historic termination of Main Street on the County Court and limited length of Main Street, the civic space should be located elsewhere. The ideal location is along Pine Street between Barraque Street and Martha Mitchell, connecting Downtown to Lake Saracen. A plaza in this location provides a direct Downtown presence along Martha Mitchell, celebrates the courthouse, and connects the public investments along Barraque to Main Street and ties downtown to Saracen Landing (See Fig. 5.17).



Figure 5.17 - Downtown Detail

9. Re-design 4th Ave between Walnut and State Street as a shared space street on either side of the train tracks. Following upon the UA proposed Arts Walk, a shared space street can accommodate public art, open space, and occasional vehicles.
10. Repair the edges of the Downtown Community Services Center. Recognizing that the Community Services Center contributes vital services to Pine Bluff, the way it physically engages downtown is detrimental. Restriping parking along surrounding streets reduces on-site parking which can be converted to additional community open space. The corner of 2nd Ave and Walnut may accommodate additional park support structures including restrooms and covered seating. Edges where parking cannot be removed should be lined with brick and metal fencing to define the space and reduce the interface between Downtown sidewalks and lawn which is not part of a public park (See Fig. 5.18).



Figure 5.18 - Downtown Community Services Center

11. Increase the Downtown tree canopy. Access to trees on a daily basis contributes to public physical and mental health. Where possible, trees should be added within public rights-of-way. Consult the UA Extension Service or a landscape architect to determine the appropriate tree species to replant. The Arbor Day Foundation or the U.S. Forest Service may help with funding.



### Civic Center

1. Pursue a redesign of 6th Avenue as specified in the section concerning Downtown.
2. Create new zoning standards for the Civic Center district to direct street-oriented development, minimizing barriers such as density, multi-family restrictions, and parking requirements. While Downtown is most in need of new zoning standards, the Civic Center area's redevelopment is also hindered. Pine Bluff's current zoning standards severely limit multi-family housing, which is in high demand. Additionally, new buildings are not required to be street-oriented, which undermines walkability. New standards are necessary to encourage and accelerate infill.
3. Establish a series of connected open spaces between the High School and the Harding Drain to manage stormwater. Much of the Civic Center area was formerly Harding Lake, filled in the early 20th century. Deterioration of the storm drain system has caused the area to flood regularly, along with other upstream areas. Replacing the storm drain system will be necessary but it is very costly and subject to future blockage. With ample public and vacant

land around the Civic Center, a system of greens, lowered slightly below street level and connected to each other by pipe, can be created to hold and clean stormwater. A similar strategy should be pursued within neighborhoods experiencing flooding. Handled appropriately, stormwater solutions can enhance the area through a series of parks, supporting its civic character (See Fig. 5.19).

4. Redesign 8th Avenue to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities and on-street parking. 8th Avenue, along the north side of the Convention Center and City Hall, was designed to signify the Civic Center's core, with a central median. However the street has too much space for vehicles at recorded levels of ADT, and little or no space for pedestrians and cyclists. In fact the segment east of Missouri has no sidewalks, with people observed walking in the roadway. Re-allocation of street space can be completed by re-striping the roadway in the short term and reconstructing when funding is available. Parking added to 8th Avenue serves to protect pedestrians from nearby fast moving vehicles and to alleviate some of the inefficient City Hall and Convention Center parking (See Fig. 5.20-24).

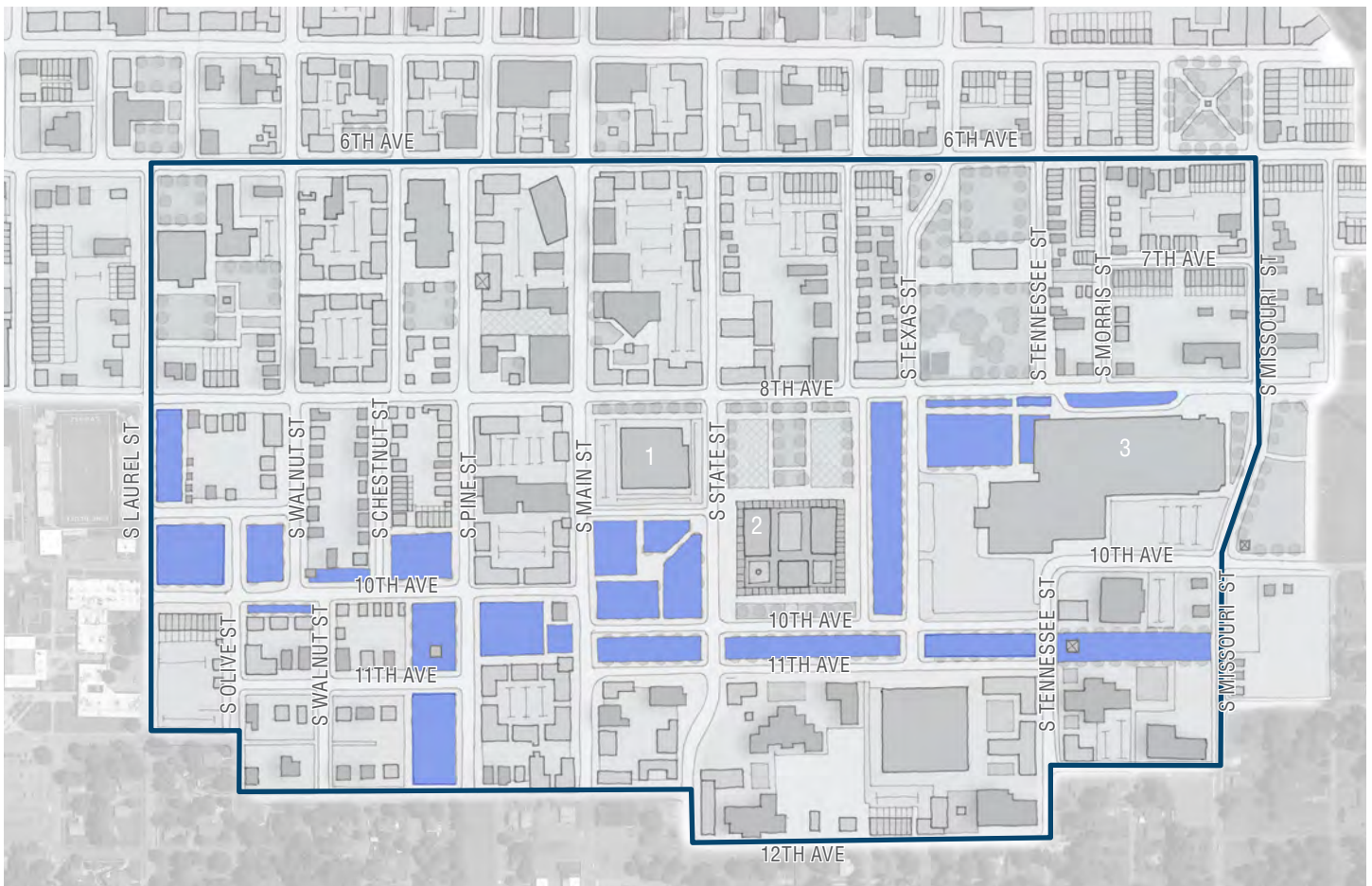


Figure 5.19 - Storm water system solution while preserving civic character.





5. Re-stripe 10th and 11th Avenues for on-street parking. Like many streets in Pine Bluff, 10th and 11th Avenues have much less traffic than their capacity. Currently the avenues consist of two, 13 foot wide travel lanes. The lanes are both much too wide, encouraging speeding, and far over capacity. The avenues should be re-stripped with one 10 foot wide travel lane each, the rest of the width given to angled on-street parking. The parking will help alleviate inefficient City Hall and Convention Center parking (See Fig. 5.25-26).
6. Reconfigure Texas Street and the City Hall parking lot to accommodate stormwater and beautify the entrance. Between the City Hall east entry parking lot and Texas Street, there are currently 7 travel lanes and 3 parkings lanes. This configuration is extremely inefficient, far over necessary capacity, and completely lacking beauty. Like other streets, Texas Street has much more capacity than needed, and the City Hall parking lot is very inefficient. The pair should be reconstructed to provide additional stormwater capacity in a large green that mimics the green between 10th and 11th Avenues, and to optimize the configuration of travel lanes and parking lanes. The proposed Option 1 requires reconstruction of both the parking lot and Texas Street to achieve the ideal design. However, Option 2 provides an interim configuration that can be achieved with minimal disruption to both facilities (See Fig. 5.27-28).
7. Encourage infill development of housing, including townhouses and multi-unit housing. As a transition area from Downtown to surrounding neighborhoods, the Civic Center area should accommodate a moderate intensity of housing, including multi-unit housing. Downtown's success will require additional housing in close proximity, while its redevelopment will increase desire for this housing. The future Civic Center setting of greenways and parks amidst civic buildings is an excellent setting for two to four story housing whose residents can activate the open spaces. New development should be encouraged through expedited applications and fee waivers. As part of a new zoning district for the Civic Center, new housing development should not be required to provide on-site open spaces, due to the prevalence of public open spaces in the area.

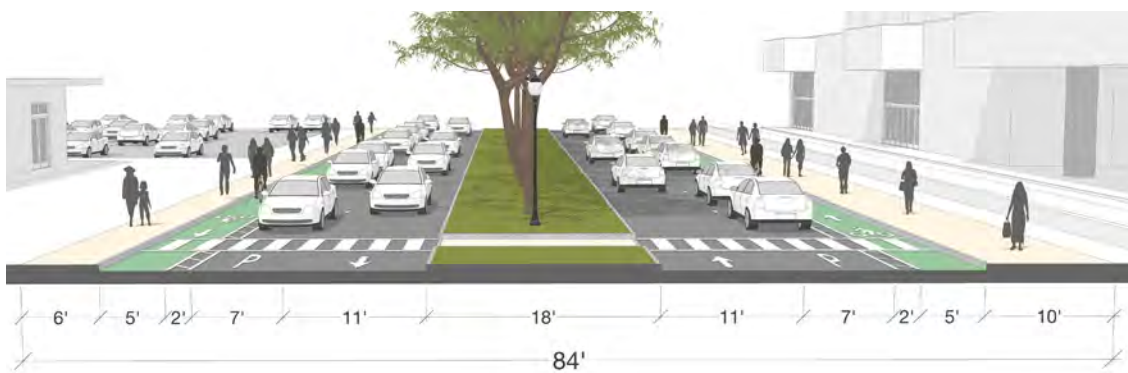


Figure 5.20 - 8th Ave Street Improvements - Restriping Option from Main to Missouri

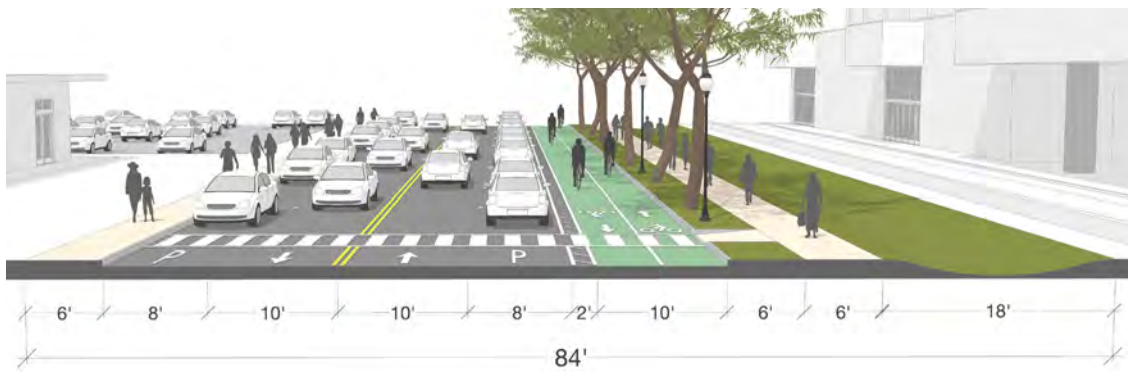


Figure 5.21 - 8th Ave Street Improvements - Reconstruction Option for Stormwater From Main to Missouri



Figure 5.22 - 8th Ave Street Improvements - Reconstruction Option for Stormwater From Main to Missouri



# FOCUS

## DOWNTOWN & CIVIC CENTER

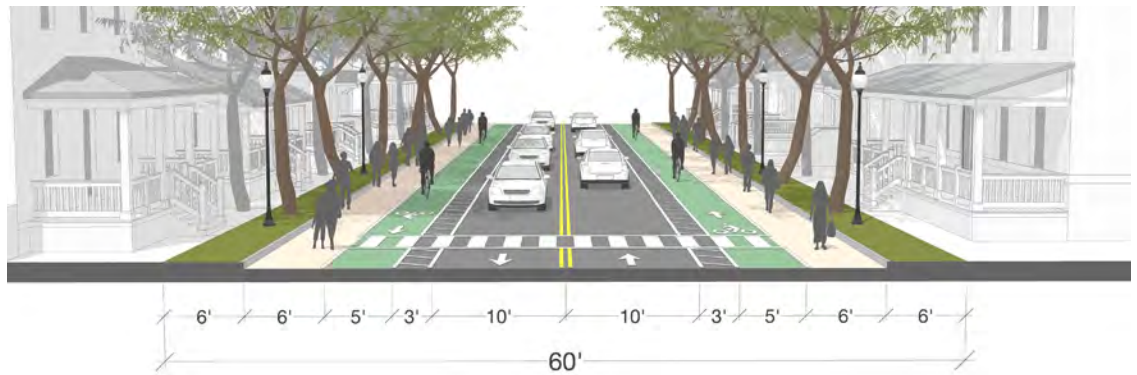


Figure 5.23 - 8th Ave Street Improvements - Temporary Restriping Option From Missouri to Ohio

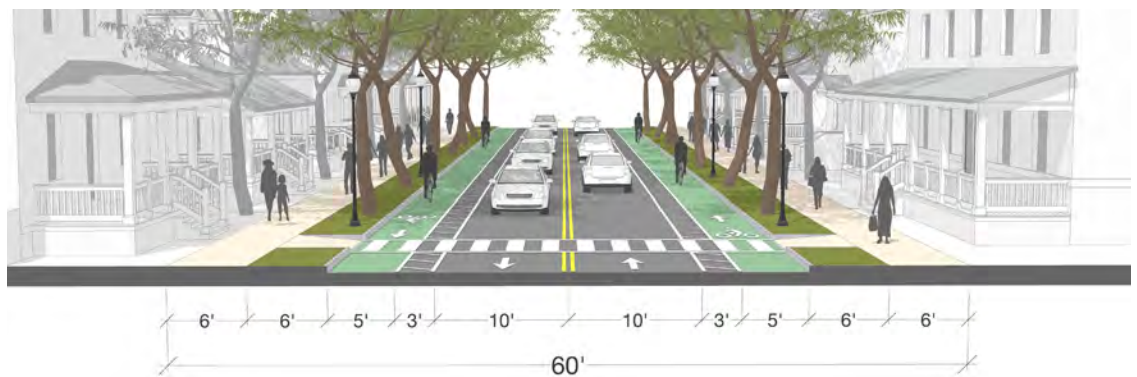


Figure 5.24 - 8th Ave Street Improvements - Reconstruction Option From Missouri to Ohio

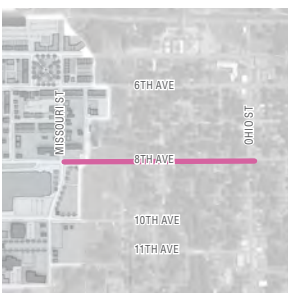






Figure 5.26 - 10th and 11th Ave Street Improvements By Restriping

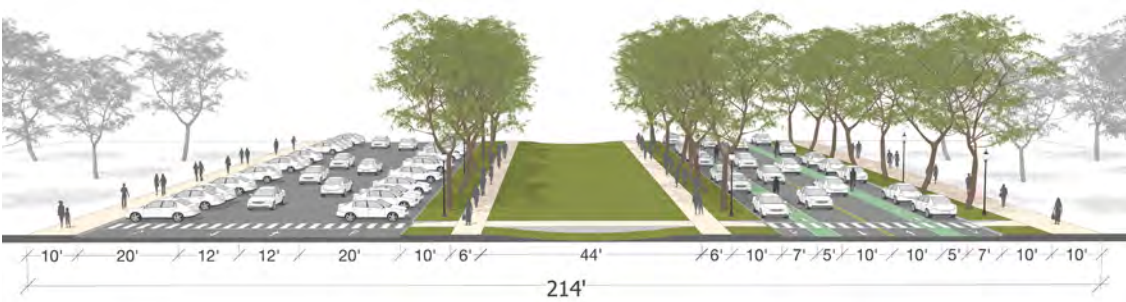


Figure 5.27 - Civic Center Parking & Texas Street Improvements - Parking Lot Reconfiguration Option 1

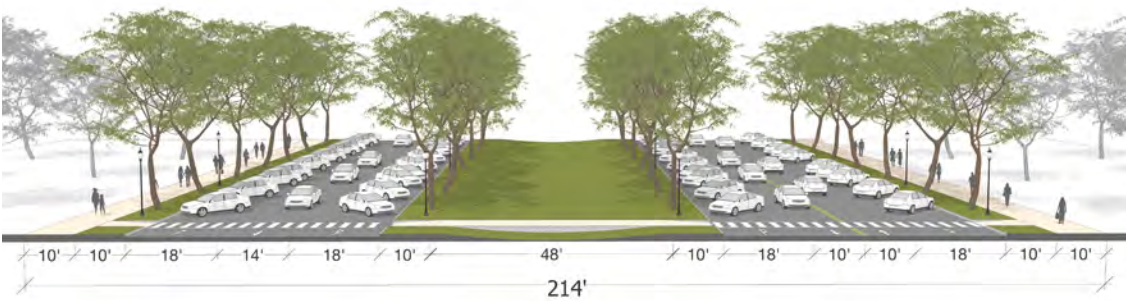
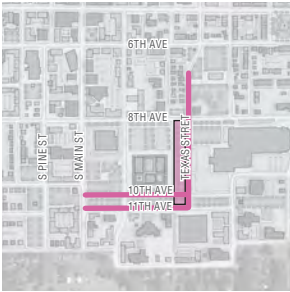


Figure 5.28 - Civic Center Parking & Texas Street Improvements - Parking Lot Reconfiguration Option 2



### Main & Harding

#### Where

The intersection of Main Street and Harding Avenue, along with one block in each direction. Main Street is an important node along Harding Avenue, where the street transforms from a lower speed, neighborhood street to the west, and a high speed, suburban roadway to the east (See Fig. 5.29).

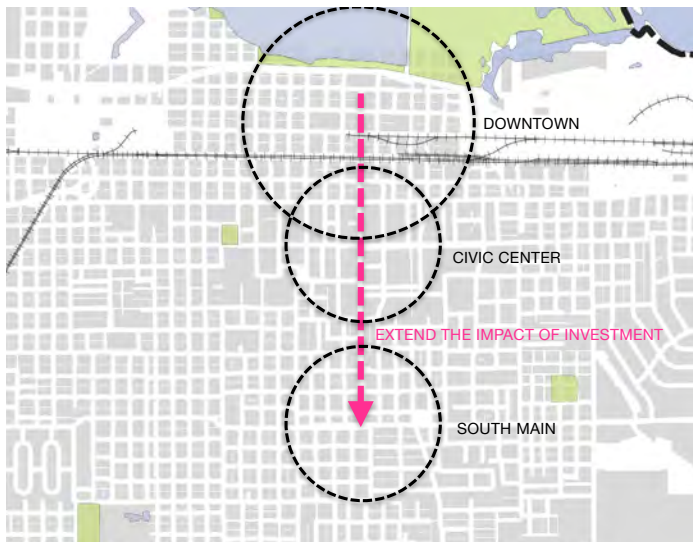


Figure 5.29 - Main and Harding is the Southern Anchor for Main Street

#### Purpose

Pine Bluff's central neighborhoods need support and investment. Close-in to Downtown and the Civic Center, both key community assets, vacant parcels make up a majority of neighborhood properties. While this is also the case within outlying neighborhoods, the central neighborhoods abut many stable neighborhoods (See Fig. 5.30). Neighborhood degeneration spreads to surrounding areas; regenerating central neighborhoods will help support surrounding stability. The intersection of Main Street and Harding Avenue occupies the intersection of three neighborhoods. To the east, vacancy is above 40%; to the west, vacancy is below 20%; to the south, vacancy is around 10% (See Fig. 5.31). Investment at this crux of deterioration builds on the relative stability of two neighborhoods while providing regenerative opportunity to the third.

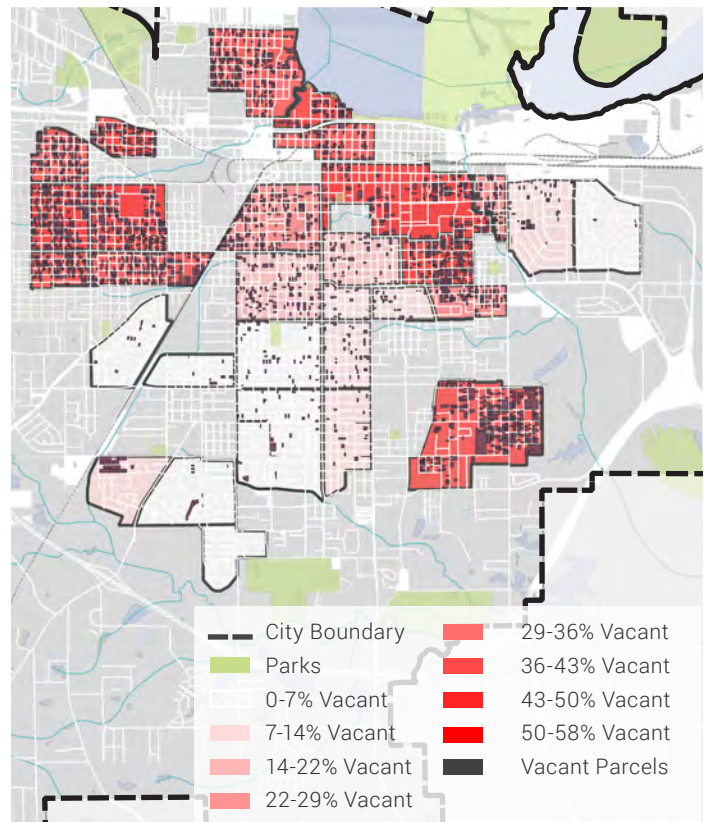


Figure 5.30 - Community & Neighborhood Regeneration

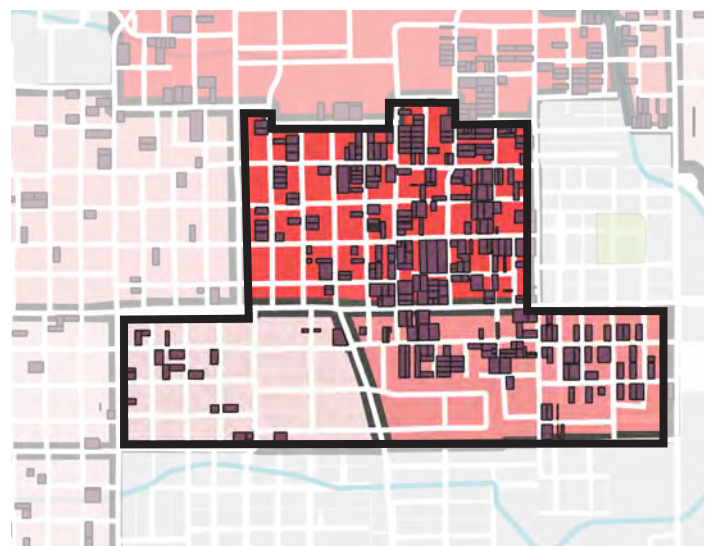


Figure 5.31 - Community & Neighborhood Regeneration Zoom-In

Neighborhoods need nearby destinations that act as centers of activity, socialization, and to provide residents with goods and services. Frequently, neighborhood destinations - otherwise and somewhat confusingly known as neighborhood centers - lay at the intersection between neighborhoods. With access to multiple neighborhoods, destinations can service a sufficient number of households to support multiple businesses and act as advantageous locations for service providers (See Fig. 5.32). Neighborhoods also need a diversity of housing types, including multi-family, attached single family, detached single family, and accessory units. While adding housing diversity can be difficult within established neighborhoods, destinations like Main and Harding offer ample vacant land which is at the edge of a neighborhood rather than within it.

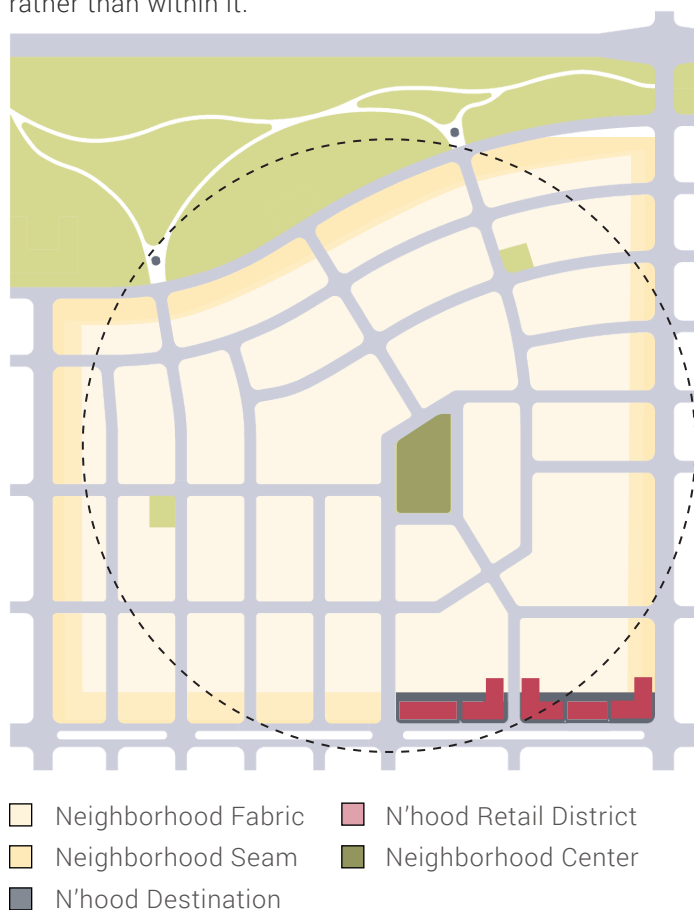


Figure 5.32 - Neighborhood Structure

This location also occupies the visual terminus of Main Street, the southern end of a barbell originating in Downtown. It serves as a transition from the calm and formal West Harding Avenue to the speedy and suburban East Harding Avenue. This direct Main Street connection to Downtown and east-west division makes Main and Harding a key intersection citywide. Approximately one mile from Downtown, Main and Harding is sufficiently distant to support a small commercial node that

is distinct in character and programming from Downtown. The remainder of the Main Street corridor between this node and City Hall should be encouraged for additional housing infill, particularly multi-family and attached single family. Commercial spread out along a mile-long corridor results in automobile-oriented designs and dangerous conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. Commercial should instead be concentrated in nodes that are distributed throughout the community, each responding to the characteristics of its surroundings. Downtown should be the most significant area of commercial activity. This node should be much smaller, consisting of a handful of businesses supported by immediately adjacent new housing.

In addition to the node itself, the design of E Harding Ave should be revised. Presently the Main Street intersection divides West Harding, a neighborhood street, from East Harding, a high speed street leading to a large suburban roadway. The eastern section between Main and Ohio Streets should be an active seam or connection between the neighborhoods to its north and south. Due to the high speed geometry and automobile-oriented land uses, where there are buildings, the roadway is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists, acting as a divider rather than a connector. As land is developed along East Harding, it should contribute to a new roadway character aimed to slow cars and connect neighborhoods.

### Action Steps

Regenerating the Main and Harding center requires changes to policy, investment in the public streetscape, and private development initiative (See Fig. 5.33-5.36).





Figure 5.33 - Existing Condition

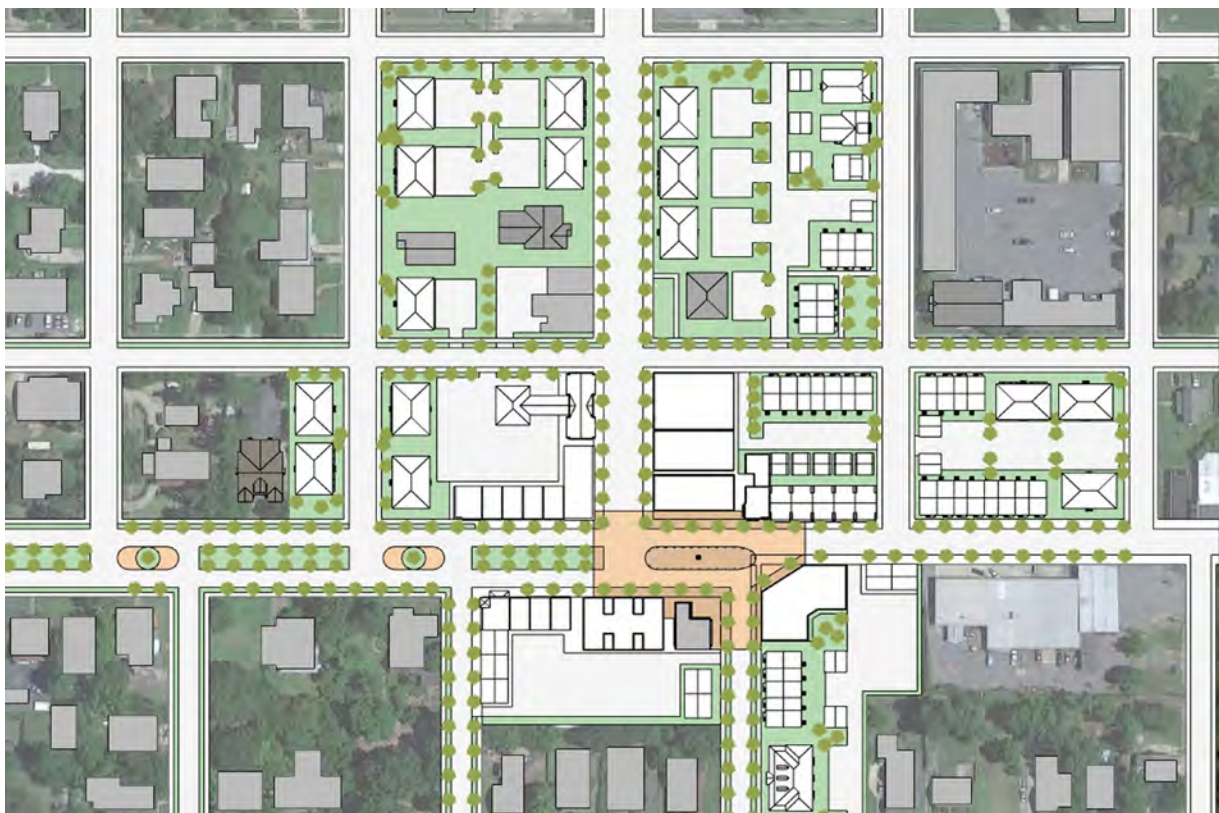


Figure 5.34 - Proposed Area Plan





Figure 5.35 - Proposed Area Plan Building Types



Figure 5.36 - View of formal plaza lined by a mix of building types at the intersection of Main and Harding



1. Create new zoning standards for Mixed-use and adjacent areas to direct street-oriented development, promote diversified housing, and minimize barriers such as density, use restrictions, and parking requirements. While current zoning standards are simple, they do not direct or even permit development to create the form needed for a neighborhood destination. Areas of mixed-use activity and housing diversity should be supported in multiple locations throughout Pine Bluff, which should share a new zoning designation. The mixed-use zone should promote commercial development along major streets and increase housing diversity and intensity within one or two blocks of the commercial node or corridor.
2. Invest in the intersection of Main Street and Harding Avenue, creating a formal plaza. Presently the intersection poorly resolves the colliding geometries of three very different streets, prioritizing cars. To support pedestrian and commercial activity, this intersection and adjacent streetscapes need to be adjusted to reduce car speed and provide sufficient space and shade for pedestrians. Luckily the colliding geometries, when carefully resolved, result in an ideal plaza space on Harding Avenue within the jog of Main Street. A plaza of this sort establishes a strong central identity and should be accentuated with pavers or stamped concrete, bollards, seating places, and shade trees.
3. Invest in the streetscape of Main Street from 15th to Harding Avenue. Like most roads in Pine Bluff, Main Street at Harding Avenue is very over capacity for vehicular needs. The street should be rebuilt between 15th and Harding Avenue to support street-oriented businesses and pedestrians, with wider sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking (See Fig's 5.38-40).
4. Assemble and offer public and vacant properties for redevelopment following the vision. The private sector will play a significant role in regenerating this intersection, which is surrounded by a number of vacant properties. Housing is needed to support future commercial uses, filling gaps currently missing from the housing market. Where surrounding properties are publicly owned or can be condemned using the URA, they should be offered in assemblages for redevelopment at a low cost in order to encourage the creation of townhouses, apartments, duplexes, and cottages.
5. Encourage Citgo to redevelop in a gas-backwards format. One of the key corner properties at this intersection is the Citgo service station. While service stations don't often give-up corner properties, and they are difficult to clean up, they do often renovate or rebuild. In recent years, a number of service stations have adopted the gas-backwards format where the convenience store is placed close to the street and the pumps and parking are located behind the building relative to the street. Reversing Citgo, including the Subway store, helps support the commercial street while maintaining the use. In addition, zoning changes should permit a greater intensity of building on that site, which can easily accommodate double the building capacity (See Fig. 5.37).
6. Redesign East Harding Avenue. E Harding Ave should be an active neighborhood seam, stitching together the neighborhoods north and south. Its current automobile-centric design is incompatible with its location in the city. A new, pedestrian-oriented design should be adopted and the street modified over time. Restriping may be pursued in the interim to reduce vehicle speeds and provide space for non-motorized roadway users (See Fig 5.41).



Figure 5.37 - Proposed Area Plan Building Types





Figure 5.38 - East Harding Avenue from Main Street to Texas Street and Indiana Street to Ohio Street

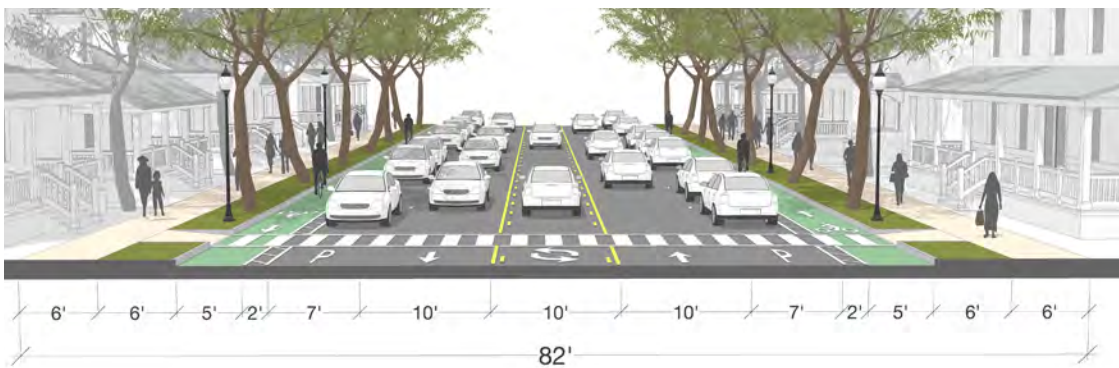


Figure 5.39 - East Harding Avenue from Texas Street to Indiana Street

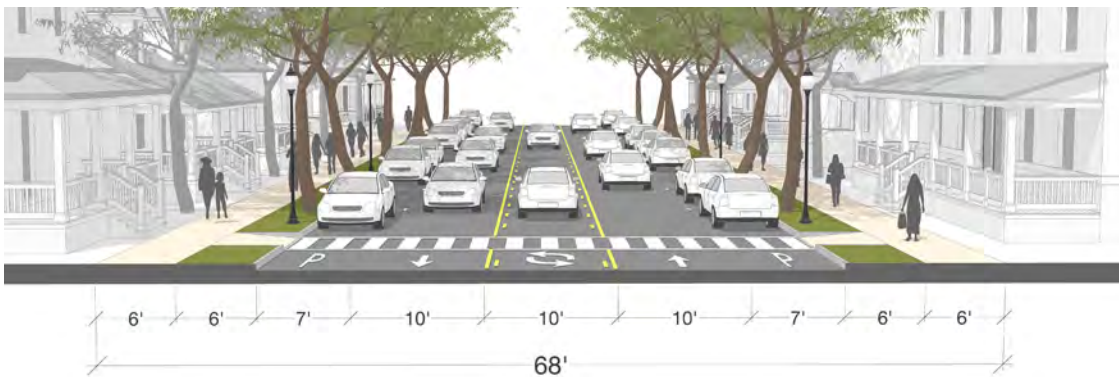


Figure 5.40- Alternative option for East Harding Avenue from Texas Street to Indiana Street

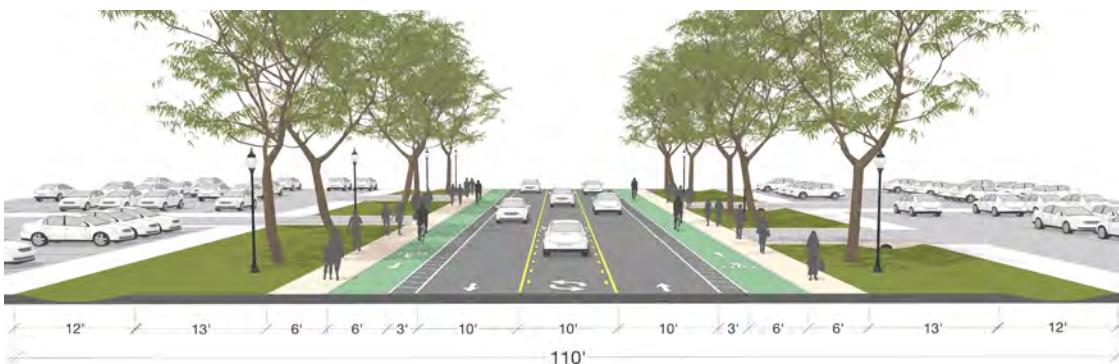


Figure 5.41 - East Harding Avenue from Ohio Street to I-530 by Restriping



# FOCUS

## UAPB & UNIVERSITY PARK

### UAPB & University Park

#### Where

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff and the University Park neighborhood located directly south of campus. Both are along the western edge of Lake Saracen and comprise the western and northern edges of the core city. While the UAPB campus has grown northward, the historic campus core interfaces with the neighborhood along W Reeker Ave, in addition to a few university parcels that are located south of Reeker.

#### Why

Universities are a serious economic engine for cities. Students, faculty, and visitors all have the potential to support and establish businesses, rent and purchase homes, and bring vitality to a city's streets and parks. UAPB hosts around 2,500 students and a staff of nearly 650. With an impressive history of graduates, division 1 football, and a close-knit community, the university draws thousands of visitors. This is a lot of vitality. Unfortunately the university is cut off from the adjacent lakefront and a car is required to find food, hard goods, and entertainment off campus. Once in a car, people are likely to drive further, often out of Pine Bluff, to spend money that could otherwise contribute to the wealth of the community. Similarly, the neighborhood directly adjacent to the university is an opportune place for students and faculty housing, and a main street to draw activity. However, the University Park neighborhood has seen some of the most significant disinvestments citywide.

UAPB has recently produced a new campus master plan, indicating plans for expansion yet turning its back to the University Park neighborhood (See Fig. 5.42). Similarly, the city has produced a plan sketch for the University Park neighborhood which does not engage with the university (See Fig. 5.43). The intersection between a university and adjacent community should be vibrant, with a business main street providing food, goods, and entertainment, and numerous housing options. Pursuing plans separately ensures that the city and university remain divided. Unfortunately neither plan has investigated the interface, and UAPB's plan will further erode the relationship by lining Fluker Street - the best location for a main street - with surface parking lots.

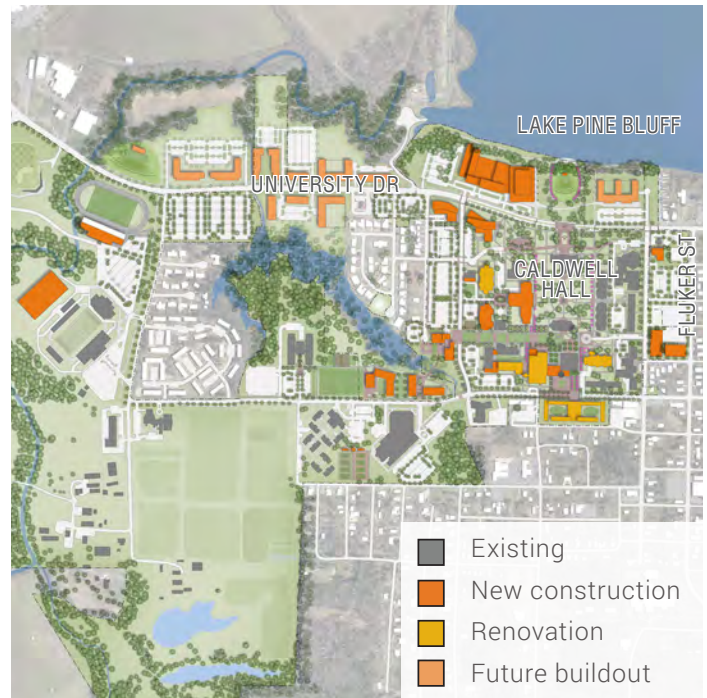


Figure 5.42 - Existing Plan

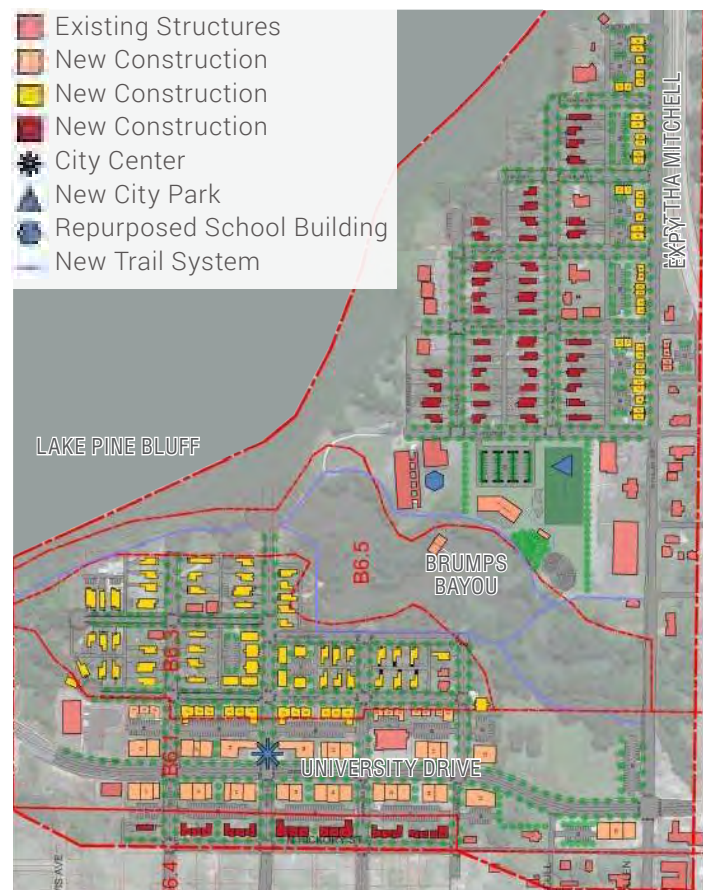


Figure 5.43 - Existing Plan For University Park



To remedy this, a plan for the interface between UAPB and University Park has been proposed, creating a main street along Fluker Street, adding diverse housing options, and revising the optimal locations for commercial uses (See Figures 5.44-45). Fluker Street is a strategic main street location for its connection to Townsend Park, Lake Saracen, and infill opportunities. Reeker Ave could work as a viable alternative, but that would require modifications to the Fine

Arts Center and Corbin Hall. A revised master plan should be pursued between the city and UAPB to establish a main street and to invest in new housing together. Rather than continuing to expand northwards, UAPB should also consider the potential for investments in University Park that may fulfil some of its programming and housing needs.



Figure 5.44 - Area Plan





Figure 5.45 - Area Plan

### Action Steps

Revitalizing the University Park neighborhood and improving the interface with UAPB requires coordination, changes to policy, investment in the public streetscape, and private development initiative.

1. Coordinate plans between UAPB and the City. The first step should be a dialog between the City and University concerning their interface. A sketch plan and illustration have been developed to assist in this discussion, providing careful recommendations to be considered. While both the City and University have focused on University Drive as a commercial street, this should be discouraged beyond the intersection with the new main street described below, unless the character of University Drive can be significantly altered.
2. Establish a Main Street along Fluker Street, or Reeker Ave as an Alternative. To attract some student, faculty, and visitor spending on food, goods, and entertainment, a compelling and walkable main street is needed. Currently commercial uses are located along University Drive,

which is not designed properly to support businesses (see the discussion that follows on University Drive). Due to the speedy and wide design of University Drive, a main street should be selected that intersects perpendicularly. This strategy retains visibility to drivers while allowing the main street to be intimate. Intimate main streets encourage pedestrian cross-shopping between establishments and a park-once strategy which reduces overall surface parking. Establishing a main street requires zoning modifications, investment in the streetscape, and recruitment of businesses (see the discussion that follows on zoning). To be viable, the street requires an appropriate design, and either candidate street would require some degree of reconstruction. Street reconstruction may be limited to between University Drive and L A Prexy Davis Dr. A proposed configuration is included, which would establish a viable commercial street along Fluker Street with minimal intervention (See Figure 5.46).



3. Revise University Park zoning. Zoning modifications are necessary to transform University Park. New rules have been drafted for University Park with good intentions, but they are oriented towards a commercial University Drive. Additionally some drafted standards, such as excessive front setbacks, require modification. An ordinance for Downtown Pine Bluff has been developed as part of this plan, which can be applied to University Park with minor modification. Goals of zoning change should be to allow a wide variety of mixed-uses along the main street, higher intensity housing along University Drive, and a mixture of housing types throughout the neighborhood.
4. Establish minimum design standards for the campus edge. The edges of UAPB towards the City, principally south and along University Drive, should express the dignified civic stature of the university. To date these edges have mostly been treated inconsistently by university buildings. The university's historic buildings set a strong precedent to emulate. Some newer buildings, like Corbin Hall, engage the sidewalk on Reeker Ave while others like the Rust Technology Hall do not. As the campus edge slowly extends south into the neighborhood, design decisions have not accounted for neighborhood impact. In the new master plan, this edge is filled with open parking lots while other buildings present large blank walls. This treatment will lead towards further neighborhood deterioration rather than regeneration.

The edge requires a minimum set of design standards to clearly define the campus space, express the dignity of the institution, and disallow open parking lots, expanses of blank walls, and back-of-house activities along streets, like utilities and trash. Both the University and City should be active in beautifying and activating the University-City interface and investing in the surrounding neighborhood.

5. Calm University Drive for student and resident safety. University Drive is the elephant in the room, causing significant deterioration in the University Park neighborhood and endangering students, staff, and visitors to UAPB. As both the University and City make plans for investments along University Drive, opportunities for roadway improvement directly influence the success of these investments. Unfortunately, University Drive is a state road which does not have opportunities for rerouting, which means that it cannot be downgraded. In its current form, retail along this roadway will be automobile-oriented, which returns little long term value to the City. Crossing the overly-wide roadway with speeding cars is dangerous. Without changes to the roadway, development along University Drive should be primarily multi-family housing set back from the roadway with a consistent tree canopy. Lanes should be re-striped to be narrower at a minimum, but more substantial roadway modification should be pursued (See Fig. 5.47). The University's plans to cross to Lake



Figure 5.46 - Fluker Street Improvements - Streetscape and Restriping

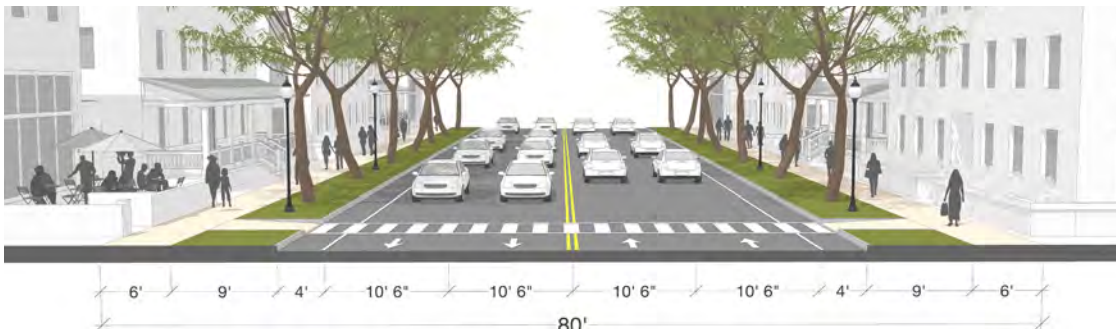


Figure 5.47 - University Drive Improvements - Restriping Option 1



# FOCUS

## UAPB & UNIVERSITY PARK

Saracen should be pursued, along with an enhanced pedestrian crossing in front of the Admissions Office (See Fig. 5.48). But plans for mixed-use along the roadway should be reconsidered, potentially relocated to Reeker or Fluker as discussed previously. While difficult, roadway adjustments should be pursued both by the University and City, to improve the safety of residents, students, staff, and visitors. Foremost, the speed vehicles travel needs to drop. Changing the speed limit does little to influence driving speed, which is best addressed by narrower lanes, fewer lanes, parked cars, street trees, and buildings along the edge of the roadway. Two restriping options are proposed, which can be achieved without the significant cost of rebuilding the street. Traffic volumes are low enough to remove two lanes, and the restriping options would allow a change back in the future if necessary. These options make space for street parking and bicycle facilities, both important for land uses

along University Drive and connection between UAPB and Downtown. An additional reconstruction option is proposed for the portion that crosses the UAPB campus. Here a median is proposed instead of on-street parking, to provide a pedestrian refuge when crossing to the lake. As with the restriping options, this proposal does not move curbs, which is very expensive. If met with resistance to change from transportation agencies, the University and City should take a long-range view and continue to pursue alterations over time. Transportation agencies across the country have been slowly changing their standards, many of which would now permit this type of change (See Fig.'s 5.49-51).



Figure 5.48 - Enhanced pedestrian crossing in front of Caldwell Hall



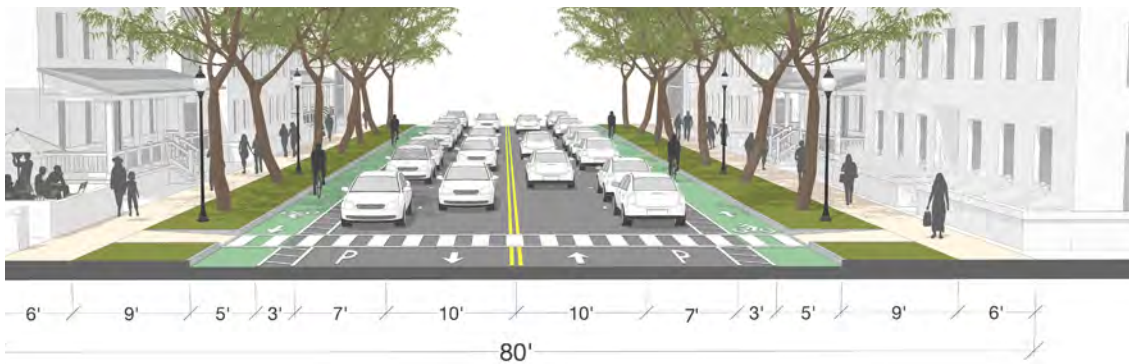


Figure 5.49 - University Drive Improvements - Reconstruction Recommendation

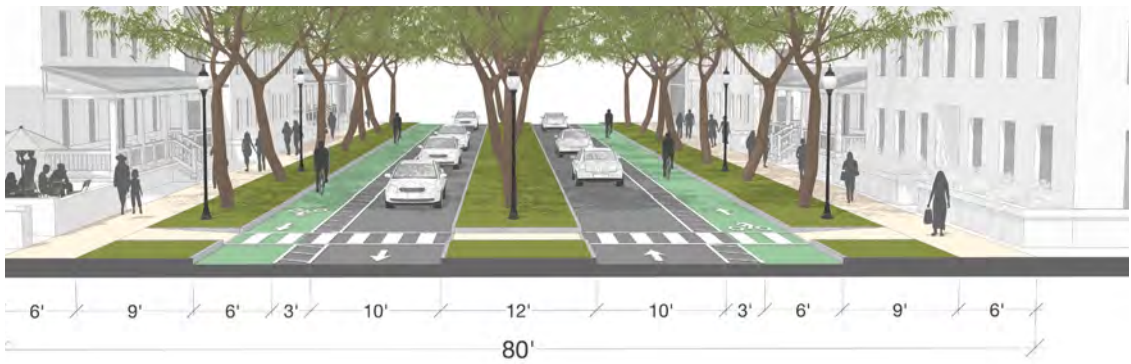


Figure 5.50 - University Drive Improvements - Restriping Option 2

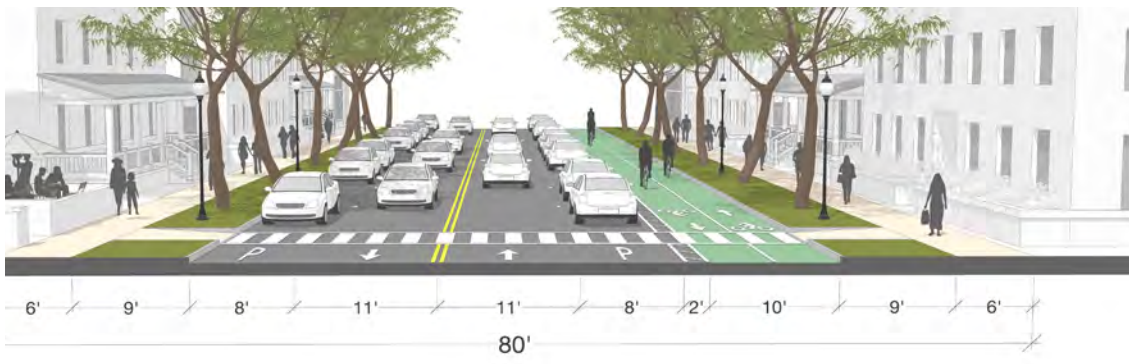
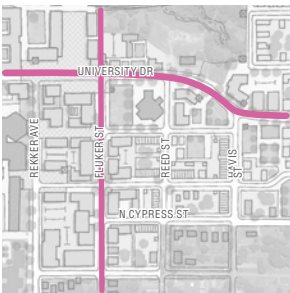


Figure 5.51 - University Drive Improvements - Restriping Option 3



### Jefferson Square

#### Where

The Jefferson Square shopping center occupies a large site between S Olive & Main Sts, and W 27th & 30th Aves. Approximately one mile from Main and Harding, and one mile from the 27th Ave. commercial corridor, the shopping center is well located to serve the City's central and southern neighborhoods (See Fig. 5.52).



Figure 5.52 - Existing Plan

#### Purpose

Cities strive to increase the efficiency and value of land while providing services and convenience for residents. The Jefferson Square shopping center covers approximately 30 acres, or 3 blocks, adjacent to the most stable of the city's close-in neighborhoods. While the shopping center is well maintained and supports multiple tenants, the shopping center format is far out of date and the land is significantly underutilized.

Shopping centers of this type commonly require renovation every 20 years to retain shoppers. Jefferson Square's format and design are out of date. Renovation is expensive, and while the shopping center maintains its signs, facades, parking lot, and landscaping, the building facades need updating. Beyond the 20 year cycle, similar shopping centers around the country have seen significant and widespread decline, even with renovation, due to shoppers and merchants moving newer shopping centers or to downtown main streets.

For Jefferson Square, the near-term opportunity is in the parking lot, not the buildings. The parking lot was sized for a different time when the center was new and attracted many more shoppers. Even at that time, the parking lot was likely larger than necessary. At present, only a small fraction of the parking lot is in active use. This space should be repurposed

for new construction, including many multi-family housing units, and a range of smaller retail spaces.

Over time, Jefferson Square can be redeveloped, in stages, becoming a center for surrounding neighborhoods and a piece of neighborhood fabric itself (See Fig. 5.53). This transformation can begin by adding just a few structures to the entry, with a large outdoor space for dining and public use. Following, the front portion of the parking lot can be infilled with new buildings that begin to create a traditional structure of streets and blocks, with one of the streets along the shopping center's fire lane. New buildings should principally be multi-family and mixed-use. Later stages of redevelopment may introduce townhomes, and eventually duplexes and community open space. The larger-format shops currently at Jefferson Square may eventually be removed and replaced with more neighborhood-scale streets and housing, seamlessly connecting Olive and Main Streets.

Achieving this transformation is a long process, but a valuable one both for the shopping center owner and for the City. For the owner, a significant increase in development capacity and diversity of uses allows for some cash flow to maintain and later redevelop the site. At present the market for retail and housing is small, but strategic moves can generate a market at this location, and encourage neighbors to make Jefferson Square a regular destination. For the City, increased development of housing and mixed-use on what is now a parking lot increases tax revenue. And for nearby residents, the site can integrate more closely with the form of the neighborhood, beginning to replace the automobile-dominated configuration of businesses along Olive Street.





Figure 5.53 - Full Site Redevelopment Into a Mix-Use District

## Action Steps

Transforming Jefferson Square is primarily a private-sector enterprise. The City's role is to remove barriers by aligning policies with the intended outcome and to encourage that outcome.

1. Change Jefferson Square's future land use. This plan is the first step towards a new future for Jefferson Square. By changing its land use to neighborhood center, a higher intensity, mixed-use future is encouraged.
2. Change zoning standards for Jefferson Square. Zoning is a barrier to change. As with other sections of this plan, zoning modifications are needed for Jefferson Square. Currently a large commercial district, the site requires significant infill and a block structure to be established over time. Mandating these changes is possible, but an approach that permits but does not require change is preferred. Most required changes are outside of the specific zoning districts on the site, with issues identified in the assessment document on pages 40 through 45. The current zoning includes both B-1 (neighborhood business district) and B-2 (community and regional shopping center). In general these districts allow many uses, including residential (UPOR in B-2), but specific requirements including maximum residential density, minimum setbacks, heights, and screening which would result in problems if the site were attempted to be redeveloped under current zoning. The City's parking standards present the most significant obstacle, which is discussed in the following point. Zoning reform can be accomplished through a new district that is applicable to other large shopping districts such as those located along 28th Avenue near Hazel, also discussed in greater detail within this plan.
3. Change parking standards. Presently, the City's parking standards are high for commercial and residential uses. Standards like these result in the unused parking lots that make up most of Jefferson Square. Redeveloping the site requires additional development capacity and





removal or significant reduction to parking requirements. This strategy is being applied in progressive cities that understand that these standards restrict development, are costly, and are based upon data collected from places very different from Pine Bluff. When minimum parking requirements are removed, it is the owner or operator's choice to decide how much parking is necessary, not the City's. This allows them to right-size their capacity and adjust as needed in the future. Jefferson Square is an appropriate redevelopment candidate to test the effectiveness of reduced parking requirements in Pine Bluff. Such standards should be considered for removal or significant reduction citywide (excluding residential single-family and duplex uses). If neither are palatable, a combined minimum standard of 3 spaces per 1,000 square feet should be used for the shopping center, along with 1 car per unit for any on-site residential. If offices and residences are constructed, they should be permitted to share parking spaces. Setting aside the alternatives, Pine Bluff should strongly consider removing all minimum parking requirements. They are a financial and physical burden to development and create unnecessary review processes.

4. Change subdivision standards. Should the Jefferson Square site be redeveloped as envisioned, a number of subdivision standards require modification. The assessment document details some of these changes on pages 35 through 39.
5. Amend the master street plan. Future streets should be added between Olive and Main through Jefferson Square. These streets should continue the pattern of blocks from west of Olive within the site, east to west at a minimum. The new streets should be included in the master street plan.



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### Seabrook Youth Center / Merrill Building

#### Where

The Seabrook Youth Center / Merrill Building is located within a block bound by W 9th and 12th Avenues and S Plum and Mulberry Streets. Most of the edges of this block are developed with houses; access to the youth center is from the northeast corner at W 10th Ave and S Ash St.

#### Purpose

The Seabrook Youth Center is an important community asset within the City's core neighborhoods, and importantly, in the northeastern core which has seen increasing disinvestment and vacancy. The neighborhood is adjacent to the high school, and to two stable neighborhoods to the south. The youth center's services, particularly with proximity to the high school, benefit young people who are in need of hope for their future and their community.

The youth center facilities need significant investment, ideally reconstruction. Prior to this plan process, facilities improvements were planned. The comprehensive plan provides an opportunity to step back and envision how this needed investments in the community could be even more impactful. The building could be rebuilt where it is and in a similar form, but there are a number of considerations and surrounding vacant parcels that could be leveraged to expand the facility and increase its impact.

Key issues are discussed in the following section detailing specific recommendations. These are based upon a few observations: the youth center site and buildings are within a FEMA flood zone, the Harding Drain begins at S Mulberry St and backs up creating flood damage in the neighborhood, much of the site is hidden from surrounding streets, with a few modifications the site could be a large park in addition to its current programming (See Fig. 5.54).

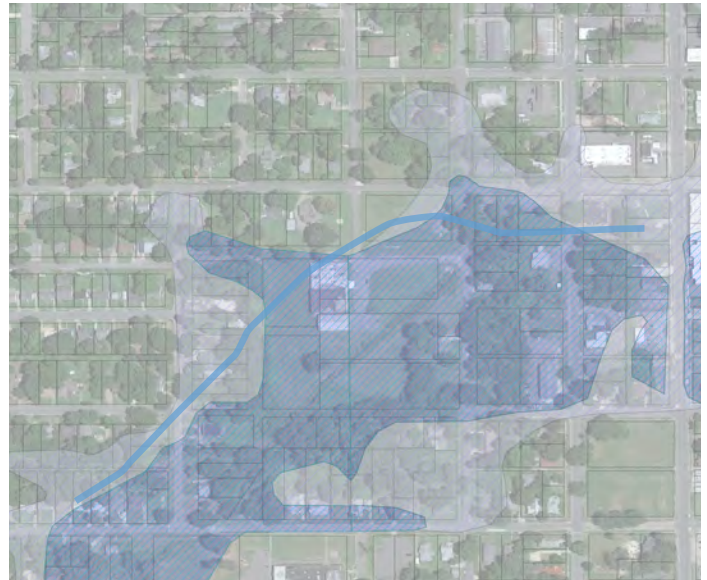


Figure 5.54 - Merrill Youth Center and Park Redevelopment Recommendation



Flooding from stormwater is a major community issue. The youth center site is in a pivotal location to improve stormwater management, which can be designed as a park that happens to flood from time to time, as many parks nationwide have historically been used. In addition to the youth center site, the Sam Taylor school site can also contribute to this solution. As occurs elsewhere in Pine Bluff, areas that flood are more likely to have vacant parcels. This is the case to the southwest of the youth center, along the Harding Drain. Vacant parcels here should be added to the park and future stormwater management system. It is important to design the future stormwater systems as multi-use park spaces. These have a lower capacity than a detention pond, but contribute tremendous value to the community, while conventional detention ponds would extinguish value. The new youth center building can be built outside of the flood zone by adding the vacant parcel at the northeast corner to the public site, constructing there on higher ground.

The current youth center building and much of the site is hidden away from surrounding streets. Civic buildings and open spaces should have open, permeable edges along streets, with major buildings visible and surrounding homes facing the civic space. The plat map shows 10th and 11th Avenues continuing through the site along with additional street connections (See Figure 5.55). Some of these connections should finally be created, whether vehicular or pedestrian, to establish the youth center site as a formal civic block, rather than being hidden within a superblock. Doing so allows some odd parcels along the unbuilt portion of 11th Ave to be developed, facing the park space, along with the rear of lots along the unbuilt portion of 10th Ave which are deep enough to add additional houses or accessory dwellings. In other places, there are vacant parcels that allow the park to have a presence along Plum Street.



*Figure 5.56 - FEMA Flood Zone Overlaid Upon the Merrill Youth Center Site*

Creating a park from the site, fixing a portion of the area flooding problems, rebuilding the youth center in a more prominent and safe location, and restoring some of the street network would transform the youth center site from a hidden community gem, to an active center of neighborhood activity. Many surrounding homes have seen investment from their owners, and the neighborhood overall is relatively stable. Investments in this site would benefit both the city's youth and the neighborhood as a whole (See Figure 5.56).

### Action Steps

Improvements to the youth center and surrounding area are complicated yet important. They require coordination between Public Works, the Parks Department, and the Urban Renewal Authority. But with hard work, these improvements can make a significant impact on the surrounding neighborhood and people citywide who use the youth center and newly created park.

1. Construct key missing streets and alleys as pedestrian and bikeways. The superblock that the youth center occupies includes a number of streets and alleys on the plat map that have not been constructed. Because a number are missing, portions of the site are hidden, creating potentially dangerous conditions. A few key streets and alleys should be constructed fully or as pedestrian and bike ways to provide visual and physical access. Pedestrian / bikeways should include, at a minimum, a 12 foot wide shared use path and pedestrian-scaled street lighting appropriate for a park setting. W 11th Ave should be fully constructed if possible, or at least provided with vehicular access from the east to reach the parcel 930-55452-000 so that it may be developed



*Figure 5.55 - Merrill Youth Center Site*



with housing. W 10th Ave should be connected through as a pedestrian and bike way, providing park access.

2. Consolidate parcels the youth center is located on and remove non-existing streets. The youth center is located on 6 city-owned properties along with a number of streets and alleys that have not been constructed. The site should be consolidated and replatted into a single parcel covering all of this land.
3. Add adjacent vacant parcels to the youth center site. A number of vacant parcels surround the youth center site, cutting it off from the adjacent streets. These parcels should be added to the youth center site, transforming the site into a park with well maintained edges. If parcels within the superblock are available in addition to those listed below, they should also be added to the youth center site. Parks and civic institutions should be faced by adjacent houses and businesses, not at their rear.
  - a. County owned parcels:
    - 930-61931-000; a high priority parcel at the northwest end of the site which provides presence on the corner of W 9th Ave and S Mulberry St.
  - b. Privately owned parcels:
    - Parcels 930-62068-000, 930-62069-000, 930-62070-000, 930-62071-000, 930-62072-000, and 930-62073-000; high priority parcels at the southeast corner of the superblock, allowing access to W 12 Ave along the stream and space to provide stormwater management.
    - Parcels 931-45910-000, 931-45911-000, 931-45912-000, 931-45913-000, and 931-45914-000; parcels along S Plum St providing cross-block access.
4. Construct stormwater management designed as park space. The entire youth center site is located within the FEMA flood zone, which runs along the Harding Drain. At S Mulberry St, within the youth center site, the drain is piped, running under the high school, City Hall, the Convention Center, and a few blocks of housing. The drain slows the flow of stormwater, often flooding this site and nearby areas. The site should be re-designed as a park, and land reshaped to provide additional stormwater detention. The stormwater system should be designed to allow for flooding during major storm events but double as park space for community use as well.
5. Adjust the zoning of remaining private parcels on the superblock. Infill should be encouraged on the remaining parcels of the superblock. Due to the odd lot configuration, much of this infill will need to be in the form of accessory dwelling units at the rear of properties so that housing faces onto the park. Additionally, townhomes, duplexes, and small multifamily housing should be allowed, adding housing at a variety of price points, within close proximity of the youth center and park.
6. Replace the youth center building. The youth center building itself is in need of removal and the construction of a new youth center. This should be located at the corner of S 9th Ave and S Mulberry St if the vacant property can be acquired, or close to one of the streets at the edge of the superblock. The northeast corner is preferred both for the civic nature of that site and because much of that site is outside of the flood zone, which covers nearly all of the youth center site. The new building should be civic in design, with ample windows facing onto surrounding streets and towards the youth center property behind. Located near a street, on-street parking can provide all of the needed parking for the youth center.



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### Jefferson Regional Medical Center

#### Where

The Jefferson Regional Medical Center (JRMC) is oddly situated in a Part of Pine Bluff, north of the country club, which borders Bayou Bartholomew, between S Hazel and Cherry Streets adjacent to a mix of residences and institutions. The site and surrounding area lacks a clear structure of streets and blocks, with the medical center occupying a superblock disconnected from the area's primary street network.

#### Purpose

A major area employer, JRMC is in the preliminary stages of major modification to their facilities. The plan being pursued unfortunately does little to improve the campus' interface with the neighborhood or to improve the surrounding built environment (See Fig. 5.57). Hospital administrators are not typically aware of these issues, nor are the hospital architects' designs that conventionally focus on the hospital as an isolated clinical unit. The interface with the surrounding neighborhood should extend the hospital's commitment to public health, to its campus, and the community.



Figure 5.57 - Existing Condition and Proposed 2018 Concept Plan

Recently, the healthcare world has become more aware of the built environment's impact on health and that healthcare does not mean community health. Poor health outcomes related to obesity and diabetes, respiratory issues, mental health, and other chronic preventable illnesses are primarily shaped by the immediate surrounding environment that is often neither health promoting nor disease preventing. This pattern is particularly present in underserved and underinsured communities.

Access to healthcare generally determines just 10% of community health but accounts for 90% of all healthcare expenditures. This mismatch in spending is driving many hospital systems to invest upstream and prevent poor health outcomes before they arrive in emergency departments - the most expensive places of care.

Such investments often include hospital campus planning that recognizes the importance of place and design beyond the clinical setting and integrating with the community through healthy built environment principles. These principles allow healthy choices to be the easy choices one can make. In addition to healthcare and healthy food access, healthy built environment patterns are connected, encourage the pleasant and safe walk, provide safe cycling infrastructure and transportation access, provide shaded streets that consider all users, reduce heat island effects, and meet the daily needs without having to rely on the automobile. Healthy built environments have proven to have a positive impact on a community's physical, mental, and social health. JRMC's coming investment in their campus should reflect non-clinical approaches that can improve the system's quality and cost effectiveness while significantly benefiting the neighborhood and the community at large.

The renovated JRMC campus can serve as a neighborhood center, beautify streets, and encourage development of housing and services for staff, visitors, and neighbors. The recommended design is a long term campus vision that uses JRMC's 2018 plan concept as a starting point, with minor modifications to the entry geometry, new tower orientation, and the location of service truck bays (See Fig. 5.58). This serves two goals: to orient the new tower towards Mulberry Street and service bays away, towards 40th Ave, and creating a slower speed geometry at the entry from 42nd Ave which terminates in a civic square rather than a roundabout. The remaining buildings proposed represent a much longer vision for campus, locating new medical office buildings along the campus edges at Mulberry and Hickory Streets, and 42nd Ave. Buildings along the campus edge could also be multi-family, providing affordable housing options for staff and area residents. At the new entry and 42nd Ave are commercial mixed-use buildings that should house food service, pharmacy, and services to support staff, patients, visitors, and residents (See Fig. 5.59)

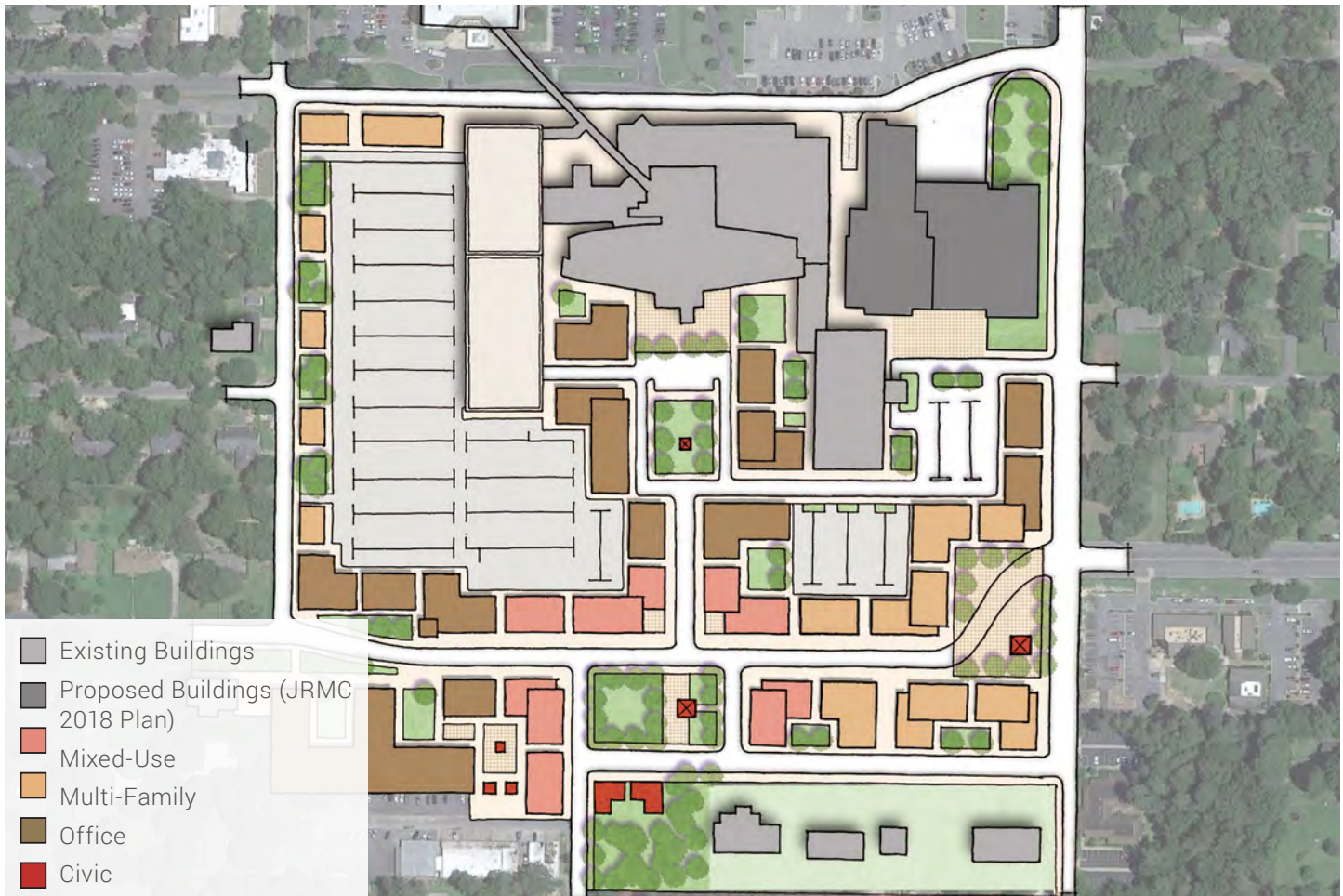


Figure 5.58 - Proposed JRMC Campus Master Plan

The Jefferson Regional Medical Center is an important institution, and its successful future should be supported. These recommendations intend to propel JRMC into future-oriented thinking concerning campus design, especially the community-campus interface. Conventional thinking attempts to buffer the large buildings from edges with landscape and parking, locating height in the middle. Future-oriented thinking lines the campus edge with buildings that engage and active streets, and provides space for cafes and services that serve both the medical center and the community.

### Action Steps

1. Engage JRMC in long-term future discussions. The City and JRMC should be partners in the future of the neighborhood and facility. There are off-site modifications that the City must be involved in, like conditions on Hazel Street which slow emergency vehicles. And the City should be concerned with the edges of campus along Hickory and Mulberry Streets and 42nd Ave. In the surrounding area, the City's zoning standards need modification as described below. But first, JRMC and the City should work together to achieve a shared vision for the larger area to align plans and policies.
2. Change zoning for off-campus properties in the surrounding area. Outside of the JRMC campus, most non-single-family development is automobile-oriented in design, which is incompatible with the surrounding neighborhood character. While these buildings are not likely to be redeveloped for some time, any future development should be oriented towards the street, with shielded parking and service, establishing slow speed, walkable streets. Future zoning in the area must be handled carefully, considering the hodge-podge of uses and direct adjacency of low intensity single family dwellings.
3. Consider reorienting campus towards W 40th Ave. While the plan recommendations herein retain an entry from W 42nd Ave, choices in that design follow existing plans from JRMC as closely as possible. When thinking long-term, reorienting hospital access towards W 40th Ave should be considered. The character of W 42nd





Ave, which hosts the main hospital entrance, is solidly rural single family, which is not compatible with higher traffic volumes. However, W 40th Ave is lined with higher intensity uses that are less impacted by higher traffic volumes. Other considerations may suggest that 42nd Ave is a better entrance, and if so, the zoning along it should be considered for higher intensity uses. While traffic is a problem for lower intensity housing, traffic is a benefit for businesses and institutions. The location of vehicle movements should be coordinated with the land uses.

4. Consider zoning standards along the JRMC campus edge. The core issue with large institutional campuses in neighborhoods occurs at the intersection of these uses, setting aside traffic impacts. A few simple zoning requirements and adjustments could be added to shape the campus edge over time. Careful use of

nonconformities, along with increases in development capacity and decreases in parking requirements, could encourage campus design that improves the edge condition. The primary zoning issues are the same as those in all area discussed: parking should be behind buildings or sufficiently screened from the street, buildings should have windows and doors facing towards streets, there should generally be buildings along streets, and streets should support pedestrians.

5. Pre-design area streetscapes. As future development occurs, street improvements should incrementally transform the area. The standard sidewalk requirements, while not enforced, are also not sufficient for a higher-intensity area, and do not include street tree requirements. Streetscapes in the area should be pre-designed to actively direct future outcomes.



Figure 5.59 - Illustration Depicting the JRMC Campus Integrated with Surrounding Neighborhoods





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# FOCUS

## BLAKE & 13TH

### Blake & 13th

#### Where

The intersection of S Blake St and W 13th / Hepburn Ave, from Fig St to Bay St. The interchange on I-530 makes this intersection an important transportation node. These recommendations also apply at W 6th Ave / Hwy-190, another important intersection along Blake.

#### Purpose

The road size, volume, speed, and land uses along S Blake St divide the West End from the core of Pine Bluff. As a state road with high volumes, changing the character of Blake is unlikely. Despite the danger and difficulties created by the high-volume street, traffic passing by is good for businesses. However, businesses directly along a street like Blake cannot survive in a traditional, walkable format, instead requiring a

format that is automobile-oriented. To reconnect the West End, solutions are found in the perpendicular direction, along W 13th / Hepburn Ave and W 6th Ave / Hwy-190.

The primary connections from the West End into the core of Pine Bluff, Hepburn and Hwy-190 should be retrofitted to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety and to create nodes of neighborhood services. Both streets are automobile-oriented. Hepburn has a sidewalk on one side, barely separated from traffic and not entirely continuous. On the other hand, Hwy-190 has no pedestrian accommodations. Pedestrian and cyclist safety can be achieved in neighborhood conditions by significantly slowing traffic speeds. But larger roadways like these require dedicated facilities, while also requiring vehicle speeds to be reduced. Beyond safety, comfortable accommodations like shade trees, an occasional place to sit, and protection from fast moving cars. Additionally, the position of buildings along the road impact sidewalk comfort.



Figure 5.60 - Prototypical Main Street Development Crossing Blake

Due to the traffic volume on Blake, and connections west on Hepburn and east on Hwy-190, the two intersections are excellent opportunities for modest neighborhood main streets. Between Fig and Bay Streets on Hepburn, most of the properties are empty, making development simple. While the northeast corner is occupied by AutoZone, the building and parking are set back sufficiently from the street to easily fit more buildings on the site. On a street perpendicular to Blake, business can succeed when oriented towards the street if the street is well designed. Presently Hepburn is not designed for this, but these two blocks could be changed, leading the way for further modifications. Converted to an intimate main street, Hepburn-oriented businesses can attract customers who commute along Blake, as well as those connecting the I-530. A short main street segment at Hwy-190 is also possible through similar roadway and land use changes. However, on Hwy-190 most of the parcels near Blake are already developed, so change will take more time. The remainder of each corridor can support more substantial housing development, helping to create a people presence along the street and nearby buildings to help slow traffic (See Fig. 5.60).

Creating pedestrian activity at these intersections, active uses along each street, and changes to the roadways will slow traffic, allow businesses to flourish, and help stitch the West End to the core of Pine Bluff.

## Action Steps

Changes are required to streetscapes and regulatory documents in order to incentivize and direct private development along Hepburn and Hwy-190.

1. Adjust zoning to create main streets and allow more housing along Hepburn and Hwy-190. As with most other sections, zoning modification is required to activate these areas. The zone can be similar to zoning for neighborhood main streets in the first one or two blocks from Blake in both directions, and then similar to neighborhood seams along the remainder of those streets. Rather than creating specific zoning districts for these sites, repeatable districts should be developed for areas that are neighborhood centers, seams, and fabric within the future land use map. Some consideration is required here for incremental growth along the landscaped edges of properties such as AutoZone. This structure can continue to serve customers along Blake, but the southern edge of the property should be lined with new, shallow buildings facing onto Hepburn. Similar zoning allowances are necessary for the 28th Street area and in other suburban commercial areas across Pine Bluff.

2. Reconstruct Hepburn between Fig and Bay Streets. To change perception and encourage private investment, Hepburn should be rebuilt between Fig and Bay Streets. This streetscape should establish a main street feel, and tighten the curb return radii at Blake. An effective radius should be used to accomplish this (see the toolkits) (See Fig. 5.61).
3. Consider temporary, incubator retail along Hepburn. Instigating new development in this location will be difficult. In the interim, small and temporary retail spaces may be added at free or very low rent to incubate locally-grown businesses. Small incubator space has seen success in Detroit's open spaces, and also in Muskegon, Michigan, which is a model appropriate for Pine Bluff. These facilities may be purchased and managed by a City agency or by one or more area institutions. Once private development interest begins transforming the area, incubator facilities may be relocated to other places like Blake and Hwy-190, Main & Harding, Jefferson Square, Fluker St or Reeker Ave, or downtown.
4. Consider reconstructing Hwy-190 between Fig and Bay Streets. Like the reconstruction recommended for Hepburn, Hwy-190 similarly requires change. Hepburn is a higher priority due to its I-530 connection, however changes to Hwy-190 to accommodate bicycles have been discussed, along with reconstruction of W 6th Ave further east. While current pavement widths are different between these streets, the future reconstruction should produce a similar street design.
5. Pre-design the streetscapes of Hepburn and Hwy-190. Prior streetscape recommendations are concerned with the portions of Hepburn and Hwy-190 closest to Blake because these areas have the greatest potential to improve pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Blake. But the rest of both streets also require reconstruction in the long-term. This scale of reconstruction is costly, and may be completed all at once, in smaller segments, or incrementally as individual properties redevelop. Due to this uncertain and longer term street reconstruction timeline, the preferred condition along these streets should be designed soon, directing future public or private investments when they are possible (See Fig. 5.62)



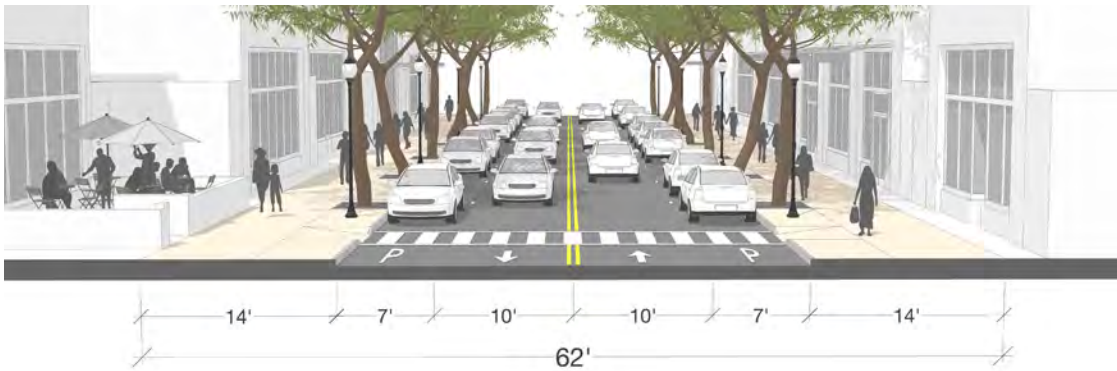


Figure 5.61 - Reconstruction of Hepburn Between Fig and Bay Streets

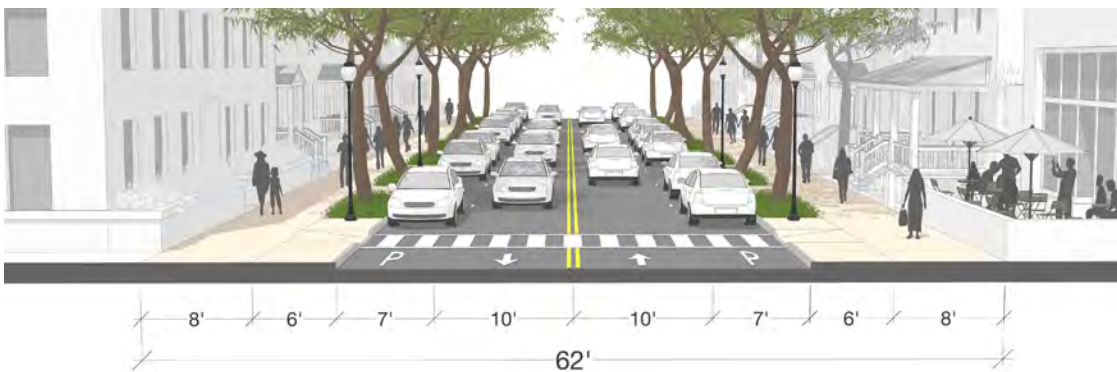
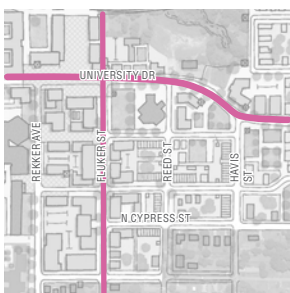


Figure 5.62 - Reconstruction of Hepburn Along Neighborhood Seams





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### 28th Avenue

#### Where

West 28th Ave from the railroad east to S Spruce St. One of the more active commercial corridors within the core of Pine Bluff, 28th Ave boasts local and national businesses in close proximity to numerous neighborhoods.

#### Purpose

At the confluence of three I-350 interchanges at Hazel St, Old Warren Rd, and Camden Rd, W 28th Ave between the railroad and S Spruce St in one of the most active commercial corridors within the city core. The traffic volume along 28th is between 15 and 20,000 ADT (average daily traffic), which is high for the City but not unmanageable at slower speeds. This traffic volume brings commercial opportunity; unfortunately, the street is wide and high-speed, and businesses are suburban in format which brings little overall value to the city or surrounding neighborhoods. East of Hazel Street, 28th Ave splits into a one-way pair that cuts through approximately 14 blocks of neighborhood fabric, ending that configuration at Olive Street. In its current condition, 28th Ave produces a low-quality commercial strip and erodes neighborhood fabric west of Hazel with large parking lots and suburban-style commercial encroachment, and east of Hazel with high speed vehicles. Neither condition is desirable or productive.

Being under City control, W 28th Ave could become a vibrant and vital mainstreet, repairing the surrounding neighborhood fabric. High volume roadways provide customers for businesses, but they are often converted into high-speed suburban commercial corridors by conventional engineering practices. This type of corridor produces far less tax value to the city on a per acre basis than main streets like downtown, and often less than townhouses and other medium-intensity housing. But streets of all volumes can support productive land uses with the right design. In the format of a main street, 28th Ave could host 9 blocks of highly-productive mixed-use commercial and medium-intensity residential buildings. Due to the excessive parking already in place and the width of the roadway, intensification of the corridor could occur without pushing parking and other noxious developments into the neighborhood. Rather than compete with downtown, which occupies a unique history and position at Lake Saracen, 28th Ave would compete with Olive St and Camden Rd, highway-oriented businesses, which are of a lower value from the standpoints of productivity and community cohesion. A strong 28th Ave main street would be easily accessible by foot, bike, or car from the City's Central and South neighborhoods (See Fig. 5.63).

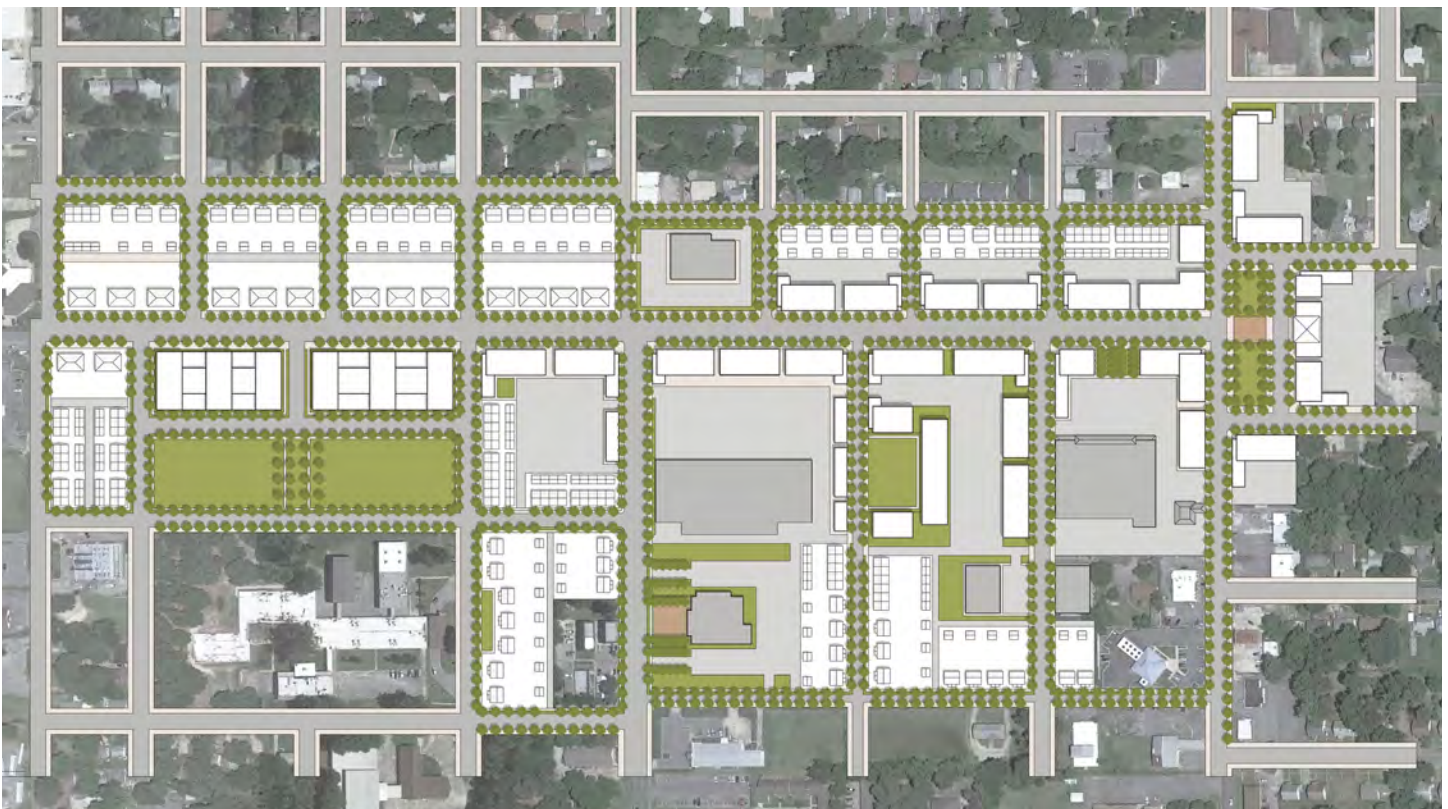


Figure 5.63 - 28th Avenue Mixed-Use Center Revitalization



Slowing traffic along and reimagining W 28th Ave allows the one-way pair east of Hazel St to be calmed, improving connections between the Central and South neighborhoods, and reducing traffic impact on adjacent homes. Speed kills. High-speed traffic has no place cutting through neighborhoods with houses directly adjacent. Luckily low-speed traffic can accommodate the same or greater volume of ADT, especially in a gridded street network that disperses cars. Key roadway features that lower speeds include two-way traffic, narrow lanes, on-street parking, street trees, buildings near the roadway, and pedestrian activity. Between Catalpa and Hazel Streets, 28th Ave should be narrowed to 3 lanes and eventually receive on-street parking, street trees, and more appropriate sidewalks. Just east of Hazel, before Spruce St, the odd geometries creating the one-way pair should be modified to create a rectangular park from 27th to 28th Ave. This allows both 27th and 28th

Avenues to become two-way streets, connecting with the larger segment of 28th Ave by circulating around the park. While a far cry from what exists today, a reimagined and retrofit 28th Avenue would significantly benefit the City.

### Action Steps

The process of converting W 28th Ave will take a long time, and full conversion requires substantial money in rebuilding the roadway. Additionally, some of the commercial land owners are likely to oppose lane reductions because they have a limited, suburban understanding of successful city design. Many think that wider roads equal more business. In many places conversions from 5-lanes to 3-lanes have resulted in increased customers, but full success comes only once the suburban buildings are removed and sites redeveloped. This scale of change is a long process, and now is the time to set the vision (See Fig. 5.64).



Figure 5.64 - Illustration of 28th Avenue Mixed-Use Center Revitalization

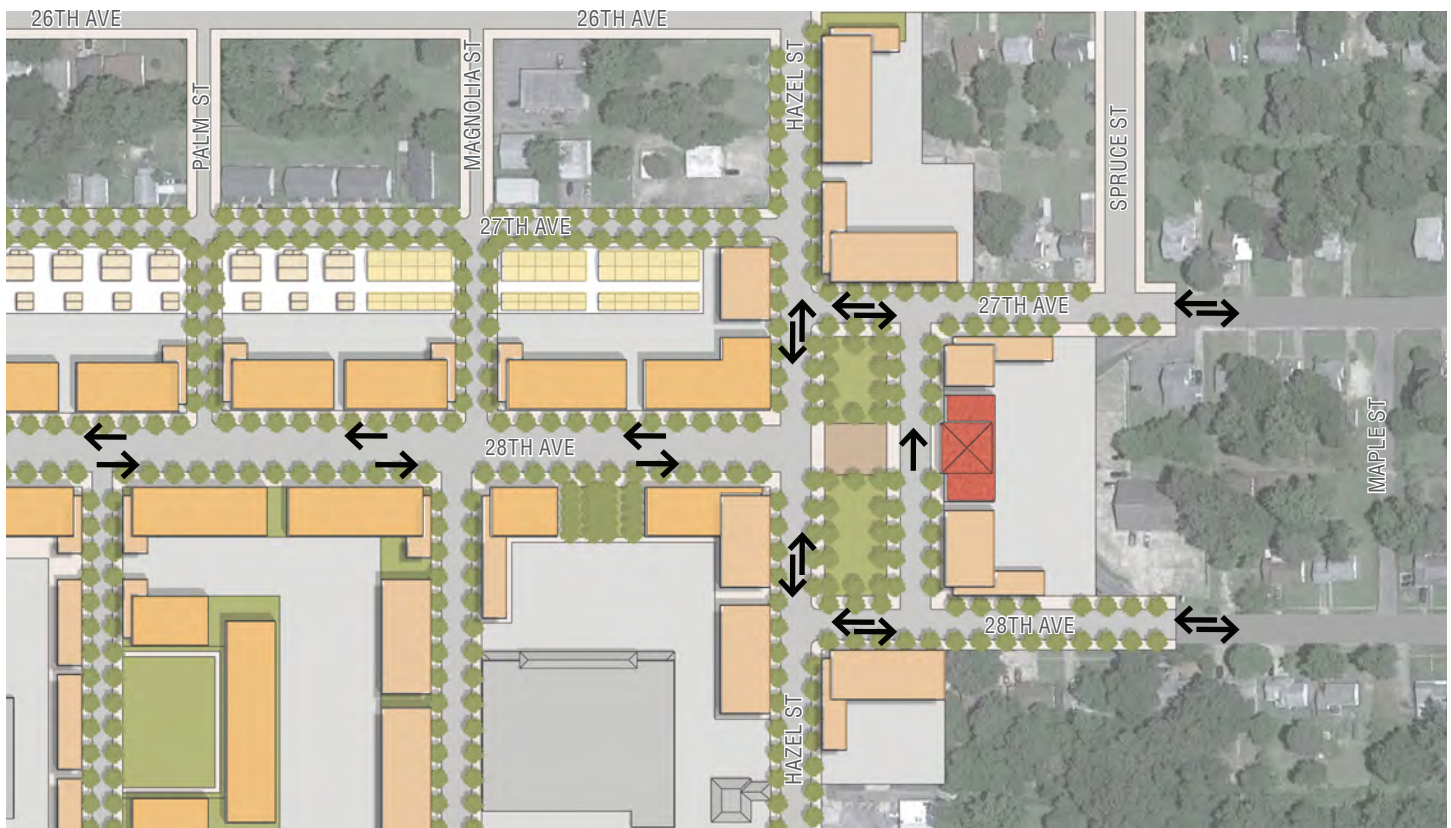


Figure 5.65 - Traffic Circulation

1. Re-stripe W 28th Ave, west of S Spruce St. Controlling traffic speed and creating on-street parking are both required to change the character of a suburban roadway. W 28th Ave, while within the core city, is designed like a suburban arterial for ½ mile east of the railroad to Hazel Street yet that type of design is intended for streets that continue for many miles. Initial changes to the street design can be achieved by restriping, reducing travel lanes and making space for street parking or bikes. Initially, restriping should create buffered bike lanes as on-street parking will not be used until buildings are built close to the street. Buffered bike lanes will provide space for cyclists and limit the space for vehicles to slow movement
2. Redesign W 28th Ave, west of Hazel St. An initial design concept for the reconstruction of W 28th Ave should be completed ahead of available funding. With an appropriate design in place, funding that becomes available may more easily be utilized (See Fig. 5.66)
3. Adjust zoning along W 28th Ave, west of S Spruce St. Zoning has allowed W 28th Ave to become suburban, and for this suburban commercial development to encroach into surrounding neighborhoods. In many cases, neighboring houses now face large parking lots and service areas for businesses. With buildings set far away from 28th Ave, the street is automobile-only. In concert with re-striping 28th Ave, zoning must be changed to address both the 28th Ave condition and transition to the surrounding neighborhoods. Zoning changes here are similar to those needed along E Harding Ave and portions of Olive St that follow a suburban commercial strip condition, but greater attention should be paid to the larger transition zones and larger parking fields which may be infilled with additional housing.
4. Convert the W 27th and 28th Ave one-way pair to two-way. One-way pairs encourage higher traffic speeds. Generally these are acceptable when trying to shrink very large arterials in commercial districts. They may also be useful in rare instances that street rights of way are too narrow to accommodate 2 travel lanes. The W 27th / 28th Ave pair doesn't fit these two conditions, nor is there sufficient traffic to necessitate one-way movement. In its present format, the one-way pair divides neighborhoods and threatens the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and even drivers traveling north-south. The one-way pair should be converted to two-way. In general this is a simple process of changing signage and adjusting some paint. The other area of difficulty is discussed in the following point.



5. Create a civic green to negotiate the grid-shift geometry at S Spruce St. The intersection between the one-way segments of 27th/28th Ave and the wider section of 28th Ave is currently a high-speed geometry, encouraging speeding through the neighborhood. Additionally, short street stubs are left between Spruce and Hazel, and most properties are oddly shaped and underutilized due to the curving geometries. The surrounding neighborhoods have little park space; a civic space in this location would help offset the lack of parks, especially if it is outfitted with a playground and other amenities. If negotiating property access proves too difficult, the curved segments of 28th Ave that connect to the one-way pair could be closed to traffic and painted to appear as public space. This modification could be done without impacting access to any adjacent properties through a minor connection to the insurance agency parking lot.
6. End the 28th Ave truck route at S Hazel St. Presently, 28th Ave including the one-way pair is designated as a truck route. The one-way pair portion cuts through a neighborhood, where truck traffic should not be encouraged. The central city has numerous alternative routes and connections to I-530 and other major regional roads, leaving the one-way pair on 28th Ave an unnecessary truck connection. The MPO should remove the truck route designation on 28th Ave from Hazel to Olive.

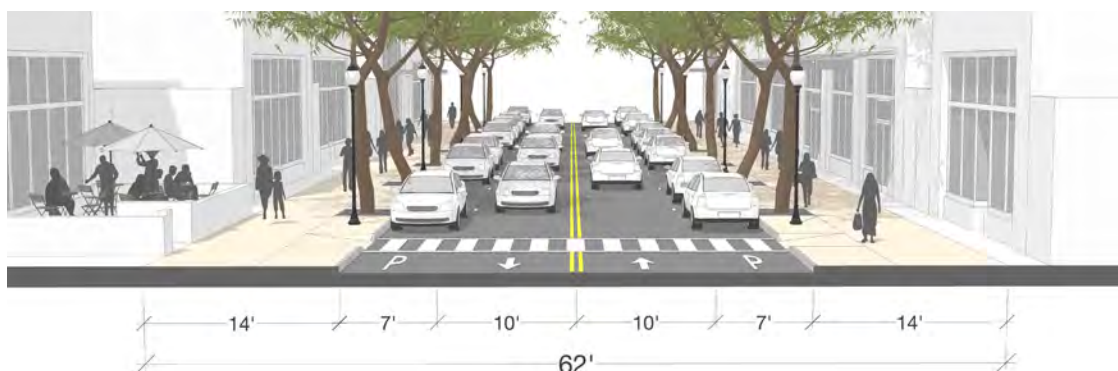


Figure 5.66 - Redesign of 28th Avenue West of Hazel Street



### East End / Pines Mall

#### Where

Principally the area bound by Martha Mitchell to the east, Commerce Rd to the west, and E Harding Ave. The East End of Pine Bluff hosts the largest of three suburban commercial districts, formerly anchored by the Pines Mall. In the near future this area will be anchored by Saracen Casino, east of Martha Mitchell, off of Market Street.

#### Purpose

This plan is principally focused on rebuilding the core city of Pine Bluff, and while new development towards the edge of town is discouraged, the East End must be addressed because of outside factors. In the near future, a casino open just to the east of Martha Mitchell, off of Market Street. Adjacent to this is the run-down suburban commercial strip along E Harding Ave, including the Pines Mall. Like most malls in recent years, Pines Mall has declined and emptied of shops. Across the country malls and suburban commercial strips have declined in favor of either new suburban commercial lifestyle centers or walkable downtowns and main streets. Normally the effort and expense needed to transform a failed mall is too high to consider a priority in coming years for Pine Bluff. However, the Casino will bring energy to this part of town, which means that portions of the East End are likely to experience investment and redevelopment.

The format of new investment and redevelopment in the East End is a high priority concern. Because investment is inevitable, that investment should be directed to positively impact the city. With the current condition of the East End, typical development practices in the area, and regulatory standards set up to encourage suburban development, the current trajectory of the East End would be detrimental to the city. The area between Commerce Rd and Martha Mitchell, containing the mall and undeveloped land to the north of it, is vast. If directed towards more intense, walkable, and

interconnected redevelopment, the results could significantly increase the City's tax base and leverage existing major infrastructure and the casino. To illustrate this, a comparison of the size of the East End reveals that it could include all of downtown and the civic center, all of downtown Fayetteville, or most of downtown Little Rock (See Figure 5.70). In order to direct development, subdivision and zoning standards need to be updated and a vision needs to be communicated to interested investors and developers. Such a vision is included in this plan (See Figure 5.69).

#### Action Plan

Because the City does not need to be actively involved, preparing for investment in the East End is simple. **Codes need to be changed, and a design vision presented**, which is already part of this plan.

1. Adjust zoning to direct preferred outcomes. Zoning for the redevelopment of the East End should be revised through an overlay district that provides two development paths: one which achieves outcomes by encouraging subdivision with significantly increased capacity over the current zone, and one which requires the creation of a gridded internal street network, with open spaces, that also increases capacity over the current zone. In this scenario, a developer could opt to follow the strict standards or could alternatively subdivide and rezone the property to achieve a similar outcome towards their own vision.
2. Adjust subdivision standards to direct preferred outcomes. Current subdivision standards encourage low-value suburban development patterns. Subdivision standards should be adjusted to require an interconnected system of streets that forms mostly rectangular blocks, allows for a variety of local street types, requires public space in the form of squares or plazas, and encourages dual-use and sustainable stormwater management.
3. Pre-design the Market street reconstruction. When the East End is redeveloped, Market Street should become a mixed-use main street, to benefit from casino traffic. Proper design of Market Street is important to slow car speeds encouraging shopping, and to provide ample sidewalk space towards the same ends. A design for Market Street should be prepared as a City vision ahead of proposals from others. While there will be a push for more travel lanes and faster movement, the City should resist these calls and require an intimate shopping street.



Figure 5.67 - Market Street Reconstruction



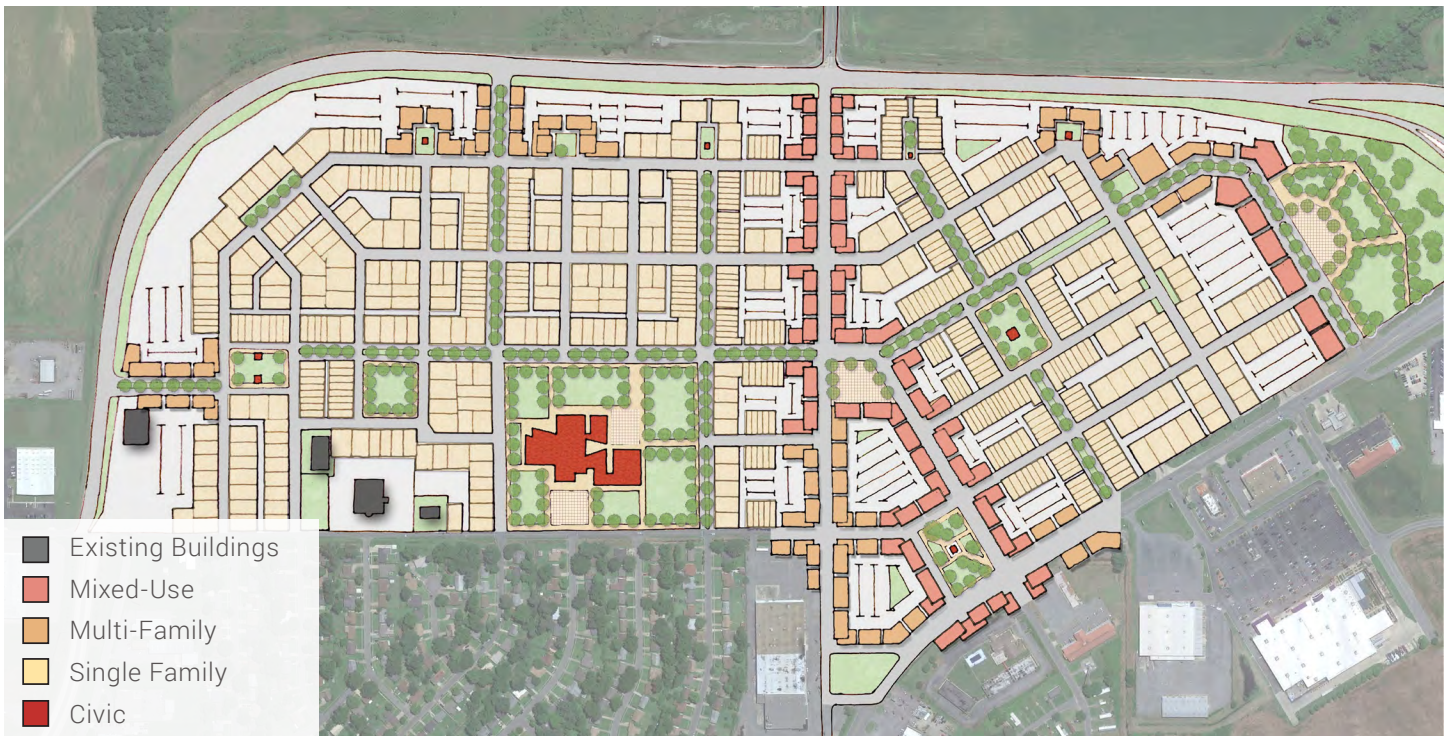


Figure 5.68 - East End Development Plan



Figure 5.69 - Illustration Depicting the East End Development Plan Looking East From Harding





Figure 5.70 - Scale Comparison - Existing Site Conditions



Figure 5.71 - Scale Comparison - Downtown Pine Bluff





Figure 5.72 - Scale Comparison - Little Rock, AR

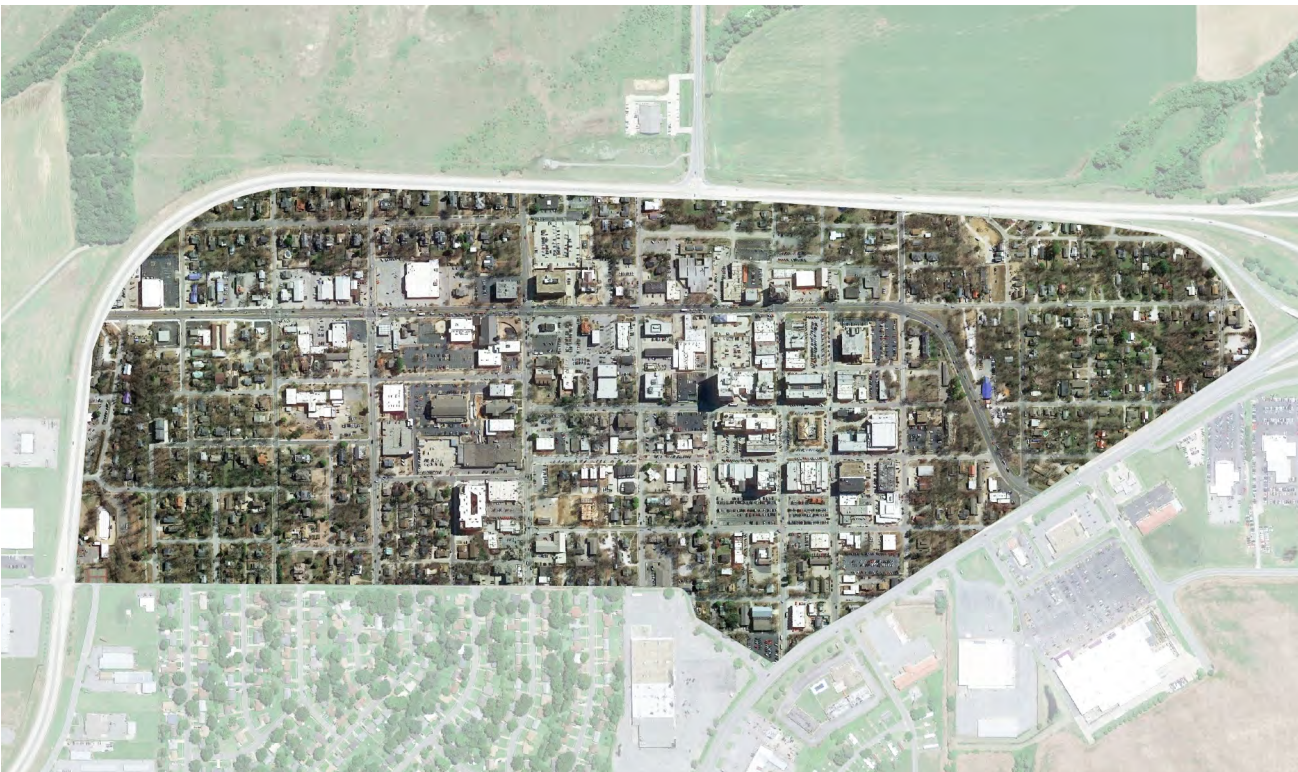


Figure 5.73 - Scale Comparison - Fayetteville, AR

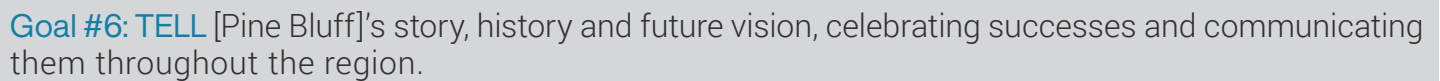


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# 6.0 TELL





Story telling, when authentic and honest can inspire others to see Pine Bluff differently and pierce the negative perceptions of those who choose not to see the potential of a better City. Smart and creative (and sometimes irreverent) social media can attract positive attention to the ongoing narrative of Pine Bluff's success. Pine Bluff has to create individual champions that will carry the message to the broader world and attract people who want to be a part of something extraordinary.

How many new store openings have you read about in Pine Bluff over the past years? Now, how many store closings or layoffs have you read? As we can attest to after watching the local news, it's the bad stories that catch viewers' attention. The same goes for printed material as well. A Communication Director at City Hall should begin crafting the message that distributes the stories online, in papers, in magazines that may, over time, change public perception of what it is like to live in Pine Bluff. If arrests and convictions are made, that information should be shared (provided legal counsel permits) rather than just news on the crime. However, that news should be below the fold, taking a back seat to success stories in town. Little information, outside of Pine Bluff, was heard on the opening of the \$11 million dollar Aquatics Center. Positive

news like this should be shouted for all to hear. Most of the state knows that Pine Bluff will soon have a Quapaw Nation casino because that company, eager to attract gamblers to the city, have been strategic in their ads and information. The same zeal should be used when trumpeting a civic or quality of life change in town. If it affects the citizens of the city, visitors to the region then it should be shared, in a strategic manner.

### Application

Everywhere. The story of Pine Bluff's transformation should be blanketed across all social media outlets, devices and channels to reach the eyes and ears of future Pine Bluff residents. There should be special attention given to reaching former Pine Bluff residents that now live elsewhere. The strongest connection to a place exists within the people who grew up in the City. They want to see change, they want to bring their talents back "home" and they are more than likely to do so if they are given the opportunity to contribute to the forward momentum that has already been created. There is never an opportunity that should be missed to highlight the positive stories that exist in Pine Bluff.

### Action Steps

Take ownership of the City's "story"

1. Create a new narrative (that "Pine Bluff is")
  - a. History
  - b. People
  - c. Family
  - d. Community
  - e. Ambition
  - f. Resourceful
  - g. Determined
  - h. Proud
2. Direct your story
  - a. Inform people statewide and regionally about the positive things happening in Pine Bluff. Too many news reports and stories coming from Pine Bluff are negative related to crime or safety. The information to the region needs to be a message of rebuilding, recovery and resiliency. There have been recent ads by the Saracen Casino promoting their future opening but the community is more than one new business. The message should convey that there's more to Pine Bluff than this new casino. The Main Street Library, the new Aquatics Center, and restaurants on Barraque

should be shared to promote downtown's rebirth or stories on the expansion of JRMC to promote community health and wellness initiatives.

- b. Address problems/bad press head-on with factual information to clarify misconceptions. Facts should always be used when promoting the City in a positive light. A full time staff Communications Director at City Hall should be directed to build a promotional campaign that strategically shares news of grand openings or dramatic changes. These stories will catch the attention of past residents and fill the current community with a new sense of pride.

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing.

Along with a strategy on what message to share, how to deliver that message, and who is the audience, the 'when' is just as important. Marketing experts will tell you that posting information is often as much of 'when', as it is 'what' you post. For example, the frequency of social media posts for viewers to see the stories but not get inundated by too much information too many times each week is a delicate matter. Marketing conferences even teach what days of the week are better to post than other days. A joint branding calendar be approved by City Hall's Communications Director and other parties, such as Go Forward Pine Bluff. That calendar should include what message topics will be shared, on what platform and how often. Not all need to be social media or website. This calendar should include how often potential stories should run in the local and regional paper and other periodicals. The calendar should also cover what topics or stories need to be generated and by whom. This strategic approach will make sure the right message about Pine Bluff's brand is being shared correctly. Of course, new happenings, or success stories that are time sensitive should bump other calendar content when things arise in the community. However, regardless of immediate or pre-prepared material, the message needs to be positive!

### Responsible Party

As mentioned above, the City Hall Communication Director along with the Go Forward director should craft a joint strategy to avoid a duplication of services and redundancy. The information and stories from the City and from Go Forward Pine Bluff should be the same message even if it is shared in different places.

Go Forward Pine Bluff has spent considerable time, effort and resources into the future of Pine Bluff. Their web site attests to that effort and has a great tab called "Good News in Pine Bluff," (<https://goforwardpinebluff.org/good-news/>) which appears to be current on new initiatives, successes



and openings around town. Most of the focus is on downtown and at the casino as that is where the success stories are at the time of this plan. The Go Forward pillars provide the focus of the program:

- Government / Infrastructure
- Education
- Economic Development
- Quality of Life

For success to occur within these pillars (areas of focus) it has taken and will take the whole community working together. It is not a quick fix, and telling the story of success is never a short story. It requires strategies, mentioned above, staff, and volunteers willing to devote time to the effort

### Measuring Success

The difficult question of “how do you measure success?” can be viewed as goals vs. goals achieved. Mike Fishbein’s article (<https://mfishbein.com/how-do-you-measure-success/>) provides six strategies that can help define success and work towards achieving meaningful goals:

- Discover your values: This was begun by Go Forward and in part through this comprehensive planning effort. Each community has a different idea of what they want to see improve. The pillars listed above provide the categories for measuring change based on a metric that the citizens of Pine Bluff choose.
- Compare yourself (city) only to yourself (city): Each community responds to growth or change in a different way at a different pace. Pine Bluff is the only city that counts when moving forward. Action steps listed in this plan as well as Go Forward initiatives are the goals to monitor. John Wooden, famous UCLA basketball coach once said “Don’t measure yourself by what you’ve accomplished, but rather by what you should have accomplished with your abilities.” This can apply to a community when you take into account funding, resources, leadership, infrastructure, outside influences (i.e. COVID 19), and the will of the citizens.
- Measure what is hard to measure: It may be easy to add up quantitative amounts like city finances or number of students enrolled at UAPB each semester but its had to measure quality of life efforts that might influence those same students to choose to stay in Pine Bluff to enter the workforce after graduation or the effect a new park or splash pad has on the families that now use this amenity. Sometimes the ‘hard to measure’ intangibles are the things that make the greatest difference in economic development.

- Measure results over the long term: Most Americans crave immediate success, its the culture we have created. The successes that take a long time to come to fruition are the ones that can teach valuable lessons to direct other efforts that could lead to successful outcomes. Measure improvements with a long term lens whenever possible.
- Measure outcome, not proxies (the process): Education is one of the Go Forward pillars, so if one was to measure how much a student has learned over his school years, you would not just count the number of books he/she read. If he or she can apply what they have read then their learning can be put into practice. Similarly, the City should measure outcomes of the goals set forth in this plan or the successes Go Forward can see related to their pillars of focus.
- Learn and iterate: This last message is be flexible. A twenty year master plan that is flexible with sound initiatives can respond to unexpected changes that arise during those twenty years. Focusing on low impact development for the right reasons (environmentally sensitive, fiscally prudent, energy conservation, etc.) will lead to positive outcomes even if changes in the environment present scenarios not envisioned when this plan was adopted. If the reasons for doing and process to get there are sound, it’s not a bad thing to achieve that goal in ways different than initially visualized.

When it comes to rewriting the narrative on Pine Bluff, it will take hard work to share the successes for each set of goals. Communication with local and statewide news outlets and periodicals with highlight stories on those successes can slowly change public perception of Pine Bluff. Videos or Vlogs on individual successes help personalize the story. If a UAPB student graduates and decides to stay in Pine Bluff to work for a new start up company that is part of a community business incubator. The angle of the story can be a personal journey rather than just a report on the incubator.





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# 7.0 STRENGTHEN



# STRENGTHEN

## COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOOD REGENERATION



**Goal #2: STRENGTHEN** [Pine Bluff] through neighborhood regeneration, addressing community-level issues and bringing people together to build human capital.

### Overview

Strength is defined as the capacity to withstand great force or pressure. Pine Bluff has experienced a weakening of financial strength over the past 4 decades. This is due to the combination of loss of jobs, which causes a loss of population, and subsequently deterioration of the business climate that has replaced local ownership with regional or national chain stores. This weakening cannot be reversed without an influx of prosperous job opportunities, and an influx of available capital (via workers expendable income) to support incremental growth and development of local business or retail ownership. The reinvestment necessary from private property owners is vital to achieve the goals of substantial redevelopment outlined in this plan.

This effort to strengthen neighborhoods and commercial corridors will mean abandoning less viable properties to focus on a significant concentration of neighborhood attributes that will provide a full spectrum of community needs. To support these neighborhoods, there must be a significant concentration of business within walking and bicycle distance ( $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile).

Determining the health of the ongoing real estate market is difficult for a variety of reasons. There are so many vacant and abandoned properties that there is easily too much supply, and little to no demand for these existing homes and commercial properties. The housing market is dominated by aging single family residences that continue to rapidly deteriorate. Further complicating the potential for

new residential development is that the rent or mortgage prices are too low to meet a threshold needed to finance construction and make the investment financially viable.

### Purpose

Strong neighborhoods are the backbone of a community. The relationship between the people and their neighborhood is essential to creating community and seeding the culture of a place with character and life. Home ownership is critical for a strong neighborhood to stay together. A high percentage of rental properties on a single block begins to erode the community character. Not because renters are not good people, but they have not made the financial commitment to a place in the same way a homeowner does. Strong neighborhoods mean neighbors regularly interact with each other, provide for each other, and support each other in times of need.

Strong neighborhoods have a relationship with their surroundings that is healthy and accessible. Gated communities have the appearance of community within their fenceline, but the self-selected isolation from other neighborhoods is grounded in fear and prejudice. A series of gated subdivisions will never develop a healthy culture because they are by design never allowed to interact with the broader community.

Connected and active neighbors are more involved in their communities; shopping, volunteering, and worshiping locally.



Neighborhoods require access to nearby main streets, local institutions like schools and churches, and access to parks. When these destinations are nearby, residents are likely to walk or bike, travelling at a speed slow enough to interact with their neighbors, building lasting relationships. When many neighbors walk their neighborhood streets regularly, they observe and influence their neighborhood. They can engage others to become more active and help those in need. Strength is built through relationships; neighborhoods are enriched through interactions between neighbors.

### Application

#### Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods identified in this plan that have a high potential for sustained investment, and high probability for redevelopment based on their proximity to existing retail, the structure of their street grid, and proximity to existing institutions. Many of the Core City neighborhoods, that grew out of expansion from downtown in the early 20th century, had neighborhood corner stores, small groceries, or other similar convenience shops interspersed throughout the neighborhood. It provided residents access to goods and services without the need to leave the area and shop downtown. These early centers often provided a neighborhood with its unique identity. The trips to downtown were on weekends or on occasions when specialty items like shoes, clothes, or school supplies; for items not found at the corner store. The neighborhoods were strengthened by the presence of the Mom & Pop shops where you knew the owners and their employees, who often lived in the same neighborhood.

Churches and schools of that same time period were the heart of the neighborhoods they served, with a proximity close enough that families could walk to both. Quite different from the newer schools in most Arkansas towns that are very large sites located along arterial roads with enough room for car queuing lines, parking lots, and stadiums. Likewise, many newer churches sit off interstates for easy access for thousands of parishioners who drive to church once or twice a week.

The unrealized side effect of the neighborhood corner store, church, and school was the active transportation that families did on a regular basis. They were accustomed to walking rather than using a vehicle for transportation. This walking by default led to healthier individuals that knew their neighbors and protected their streets by simply walking down the sidewalks often enough to know.

Another unique aspect of pre-World War II neighborhoods was the variety of housing types, both in size and architectural style. Many of the larger two story houses were converted into small apartments yet remained in the neighborhood fabric thus expanding the diversity which helped to strengthen the entire neighborhood.

#### Neighborhood Centers

A Neighborhood Center is where surrounding residents go for a meal, to buy certain goods and services, to worship in communion, or even to gather with their neighbors at a central park. Some neighborhood centers include a mix of uses (i.e. bank, restaurants, small offices, churches, community center, etc.) in one location that's walkable or bikeable from nearby residential blocks while other neighborhood centers are smaller, often a church, school, or a park. The purpose of these centers is to provide a core to the surrounding area, the heart of the neighborhood, and often provide its identity.

Pine Bluff has a number of existing and potential neighborhood centers that could solidify the surrounding area by acting as an anchor to a neighborhood or group of neighborhoods. Most are ½ to one mile apart and focus on either park land or a facility or group of buildings. Some are future removed due to the low density of population in the area the site can serve.

These neighborhood center sites don't need to include a facility or building that would require maintenance by city or parks staff, especially if there is not currently an active facility on that site. A neighborhood center can be a park or open space that provides recreational opportunities (active or passive) for the surrounding residents, or it could be privately operated businesses or a religious institution that supports the area.

One method for strengthening neighborhoods is to identify existing or potential centers that serve current neighborhoods or to find one that borders more than one neighborhood, such as Main & Harding, which is a commercial location with historic architecture at a key intersection that has potential to include open space plazas, retail shops, restaurants, etc. (Refer to FOCUS, page 134 for more information). This commercial node can serve as an anchor while providing an identity for surrounding neighborhoods. Some neighborhood centers, like Central Park (refer to INVEST, page 88 for more information) are parks that bring the surrounding residents together to recreate and socialize. Others like the Forrest Park Elementary campus or Indiana Street Park are former school sites that still have good open space for public use, but the buildings may need to be repurposed, renovated, or demolished. Merrill Community Center (refer to FOCUS, page 150 for more information) offers both open space and facility.

Historically, neighborhood centers in other communities provide an identity for the neighborhood or area surrounding it. They create an identifiable brand that provides an image that part of town is known for. Sometimes the architectural quality of a structure becomes the image for the neighborhood. Other times it may be the history of the site where generations of residents have used that location over many decades. The use may have been personal, like family reunions or picnics, or more public, such as town hall meetings, or commercial areas with stores and an architectural character that have existed for generations.



# STRENGTHEN

## COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOOD REGENERATION

### Neighborhood Centers Described in FOCUS

Three Neighborhood Centers correspond with Focus Areas, as described in detail in FOCUS. These three neighborhood centers provide different examples of facilities or open spaces that offer a variety of support and activities to the surrounding residents. Not all centers need to have buildings and likewise, not all centers should have courts or fields as open space.

- Merrill Community Center or Seabrook Youth Center first opened in 1996 with recent renovations to the facility, which was celebrated in February 2020. It currently functions as a neighborhood center, with both interior activity and educational programs as well as exterior

amenities and open space for recreation (see page 150).

- Main & Harding: This location, which serves three adjacent smaller neighborhoods, is a commercial node located at the intersection of two important corridors in the center of town at the terminus of Main Street south of downtown. As detailed in the FOCUS section, this location has the potential to be a revitalized retail and open space (public plaza) gathering location. (see page 134).
- Central Park, a city owned and maintained park, offers court sports (basketball & tennis), a playground, picnic areas, walking path and restrooms. (see page 88).

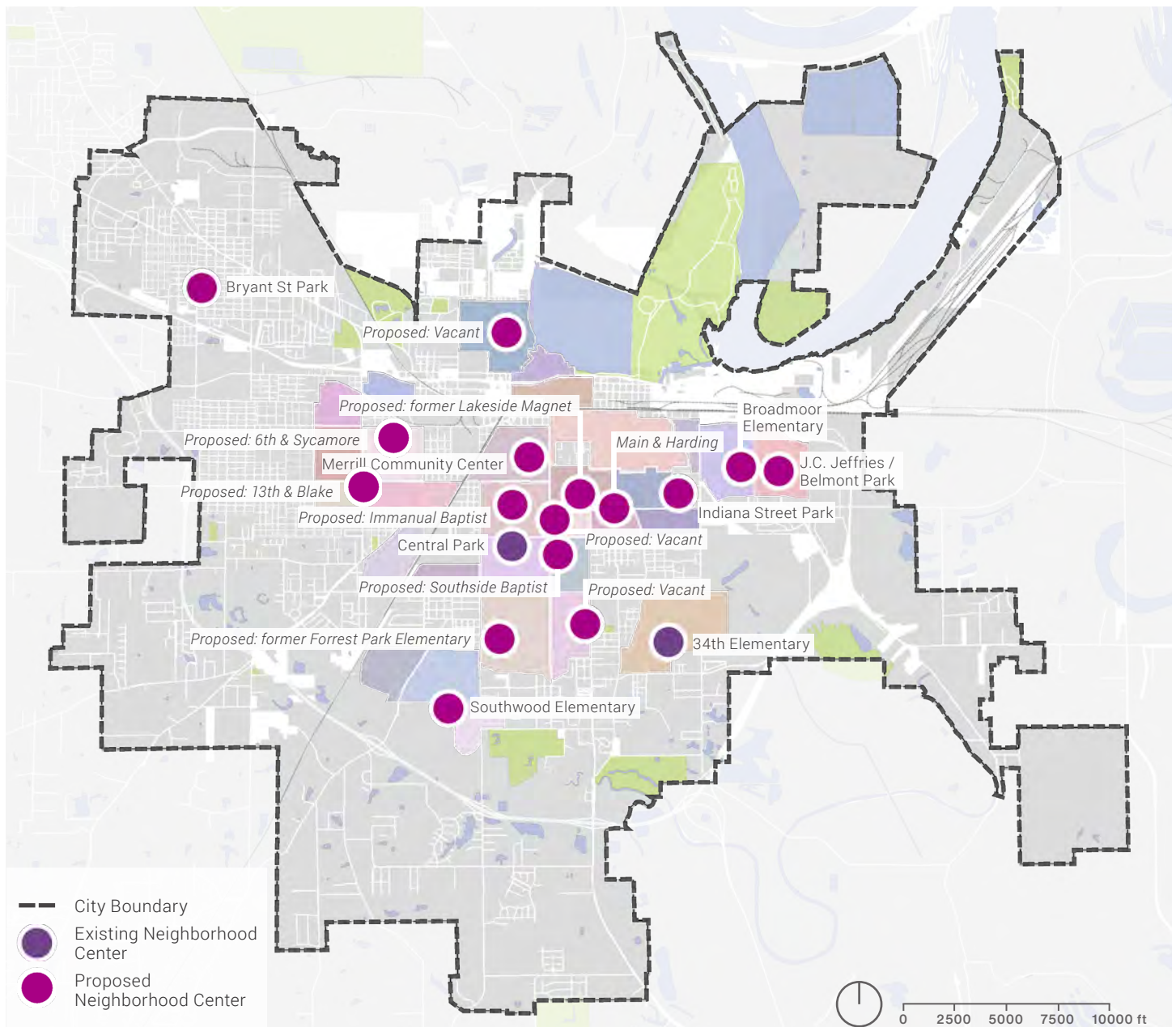


Figure 7.1: Neighborhood Centers





## Additional Neighborhood Centers

Many neighborhood centers take advantage of existing schools or parks that already function as community gathering locations, some may center on a church or other amenity that is in private ownership but may function as a defining neighborhood resource, especially those with space to gather, while other neighborhood centers are proposed on vacant lots where a new center may be established. Beyond the three mentioned above and found in FOCUS, the other existing neighborhood centers are as follows:

### East

- J.C. Jeffries / Belmont Park is common open space owned by the City on the east side of town between Harding Avenue and Martha Mitchell Expressway.
- Broadmoor School is an active school in the Broadmoor neighborhood. This location could serve as a meeting hall as well as open space use outside.
- Indiana Street Park is open space next to Taylor Field at a location that was once a school, which could be repurposed into a community center or meeting hall. Refer to LID on page 111 for more information on this area.
- Thirty Fourth Elementary School campus: This center location was suggested by Pine Bluff citizens at the charette public meeting. This facility currently serves at the neighborhood's center.

### North

- Proposed Bell St. Neighborhood Center on currently vacant open space located near Bell street & N Cypress Street. This location may simply be open space usable by University Park residents and accessible by the future trail that loops Lake Pine Bluff just three blocks to the east.
- City-owned Bryant Street Park which currently offers court sports, picnic areas, shade trees and open space uses.

### Central

- Immanuel Baptist Church Neighborhood Center. This church facility can function as a meeting hall with plenty of paved parking and open space options on the east side of the site.
- Proposed center near W. 18th Avenue and S. Poplar Street on vacant land located in the middle of a residential area.
- Southside Baptist Church has unpaved land (potential open space) north of their sanctuary that could serve as a neighborhood park with the facility as a meeting hall or after hours education center.
- Former Lakeside Magnet campus has the potential to be a meeting hall if the facility is repurposed as well as provide open space amenities on the grounds outside the

building. The large parking lot next to the school could be converted into playfields or sports courts.

### South

- Forrest Park Elementary Campus is a former elementary school situated at the heart of a neighborhood with ample open space and buildings for community programming, if financially feasible to renovate and operate.
- First Presbyterian Church has open space land north of W 32nd Avenue as well as a historically significant building that could serve as the symbolic and physical location for neighborhood meetings and gatherings. An alternate neighborhood center location for this area could be investigated on vacant property east of the church.
- Southwood Elementary School campus has large open space fields surrounding the school facility. This location has both interior and exterior potential as a neighborhood center for the surrounding residents.

### West

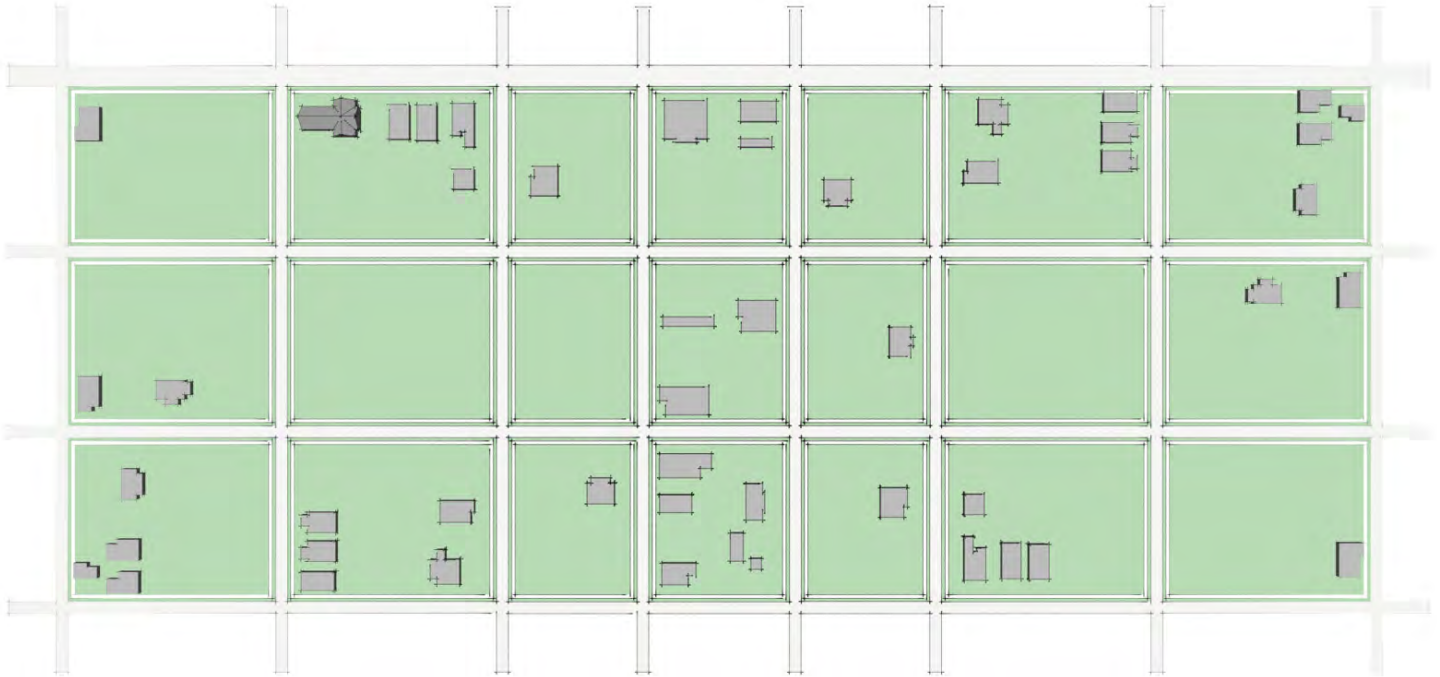
- The Jefferson County Road Department, Sanitation, and Recycling Center near 6th and Sycamore occupies over 15 acres of land and is surrounded by residential use on three sides. The facility, either in whole or south of 9th, should be relocated to a more appropriate industrial area and the site repurposed as a neighborhood center and city park. The existing brick structure along 7th Ave should be retained in its current use or as a community or recreational facility.
- 13th Ave and 6th Ave at Blake are two sites proposed for neighborhood main streets to reconnect the West End with the Core City, which could serve as neighborhood centers for the surrounding fabric. See the Focus section for more information.

## Neighborhood Regeneration

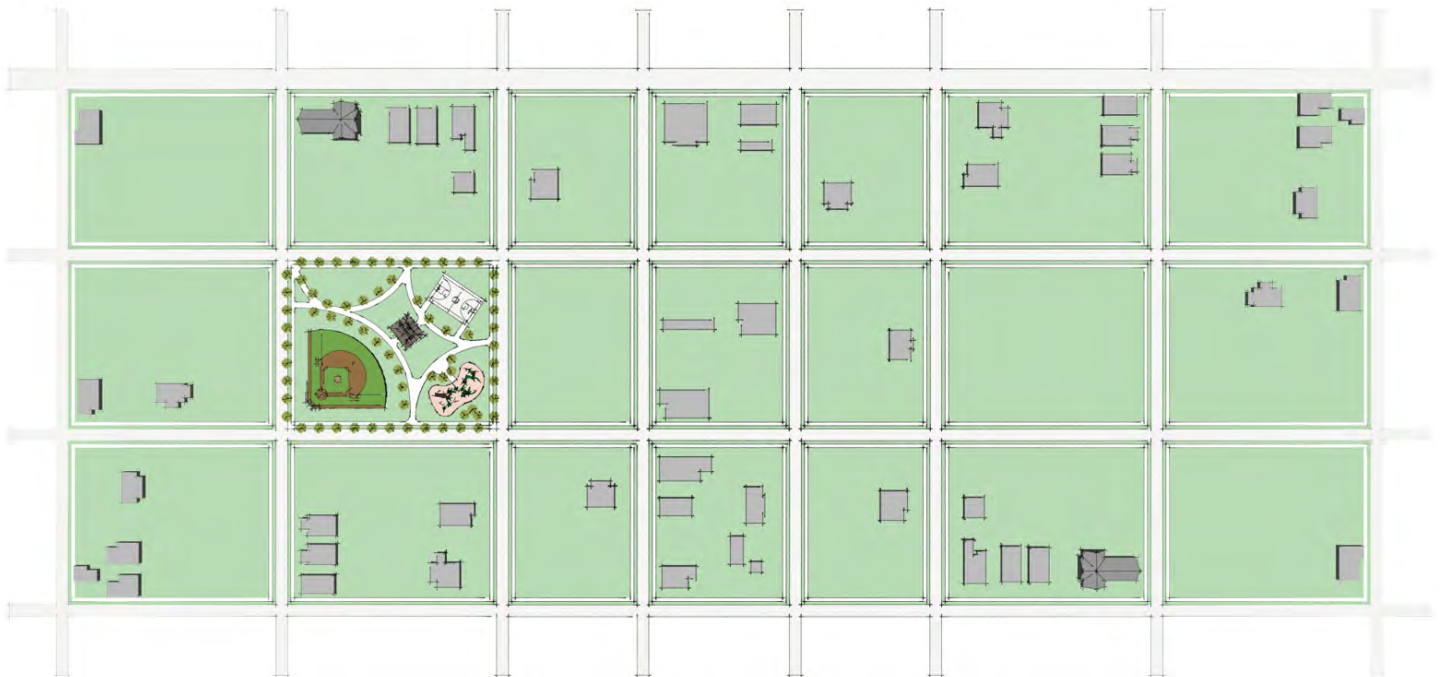
Regeneration is an effort that takes time, dedicated city staff and volunteers, and a willingness to make a positive change. The methodology that is illustrated here is the approach that may work best in many of the Pine Bluff neighborhoods with contiguous vacant lots that can be grouped to form a park site. Parks can unify a neighborhood by providing a multitude of activities for residents and families. These parks, which may have active recreational amenities like a baseball diamond or basketball courts, can nurture youth that spend time learning a sport they will come to love, while other passive uses such as walking paths, benches, or people watching opportunities also provide a respite for local residents. A playground can provide a location for child and parent bonding or a place where friendships can grow through shared experiences. The houses that surround the park become the eyes on the park, the keepers of the shared common space that directly affects their daily lives, property value, and sense of community pride.

# STRENGTHEN

## COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOOD REGENERATION

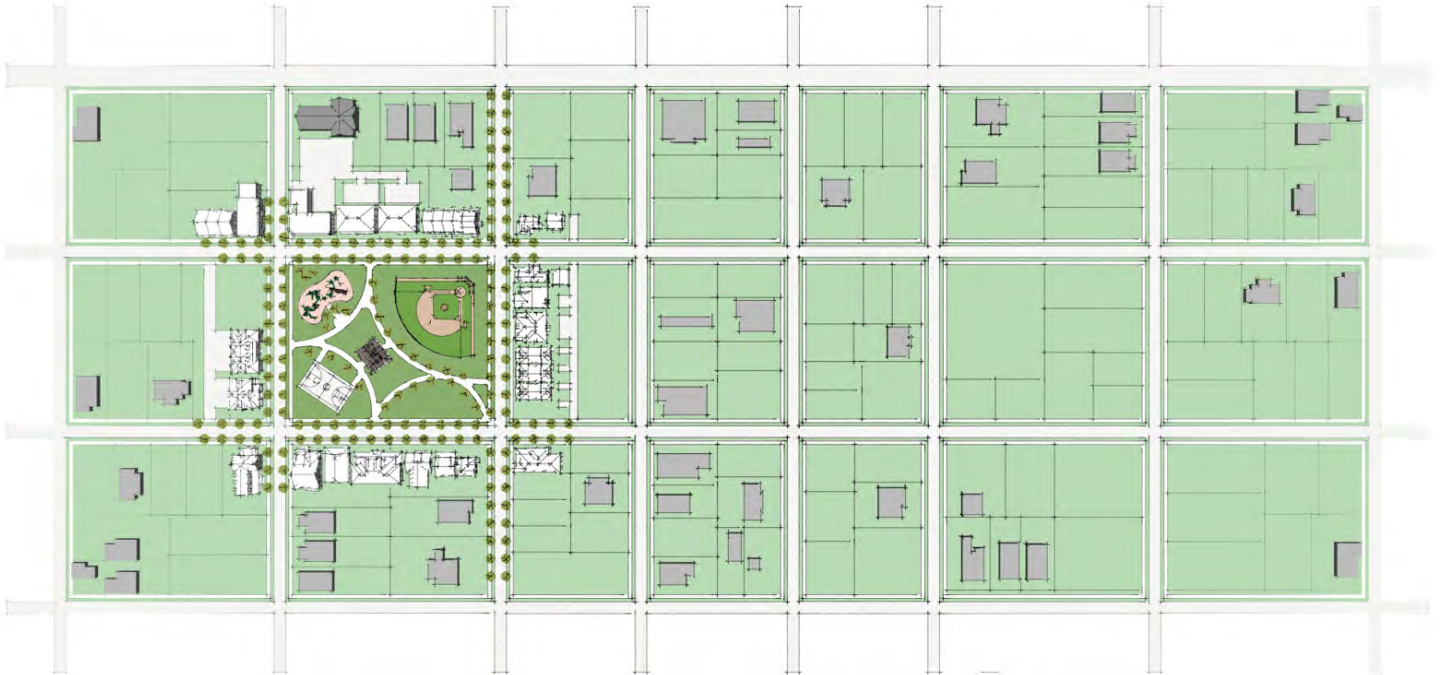


Step 1: A typical multiblock neighborhood with existing houses and vacant lots between. Many of the vacant lots occupy an entire block in some instances. Sidewalks need to be present (or introduced if not) on both sides of the street to encourage a safe walkable environment and provide connectivity to future amenities.



Step 2: A small park is developed from combining contiguous vacant lots. Even though this park has few houses fronting it on the side streets, many nearby residents are likely to come use the space since it can be accessed by foot or bicycle. Proximity is the key to its use and popularity. The sidewalks connect the residents to the park.





Step 3: Neighborhood regeneration begins by adding new single family homes of different sizes on the vacant lots facing the new park site, ensuring that a diversity of housing types are introduced. A mix of starter homes and larger two story houses should be included in the redevelopment plan. That includes adding townhouse or row house, duplex, triplex, and quad-plex housing to the area as well to add compatible and affordable density. Where possible, utilize rear alleyways to access parking for the new homes and free up on-street parking by removing frequent driveways.

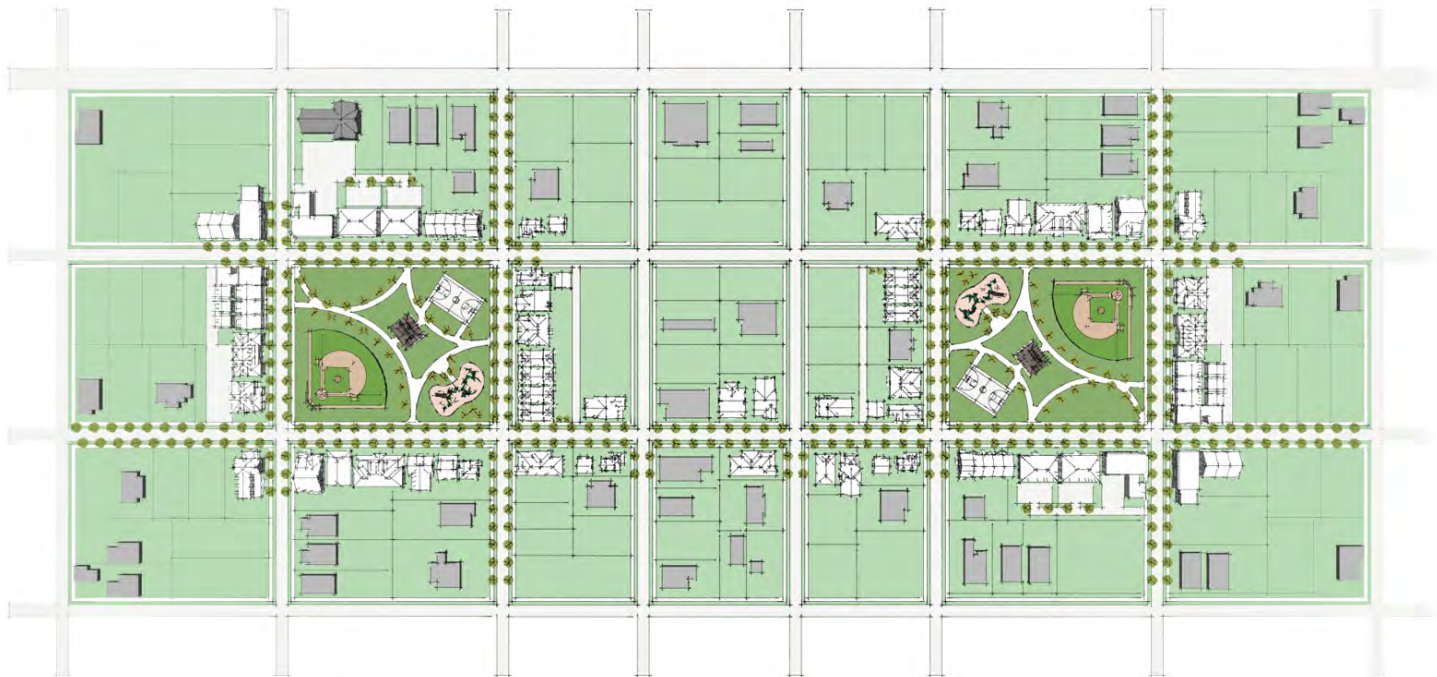


Step 4: As the new park, which acts as a regeneration catalyst, is surrounded with homes, introduce another park site approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile away on a second set of vacant lots (shown closer here for demonstration). Follow the same pattern of mixing the diversity of housing types to attract different residents to the area. Feel free to change some of the park amenities, but make sure a variety of both active and passive play elements are present.

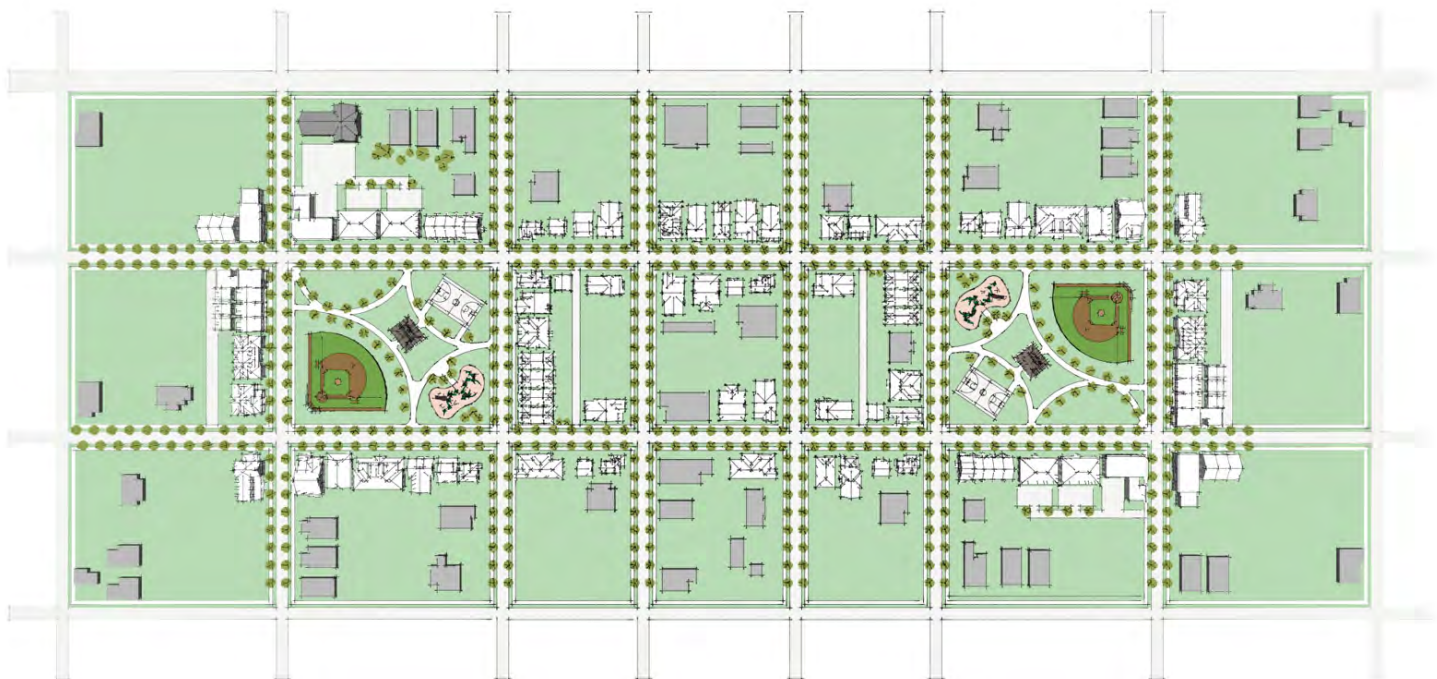


# STRENGTHEN

## COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOOD REGENERATION



Step 5: Focus on one corridor that connects both parks. Since it is less than a 10-minute walk from either park site, this corridor's vacant lots will become the next redevelopment opportunity. Again, remember to provide a mix of building size and densities to address the needs of all potential residents regardless of their home ownership or rent/lease preference.



Step 6: Infill the remainder of lots between the amenities. Once these blocks are filled in with new residents, the side streets that run perpendicular to the park, away from the two corridors, will begin to follow suit. These side streets are still less than a 10-minute walk or ride to multiple parks. The city now has a model that can be replicated in many of the existing neighborhoods with vacant lots.

## Action Steps

Structure Pine Bluff to **build local strength**.

Presently, systems are not set up to enhance residents' futures. A system of local value capture to build local strength must be re-established. Policy decisions that benefit certain groups at the expense of the other groups will perpetuate economic stagnation. Policies should support resident's success by leveraging existing programs and initiatives where possible, before exploring new programs. Small successes will create an economic feedback loop that benefits the community as a whole. Growing new businesses by providing low cost incubator space to local entrepreneurs who pledge to remain in the community is a win-win. The UAPB incubator on Main Street is an example of this initiative.

### 1. Strengthen **neighborhood cohesion**

- a. Existing neighborhoods: Develop strategies to encourage home ownership
- b. Determine Strategy for neighborhood redevelopment (example on pages 182-184)
- c. Infill/Redevelopment: Reduce zoning and development barriers for creating infill housing
- d. Address issue of absentee landowners
- e. Create neighborhood centers as catalysts for redevelopment and social concentrators (type/land use, redevelopment potential, housing, street network, triage)
- f. Evaluate and increase neighborhood access to transportation, parks, civic institutions, and social destinations
- g. Address **vacant and abandoned properties** with a variety of approaches, not "one size fits all"
  - Create vacant lot typologies and strategies for each
  - Communicate with community what has been slated for demolition
  - Clarify the criteria and scoring system for rehabilitation vs. demolition
  - Utilize 25% (Federal) historic tax credit for rehabilitation up to \$400,000
  - Utilize opportunities to relocate parks to more visible areas (acquire vacant lots in strategic locations for more productive park spaces than those already existing)
  - Restore natural drainage systems by acquiring vacant and abandoned properties within floodplains to reduce drainage infrastructure demands

- h. Maintain neighborhood cohesion that supports and enhances the public realm.
  - Implement Form Based Codes to provide uniform development guidelines across neighborhoods
  - New development to match scale and density of surrounding neighborhoods where appropriate
  - New development to increase scale and density when adjacent to commercial centers and focus corridors
  - New development to install pedestrian safety features, landscaping, and accessible design in the public right-of-way

### 2. Encourage **downtown redevelopment**

- a. Strengthen the downtown "brand"
  - Differentiate downtown's sub-districts and support their identities (the area being focused on is too large for a single identity)
  - Create/support an anchor/incentive to point toward downtown to create an experience (or multiple per sub-district)
- b. Reduce or remove barriers for investors to renovate or redevelop in downtown
  - Create Pink Zones: areas of lightened red tape for small-scale projects, designed to allow individuals with little capital to take action
  - Revise zoning to allow mixed-use development
- c. Explore partners who offer small business financing
- d. Form a Small Business Alliance to have a voice at the Chamber and recruit businesses downtown
- e. Address issue of absentee landowners
- f. Capture local and outside investment in downtown
- g. Support pop-ups and innovation (inclubation)

### 3. Encourage **downtown housing**

- a. Reduce barriers to building housing downtown
  - See Pink Zones, 7.1.2.b.
  - Ensure quality of site planning that is appropriate in an urban context, rather than a suburban-style layout and relationship to street
- b. Assemble absentee and vacant properties for infill housing

### 4. Reinforce **connectivity** for all modes of transportation

- a. Remove one-way pairs (couplets)
- b. Focus on key corridors for improvements





- c. Enhance gateways into town to reflect pride in the community
- d. Direct casino traffic via wayfinding to benefit the City (through downtown rather than around it), refer also to Wayfinding in INVEST, page 94.
- e. Clearly connect attractions around town
- f. Connect neighborhood social centers
- g. Enhance Olive Street from downtown to 530
- h. Enforce fines for trains blocking downtown roads
- i. Revise subdivision ordinance to require sidewalks

Pine Bluff business and community leaders will have to address challenges to home ownership because of lack of financing opportunities created by historic racism and redlining. City leaders must engage with national programs that support non-profit housing development and use every available mechanism (churches, career tech, and workforce programs) to build a skill pipeline surrounding construction and development services, especially property maintenance and repairs.

Non-profit housing developers may have the greatest potential for success in delivering new housing in Pine Bluff. These organizations are difficult to create from scratch and may even require outside consultation from another Arkansas non-profit development corporation. Building this expertise is a challenge, but absolutely necessary to simultaneously regenerate neighborhoods surrounding local schools, and spur new development.

### Timeframe

Immediately and ongoing (to be completed with Implementation phase).

### Responsible Party

To be completed with Implementation phase.

### Measuring Success

A healthy and cohesive neighborhood looks and feels like a vibrant place. Measuring the strength of a neighborhood will depend on many external attributes. Because each home, street, block, and neighborhood all have their own characteristics, the external attributes begin to give us a picture into the ongoing health of a neighborhood. As time passes and neighbors move in and out, there will be a continuity of incremental improvements that occur through small everyday activities. Time is the greatest measure of success for a neighborhood and a few ways to observe this are as follows:

- Market Value - Are the market conditions for private property improving and exceeding the cost of living adjustment each year?
- What is the percentage of homeowner-occupied homes compared to rentals?
- Is private property well maintained and free of trash and debris?
- Are property owners making investments that improve the value of a property?
- Percentage of utility bills paid on time
- Residents who walk the neighborhood, and visit on the front porch
- Flags for sports teams, and seasonal decorations
- Newly planted trees

And even small, but important things like

- Flowers planted in the yard
- Kids playing in the front yard
- Presence of people of all ages

Ultimately a neighborhood is successful when a new generation of residents moves in and begins the cycle of improvement again for the next generation.





### Conclusion

The story of Pine Bluff is not just its rich history or how future events will shape the city. The story of Pine Bluff is embracing the meaning and purpose of the work that is accomplished in the vast and unending present day. Small movements can create a monumental shift in the spirit of Pine Bluff as this story is written. The authors of the Pine Bluff story are you and your neighbors, the leaders, who when challenged to emerge from difficult times, find the strength in each other and the common path forward.

This Plan is not complete until the work outlined here has been put to the test. Some parts may need to be revised as conditions improve and community priorities change. What remains critical is the opportunity to bring the community together under a clear understanding of the challenges to finish the work.

There is no greater success than for people to work together towards this common goal that they could not accomplish themselves. This collective spirit of accomplishment not only brings richness to a community, but empowers each one of us with the knowledge that all things are possible, for those who believe.



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# **PART THREE**

## **IMPLEMENTATION**





### Overview

Pine Bluff is in a unique position within the region and nationally because of the continual decline in property values and lack of market conditions that could sustain new development. Pine Bluff is not the only community that is dealing with these issues but the combination of state, county, and local regulations prevent the “state” or any other organized governmental entity from seizing private property without just compensation. This is an important aspect of the American Dream, not only because the potential for home ownership has been the first rung on the ladder to generational wealth, but because the security afforded to property owners is uniquely enshrined in the laws that form the backbone of our society.

The ability for Pine Bluff to remove blight, and transform properties into productive use hinges on the ability of City of Pine Bluff, PBURA, Jefferson County, and the State of Arkansas to work in lock-step with the residents of Pine Bluff to solve these problems. To jointly understand the issues facing Pine Bluff, and diagram a roadmap to revitalization, it is necessary to understand the existing powers and responsibilities of PUBRA, Jefferson County, and all taxing entities that have a vested interest in the productive use of real estate. As we indicate in the Comprehensive Master Plan, the revitalization of Pine Bluff will require exceptional focus on specific areas for re-investment, while other areas with greater redevelopment cost to be “held” until such time as market conditions improve.

The greatest challenge is establishing and maintaining TRUST and CONFIDENCE with the public. This means Pine Bluff must speak generally with all residents and business owners in Pine Bluff about the overall goals of the redevelopment effort, and specifically with property owners in areas who will be affected (and benefit) from revitalization. Establishing trust and confidence will require no less than constant and persistent communication by elected officials, staff, and oversight board members who are charged with the responsibility of conducting PBURA programs. The balance of power must always rest in the mutual understanding that improvements may unfairly create winners and losers, but that the improvement will eventually improve conditions to create a city-wide winning combination that is sustainable, equitable, and just.

Difficult decisions will require expansive public conversation, over a period of months, with written policies and procedures to document the process for revitalization. This process should be written, reviewed and adopted by ordinance, resolution, or whatever process will withstand the changing political landscape that could undermine success. This process will take years and many election cycles to prove its worth. Pine Bluff is positioned for success based solely on the passion and determination of civic leaders, and the grit of its current residents.

### Approach

The purpose of land transfer is to combat deteriorating areas of Pine Bluff that could lead to long term negative impacts in the community. This occurs ultimately with the City acquiring property whose owners continually fail to comply with code standards. This section recommends the following strategies:

1. Create a Blight Study that will identify condition of vacant and abandoned properties establish hot spots of such areas, determine which property owners will comply with code enforcement
2. Acquiring land that continues to act as a blight in the community
3. Receiving a clear title from the circuit judge to begin remediation of properties
4. Reversing the effects of blight and putting property into good use.

In order for remediation to occur within a reasonable timeframe, major changes to county and state legislation will need to occur. An important overarching strategy within this section is for Pine Bluff to engage with Jefferson County and the Arkansas Commissioner of State Lands (COSL) to remove barriers to the City acquiring properties for the purpose of remediation.

#### Step 1 Create a Blight Study

Undertaking A Blight Study will require coordination between the Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency, Fire Department, and the Department of Code Enforcement. A boundary for the study area should be determined based on recurring code enforcement violations within a quarter-mile of each other in the last five years, and areas that have burned down or are known dangerous liabilities according to the fire department.

First, create a “Yes-No” coded rubric for Pine Bluff’s department of Code Enforcement to narrow down exactly which properties are blighted and which can be remediated. This leads directly into the second strategy: implement a hotspot analysis to determine where in the community are the centers of building deterioration, overgrown lots, or “blight”. Since data on vacant properties has been pulled for the updated comprehensive plan, this can be readily achieved. Mobile, Alabama performed a similar study and discovered that 22% of the “blighted” homes they studied fell within such a hot spot.

After the City has concluded its inventory of vacant structures, strategy three is recommended: pass an ordinance to reinvent Pine Bluff’s meaning of a code violation. Instead of issuing fines, issue noticeable stickers alerting property owners of a set period of time to fix their property, otherwise a lien will be placed. This will indicate to the community at large that

the city is addressing deteriorating lots. Mobile, Alabama implemented this system and, by utilizing this strategy that places emphasis for property upkeep in its citizens’ hands, saw an 80% success rate of improved properties.

To initiate these strategies, it is recommended the City begin by addressing ten individual parcels that are categorized by Code Enforcement and the Fire Department as most damaged and also most valuable, according to Jefferson County assessor information. These strategies will allow Pine Bluff to begin taking steps toward a cleaner, safer, and more economically-competitive community.

#### Step 2 Acquire Properties

Acquisition of properties for the purpose of reversing deterioration and blight begins with placing liens on properties which fail to meet code. Arkansas state law specifies five liens municipalities can leverage to clean up lots: Clean-up, Court, Priority clean-up, Unsafe and vacant structure, and Weed lot.

Should an ordinance be passed redefining property code violations, the City can follow up between 14-20 days to determine which property owners are non-responsive and which are willing to comply. If non-compliance is encountered, Arkansas State Law § 14-54-903 specifies that after seven days of issuing written notice, the City may do whatever is necessary to clean up the lot and charge the ensuing cost to the owner.

Currently, the method for acquiring lots from non-compliant property owners happens in a lengthy process involving tax delinquency, acquisition, and disposal in the hands of the Arkansas Commission of State Lands. Afterward, a clear title will be required to certify new ownership. The aforementioned pre-acquisition strategies would function as an attempt to sort between property owners in need of encouragement of adhering to code, and those whose properties will not improve apart from a change in ownership.

##### A. Create a Deed-to-City Application

If the City encounters non-compliance and elects to move toward acquisition, the requirement of obtaining a clear title can take anywhere from 3-7 years. In order to avoid such a lengthy process, the following strategy is encouraged. Creating an application for residents to voluntarily deed lots to the City of Pine Bluff would allow a final avenue to explore before extending additional liens and taking the property to Arkansas State Court.

Placing the application under the authority of the Pine Bluff Urban Renewal Agency would allow the jurisdiction of the board to govern the administration of the application itself. Execution would be handled by the Director of Code Enforcement. The application would include detailed





information and benefits of deeding their lot to the City:

- Remove your tax burden & eliminate back taxes
  - For many individuals, wiping away any future taxes or back taxes that have accumulated over time will be a welcome prospect. Time limit for zero cost transition
  - After a specific timeframe is established for completing deed application to the City, property owners have the added benefit of deeding the lot to the city. Otherwise, additional taxes must be paid. Regardless of whether the lot is deeded within the specified timeframe, Pine Bluff will accept any current and future liability.
- City will not purchase lots, but lots not deeded will be assessed code fines
- Remove your existing obligation to mow and maintain
  - Approaching conversations with property owners must be done with sensitivity. Framing the situation in terms of upkeep and best use is important, particularly for individuals who are elderly, disabled, or otherwise unable to keep up with obligation to take care of their property.
- Absolve liability for damage and destruction
  - This includes any liens that have been placed on the property which have not been absolved.
- Given letter of tax credit applied toward newly renovated home
  - In coordination with the Reinventing Downtown Pine Bluff plan, this incentive is an important step in the revitalization of the city's historic central business district.

### B. Establish a Land Bank

A land bank is defined as a “governmental or nonprofit entity that acquires, holds, and manages foreclosed or abandoned properties.” Establishing a land bank in Pine Bluff can be considered a secondary goal. Historically, land banks have existed in order to obtain property at low or no cost through the tax foreclosure process and claim the right of first refusal to purchase tax-foreclosed properties. Legally they are also enabled to hold land tax-free, clear title and/or eliminate back taxes, lease properties for temporary uses, and negotiate transfers to future owners in a manner most closely aligned with the community needs.

There is no legislation in Arkansas enabling land banks. Legislation passed the Senate, but failed in the House in 2007, and no further legislation has since been brought forward. Although the process of establishing a land bank would be

lengthy, the precedent has been set with Jonesboro and Little Rock both creating their own municipal land banks. Once it is set up, a Pine Bluff land bank could be used to “preserve public spaces for future public needs and priorities, all while converting perceived liabilities into realized assets.” Establishing a land bank will allow for speedier obtainment of clear title, thereby increasing the rate of redevelopment. It is recommended that properties acquired and managed by the land bank be sold to qualified contractors for redevelopment (see Urban Infill Strategies, page 194).

(Source: “Putting the Heart Back in the Heartland: Regional Land Bank Initiatives for Sustainable Rural Economies”, by Ron Johnson, Arkansas Law Review, Volume 69, Number 4, January 2017, <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=alr>)

### Step 3: Clear Title

After properties are acquired, redevelopment can't begin unless clear title is granted by the circuit judge. After the City implements liens to address vacant structures and unsafe properties, the main way a clear title is granted occurs with the case being turned over to the local tax collector, then moving on to the process of tax delinquency, acquisition, and disposal in the hands of the Arkansas Commission of State Lands.

Even if a land bank were established, appropriate liens and deadline stickers were placed on properties and all other recommendations were followed, clear title would be expected from the judge anywhere from 3 to 7 years. This timeframe includes time allotted for an owner to contest the ruling. And even then, legality might be considered an issue with this strategy because there is no indication that clear title is granted by the court once the process is complete.

3-7 years is too long for Pine Bluff to wait to address the blight invading the community. Clear title can be obtained much faster if the property owner deeds the property to the city, although this may require a great amount of time from the City. Aside from the creation of a land bank, the next best strategy for increasing obtainment of clear title is pursuing state legislation that would allow municipalities to acquire properties based on outstanding liens rather than tax delinquency.

Mobile, Alabama established state legislature HB 430 in 2019 that did precisely that, allowing to clear title on property with multiple heirs, a widespread problem across the state. Since Arkansas does not specify whether clear title is granted at the end of the lengthy tax delinquency process, it would benefit Pine Bluff to pursue state legislation to clarify this vague point and establish a legal and faster avenue for property remediation.



#### Step 4: Put into Productive Use

After a clear title is obtained or a property is deeded to the City, remediation can begin. The Plan recommends five categories of redevelopment strategy: requests for proposals, mow-to-own, farm-to-own, mortgage assistance, and rewilding. Each category was researched according to peer cities and accounts for the various legal, practical, and creative methods which may be utilized to bring about sustainable redevelopment in Pine Bluff.

##### Program A: RFP

Program A would ostensibly be a pool of requests for proposals from select redevelopment groups qualified to reinvest. To qualify to receive an RFP when a redevelopment project materializes, the contractor must have legitimate financial backing, must redevelop the project within the specified timeline given by the Pine Bluff Renewal Agency, and must adhere completely to the master street plan, as well as other city plans.

Another important component of this program is engagement with contractors and professional services. It is likely that as properties are assessed, brownfield and environmental challenges will present themselves that are outside of the capabilities of the City to maintain. A pool of professional and environmental contractors capable of addressing specific problems will allow Pine Bluff to solicit immediate redevelopment assistance when required. In tandem with the urban infill strategies described in detail on page 194, it is recommended that the City sell qualifying properties below market value in order to stimulate redevelopment.

##### Program B: Mow-to-Own

Montgomery, Alabama city councilman William Green proposed a solution for abandoned lots that were tarnishing the reputation of the town. Although it seems too good to be true, Green pitched the idea of the city deeding land to a neighbor of a vacant lot with only a few stipulations. This mow-to-own idea came about from the simple idea that if you live close enough to mow the lot, you can own it. Some stipulations are seemingly ordinary, such as taxes required to be paid on time, maintenance must continue regularly, and the new potential owner must not have had abatements on their property in years prior.

##### Program C: Farm to Own Program

For some parcels, zoning and land use may be conducive to a farm-to-own agreement between the city and potential property owner. The city can set up in the agreement permit by-right commercial gardens, requiring use of limited insecticides and petrochemicals. A limit on the size of garden buildings can likewise be set, as well as eliminating building permits for qualified structures. To further assist urban

farming startups, city water meters would be required, with fees covered by the municipality for all garden uses. Along with other benchmarked standards for urban farms, properties would be permitted to rent and live in the home located on property. Finally, production needs would be coordinated with the local economy and restaurants, creating a farm-to-table network. Since 2012, 281 students have majored in agriculture or aquaculture sciences at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. Innovation can be gleaned from young graduates by advertising the Farm to Own program, as well as the following.

##### Program D: Mortgage Assistance

The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff has approximately 2,500 students on its campus. In order to capture innovation from an intelligent young workforce that regularly leaves Jefferson County, the plan recommends a mortgage assistance program. The program must be geared toward any college graduates, but specifically those from UAPB, incentivizing a young, local workforce to stay in Pine Bluff for 5 years. It is recommended the city establish partnerships with local banks to provide low-interest, zero-down loans in select blocks and neighborhoods preferably near downtown to facilitate a mixed-use environment with flexible live-work-play options.

##### Program E: Rewilding and Parks

Rewilding is a passive form of ecosystem management in which humans step back to allow the area to develop on its own. While some might think this can easily lead to overgrowth, the purpose of this category of lot reuse is based on environmental and ecological understanding. Because floodways change over many years, some houses may be at risk of flood damage that will not be covered in home insurance policies. Likewise, other homes thoroughly damaged by natural disasters pose a threat to adjacent property owners, and would also fall into this category. The same goes for crumbling homes at the edge of a wood or forest.

When a lot is designated as a candidate for rewilding, it is recommended that the City assess the estimated cost of removal of water meters and electrical infrastructure where possible. In order to allow the area to return to its natural state, it is also encouraged to provide relocation assistance for immediate or adjacent property owners to areas designated for redevelopment by approved City plans.

A second possibility for rewilding is turning such lots into public parks. Instead of deeding the property to eligible candidates, the Parks Director can be brought in to survey properties which might be a good fit for the parks master plan. This would be an ongoing review process as new lots are brought into the City's ownership.

### Urban Infill Strategies

The residential housing landscape of Pine Bluff can be described as low fabric intensity. The following urban infill strategies are encouraged for properties that come into the ownership of the City or Urban Renewal Authority (URA) following the acquisition process. These strategies were developed with consideration to existing conditions across Pine Bluff, as well as the future land use standards and map (pages 12-17).

In general, vacant properties prime for redevelopment fall into one of four categories. Scattered sites feature a variety of single family detached homes with empty lots between each

other. Longitudinal half blocks are completely vacant facing a street, while on the other half are single family detached houses. In a variation of half-empty blocks, transverse half blocks have three to four homes clustered near each other at two corners of the block, leaving the remainder of the block empty. In some cases, entire blocks are vacant.

Lacking a detailed plan for each property, the following diagrams describe prototypical infill strategies. Each block should be evaluated based upon the pattern of property ownership, and also considering area-wide needs. Redevelopment standards should be flexible according to the existing conditions of an area.

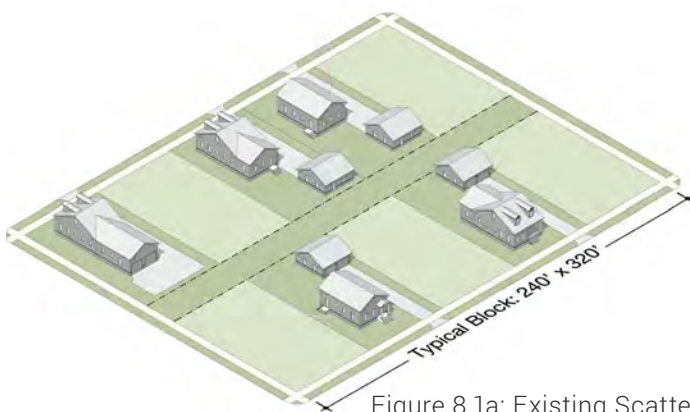


Figure 8.1a: Existing Scattered Site

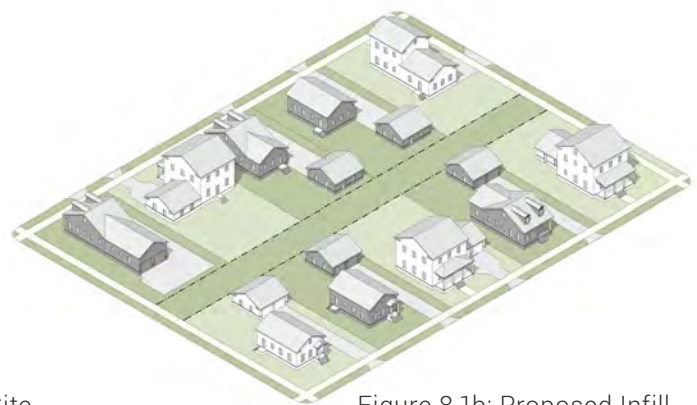


Figure 8.1b: Proposed Infill

### Scattered Sites

The most common type of existing condition in Pine Bluff is the scattered single-family homes with vacant lots in between. Infill housing should match the existing housing on the block, predominantly single family, and be completed with consideration for one block-face at a time, including sidewalks, trees, and potential grants or assistance to upkeep existing, adjacent homes. A block-face is a street-oriented analysis with the goal of improving the overall street, on both sides, which has a greater long-term positive impact.

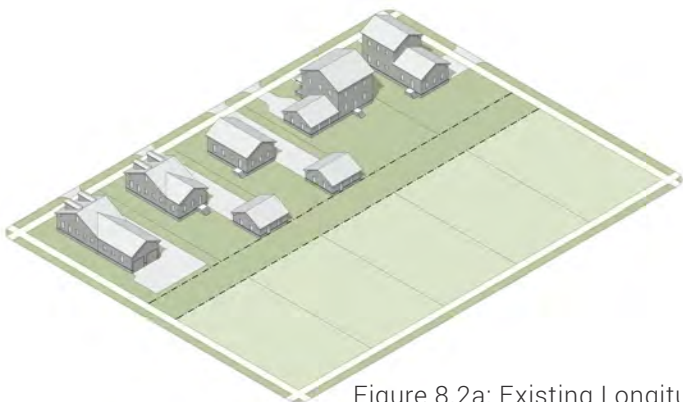


Figure 8.2a: Existing Longitudinal Half Block

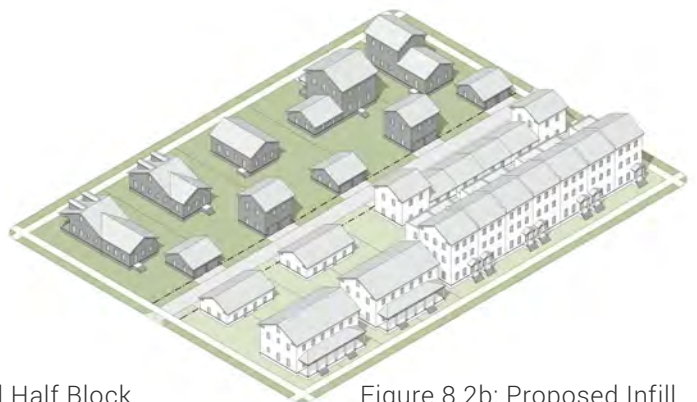


Figure 8.2b: Proposed Infill

### Longitudinal Half Block

Where the long side of a block is fully controlled, infill can change housing type to townhomes or small multi-family buildings without additional buffer, provided the opposite side of the street is also under significant control or of a higher intensity use. This higher density housing solution creates a diverse range of living options for a diverse population. Redevelopment may include construction of the alley, missing in most blocks yet the right-of-way tends to exist. An alley is an effective

way to eliminate curb cuts to high traffic roads and provide residents with safe access from the rear. Along the street to be redeveloped, sidewalks and trees should be included, and ideally along both sides of the street.

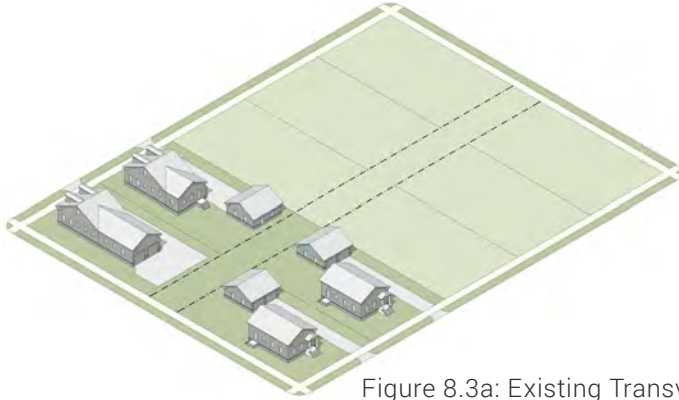


Figure 8.3a: Existing Transverse Half Block

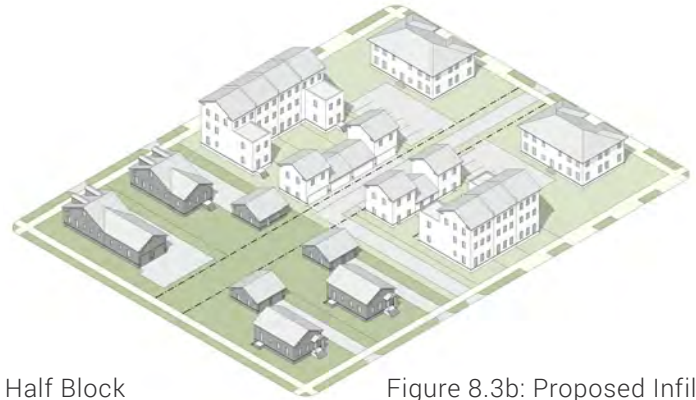


Figure 8.3b: Proposed Infill

### Transverse Half Block

Where the short side of a block is fully controlled, infill can transition housing type from the existing single family homes to duplexes or townhomes, and small multi-family building along the side street. Like the Longitudinal Half Block, consideration should be given to the appropriate transition from housing opposite the street from any new infill lot. This configuration of vacant property is well suited for multi-family development, creating an even higher-intensity neighborhood fabric. All infill should include sidewalks and trees, and consideration be given to complete sidewalks and add trees elsewhere on the block. The full block alley may be added, however it may also be completed only for the portion controlled, yet able to be completed for the remainder of the block in the future.

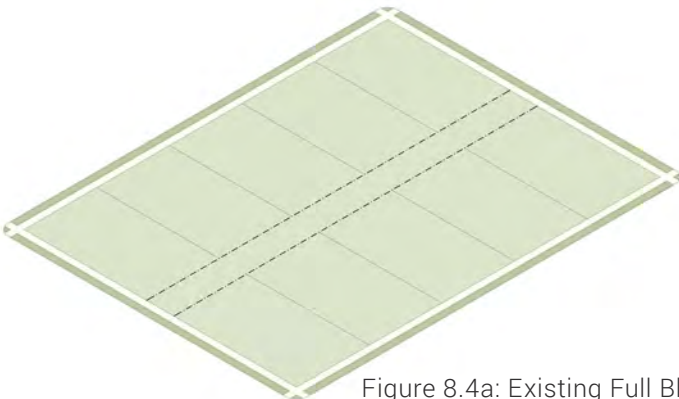


Figure 8.4a: Existing Full Block

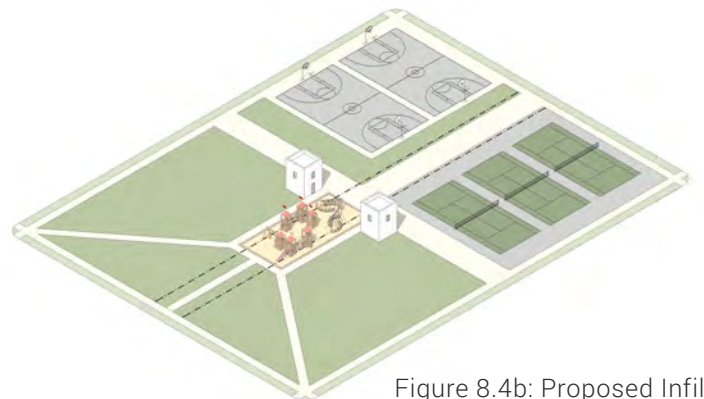


Figure 8.4b: Proposed Infill

### Full Block

Where full blocks are under URA control, they should be considered for park space, neighborhood centers, or stormwater areas, which ideally, are combined on one site. At the neighborhood level, parks are an essential public resource and are correlated closely to decreasing obesity rates and boosting mental health. Parks also serve as important public connections between neighborhoods and should be prioritized where none exist. In the case of significant stormwater needs, which may negate the public use of land, the site area should be designed naturalistically with soft, non-fenced edges, and with native plants. In the middle of the city, such stormwater areas should include a low masonry wall with highly transparent metal fencing above, at the back of sidewalk, to reduce disposal of discarded items into the facility.

If such empty blocks are not necessary to create public parks or stormwater areas, these blocks may be redeveloped as a single consistent infill project respecting adjacent neighborhood characteristics and integrating similar housing floor area ratios, heights, setbacks, and styles as the surrounding blocks.



# IMPLEMENTATION

## DEPARTMENTAL COORDINATION

### Departmental Coordination

The comprehensive plan is a document reliant on every single city department to be utilized for its most specific recommendations, from sanitation pickup to the office of the mayor. It takes diligent effort to maintain due process for daily municipal functions. City leadership and staff must be innovating efficient methods for achieving plan recommendations, which can easily become bemired in red tape, legal or otherwise. Unless standard operating procedures are established to coordinate execution of the implementation recommendations listed below, the vision and goals for the comprehensive plan will not be realized. The goal of the comprehensive plan is bettering the quality of life for all Pine Bluff residents and connecting them to the resources they need. Each department member involved in this process should prioritize and focus on developing their community and enabling their neighbors to do so as well.

As such, the development of a specialized team of staff and leadership should be considered to oversee the coordination of comprehensive plan efforts and initiatives. Comprehensive Plan implementation proper may be overseen by this team or by the continued efforts of the Steering Committee that was created to direct the development of the Comprehensive Plan.

It is imperative that the Comprehensive Plan be implemented through the lens of **enabling, prioritizing, and focusing** on

- Community Development
- Innovation, and
- Connecting people to resources.

### Department Plan Coordination Recommendations

1. Establish an operating principle for Pine Bluff Municipal Operations that corresponds with high-level stewardship of the public trust expected by the residents of Pine Bluff.
2. Establish and maintain Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to preserve continuity of service to residents of Pine Bluff as staff members change, and public officials transition in and out of office.
3. Prepare flow charts and checklists that identify the steps staff will take to accept, process, and return public records.
4. Clearly document the flow of information between departments to indicate the necessity for collaboration, and the critical need for open information sharing.
5. Establish reasonable timelines for correspondence (emails, letters, FOI requests, bills, invoices, reviewing documents, event permits, etc.) and maintain records showing staff and elected official response times.
6. Review and adopt policies that refer directly to the Comprehensive Master Plan.
7. Use Comprehensive Master Plan Implementation Table notation when identifying budget requests and project priorities.
8. Prioritize Procedures and activities that forward the potential for collaboration between departments.
9. Remove barriers between information sharing between departments and physically relocate departments into shared space to increase efficiency.
10. Cross-train employees in adjacent and related departments to create shared institutional knowledge.
11. Create a healthy and enjoyable work environment. It is essential to build morale that is focused on improving Pine Bluff and being good stewards of public resources.



Photo credit: Christina Wocintechchat



Implementation Tables

The following implementation tables are the action steps for the future of Pine Bluff. Each action or policy within the tables are numbered to align with element recommendations.

The first item number refers to the Goal (see list below) and the second number is the Topic Group. The last two numbers are the Recommendation number, corresponding with the recommendations and actions set forth within the plan elements.

Each table also annotates which Topic Group it came from, corresponding with the Goals. Each recommendation includes the responsible party to carry out the recommendation, followed by a timeline to indicate when the action should be accomplished. In some cases, there are multiple parties that can help accomplish the recommendation, and some items are multi-faceted so the timeline is spread over multiple years. "Ongoing" indicates that the effort occurs on a regular basis or over the horizon of the Comprehensive Master Plan. TBD refers to "To Be Determined" such as where a future developer will address a particular recommendation.

The Goals that make up the Implementation Tables include:

Goal	Elements Discussed
Goal 1: Grow	Future Land Use
Goal 2: Clean Up	Public Safety, Urban Design
Goal 3: Support	Economic Development
Goal 4: Invest	Transportation & Traffic Circulation; Community Facilities, Parks & Open Space; Public Utilities & Infrastructure; Sustainability & LID
Goal 5: Focus	Urban Design, Transportation & Traffic Circulation
Goal 6: Tell	Communications, Public Relations
Goal 7: Strengthen	Community & Neighborhood Regeneration, Community Facilities, Parks & Open Space

Each recommendation should be integrated within each responsible party's annual work plan and appropriate department budget, until the recommendations are completed or the Comprehensive Plan is reviewed and updated.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 1.0 GROW



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
1.0		Adopt the comprehensive master plan.	Planning Commission, City Council	Immediate	All
1.1.1	Grow the Local Economy	Establish a Buy Local program to support local businesses.	Go Forward, Local Businesses, Communications Director, Economic and Community Dev, Alliance and Chamber	Immediate	Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.1.2	Grow the Local Economy	Promote Pine Bluff businesses locally and in the region, including stories about the entrepreneurs.	Economic and Community Dev, Communications Director, Go Forward, Alliance and Chamber, Local Businesses	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
1.1.3	Grow the Local Economy	Promote Pine Bluff organizations and their history.	Economic and Community Dev, Go Forward, Local NGO's, Alliance and Chamber, Communications Director	Immediate & Ongoing	Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.1.4	Grow the Local Economy	Establish contemporary Pine Bluff branding for local products, businesses, and organizations.	Economic and Community Dev, Communications Director, Go Forward, Alliance and Chamber	Immediate	Economic Development
1.1.5	Grow the Local Economy	Establish incubator retail and business spaces in clusters within downtown, near successful businesses, and in future mixed-use areas.	Go Forward, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance and Chamber, Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Economic Development, Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.1	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Fast-track development projects in future land use designated mixed-use areas.	Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Land Use, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.2	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	De-prioritize development projects in future land use designated rural and suburban corridor areas.	Planning Commission, Inspection and Zoning	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Economic Development



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
1.2.3	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Fast-track development projects in future land use neighborhood-x designated areas.	Planning Commission, Inspection and Zoning	Immediate & Ongoing	Economic Development, Land Use, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.4	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Focus capital improvement budgets in future land use designated mixed-use and neighborhood-x designated areas.	Department Heads, Mayor, City Council	Immediate & Ongoing	Land Use, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Facilities, Transportation & Circulation, Utilities & Infrastructure, Parks
1.2.5	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	De-prioritize capital improvements in future land use designated rural areas.	Department Heads, City Council, Mayor	Immediate & Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development, Utilities & Infrastructure, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.6	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Establish a program to assist existing land owners in the central city in retaining home ownership and maintaining their properties.	Local NGO's, Police Department, Urban Renewal Authority, Code Enforcement, Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.7	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Establish a program to retain housing options for low and moderate-income households within each neighborhood (distributed).	Local NGO's, Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority	7+ years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.8	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Establish a local small developer program to build development capacity which retains wealth in Pine Bluff.	Local NGO's, Alliance and Chamber, Economic and Community Dev, Go Forward, Urban Renewal Authority	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 1.0 GROW

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
1.2.9	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Establish a program to relocate businesses currently along commercial strip corridors into downtown, mixed-use, and neighborhood commercial districts, and redevelop the former properties for housing, principally multi-family.	Urban Renewal Authority, Local NGO's, Go Forward, Economic and Community Dev, Alliance and Chamber	1-3 years	Land Use, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.10	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Assemble URA properties to target infill housing development around neighborhood centers.	Urban Renewal Authority	1-3 years	Land Use, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.11	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Halt future annexations.	City Council	Immediate	Economic Development, Utilities & Infrastructure, Land Use, Community & N'hood Regeneration
1.2.12	Grow Physically in a Focused, Incremental Manner	Adjust zoning to be consistent with the Future Land Use map and Recommended Updates to Zoning and Other Standards	Planning Commission, City Council	Immediate	Land Use, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration

**END OF 1.0 GROW**

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
2.1.1	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Replace light bulbs along city streets in downtown and in city parks	Street Department, Parks & Recreation	Ongoing	Public Safety, Parks, Community & N'hood Regeneration
2.1.2	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Clean the downtown sidewalks; Remove glass, debris, and unsafe canopies in downtown	Street Department, Local Businesses, Alliance & Chamber	Ongoing	Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration
2.1.3	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Remove trash from storm drains and drainage swales that impact the effectiveness of the drainage system	Street Department, Code Enforcement, Local Businesses, Cemetery	Ongoing	Public Safety, Utilities & Infrastructure
2.1.4	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Inventory collapsed drainage lines	Street Department	Ongoing	Public Safety, Utilities & Infrastructure
2.1.5	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Improve waste management collection (couches, trash on curbs)	City of Pine Bluff, City Council, Mayor, Local NGO's, Residents	Ongoing	Public Safety, Utilities & Infrastructure, Community & N'hood Regeneration
2.1.6	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Increase Code enforcement activity	Code Enforcement	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
2.1.6.a	Triage: Image and Maintenance	* Add strength to code enforcement efforts by mailing fines, rather than notices, for repeated non-compliance, or invoices for city labor to mow or secure properties. Place liens on properties if fines are not paid within a reasonable time period	City of Pine Bluff, City Council, Mayor, Code Enforcement	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
2.1.6.b	Triage: Image and Maintenance	* Properly staff code enforcement to effectively address violations	City of Pine Bluff, City Council, Mayor, Code Enforcement	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
2.1.7	Triage: Image and Maintenance	Ensure that all traffic signals are operational; notify ARDOT of vehicular and/or pedestrian signals that are not functioning properly along state roads	Street Department	Ongoing	Public Safety, Utilities & Infrastructure, Transportation & Circulation



# IMPLEMENTATION

## 2.0 CLEAN UP

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
2.2.1	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	Integrate CPTED into Pine Bluff Police Department	Police Department, Economic & Community Development	Immediate	Public Safety, Urban Design
2.2.2	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	Conduct Safety walks to enhance safe neighborhood actions	Police Department, City Council, Mayor, Alliance and Chamber, Staff	Ongoing	Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration
2.2.3	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)	Encourage design principles that provide "eyes on the street" such as front porches and street facing windows	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Commission, City Council, Mayor, Staff, Economic & Community Development	Ongoing	Public Safety, Urban Design
2.3.1	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Reduce the fear of crime through increased police visibility in neighborhoods	Police Department	Immediate	Public Safety
2.3.2	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Increase capacity for neighbors to elevate neighborhood conditions and report problems to police	City of Pine Bluff, Code Enforcement, Neighborhood Assoc.	Immediate	Public Safety
2.3.3	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Provide residents the confidence and knowledge that petty crime is being addressed and eliminated	Police Department	Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.4	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Promote successes - City officials should work closely with PBPD Public Information Officer (PIO) to promote successes and counterbalance negative perceptions.	City of Pine Bluff, Mayor, Communications Director	Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.5	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Reduce Crime (see below)	Police Department	Immediate and Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.5.a	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Allocate appropriate resources to police: computers in car, body cameras, etc.	City Council, Mayor	Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.5.b	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Take a "saturation" approach to target areas, in conjunction with enhanced youth engagement and other community programs	Police Department	Ongoing	Public Safety

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
2.3.5.c	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	* Where there is community support, take an incremental approach, with strict enforcement starting on a block or small area and moving outward.	Police Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.6	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Improve Data - In Particular, both the police and fire departments have expressed the need for better access to GIS (Geographic Information Systems) mapping data, in order to better assess changing conditions and challenges	Police Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.7	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Work to actively strengthen on-the-ground Neighborhood Watch resources at the grass-roots level	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.7.a	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Continue to support and renew interest in Neighborhood Watch toolkits and training for residents in trouble areas. (see <a href="https://www.nnw.org/toolkit-training">https://www.nnw.org/toolkit-training</a> )	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.7.b	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Specifically identify neighborhoods where there may be limited or no representation.	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.7.c	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Connect neighborhood watches to potential partners (local organizations, programs for at-risk youth, businesses, faith-based organizations, institutional partners)	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.8	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Where possible, support direct interaction of police with neighborhood residents to increase rapport and trust	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.9	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Promote strong youth engagement programs	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety
2.3.10	Public Safety / Crime Reduction	Build continuity of neighborhood-oriented policing with close contact between officers, city administration, and neighborhood watch representatives	Police Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Public Safety

### END OF 2.0 CLEAN UP



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Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
3.1.1	Preparing the City to Do Business	Work Together as One	Everyone	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
3.1.1.a	Preparing the City to Do Business	Reorganize to remove departmental silos and to move resources in the right direction	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
3.1.1.b	Preparing the City to Do Business	Connect projects across departments	Department Heads, Staff	Ongoing	Not in an element
3.1.1.c	Preparing the City to Do Business	Identify agencies working at “mixed odds” and connect them to outcomes	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate	Not in an element
3.1.1.d	Preparing the City to Do Business	Make decisions in an efficiency-focused direction	Department Heads, Staff	Ongoing	Not in an element
3.1.1.e	Preparing the City to Do Business	Align government effort to be highly effective at specific tasks that unlock latent human and economic potential	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate	Not in an element
3.1.1.f	Preparing the City to Do Business	Improve response time for written and verbal communications and maintain attention to detail to support continuity between business groups	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate	Not in an element
3.1.2	Preparing the City to Do Business	Support Private Sector Investment	City of Pine Bluff, Alliance & Chamber, City Council, Mayor	Immediate	Economic Development
3.1.2.a	Preparing the City to Do Business	Create efficiencies in the development process	Department Heads, Staff, Mayor, City Council, Planning Commission	Ongoing	Economic Development, Community & N’hood Regeneration
3.1.2.a.i	Preparing the City to Do Business	Require a pre-development meeting on all new development projects to include representatives from zoning, public works (streets, sewer, and private utilities), building inspection, as well as the project architect and engineer to provide clear direction on development requirements and expectations, the development process and key point personnel	Department Heads, Staff	Ongoing	Economic Development, Community & N’hood Regeneration
3.1.2.a.ii	Preparing the City to Do Business	Create a staff position to be the development “point person” to coordinate across departments and move the development process forward in a more timely fashion	Mayor, City Council	Immediate	Economic Development, Community & N’hood Regeneration

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 3.0 SUPPORT

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
3.1.2.a.iii	Preparing the City to Do Business	Simplify development application forms to make them more understandable for small business owners	Staff	1-3 years	Economic Development
3.1.2.a.iv	Preparing the City to Do Business	Create consistency in development forms across departments	Staff	1-3 years	Not in an element
3.1.2.a.v	Preparing the City to Do Business	Ensure that all departments are following the same development process flow chart	Staff	Immediate	Not in an element
3.1.2.a.vi	Preparing the City to Do Business	Simplify the development process for rehabilitating existing structures	Staff	Immediate	Economic Development
3.1.3	Preparing the City to Do Business	Create and empower the Public Information Office	Mayor, City Council	Immediate	Not in an element
3.1.4	Preparing the City to Do Business	Create programs and access to financing to support locally-owned small businesses	Mayor, City Council	1-3 years	Economic Development
3.1.5	Preparing the City to Do Business	Focus on jobs that provide a mix of income scales that utilize skills aligned with SEARK programs	City of Pine Bluff, Alliance & Chamber, City Council, Mayor	1-3 years	Economic Development
3.1.6	Preparing the City to Do Business	Support pop-ups and innovation for lessons learned	City of Pine Bluff	Immediate	Economic Development

**END OF 3.0 SUPPORT**

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.1.1	Managing City Resources	Identify gaps in the “Schools-Jobs-Housing-Quality of Life” continuum.	Local NGO’s, Alliance and Chamber, Planning Department, Go Forward	Ongoing	Land Use, Parks, Community & N’hood Regeneration
4.1.2.	Managing City Resources	Fully realize the potential of Urban Renewal Programs.	Urban Renewal Authority		
4.1.2.a	Managing City Resources	Build public trust in the critical issues and articulate a clear pathway to action steps.	Planning Commission, Communications Director, Mayor, City Council	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N’hood Regeneration
4.1.2.b	Managing City Resources	Seek legal counsel for programs used by other Urban Development Authorities that can be localized by PBURA without additional authority being granted.	Urban Renewal Authority, Staff	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N’hood Regeneration
4.1.3	Managing City Resources	Establish housing trust fund from property tax assessments to fund low interest loan program.	City Council, Mayor	Immediate	Community & N’hood Regeneration
4.1.4	Managing City Resources	Improve cellular service reliability across town (public safety issue for PBPD).	City Council, Mayor, Police Department, Utility Providers	1-3 years	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.1.5	Managing City Resources	Upgrade water infrastructure in downtown to increase water pressure.	City Council, Streets Department, Utility Providers, Go Forward	1-3 years	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.1.6	Managing City Resources	Invest in targeted street improvements to accommodate active mobility while accommodating existing vehicular trips (refer to Streets action steps).	Planning Commission, City Council, Street Department	Ongoing	Community & N’hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
4.1.7	Managing City Resources	Invest in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure that provides connectivity between neighborhoods, neighborhood centers & retail centers, and community attractions. (refer to Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities action steps)	Planning Commission, City Council, Street Department	Ongoing	Community & N’hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
4.1.8	Managing City Resources	Prioritize investments and capital improvements in existing parks that serve as neighborhood centers or as LID facilities to alleviate stormwater management issues (refer to Parks & Community Facilities action steps).	Parks and Recreation, Planning Commission, City Council	Ongoing	Utilities & Infrastructure, Sustainability & LID, Community & N’hood Regeneration, Parks



# IMPLEMENTATION

## 4.0 INVEST



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.1.9	Managing City Resources	Obtain strategically-located land for future parks to serve as neighborhood centers or urban greenspace in lower density areas of town, until such areas are developed with a population density to fulfill the need for a more developed park.	City Council, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation	Ongoing	Parks, Sustainability & LID, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.1.10	Managing City Resources	Invest in wayfinding systems to guide visitors to community destinations (refer to Wayfinding action steps).	Go Forward, City Council, Street Department, MPO	1-3 Years	Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation
4.1.11	Managing City Resources	Invest in tools, strategies, and improvements to alleviate drainage and stormwater issues (refer to Drainage action steps).	Wastewater Utility, Urban Renewal Authority, Parks and Recreation, Street Department, City Council	1-3 Years	Utilities & Infrastructure, Sustainability & LID, Parks
4.1.12	Managing City Resources	Invest in Low Impact Development strategies and applications to aid in the collection and infiltration of stormwater to reduce the strain on the existing drainage system (refer to Sustainability action steps).	Wastewater Utility, Urban Renewal Authority, Parks and Recreation, Street Department, City Council	1-3 Years	Utilities & Infrastructure, Sustainability & LID
4.2.1	Streets	Complete the transfer of Hwy-190 / 6th Ave from ArDOT to local control.	Street Department, City Council, MPO	1-3 years	Economic Development, Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
4.2.2	Streets	Acquire local control of Olive Street to enable recommended land-use changes along the corridor, particularly north of 34th Ave.	Street Department, City Council, MPO	7+ years	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety, Economic Development
4.2.3	Streets	Acquire local control of State-owned segments of Harding and Main Street within the Core City.	Street Department, City Council, MPO	3-7 years	Public Safety, Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation
4.2.4	Streets	Work with ArDOT to increase pedestrian safety, slow speeds, and find alternative routes for University Drive's state designated traffic.	Street Department, City Council, MPO, UAPB	Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety, Economic Development
4.2.5	Streets	Study and advocate for improved pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Blake Street.	Street Department, City Council, MPO	Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.2.6	Streets	Adopt a policy that decisions regarding street operations and improvements be based upon the comprehensive plan methodology and its tools.	City Council	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
4.2.7	Streets	Create a community-driven tactical streets process that allows local organizations, businesses, and residents to safely and inexpensively make operational changes on local streets to increase non-vehicular use of streets.	Code Enforcement, Police Department, Residents, Local NGO's, Street Department, Inspection and Zoning, Local Businesses, Planning Commission, Fire Department, City Attorney	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
4.2.8	Streets	Study unbuilt and dead-end streets within the Core City, using the methodology in the "Missing Connections" section, and create a plan to abandon or build missing streets, and complete dead-end streets over time.	Urban Renewal Authority, Parks and Recreation, Economic and Community Dev, Inspection and Zoning, Police Department, Street Department, Planning Commission	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
4.2.9	Streets	Incorporate the Land Use-based tools within this chapter to determine appropriate roadway characteristics along new and retrofit streets within Street Department policies and subdivision standards.	City Council, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
4.2.10	Streets	Survey the location, age, and operations of underground utilities, beginning in the Core City and moving outward.	Wastewater Utility, Street Department	Ongoing	Sustainability & LID, Utilities & Infrastructure
4.2.11	Streets	Demote functional classifications along overbuilt and over-specified streets, as specified on page 62.	Street Department, MPO	1-3 Years	Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 4.0 INVEST

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.2.12	Streets	Redirect existing truck routes away from neighborhoods, as specified on page 63.	Street Department, MPO	1-3 Years	Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.2.13	Streets	Prioritize street investments in the core of the city, as specified on page 63.	City Council, MPO, Street Department	Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Public Safety
4.2.14	Streets	See the Focus chapter for adjustments to existing plans for Main, Barraque, Walnut, and Pine Streets.	City Council, Go Forward, MPO, Street Department	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development
4.2.15	Streets	See the Focus chapter for improvements to 6th Ave, 8th Ave, Texas Street, 10th Ave, 11th Ave, Harding Ave, Fluker Street, 28th Ave, Market Street, and 6th Ave and 13th Ave at Blake. Timeline per Focus chapter actions.	City Council, Street Department		Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.2.16	Streets	Convert State Street from one-way to two-way operation.	City Council, Street Department	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Repair sidewalks in the core of the city; prioritize downtown sidewalks for repair and debris removal.	Public Works Department, City of Pine Bluff	Immediate & Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.1	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Create a Primary Bikeways network along streets designated in Figure 4.23	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	1-3 Years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.2	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Begin right of way acquisition and budgeting for segments along the Primary Bikeway that require additional width or street reconfiguration for implementation (Primary Bikeways Reconstruct)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	1-3 Years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.3	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Begin acquisition for trail connections in areas where there is no existing street network, as indicated in Figure 4.23	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.3.4	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Implement the Secondary Bikeways network along streets designated in Figure 4.23	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.5	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Begin right of way acquisition and budgeting for segments along the Secondary Bikeway that require additional width or street reconfiguration for implementation (Secondary Bikeways Reconstruct)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.6	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Implement Signed Bicycle Routes along streets as indicated in Figure 4.23	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.7	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Implement Primary Bikeways Reconstruct Projects as indicated in Figure 4.23	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	7+ years	Transportation & Circulation
4.3.8	Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities	Implement Secondary Bikeways Reconstruct Projects as indicated in Figure 4.23	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	7+ years	Transportation & Circulation
4.4.1	Parks & Community Facilities	High Focus: Prioritize the development, improvement, or creation of parks that serve as neighborhood centers (Central Park, 34th Elementary, Indiana St Park, J.C. Jeffries Park, Merrill Community Center, Bryant St Park, and proposed neighborhood centers as located in Figure 4.27)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Parks, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.4.2	Parks & Community Facilities	Medium Focus: Continue normal maintenance, facility upgrades, programming, and operations (Pine Bluff Regional Park, Lake Saracen Splash Park, Saracen Landing, Chester Hynes Community Center, MLK, Jr / Oakland Park, Townsent Park, Taylor Field, RV Park, Pecan Grove Park, Brumps Bayou Park, Ste Marie Park, Byrd Lake Natural Area, Taylor Woodlands Natural Area)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Parks

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 4.0 INVEST

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.4.3	Parks & Community Facilities	Low Focus: Reduce focus on underutilized parks, specifically removing unsafe or obsolete equipment without replacement and continuing "mow and blow" maintenance (Irene Holcomb Park, Hutson Park, Packing Town Park, 3rd and Grant St Park, 33rd and Mississippi Park)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Parks
4.4.4	Parks & Community Facilities	Consider additional park sites in the longer-term to serve as neighborhood centers: Lakeside Magnet Elementary, Forrest Park Elementary, 6th & Sycamore (in this case, the Timeline reflects acquisition or agreements, not development & operation, which is likely 3-7 years)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	1-3 Years	Parks, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.4.5	Parks & Community Facilities	Consider the acquisition of two decommissioned school sites for future urban greenspace development: Oak Park Elementary and W.T. Cheney Elementary (in this case, the Timeline reflects acquisition or agreements, not development & operation, which is likely 3-7 years)	City of Pine Bluff, Planning Department, Public Works Department	1-3 Years	Parks
4.5.1	Wayfinding	Enhance wayfinding along corridors to Downtown	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.5.2	Wayfinding	Strengthen the connection between Downtown and Saracen Casino	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.5.3	Wayfinding	Enhance wayfinding along North-South corridors such as Hazel, Olive, and Main	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	3-7 years	Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration
4.6.1	Drainage	Create a City Drainage Manual	Street Department	1-3 years	Utilities & Infrastructure

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.6.2	Drainage	Hire a City Engineer	City Council, Street Department	Immediate	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.6.3	Drainage	Complete 2' contour mapping citywide	Street Department	1-3 years	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.6.4	Drainage	Complete an inventory of storm drain systems	Street Department	1-3 years	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.6.5	Drainage	Prioritize necessary drainageway improvements	Street Department	Immediate	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.6.6	Drainage	Implement Harding Drain improvements	Street Department	1-3 years	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.6.7	Drainage	Clean up and control overgrowth within drainageways	Street Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.6.8	Drainage	Regularly update FEMA floodplain mapping	Street Department	Ongoing	Utilities & Infrastructure
4.7.1.a	Sustainability & Low Impact Development	Citywide Application: acquire vacant lots along city drainage channels that are in the 100-year floodplain or are prone to flooding; assemble adjacent vacant lots in areas where additional storm water collection is needed.	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	Immediate & Ongoing	Sustainability & LID
4.7.1.b	Sustainability & Low Impact Development	Citywide Application: advance sustainability efforts through policy changes, such as CNG for city fleet vehicles, urban tree canopy protection policies, and restricting development within the 100-year floodplain.	Mayor / City Council / Public Works / Planning Department	Immediate	Sustainability & LID
4.7.1.c	Sustainability & Low Impact Development	Citywide Application: advance sustainability efforts through incentives such as water credits, recognition for water reuse/conservation, etc.	Mayor / City Council	Immediate	Sustainability & LID
4.7.2	Sustainability & Low Impact Development	Neighborhood/District Application: Implement LID techniques to reduce flooding issues utilizing the following properties: Merrill Community Center / Seabrook Youth Center, Civic Center / Convention Center East Parking, City Materials Storage & Lay Down Yard, and Oakland Park	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Sustainability & LID
4.7.3	Sustainability & Low Impact Development	Site Application: Encourage sustainability initiatives for homeowners, at community gardens, businesses, and other individual site opportunities.	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Sustainability & LID



# IMPLEMENTATION

## 4.0 INVEST

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
4.8.1	Transit	Digitize maps and schedules and display at transit stops and online.	Pine Bluff Transit	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.2	Transit	Publish schedules in a format that Google and other information services can use to provide riders with route information.	Pine Bluff Transit	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.3	Transit	Examine the balance of user fees, city budget, and other funding sources necessary to maintain fleet vehicles and provide competitive pay for drivers.	Pine Bluff Transit / Mayor / City Council	Immediate & Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.4	Transit	Examine current routes for efficiency	Pine Bluff Transit	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.5	Transit	Support access to educational opportunities	Pine Bluff Transit	Immediate & Ongoing	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.6	Transit	Improve frequency of routes to every day	Pine Bluff Transit	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.7	Transit	Add paratransit service for on-demand needs of the disabled community	Pine Bluff Transit	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.8	Transit	Add the Olive Street Route, serving Jefferson Square and Walmart	Pine Bluff Transit	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.9	Transit	Add a southwest route	Pine Bluff Transit	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation
4.8.10	Transit	Study a combined route alignment and transfer facility location, placing an emphasis on downtown	Pine Bluff Transit / Mayor / City Council	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation

**END OF 4.0 INVEST**

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.1.1	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Nurture a culture of yes through discrete tasks, collaboration, and communication	Go Forward, City of Pine Bluff, Alliance and Chamber, Urban Renewal Authority	Immediate & Ongoing	Economic Development
5.1.1.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Focus on the positive stories of resilience and hope in Pine Bluff. Specifically identify the hard working and caring community leaders that may go unnoticed.	Alliance and Chamber, City Council, Mayor, Communications Director, Go Forward, Local NGO's	Ongoing	Economic Development
5.1.1.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Relocate public meetings to a more accessible and open space	City Council, Planning Commission, Mayor	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.1.1.c	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Use social media, videos, and public communication platforms to interact with the public more easily and more frequently.	Communications Director	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.1.1.d	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Meet residents in the community, at houses of worship, restaurants, and the grocery stores to listen to residents concerns	City Council, Department Heads, Go Forward, Urban Renewal Authority, Mayor, Alliance and Chamber, Planning Commission	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.1.1.e	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Supplement ongoing community programs created by churches, non-profits and community groups where goals and objectives are aligned.	Mayor, Alliance and Chamber, Go Forward, City Council	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.1.2	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Cross train personnel between departments and offices	Mayor, Department Heads	Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.2.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Reskill all job roles with up to date policies and procedures to empower City of Pine Bluff employees.	Human Resources, Department Heads	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.2.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Provide regular training for new systems prior to roll out.	Department Heads	Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.2.c	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Build institutional knowledge across departments, ages, and skill levels to reinforce the Go Forward Pine Bluff message and initiatives.	Mayor, Department Heads, Go Forward	Ongoing	Not in an element

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.0 FOCUS

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.1.2.d	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Codify critical administrative functions and sub categories of essential staff.	Department Heads, Staff	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.2.e	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Remove burdensome tasks not specifically mandated by ordinance or regulation.	Department Heads, Staff	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.2.f	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Implement Lean Management Methodologies and team-sharing of responsibilities.	Mayor, Department Heads, Staff	Immediate	Not in an element
5.1.3	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Focus on outcomes using key performance indicators (KPI's)	Department Heads, Staff, Mayor	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.3.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Measure response time for applications and permits, timely responses to emails and written requests for information, regularly publish raw data on the city website in an editable format.	Mayor, Staff, Department Heads, Information Technology	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.3.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Adopt a philosophy of continuous, incremental improvement	Mayor, Department Heads, Staff	Immediate	Not in an element
5.1.4	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Regularly review KPI's and engage staff to improve performance	Department Heads, Staff, Mayor	Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.4.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Build career ladder within City Administration	Mayor, Human Resources, Department Heads	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.4.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Provide this plan in its entirety to city staff for review and comment	Department Heads	Immediate	Not in an element
5.1.5	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Invest in data retention, digitization, and access both internally and publicly	Mayor, Department Heads, Information Technology	1-3 years	Not in an element



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.1.5.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Train staff within each department for data management protocol, and designate timelines for regular review.	Information Technology, Department Heads	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.5.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Maximize use of technology; customer self-service, resident training and participation in feedback on technology challenges.	Staff, Department Heads, Information Technology	Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.6	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Engage staff in budget development and tracking	Department Heads	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.6.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Tie budget priorities to areas where change is most effective according to this plan.	Department Heads, Staff	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.6.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Make work in progress and problem solving visual and interactive.	Department Heads, Information Technology, Staff	Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.7	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Analyze fee structures and the cost of services	Department Heads, Staff	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.8	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Create cross-departmental task objectives to pursue focus area projects.	Department Heads, Mayor	1-3 years	Not in an element
5.1.8.a	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Avoid unnecessary meetings	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.8.b	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Avoid duplication of effort	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.8.c	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Focus and communicate goals	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.8.d	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Freely push forward primary directives from City Council based on adopted ordinances.	Department Heads, Staff	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element

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## 5.0 FOCUS



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.1.8.e	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Enforce checks and balances to ensure that projects/activities/programs are completed to the satisfaction of community residents	Mayor, Department Heads	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
5.1.8.f	Utilizing a Focused Redevelopment Approach	Regularly go out into the community and meet with residents and hear first-hand the challenges your department is trying to solve.	Department Heads, Staff	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.2.1	Downtown	Modify the Downtown street designs being pursued by Go Forward, especially Main Street and Barraque.	Go Forward	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety, Urban Design
5.2.2.a	Downtown	Redesign 6th Street for the ArDOT redevelopment.	Street Department, MPO	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation, Urban Design
5.2.2.b	Downtown	Convert 5th and 6th Streets to two-way traffic.	Street Department, MPO	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development, Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
5.2.3	Downtown	Adopt new zoning standards for Downtown to direct street-oriented development.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	Immediate	Economic Development, Urban Design, Land Use, Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.2.4	Downtown	Establish a "Pink Zone" for Downtown Pine Bluff to remove barriers to business creation and building re-use.	Economic and Community Dev, Inspection and Zoning, Code Enforcement, Fire Department	1-3 years	Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.2.5	Downtown	Establish an Opportunity Zone Fund with reporting aimed to ensure development benefits the community.	Go Forward, Alliance and Chamber	Immediate	Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.2.6	Downtown	Re-stripe Downtown streets not being rebuilt to reduce lane widths and add on-street parking and bicycle facilities.	Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.2.7	Downtown	Invest in housing within Downtown.	Go Forward, Economic and Community Dev, Local NGO's	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Public Safety, Economic Development
5.2.8.a	Downtown	Create a public plaza along Pine Street and the west side of the County Courthouse.	Economic and Community Dev, Go Forward	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design
5.2.8.b	Downtown	Extend the public plaza across Martha Mitchell to Saracen Landing.	Economic and Community Dev, Go Forward	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design
5.2.9	Downtown	Re-design 4th Ave between Walnut and State Street as a shared space street on either side of the train tracks.	Street Department, Go Forward	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design
5.2.10	Downtown	Repair the edges of Downtown Community Services Center.	Go Forward	3-7 years	Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Facilities
5.2.11	Downtown	Increase the Downtown tree canopy.	Street Department, Parks and Recreation, Go Forward	Ongoing	Parks, Sustainability & LID, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Public Safety
5.3.1	Civic Center	Pursue the redesign of 6th Street as specified in the section concerning Downtown	Street Department, MPO	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation, Urban Design
5.3.2	Civic Center	Adopt new zoning standards for the Civic Center District to direct street-oriented development.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	1-3 years	Economic Development, Urban Design, Land Use, Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration



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## 5.0 FOCUS



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.3.3	Civic Center	Establish a series of connected open spaces between the High School and Harding Drain to manage stormwater.	Urban Renewal Authority, Parks and Recreation, City Attorney, Finance	3-7 years	Parks, Utilities & Infrastructure, Sustainability & LID
5.3.4.a	Civic Center	Re-stripe 8th Avenue to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities and on-street parking.	Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
5.3.4.b	Civic Center	Reconstruct 8th Avenue to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities and on-street parking.	Street Department	7+ years	Transportation & Circulation, Sustainability & LID
5.3.5	Civic Center	Re-stripe 10th and 11th Avenues for on-street parking.	Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation
5.3.6	Civic Center	Reconfigure Texas Street and the City Hall Parking lot to accommodate stormwater and beautify the entrance.	Parks and Recreation, Building Maintenance, Street Department, Convention Center	3-7 years	Urban Design, Facilities, Sustainability & LID, Transportation & Circulation
5.3.7	Civic Center	Encourage infill development of housing, including townhouses and multi-unit housing.	Economic and Community Dev, Local NGO's, Inspection and Zoning, Urban Renewal Authority, Convention Center	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
5.4.1	Main & Harding	Adopt new zoning standards for neighborhood mixed-use and adjacent housing areas.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Urban Design
5.4.2	Main & Harding	Reconstruct the intersection of Main Street and Harding Avenue, creating a formal plaza.	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department, MPO	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Urban Design
5.4.3	Main & Harding	Reconstruct Main Street from 15th to Harding Avenue to be pedestrian oriented.	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Urban Design

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.4.4	Main & Harding	Assemble and offer public and vacant properties for redevelopment following the vision.	Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance and Chamber, Economic and Community Dev	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Urban Design
5.4.5	Main & Harding	Encourage Citgo to redevelop in a gas-backwards format (pumps to the rear of the building).	Economic and Community Dev, Alliance and Chamber	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Urban Design
5.4.6.a	Main & Harding	Re-stripe East Harding Avenue from Texas to Indiana Street to reduce speeds and support non-vehicle users.	Street Department	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
5.4.6.b	Main & Harding	Reconstruct East Harding Avenue from Texas to Indiana Street to include pedestrians, bicycles, and street trees.	Street Department	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
5.4.6.c	Main & Harding	Re-stripe East Harding Avenue from Ohio Street to I-503 to accommodate bicycles and reduce traffic speed.	Street Department	7+ years	Public Safety, Transportation & Circulation
5.5.1	UAPB & University Park	Coordinate and connect plans between UAPB and the City of Pine Bluff, focusing on Fluker Street as a mixed-use corridor.	Economic and Community Dev, Inspection and Zoning, UAPB	Immediate	Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design
5.5.2	UAPB & University Park	Reconstruct Fluker Street to support mixed-use development, pedestrians, and on-street parking.	Street Department	3-7 years	Urban Design, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.5.3	UAPB & University Park	Adopt new University Park zoning to encourage housing infill.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.5.4	UAPB & University Park	Establish minimum design standards for the campus edge.	Economic and Community Dev, UAPB	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.0 FOCUS



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.5.5	UAPB & University Park	Calm University Drive for Student and resident safety.	MPO, UAPB, ARDOT	1-3 years	Public Safety
5.6.1	Jefferson Square	Change Jefferson Square's future land use by adopting the future land use map.	Planning Commission, City Council	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Urban Design, Economic Development
5.6.2	Jefferson Square	Adopt new zoning standards for Jefferson Square to enable mixed-use infill.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Urban Design, Economic Development
5.6.3	Jefferson Square	Remove parking requirements for Jefferson Square.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Urban Design, Economic Development
5.6.4	Jefferson Square	Adopt new subdivision standards for Jefferson Square.	City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Urban Design, Economic Development
5.6.5	Jefferson Square	Amend the master street plan to require future connection through the Jefferson Square site.	Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
5.7.1	Merrill Center	Construct missing streets and alleys in the block as shared pedestrian and bikeways.	Parks and Recreation, Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Parks
5.7.2	Merrill Center	Consolidate parcels / replat the youth center site and remove non-existing streets.	Parks and Recreation	1-3 years	Land Use, Parks



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.7.3	Merrill Center	Add key County and privately owned vacant parcels to the youth center site.	Parks and Recreation	3-7 years	Parks, Land Use
5.7.4	Merrill Center	Construct stormwater management designed as park space to alleviate the Harding Drain entrance.	Parks and Recreation	3-7 years	Sustainability & LID, Parks
5.7.5	Merrill Center	Adopt adjusted zoning for adjacent private properties to encourage infill development.	Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission, City Council	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Parks, Urban Design, Land Use, Public Safety
5.7.6	Merrill Center	Replace the youth center building, locating it outside of the 100 year flood zone.	Local NGO's, Parks and Recreation, City Council	7-10 years	Parks, Facilities
5.8.1	Jefferson Regional Medical Center	Engage JRMC in long-term future discussions for both the neighborhood and facility.	JRMC, Economic and Community Dev, Mayor, Street Department, MPO, Parks and Recreation	Immediate	Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development, Sustainability & LID, Land Use
5.8.2	Jefferson Regional Medical Center	Adopt new zoning for off-campus properties in the surrounding area to support the facility and transition to nearby houses.	JRMC, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission, City Council	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Land Use
5.8.3	Jefferson Regional Medical Center	Consider reorienting campus towards W. 40th Ave.	JRMC, MPO, Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation, Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.8.4	Jefferson Regional Medical Center	Consider zoning standards along the JRMC campus edge to line streets with active building frontages.	JRMC, Inspection and Zoning, Planning Commission, City Council	1-3 years	Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Economic Development

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.0 FOCUS



Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.8.5	Jefferson Regional Medical Center	Pre-design area streetscapes to support multiple modes, including pedestrians and bicycles.	JRMC, MPO, Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.9.1	Blake & 13th	Adopt new zoning to create main streets and allow more housing along Hepburn and Hwy-190.	Planning Commission, Inspection and Zoning, City Council	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development, Land Use, Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design
5.9.2	Blake & 13th	Reconstruct Hepburn between Fig and Bay Streets.	Street Department	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
5.9.3	Blake & 13th	Consider building temporary, incubator retail along Hepburn.	Economic and Community Dev, Alliance and Chamber	3-7 years	Urban Design, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.9.4	Blake & 13th	Consider reconstructing Hwy-190 between Fig and Bay Streets.	Street Department	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation, Economic Development, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
5.9.5.a	Blake & 13th	Pre-design the streetscapes of Hepburn and Hwy-190.	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.9.5.b	Blake & 13th	Incrementally reconstruct Hepburn and Hwy-190 to support street-oriented buildings, pedestrians, and bicyclists.	Street Department, Economic and Community Dev	7+ years	Urban Design, Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
5.10.1	28th Avenue	Restripe W 28th Ave., west of S. Spruce Street to slow traffic and provide on-street parking or bicycle facilities.	Street Department	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.10.2	28th Avenue	Redesign W 28th Ave., west of Hazel Street to support street-oriented buildings, pedestrians, and bicyclists.	Street Department, Economic and Community Dev	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety, Economic Development, Transportation & Circulation
5.10.3	28th Avenue	Adopt new zoning along W 28th Ave., west of S. Spruce Street, to encourage mixed-use infill and street-oriented buildings.	City Council, Planning Commission, Inspection and Zoning	3-7 years	Urban Design, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
5.10.4	28th Avenue	Convert the one-way pair of W 27th Ave. and 28th Ave. to two-way movement.	Street Department, MPO	3-7 years	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration
5.10.5	28th Avenue	Create a civic green and reconfigure intersections to slow traffic and provide open space at S. Spruce Street where 28th Ave. shifts.	City Council, Parks and Recreation, MPO, Economic and Community Dev, Street Department, Planning Commission, Local NGO's	7+ years	Public Safety, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Transportation & Circulation, Parks
5.10.6	28th Avenue	End the 28th Ave. truck route designation at S. Hazel Street.	MPO	Immediate	Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety



# IMPLEMENTATION

## 5.0 FOCUS

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
5.11.1	East End / Pines Mall	Adopt new zoning to direct redevelopment as a mixed-use center.	Planning Commission, City Council, Inspection and Zoning, Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development, Urban Design, Land Use
5.11.2	East End / Pines Mall	Adopt new subdivision standards to direct redevelopment as a mixed-use center.	Street Department, Planning Commission, Inspection and Zoning, Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Transportation & Circulation, Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Economic Development, Utilities & Infrastructure
5.11.3	East End / Pines Mall	Pre-design the Market Street reconstruction to support a pedestrian-oriented main street.	Street Department	1-3 years	Urban Design, Transportation & Circulation

END OF 5.0 FOCUS

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
6.1.1	Guiding the City's Story	Take ownership of the City's story	City of Pine Bluff, Go Forward Pine Bluff, Alliance & Chamber	Immediate	Not in an element
6.1.2	Guiding the City's Story	Direct your story	City of Pine Bluff, Go Forward Pine Bluff, Communications Director	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
6.1.2.a	Guiding the City's Story	Inform people statewide and regionally about the positive things happening in Pine Bluff	City of Pine Bluff, Alliance & Chamber, Communications Director, Media	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element
6.1.2.b	Guiding the City's Story	Address problems/ bad press head-on with factual information to clarify misconceptions.	City of Pine Bluff, Communications Director	Immediate & Ongoing	Not in an element

**END OF 6.0 TELL**



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# IMPLEMENTATION

## 7.0 STRENGTHEN

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
7.1.1	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Strengthen neighborhood cohesion	Everyone, Local NGO's	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.a	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Existing neighborhoods: Develop strategies to encourage home ownership	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.b	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Determine Strategy for neighborhood redevelopment (see example on pages 182-184)	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber, Local NGO's	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.c	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Infill/Redevelopment: Reduce zoning and development barriers for creating infill housing	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.d	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Address issue of absentee landowners	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber, Local NGO's	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.e	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Create neighborhood centers as catalysts for redevelopment and social concentrators (type/land use, redevelopment potential, housing, street network, triage)	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.f	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Evaluate and increase neighborhood access to transportation, parks, civic institutions, and social destinations	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber, Local NGO's	1-3 years, Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.g	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Address vacant and abandoned properties with a variety of approaches, not "one size fits all"	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Public Safety
7.1.1.g.i.	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Create vacant lot typologies and strategies for each	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Alliance & Chamber	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.g.ii	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Communicate with community what has been slated for demolition	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority, Local NGO's	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration

# IMPLEMENTATION

## 7.0 STRENGTHEN

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
7.1.1.g.iii.	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Clarify the criteria and scoring system for rehabilitation vs. demolition	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.g.iv	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Utilize 25% (Federal) historic tax credit for rehabilitation up to \$400,000	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.g.v	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Utilize opportunities to relocate parks to more visible areas (acquire vacant lots in strategic locations for more productive park spaces than those already existing)	Economic and Community Dev, Urban Renewal Authority	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Parks, Public Safety
7.1.1.g.vi	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Restore natural drainage systems by acquiring vacant and abandoned properties within floodplains to reduce drainage infrastructure demands	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	7+ years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Sustainability & LID
7.1.1.h	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Maintain neighborhood cohesion that supports and enhances the public realm.	Economic and Community Dev, Local NGO's	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.1.h.i	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	Implement Form Based Codes to provide uniform development guidelines across neighborhoods	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use
7.1.1.h.ii	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	New development to match scale and density of surrounding neighborhoods where appropriate	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Land Use
7.1.1.h.iii	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	New development to increase scale and density when adjacent to commercial centers and focus corridors	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Land Use
7.1.1.h.iv	Strengthen Neighborhood Cohesion	New development to install pedestrian safety features, landscaping, and accessible design in the public right-of-way	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Transportation & Circulation
7.1.2	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Encourage downtown redevelopment	Everyone	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design, Economic Development

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
7.1.2.a	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Strengthen the downtown "brand"	Everyone	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
7.1.2.a.i	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Differentiate downtown's sub-districts and support their identities (the area being focused on is too large for a single identity)	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Urban Design
7.1.2.a.ii	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Create/support an anchor/incentive to point toward downtown to create an experience (or multiple per sub-district)	Everyone, Urban Renewal Authority	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
7.1.2.b	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Reduce or remove barriers for investors to renovate or redevelop in downtown	Everyone, Urban Renewal Authority	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
7.1.2.b.i	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Create Pink Zones: areas of lightened red tape for small-scale projects, designed to allow individuals with little capital to take action	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Economic Development
7.1.2.b.ii	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Revise zoning to allow mixed-use development	Economic and Community Dev, Planning Commission	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Land Use, Urban Design
7.1.2.c	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Explore partners who offer small business financing	Alliance and Chamber	1-3 years	Economic Development
7.1.2.d	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Form a Small Business Alliance to have a voice at the Chamber and recruit businesses downtown	Alliance and Chamber	Immediate	Economic Development
7.1.2.e	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Address issue of absentee landowners	Mayor, City Council	Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.2.f	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Capture local and outside investment in downtown	Mayor, City Council, Alliance and Chamber, Local Businesses	Ongoing	Economic Development



# IMPLEMENTATION

## 7.0 STRENGTHEN

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
7.1.2.g	Encourage Downtown Redevelopment	Support pop-ups and innovation (incubation)	Mayor, City Council, Planning Commission, Economic and Community Development	Ongoing	Economic Development
7.1.3	Encourage Downtown Housing	Encourage downtown housing	Mayor, City Council, Planning Commission, Economic and Community Development	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.3.a	Encourage Downtown Housing	Reduce barriers to building housing downtown	Mayor, City Council, Planning Commission, Economic and Community Development	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.3.a.i	Encourage Downtown Housing	See Pink Zones, 7.1.2.b.i	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.3.a.ii	Encourage Downtown Housing	Ensure quality of site planning that is appropriate in an urban context, rather than a suburban-style layout and relationship to street	Economic and Community Dev, Planning Commission	Immediate & Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.3.b	Encourage Downtown Housing	Assemble absentee and vacant properties for infill housing	Economic and Community Dev	1-3 years, Ongoing	Community & N'hood Regeneration
7.1.4	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Reinforce connectivity for all modes of transportation	Mayor, City Council, Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation, Parks
7.1.4.a	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Remove one-way pairs (couplets)	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
7.1.4.b	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Focus on key corridors for improvements	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
7.1.4.c	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Enhance gateways into town to reflect pride in the community	Mayor, City Council, Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation

Item	Topic	Recommendation	Responsibility	Timeline	Plan Elements
7.1.4.d	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Direct casino traffic via wayfinding to benefit the City (through downtown rather than around it), refer also to Wayfinding in INVEST	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
7.1.4.e	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Clearly connect attractions around town	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department, Parks and Recreation	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation, Parks
7.1.4.f	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Connect neighborhood social centers	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department, Parks and Recreation	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation, Parks
7.1.4.g	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Enhance Olive Street from downtown to 530	Economic and Community Dev, Street Department	3-7 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation
7.1.4.h	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Enforce fines for trains blocking downtown roads	Mayor, City Council, Police Department	Immediate	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation, Public Safety
7.1.4.i	Reinforce Connectivity for All Modes of Transportation	Revise subdivision ordinance to require sidewalks	Economic and Community Dev, Planning Commission, Street Department	1-3 years	Community & N'hood Regeneration, Transportation & Circulation

**END OF 7.0 STRENGTHEN**

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