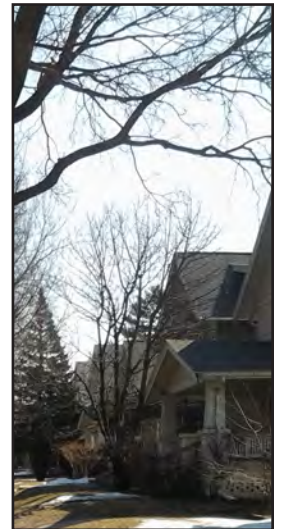




City of Cedar Rapids **Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan**



JULY 2013

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The Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan has been prepared under the direction of City of Cedar Rapids staff, with additional input provided by past planning efforts, neighborhood stakeholder groups, and land representatives. The Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association, as well as individual neighborhood residents and property owners, were instrumental in the preparation of this plan.

Contact:

Sara Lunsford, Compliance Monitoring Specialist
City of Cedar Rapids
101 1st Street SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401
+1 319 286 5810
S.Lunsford@cedar-rapids.org

City Staff:

Paula Mitchell, Grants Programs Manager
Sara Lunsford, Compliance Monitoring Specialist
Jennifer Barten, Homeownership Program Coordinator
Chrystal Shaver, CD Programs Specialist
Caleb Mason, Housing Redevelopment Analyst
Erika Kubly, Housing Programs Specialist
Dave West, Housing Rehabilitation Specialist
Laura Shaw, Housing Programs Specialist
Art Anderson, Housing and Healthy Homes Specialist
Chad Breidinger, Housing Rehabilitation Specialist
Tony Lerud, Housing Programs Specialist

Thank you to the following neighborhood members for hosting meetings in the development of this plan:

St. Paul's United Methodist Church
McKinley Middle School

Planning Consultant:

SAA Design Group, Inc
Madison, WI 53713
www.saa-madison.com



DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

While this plan is intended to be entirely “user-friendly,” some of the terms used in this document may be unfamiliar to readers. Recognizing this, this section provides definitions of several of the most uncommon terms found in the document.

DE-CONVERSION

The transfer of housing originally built as single-family that has since been converted to multi-family back to its intended use.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Recommendations intended to ensure development meets a desired level of quality through physical design. Techniques can include standards relating to facades, parking, access, landscaping, and signage, among others.

FESTIVAL STREET

A street that is regularly used for events and activities.

GREEN ALLEY

Traditional alleys that have been modified to include vegetated strips between concrete, permeable pavement, light-colored pavements, or other innovative techniques to capture and infiltrate stormwater.

HISTORIC DISTRICT

Districts within the city that are home to a concentration of historic homes and where development, renovations, and improvements are subject to certain standards that aim to maintain their significance.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Re-use and/or re-positioning of obsolete, abandoned, or underutilized sites or buildings within existing built-up areas.

LEADERSHIP IN ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (LEED)

A rating system designed to promote responsible and sustainable techniques for new construction, existing building operations and maintenance, and neighborhood development. The overarching goal is to promote the efficient use of resources during throughout a building’s life cycle.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

The design and engineering of stormwater management by which conservation and use of on-site natural features to protect water quality and runoff quantity are emphasized.

MEDQUARTER

A self-supporting municipal improvement district which funds improvements within its boundaries through charges imposed on members. Much investment and new development has taken place within this district over the past few years. At time of publication, the MedQuarter was in the early stages of creating a master development plan to guide the future of the regional medical district. The northern and eastern portions of the MedQuarter overlap the planning area for Wellington Heights.

NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

A place within the neighborhood that offers various services for residents, such as a market, recreation center, or creative space.

OVERLAY DISTRICT

A zoning district that is superimposed upon another district and whose regulations supersede those of the underlying district.

ROAD DIET

Techniques which reduce the number of travel lanes and/or width of a road in order to improve overall effectiveness of travel. A road diet could include reducing a road from four lanes to two lanes and adding a center turn lane and wider sidewalks.

STREETSCAPE

The appearance or view of a street; improvements can include pedestrian-scale street lighting, brick paver terraces, artistically-finished sidewalks, street trees or flowers in planters, informational kiosks, and/or banners.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Engineering, education, or enforcement measures with goals of slowing traffic down, particularly within a neighborhood. Examples include curb bulbouts at intersections and pedestrian crossings, speed tables, pedestrian refuges, and pedestrian-activated flashing signs.

VOLATILE ORGANIC COMPOUNDS (VOC)

Organic chemicals that release a large number of molecules into the air and that are often used in during construction. Many VOCs are harmful to both human health and the environment.

WAYFINDING

Signs, banners, and kiosks that guide users to points of interest in and around the neighborhood.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wellington Heights neighborhood encompasses approximately 385 acres in the heart of the City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The neighborhood is bounded to the north and south by 1st Avenue SE and Mount Vernon Road SE respectively, and is the first neighborhood east of downtown. Third Avenue SE provides an important east-west connection from the neighborhood to the City's regional medical district, its downtown, and the iconic Cedar River, as well as exceptional public open spaces and a regional recreational trail system.

Purpose and Organization

The Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan will help guide physical change, decision making, and policy in the area over the next 10 to 15 years to achieve a consensus-based vision for the future. This plan is intended to work together with the City's other plans, notably the Comprehensive Plan, the MedQuarter plan (in process) and Neighborhood Planning Process (NPP) Framework Plan, but goes beyond those efforts by identifying a vision for Wellington Heights and recommending specific policies and actions directed at influencing positive future growth and guiding City and neighborhood decision-making.

The plan is presented through a series of elements, incrementally laid out to communicate and elaborate upon the guiding principles of the neighborhood's vision and formulate a framework for the neighborhood's future. This organization by plan element reinforces the linkage between the vision and the interrelated approaches to realize that vision.

Key Recommendations

- Enhance **neighborhood safety** and **quality of life** through:
 - ◇ Improved street-lighting
 - ◇ Increased outreach, education, and enforcement to dissuade criminal behaviors
 - ◇ Continued and strengthened alliance within the neighborhood between homeowners, landlords, tenants, schools, churches, service organizations, and City officials
- Promote, preserve, and enhance the neighborhood's **historic residential base** through:
 - ◇ Continuing and expanding programs that assist households in becoming and remaining homeowners
 - ◇ Forging strategic partnerships with major employers (medical, corporate, higher education) to market and incentivize housing opportunities in the neighborhood
 - ◇ Incentivizing the de-conversion of homes from multi-unit to single-family
 - ◇ Modifying zoning classifications and standards for residential use to strengthen the regulatory structure for construction and renovation of context-appropriate housing of all types for Cedar Rapids' diverse and vibrant population base
 - ◇ Development of residential design guidelines
 - ◇ Viewing demolition as a "last resort"

- Nurture the neighborhood’s economic health through:
 - ◊ Promotion of the highest and best use for properties in the Uptown/College district, assuring that all regulatory and economic development tools are in place and consistent with this plan
 - ◊ Creation of an overlay district - including commercial design guidelines - that establishes an identity for 1st Avenue
 - ◊ Collaboration with higher education providers to facilitate access to learning, training, and career-building opportunities
- Improve transportation and connectivity within and through the neighborhood by:
 - ◊ Establishing and maintaining safe, accessible sidewalks
 - ◊ Elimination of most one-way streets
 - ◊ Adding dedicated bicycle facilities along key corridors
 - ◊ Slowing traffic and making major roads more pedestrian-friendly through engineered and programmed traffic calming
- Maximize opportunities for neighborhood recreation and open space through:
 - ◊ Expanded utilization of existing parks and open spaces
 - ◊ Exploration and support of a citizen- or market-initiated “neighborhood center”
 - ◊ Enhancing access, visibility, and programming at Redmond Park
 - ◊ Encouragement of neighborhood-driven and maintained public gardens
- Enhance neighborhood aesthetics and design by:
 - ◊ Comprehensively improving streetscapes along major corridors
 - ◊ Preparing design guidelines
 - ◊ Continuing to strengthen enforcement of property maintenance codes, and assuring that concerned members of the neighborhood are educated as to code requirements and procedures
 - ◊ Promoting neighborhood clean-ups as organized, engaging events
 - ◊ Improving the condition of alleys, terraces, and curbs throughout the neighborhood
- Increasing the neighborhood’s sustainability through:
 - ◊ Aligning existing regulatory tools with sustainable practices as appropriate
 - ◊ Leveraging the neighborhood’s assets of proximity and density to promote alternative transportation
 - ◊ Minimizing stormwater runoff through creative design solutions
 - ◊ Eliminating harmful chemicals used in typical 20th-century construction materials

See Section Nine for a complete implementation strategy.

Section One

Neighborhood Vision and Purpose of Plan

Developed through collaboration with residents, property owners, and business owners who call Wellington Heights their own, this plan is centered around the Neighborhood Vision Statement presented below:

It's the year 2025, and the Wellington Heights Neighborhood is recognized both within the neighborhood and throughout the City of Cedar Rapids as...

...Rich in historical and architectural character

...Friendly and neighborly

...Ideally located with excellent bike, bus, pedestrian, and automobile access to culture, the arts, dining, shopping, jobs, and education

...A stable, safe neighborhood with a sense of pride and community service evident throughout

...A neighborhood where all individuals and families from all walks of life can afford safe, sanitary, and sustainable housing

...A truly diverse neighborhood where people of all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds, and beliefs are welcome and integral to the neighborhood's identity

...A neighborhood with well-lit, tree-lined, walkable streets

...A neighborhood enriched with public spaces and invested institutions that provide opportunities for children and families to play, learn, and celebrate together

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN AND THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan is presented as a framework for future public and private investment and action in a roughly 385-acre, near-east side neighborhood in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Comprised of over 1,700 legal parcels and home to over 5,200 residents in nearly 2,300 dwelling units as of the 2010 census, the roughly 90-square block neighborhood encompasses the area between 1st Avenue E, 10th Street SE, Mount Vernon Road SE, and 19th Street SE. The neighborhood is within a mile of Cedar Rapids' downtown and the Cedar River, and is immediately adjacent to the thriving MedQuarter and the Coe College campus.



The Wellington Heights Neighborhood is home to a diverse group of people who actively take pride in its historic character, friendly and walkable streets, and proximity to regional attractions such as downtown Cedar Rapids, fine dining and shopping establishments, and world-class medical facilities. As one of the most historic neighborhoods in the City of Cedar Rapids, Wellington Heights has many assets on which to build and also several issues upon which to improve. This plan was developed in coordination with neighborhood residents and employers, the City of Cedar Rapids, and other neighborhood stakeholders, all with goals of leveraging neighborhood assets, addressing key issues, and making Wellington Heights a vibrant, attractive place to live, work, and play. With a horizon of ten to fifteen years, this document sets a vision for the neighborhood, discusses overarching principles that will guide future activity, and identifies trends, goals, and action strategies. With this framework in mind, the neighborhood and the City will continue working together to achieve their shared vision for Wellington Heights.



As one of the neighborhoods not inundated by the 2008 flood, Wellington Heights has not seen flood-related support or investment within its core. However, in 2012, the City received funding to develop a framework plan for the neighborhood focused on promoting reinvestment and addressing key stakeholder concerns. The planning process began in early 2013, as the neighborhood, City, and a team of planning consultants began working together to identify important assets, challenges, issues, and opportunities in the neighborhood. Through a two-day intensive charrette, neighborhood meetings, key stakeholder interviews, and web-based feedback methods, central values and concerns of neighborhood stakeholders began to surface. Ideas from these meetings were compiled, categorized, and used to develop a neighborhood vision, a list of key issues, and an implementable action plan focusing on both the physical framework of the neighborhood as well as policy and program recommendations.





PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF PLAN

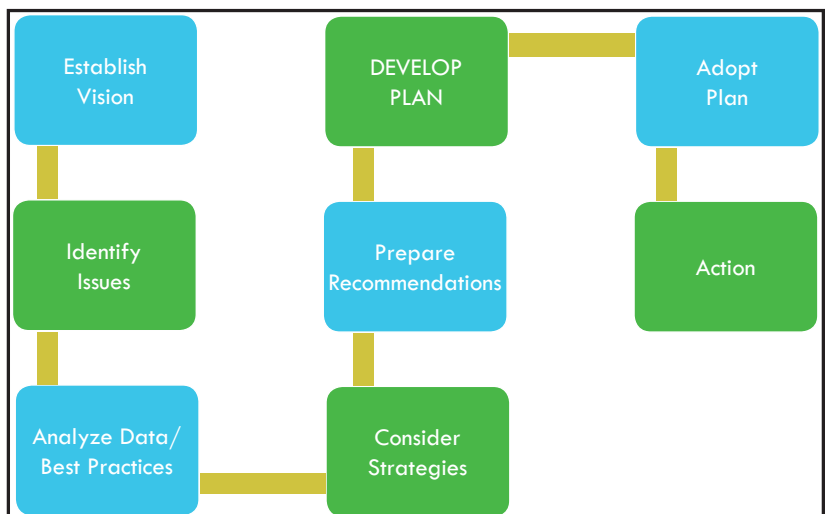
From the outset of the planning process, the purpose of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Framework Plan has been to assess current neighborhood conditions and needs, engage neighborhood residents in identifying the types of activities they view as beneficial, and develop goals and strategies that address the neighborhood's needs. The end goal of the plan is to prepare a framework that will provide direction to the neighborhood and the City as they continue to invest in Wellington Heights. In conjunction with this purpose, plan stakeholders identified several principles that will guide the future of Wellington Heights. Each goal and strategy in this plan works toward achieving these principles, which are summarized below:



- Preserve Historic Character
- Promote Neighborhood Safety
- Encourage an Increase in Owner Occupancy within the Neighborhood
- Continue to Enforce Applicable Codes and Ordinances
- Project Neighborhood Pride and Identity to the City and the Region
- Boost Accountability of Residents, Property Owners, and the City
- Provide Safe and Usable Public Spaces
- Cultivate Neighborliness Among Residents and Visitors
- Leverage Proximity to and Redevelopment Momentum of Medical District and Downtown Cedar Rapids



*Right:
Neighborhood
Plan Process*





OPPORTUNITY ANALYSIS

A key component of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan is recognizing and leveraging the opportunities associated with this unique neighborhood. There are several short and long-term opportunities to build upon, as identified below:

Land Use and Linkage

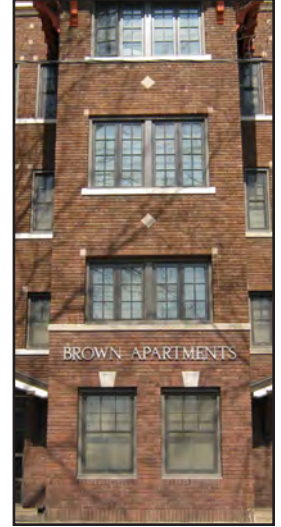
- Much investment has already been made inside of registered Historic Districts in the neighborhood.
- The growing MedQuarter is an exciting and positive development district for Cedar Rapids and the neighborhood. A clear boundary and well-thought out transition from the MedQuarter to the Wellington Heights neighborhood will benefit both the neighborhood and the district.
- New land uses can complement and encourage residential development and strengthen the traditional neighborhood character of Wellington Heights.
- The neighborhood is integrated with several very desirable neighborhood characteristics such as public transportation, churches, social service providers, and cultural and educational assets. In addition, Wellington Heights is home and/or in close proximity to restaurants, shopping, health care, and employment centers – although some basic neighborhood services and amenities (e.g., parks, hardware, pharmacy) are currently lacking.
- The neighborhood's gridded street network provides the foundation for logical, safe and direct linkages to downtown Cedar Rapids, Coe College, Mount Mercy University, the Cedar River waterfront parkway system, the Cedar River Trail and Cedar Lake Loop Trail, and the MedQuarter.
- While Redmond, Huston, and Wellington Park provide neighborhood green space and a limited level of recreational amenity, there is a shortage of usable public gathering and play space to serve the neighborhood.

Redevelopment Potential

- 1st Avenue E, particularly between 12th Street SE and 16th Street SE, has some of Wellington Heights' most valuable real estate and holds potential to become a cohesive, dense, and walkable commercial mixed-use corridor.
- The eastern and southern two-thirds exhibit infill and preservation opportunities to stabilize residential densities and promote homeownership at an appropriate scale and

character for this traditional neighborhood.

- Blocks on arterial streets and at institutional edges provide easy pedestrian and transit access to employment areas, the downtown, and higher education and offer opportunities for neighborhood-sensitive, high-quality residential density.
- There is substantial redevelopment momentum at the southwestern corner of the neighborhood, particularly along 10th Street SE, which could act as a catalyst for complementary redevelopment within the neighborhood.



Transportation and Parking

- 3rd Avenue SE is a relatively wide one-way (inbound to the neighborhood) street with low traffic volumes that links directly to and through the medical district, downtown, and the riverfront open space and trail network.
- 15th Street NE is Wellington Heights' central and primary N-S corridor, and as such serves as a "cut-through" route between 1st Avenue E and Mount Vernon Road SE. As a key residential street, 15th provides opportunities for enhanced pedestrian treatment including lighting and traffic calming.
- Mount Vernon Road SE, 1st Avenue E, and (to a slightly lesser degree) 10th Street SE are regionally important roadways and form three very hard – if not nearly impenetrable – edges to the Wellington Heights neighborhood that can be "softened" - through improved streetscape, pedestrian amenity, and roadway and intersection design - to improve the neighborhood's access and aesthetic.
- Virtually all blocks in the neighborhood are platted with alleys, which are generally in a deteriorating condition but provide most properties with rear parking access and minimize driveways along the neighborhood's residential streets, thus contributing to a strong pedestrian character.
- On-street parking is an essential component of the neighborhood's parking scheme. As a neighborhood essentially built-out before the age of the automobile, it is critical that the character of housing on individual lots is sensitive to a limited capacity for vehicle parking.
- Consolidation of existing parking lots, especially along 1st Avenue E, could be considered to increase available parking supply and maximize open space.
- Higher capacity public parking solutions might be considered near the MedQuarter district to support that district as well as the Uptown employee and patron base.
- Flexible and shared parking for institutional uses with specific days/times of parking demand (such as churches) could be considered to maximize efficiency of parking supply and to preserve open space and redevelopment space.

Visual Character

- Continued vigilance on property maintenance and general clean-up – both by public officials and neighborhood residents – is essential to the continued improvement of Wellington Heights’ image within and outside of the neighborhood.
- Continued preservation of the neighborhood’s signature residential architectural character is vital to continuing its strong sense of unity and place.
- Numerous small community gardens are scattered throughout the neighborhood, adding to the charm and visible sense of pride, neighborliness, and sustainability present in Wellington Heights.
- The “urban forest” is tremendously strong in Wellington Heights, as virtually every street is lined with mature, healthy trees.
- In addition to prominent single-family homes, the neighborhood is home to many appropriately scaled and sited multi-family structures (e.g., Brown Apartments). Multi-family residences are an integral thread in the neighborhood’s fabric historically and into the future.
- Overall, the necessary infrastructure and space are available to strengthen the pedestrian environment.
- 1st Avenue E (USH 151) and Mount Vernon Road SE serve as primary connections to the north and east from the MedQuarter, the Downtown, and the Cedar River and could be substantially improved as gateways into the neighborhood.
- Signage recognizing the uniqueness and importance of districts within the neighborhood (e.g., 1st Avenue College/Uptown District, historic districts) is generally either lacking altogether or poorly maintained.
- Attractive, pedestrian-scaled lighting is currently lacking throughout the neighborhood (10th Avenue SE from 1st to 4th being the exception).
- Alleys serve an important aesthetic as well as functional role in the neighborhood, and are currently of generally poor condition.



ELEMENTS AND ORGANIZATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Sections Two through Eight of this Plan introduce key plan elements as identified and discussed by the City of Cedar Rapids, neighborhood stakeholders, and the consultant team throughout the planning process. While these elements are discussed individually within their own section, it should be noted that each is dependent on many, or all, of the others. For example, improving the aesthetics of the neighborhood will likely increase the feeling of public safety, which will enhance economic opportunity, and so on.

Section Two - Social Capital and Public Safety (pp. 13 - 15)

As a neighborhood in the truest sense, Wellington Heights is a complex network of not only physical connections but also - perhaps most importantly - social connections between people that rely on common goals, values, and norms to be sustaining and thriving. With an emphasis on public safety, Section Two addresses this critical component of the neighborhood's framework, which was revealed throughout the planning process as an important - and at times misunderstood - component of the neighborhood's image and identity.

Section Three - Housing and Historic Character (pp. 16 - 18)

Roughly eighty percent of the property within Wellington Heights is used for residential housing, and its importance in Cedar Rapids' history as a strong, stable, working-class neighborhood is founded in its excellent housing stock. Section Three speaks to the continued importance of the neighborhood as a primarily residential community within Cedar Rapids.

Section Four - Economic Vitality (pp. 19 - 21)

Section Four examines the important role economic development has played and will continue to play in the overall health and sustainability of Wellington Heights. The neighborhood's advantageous geographic position near Cedar Rapids' downtown, MedQuarter, and Coe College contributes to the potential for a unique and thriving business and service district, specifically along the neighborhood's major roadways and neighborhood edges.

Section Five - Transportation and Connectivity (pp. 22 - 24)

Section Five looks at how the neighborhood's transportation networks and systems function to its advantage. As a dense, urban neighborhood, an integrated system of vehicle, pedestrian, transit, and bicycle routes is essential to the prosperity of the neighborhood.

Section Six - Open Space and Recreation (pp. 25 - 27)

As explored in Section Six, accessible and attractive public space for recreation, relaxation, and gathering is a fundamental element of any healthy neighborhood.

Section Seven - Aesthetics and Neighborhood Design (pp. 28 - 30)

Section Seven reflects on the importance of the visual appearance of buildings, streets, alleys, parks, and other neighborhood spaces in communicating the overall image of the neighborhood, which can be both positive and negative.

Section 8 - Sustainability (pp. 31 - 33)

Section 8 acknowledges the importance of the concept of “sustainability” in a universal sense (i.e., environmentally, economically, and socially) to the uniqueness and identity of Wellington Heights.

Each of the eight sections is structured around the following topics, which define the context and basis for the neighborhood plan’s framework:

Prevailing Trends

Issues and opportunities specific to each topic became apparent through research and interaction with stakeholders. Identifying these trends was an essential step in understanding the historical, cultural, and physical context of the neighborhood, its current state, and the potential and appetite for reinvestment.

Goals

Using the information gathered regarding prevailing trends, goals were developed to address issues and capitalize on opportunities. Goals set explicit and attainable targets which can be achieved within the timeframe of the plan and which focus on improvements to the physical structure as well as the cultural and political framework of the neighborhood. The goals were used to develop the physical framework plan, policy/program recommendations, and the action plan.

Best Practices

Many success stories exist around the region and across the country with regard to the issues and opportunities in Wellington Heights. While it is important to note that Wellington Heights is a unique place and that there is no “silver bullet” with regard to promoting neighborhood investment and improvement, identifying best practices from other communities can stimulate ideas and provide a valuable resource to the neighborhood as it begins to consider strategies and initiatives. These examples provide insight into what has worked in other communities and should be viewed as successful models worth consideration, but not necessarily as recommended implementation steps in and of themselves.

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Section Two

Social Capital and Public Safety





PREVAILING TRENDS

The residents, business owners, employees, and institutions that have a vested stake in Wellington Heights have long been committed to maintaining its position as a vital neighborhood within the City of Cedar Rapids. The neighborhood is home to many churches and schools, has an active neighborhood association, and features some of the most successful service organizations in the region. The neighborhood also exudes a friendly and neighborly feel made apparent through its historic nature, tree-lined streets, and welcoming residents.

Throughout the planning process, one of the most commonly-mentioned concerns of neighborhood stakeholders was public safety. Over the past several years, Wellington Heights has experienced a relatively high – by Cedar Rapids’ standards – incidence of personal, property, and violent crime. More recently however, crime has been declining, which is attributable in part to increased policing and neighborhood activism. Safety is an important piece of a successful, vibrant, sustainable neighborhood and affects virtually every part of resident’s quality of life.

Issues

- The neighborhood has experienced more than its share of the City’s violent crime over the past several years, although from a national perspective crime is quite low citywide.
- The police substation on 1st Avenue has been successful in encouraging neighborhood involvement in community policing but residents are not always aware of its “open” hours.
- Lighting in the neighborhood is not adequate to produce feelings of safety among residents.
- There is a high concentration of “enablers” which lawfully sell substances such as synthetic marijuana and alcohol in shops along 1st Avenue, which contributes to both perceived and realized problems within the neighborhood.

Opportunities

- Crime within the neighborhood has been declining over the past few years.
- Wellington Heights has a neighborhood watch program in place and a police substation within its boundaries.
- The Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association and neighborhood residents are very active and serious about change.
- There are many positive service organizations with vested stakes in the neighborhood.
- Numerous churches as well as Johnson Elementary and McKinley Middle school provide essential stability and community to the neighborhood and its residents.

GOALS

1. Further decrease the instance of crime throughout the neighborhood.
2. Promote positive public relations to the media and to potential homeowners and employers.
3. Increase opportunities for neighborhood engagement, celebration and involvement.

BEST PRACTICES

Hot Spots Policing – Lowell, MA

Based on the theory that crime is likely to flourish in areas with higher levels of physical and social disorder, this program emphasized increasing overall police visibility in locations with a higher incidence of crime. Officers took to the streets on foot, engaging in community events, visiting juvenile hangouts, speaking to community members, and performing routine stops of vehicles and pedestrians. Meanwhile, the City and other partners began improving street lighting, cleaning up vacant lots, and performing code inspections. Social service agencies worked to offer recreational opportunities for youth and provide housing for homeless individuals. The program's focus on known problem areas increased enforcement of minor violations, contributed to a decrease in service calls and disorder, and remarkably did not displace crime into surrounding areas.

<http://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=208>

Drug Abatement Response – San Diego, CA

The goal of the San Diego Drug Abatement Response Team program was to reduce drug activity in residential properties by encouraging improved property management practices. The City identified problem properties, contacting landlords regarding issues, and used nuisance abatement techniques to evict problem tenants. When combined with police efforts, the program helped to reduce crime in target areas by up to sixty percent. A greater amount of intervention by the City resulted in more significant decreases in crime.

<http://www.crimesolutions.gov/ProgramDetails.aspx?ID=88>

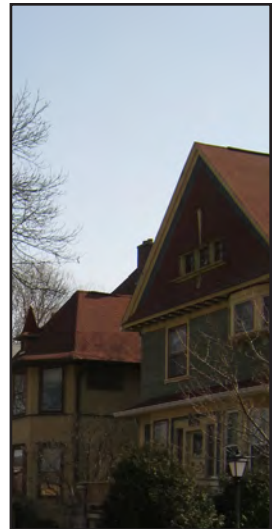
Resident Engagement – Sacramento, CA

Within the Del Paso neighborhood, the Mutual Assistance Network (MAN) is a non-profit group that has used a unique approach to engage residents in community initiatives. The group utilizes residents' skills, builds capacity to capitalize on opportunities as they arise, maintains a defined neighborhood focus, and involves residents in important decision-making roles. This has allowed MAN to produce high levels of involvement in neighborhood affairs and promote ownership among residents.

<http://www.mutualassistance.com/>

Section Three

Housing and Historic Character





PREVAILING TRENDS

As one of the first residential neighborhoods in Cedar Rapids to develop, Wellington Heights contains some of the most historic and architecturally-significant homes in the City. It is also home to both of Cedar Rapids' historic districts – the Second and Third Avenue Historic District and the Redmond Park-Grande Avenue Historic District. Originally established as a predominately single-family neighborhood, several homes originally purposed for one or perhaps two families have been converted to multi-family use over the course of many years.

Issues

- Due to its age, the neighborhood's housing stock often requires maintenance to meet code which creates a financial burden on property owners.
- Too many homes originally constructed as single-family homes have in the past been converted to multi-family dwellings, contributing to traffic, parking issues, property maintenance concerns, and other challenges.
- A steadily increasing proportion of renter-occupied to owner-occupied housing has contributed to disinvestment in properties and unstable property values.
- Certain landlords have limited connection to the neighborhood and have not adequately maintained their properties.
- Several organizations have done a successful job of rehabilitating housing within the neighborhood; the city should continue monitoring the market impacts of such activity as these and other initiatives and programs are implemented

Opportunities

- Many neighborhood stakeholders have tremendous desire and motivation to preserve its historic nature.
- Being home to two of the City's historic districts provides some protection against housing deterioration, can boost the value of homes within and surrounding the district, and provides financial and informational resources for homeowners.
- Cedar Rapids' Housing Services Division administers a number of programs to increase access to safe and affordable housing, ranging from rehabilitation assistance to roof replacement assistance, as well as assistance for prospective home buyers and renters.
- Numerous public and private organizations are found in and around the neighborhood and could provide valuable assistance to those seeking to own a home.
- The neighborhood's proximity to many of Cedar Rapids' most popular destinations, employment centers, and cultural resources has the potential to make it a highly-desirable place to find affordable, high-character and high-quality housing.

GOALS

1. Preserve the historic character of the neighborhood.
2. Foster reinvestment of deteriorating housing stock.
3. Clearly communicate a standard of quality and accountability for property maintenance.
4. Promote homeownership opportunities within the neighborhood for current residents and for individuals employed in proximity to the neighborhood.

BEST PRACTICES

Financing Historic District Rehabilitation – Boston, MA

Boston's HomeWorks HELP Program provides interest-free loans to homeowners rehabilitating their historic homes. In order to promote continued investment in the neighborhood, the homeowner must guarantee they will use the house as their primary residence for at least ten years to receive a loan. The program has fostered a sense of pride within Boston's historic neighborhoods, further developed their historic character, and strengthened their relationship with the City.

http://www.Cityofboston.gov/dnd/bhc/HomeWorks_Help.asp

Medical District Housing Partnership – Baltimore, MD

The Johns Hopkins Medical Center has partnered with the City of Baltimore to provide financial assistance to employees who purchase a home within an adjoining neighborhood. The "Live Near Your Work" program provides grants eligible for use towards down payments or closing costs. Johns Hopkins also provides resources to help short-term staff find proximate employee or university-owned rental properties. The program encourages homeownership, stability, and investment in nearby neighborhoods and establishes the medical center as a valuable and engaged part of the community.

<http://www.bayviewjobs.org/employeebenefits/employeeresources/livenearyourwork.html>

Neighborhood Preservation Housing Partnership – Iowa City, IA

In cooperation with the University of Iowa and several local organizations, the City of Iowa City has begun to preserve and enhance the character of historic residential neighborhoods adjacent to the University of Iowa campus as part of its UniverCity Housing Partnership. The City uses financing from local lenders to purchase homes, fund up to \$50,000 in renovations per home, and then sell the property to income-qualified buyers as owner-occupied housing. The purpose of the program is to promote home ownership close to City employment centers so as to foster safe, affordable, and attractive neighborhoods.

<http://www.icgov.org/?id=1995>

Section Four

Economic Vitality





PREVAILING TRENDS

Much of the commercial use within the neighborhood is located along the southern and western edges on Mount Vernon Road SE, 10th Street SE, and 1st Avenue. Over the past several years, there has been an increase in activity within the MedQuarter, Cedar Rapid's Medical District along 10th Street SE, some of which has made its way into Wellington Heights' southwestern residential edge. Along 1st Avenue southwest of 16th Street SE, there has been somewhat frequent transfer of property ownership often characteristic of commercial development along

arterial roads. Northwest of 16th Street SE, the corridor contains a higher frequency of services uses, such as medical and financial offices. The 1st Avenue Uptown College District has been working along this corridor since 2006 to improve safety, aesthetics, and to promote investment in the area.

Issues

- The presence of undesirable or unattractive commercial uses, particularly along 1st Avenue, creates unattractive gateways to the neighborhood and promotes dissident behavior in surrounding areas.
- While medical facilities have successfully created jobs and attracted people to the neighborhood, they have also generated some conflict with existing residential uses.
- Commercial uses along neighborhood edges do not always meet the needs of residents.

Opportunities

- Much investment has been made in the medical district as of late and there is enormous potential to leverage this investment in a way that benefits the neighborhood.
- Students attending Coe College, employees of local medical facilities, and neighborhood residents combine to provide a diverse, ever-present market that can attract a variety of businesses well-suited to the neighborhood's context.
- The neighborhood showed an appetite for appropriate mixed-use development which would provide accessible services and enhance safety by promoting increased pedestrian activity.

GOALS

1. Develop 1st Avenue and other appropriate streets as accessible, attractive commercial corridors with businesses serving both neighborhood and regional demand.
2. Promote context-sensitive aesthetics and business types along key corridors.
3. Accommodate a range of high-quality shopping and service uses that increases the neighborhood's aesthetic appeal and desirability for homeowners and businesses alike.

BEST PRACTICES

Commercial Corridor Design Guidelines – College Park, MD

The U.S. Route 1 corridor serves as a gateway to the City of College Park, Maryland and the University of Maryland, while also serving the needs of surrounding neighborhoods. The corridor was vastly underutilized by pedestrians and bicyclists and conveyed a disorganized, inconsistent look and feel. Since the completion of a vision plan, the corridor has taken initial steps to become more well-used, lively, and functional through utilizing “build-to lines” to bring buildings up to the street, developing form-based development codes, addressing intersection safety issues, and managing access points, among other concepts.

<http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/collegepark.pdf>

Enhancing Neighborhood Businesses and Public Relations – Portland, OR

Alberta Main Street works in conjunction with other programs managed by the Portland Development Commission. The Main Street program enlists the City and other partners to aid neighborhoods in developing vital neighborhood business districts that promote local investment, fill vacant spaces, increase visibility of the neighborhood, and promote live-work opportunities. Alberta Main Street has developed a strong public relations campaign that reaches consumers and encourages neighborhood involvement, and has garnered support for district improvement from local, regional, and national business and organizations.

<http://albertamainst.org/>

Section Five

Transportation and Connectivity





PREVAILING TRENDS

Wellington Heights is fortunate to be well connected to its surroundings, which include downtown Cedar Rapids, the MedQuarter, Coe College, the Moundview and Oakhill/Jackson neighborhoods, and the Cedar River. It also lies in close proximity to several regional transportation routes which link Cedar Rapids to major cities within Iowa and surrounding states. Despite this, there are several confusing traffic patterns and neighborhood edges that do not promote easy bicycle, pedestrian, or automobile access to surrounding areas.

Issues

- As a general comment, many existing roadways in the neighborhood - specifically Mount Vernon Road SE, 1st Avenue SE, and the one-way pairs from 2nd to 5th Street SE - function as relatively hard “barriers” for anyone not in an automobile. In many respects, the major roadways in the neighborhood - although their actual traffic volumes are somewhat low (1st Avenue being the exception) - are “overdesigned” for their current and most likely future function in the local and regional transportation system.
- The condition of certain streets, alleys, and sidewalks is generally poor.
- Routes to local schools for neighborhood children are not always safe or accessible.
- One-way and indirectly connected streets create a number of challenges, as identified by the planning team and referenced by neighborhood stakeholders, such as:
 - ◊ While one-way pairs can be effective in commercial areas, they are disruptive to connectivity within residential areas. Stakeholders rated “neighborhood connectivity” quite low in a May 2013 questionnaire (see appendix).
 - ◊ The one-way streets in Wellington Heights are not “controlled” (i.e., there are no traffic lights, stop signs, or other traffic controls) between 19th Street and 10th Street, and thus lend themselves to high speeds and cut-through traffic.
 - ◊ One-way streets concentrate traffic on a few particular streets, rather than disburse traffic evenly throughout the neighborhood, which is detrimental to connectivity and pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle safety.
- Crossing major thoroughfares along neighborhood edges is often inconvenient or unsafe. Park Court to the Hy-Vee on 1st Avenue is a very common spot for jaywalking.
- Bicycle and pedestrian routes are not always established, well-defined, or maintained.

Opportunities

- The width and traffic volume of 3rd and 4th Avenues make them prime for the development of designated bicycle routes.
- Certain streets are well-suited to streetscaping and traffic calming which will make them safer and more attractive gateways to the neighborhood.
- The neighborhood is reasonably well-served by public transit routes.

GOALS

1. Place a high priority on street, alley, and sidewalk maintenance in the neighborhood.
2. Encourage neighborhood feedback regarding the traffic impacts of new development.
3. Increase neighborhood connectivity for buses, bicycles, and pedestrians.
4. Identify safe routes to and from neighborhood schools.

BEST PRACTICES

Complete Streets – Nashville, TN

Complete streets refer to streets that are designed with the safety, convenience, and comfort of all users in mind, from the pedestrian and bicyclist to the motorist and transit user. Since implementing a complete streets policy, the City of Nashville has seen up to a 300% increase in pedestrian traffic, a tenfold increase in miles of bicycle infrastructure, and the completion of its first health impact assessment. Complete streets are an effective means to promote walkability within neighborhoods as well as connections to surrounding areas.

<http://www.smartgrowthamerica.org/documents/cs/resources/complete-streets-in-underserved-communities.pdf>

Neighborhood Traffic Management – Milwaukee, WI

A neighborhood traffic management program provides neighborhood residents with the opportunity to address traffic problems on residential streets. In Milwaukee, residents can formally request that the City conduct a study of traffic patterns and speeds on neighborhood streets and assess the costs of proposed traffic calming features. This program encourages neighborhood engagement and proactive solutions to safety issues.

<http://City.milwaukee.gov/mpw/divisions/infrastructure/NeighborhoodTrafficManagement.htm>

Safe Routes to School - Nationwide

The Safe Routes to School program provides financial assistance for cities to assess and improve the ability for children to walk or bike safely to and from school. A comprehensive assessment of sidewalks, street crossings, safety hazards, and other facets of the transportation network around schools allows the City to prioritize resources and develop safe and convenient routes throughout the City. As public facilities, the improvements also enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections and safety for all users.

<http://www.iowadot.gov/saferoutes/>

Section Six

Open Space and Recreation





PREVAILING TRENDS

While Wellington Heights is well-situated to many of the City's premiere open spaces, it suffers from a lack of safe, usable open space within its boundaries. Redmond Park includes a playground and splashpad and has successfully hosted neighborhood events and programs in the past. Huston Park is rather small and does not provide much usable space aside from a few benches. Wellington Park consists of a functional playground and a small open field but is situated amongst incompatible land uses. There

are also public spaces at both Johnson Elementary School and McKinley Middle School as well as community gardens dispersed throughout the neighborhood.

Issues

- Existing parks are sometimes considered unsafe for use by children and families.
- Existing parks are not always usable for larger, structured events.
- There is a lack of event or activity programming within Redmond Park.
- Much of the neighborhood does not have easy access to surrounding open space.

Opportunities

- Past successes in programming events provide precedent for increasing the number of scheduled activities.
- In an entirely grass-roots fashion, several community gardens have been established throughout the Wellington Heights Neighborhood.
- Redmond and Huston Park are located along 3rd Avenue SE, which is one of the busier streets in the neighborhood.
- Wellington Park has the potential to be a safe, attractive, and functional neighborhood gathering place that can host events and attract use from the nearby MedQuarter.

GOALS

1. Enhance the safety and usability of existing parks and open spaces in the neighborhood.
2. Increase opportunities for year-round, neighborhood-focused activities and events.
3. Increase the amount of public parks and open space accessible to all neighborhood residents.

BEST PRACTICES

Park Rejuvenation – Washington D.C.

Once known as “Needle Park” for the amount of drug use and sales taking place within its boundaries, Marvin Gaye Park saw significant community reinvestment in the late 2000s to remove trash, rebuild play equipment, and program year-round events. Since this investment took place, the park has become a safe place for community gatherings, regularly hosts events, and projects a positive community image in the media. The keys to this success have been buy-in from governmental and community organizations, continued vigilance of local residents, and programming year-round events that celebrate the space and its context.

http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/Rejuvenating-Neighborhoods-White-Paper.pdf

Section Seven

Aesthetics and Neighborhood Design





PREVAILING TRENDS

When it was established, Wellington Heights was one of the most attractive neighborhoods in the City due to its striking architecture, institutional presence, and appealing streetscape. Fortunately, many original aspects of the neighborhood's beauty and design are still in place, which provides opportunities to capitalize on existing assets in relatively short order. Property maintenance and litter control are perhaps the two most important aspects of aesthetics but streetscaping, landscaping, and architectural design are also valuable pieces that contribute to the look and feel of the neighborhood.

Issues

- Property maintenance and upkeep, particularly regarding certain rental housing units, does not always shed positive light on the neighborhood.
- Litter is rampant in the neighborhood, as are larger pieces of trash on lawns and in vacant lots.
- 1st Avenue SE and (to a lesser degree) Mount Vernon Road SE are key entrance corridors to the neighborhood as well as to the MedQuarter, Coe College, and Downtown Cedar Rapids. Both of these roads provide limited aesthetic quality and definition, with billboards, marginal sidewalk quality, poorly scaled lighting, and generally unkempt appearance.
- Buildings with historical or architectural significance typically are not noticeably celebrated.

Opportunities

- Many properties are kept up very well and homeowners are vigilant in improving neighborhood aesthetics.
- A nuisance abatement ordinance recently passed by City council should have positive effects.
- Neighborhood cleanup days have been successful in the past.
- Several streets in the Wellington Heights neighborhood are within rights-of-way that are wide enough to accommodate an appropriate range of streetscape improvements.

GOALS

1. Enhance the visual image and expression of public spaces such as streets, alleys, and parks to send a consistent and positive message about the neighborhood as a unique and beautiful place.
2. Establish and clearly communicate a standard of quality and accountability for the maintenance of all private properties.
3. Improve wayfinding and identity signage within the neighborhood.
4. Reduce the visual impact of parking areas and other “blank” spaces in the neighborhood.
5. Improve street, alley, and park lighting throughout the neighborhood.

BEST PRACTICES

Landlord Engagement and Education – Schaumburg, IL

The City's crime free multi-housing program requires leasing agents to take a seminar at the police department before being allowed to rent their property. The seminar educates landlords on their rights and responsibilities and on how to screen tenants and encourage safety within the vicinity of their property. The requirement also encourages landlords to find tenants that will care for the property and ideally become involved in the neighborhood. The result has been fewer conflicts between landlords and tenants and safer environments around both single and multi-family housing units.

<http://www.ci.schaumburg.il.us/PSAFETY/PSafety/Pages/CrimeFree.aspx>

Neighborhood Beautification and Streetscaping – Seattle, WA

Seattle's Neighborhood Green Streets program enables residential streets to benefit from improved streetscaping, pedestrian and bicycle traffic, and traffic calming features. Designated green streets become neighborhood destinations, which increases the number of people on the street and enhances safety. Streetscape funding can come from a local improvement district, agency partnerships, grants, or City matching funds.

http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual/manual/6_2.asp

Section Eight Sustainability



PREVAILING TRENDS

A sustainable neighborhood not only efficiently utilizes environmental resources but also promotes enduring economic activity and provides opportunities for all people to contribute to its success. Wellington Heights has been a valuable piece of the fabric of Cedar Rapids since the late-1800s and has the potential to continue this into the foreseeable future. While portions of the neighborhood have seen disinvestment over the years, there are still many strong foundations on which to build.

Issues

- Very few people that are employed within the neighborhood also live or own a home in the neighborhood.
- Historic District regulations and standards can sometimes present challenges for installing renewable energy systems, for example solar panels or small wind turbines
- Standing water in alleys is relatively common after rain events.
- Commercial centers within the neighborhood are subject to minimum parking standards which have traditionally resulted in large amounts of impervious area in the form of parking lots.

Opportunities

- Many programs exist to rehabilitate and sell dilapidated properties to new homeowners; at the same time, neighborhood employers hire many young employees who also may be considering homeownership.
- Installation techniques and progressive guidelines have made it easier to install renewable energy systems - such as solar panels and small-scale wind turbines - on historic structures without compromising their significance.
- Sites planned for redevelopment have the opportunity to implement sustainable practices and serve as pilot projects for the neighborhood.

GOALS

1. Enable all neighborhood residents to contribute to the success of the neighborhood through inclusion in neighborhood affairs, activities, and activism.
2. Promote a live-work neighborhood that offers quality residential and employment opportunities.
3. Incentivize stormwater management practices that promote the efficient use of water and eliminate overuse of storm sewers.
4. Implement and incentivize sustainable practices in all new or re-development on both residential and commercial sites.
5. Market vacant lots for infill development that is appropriate for the neighborhood.

BEST PRACTICES

Sustainable Neighborhood Grants – St. Louis, MO

The City of St. Louis and local foundations have partnered to begin the Sustainable Neighborhood Small Grant Competition in 2013. The competition allows neighborhood associations, individuals, or other groups to develop proposals for projects that will improve livability, quality of life, and sustainability within the City's neighborhoods. Many resources are available to support proposal development and the City offered help sessions for those considering involvement. The competition has fostered neighborhood involvement, preservation efforts, and an increased interest in neighborhood economic vitality.

<http://sustainableneighborhood.net/>

Green and Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) – Dubuque, IA

GHHI is a nation-wide initiative that aims to create healthier living environments centered on the home. Within Dubuque, the program has used home advocates to begin updating homes and taking care of issues such as energy efficiency, lead hazards, and weatherization in low-to-moderate-income homes. Cedar Rapids has been identified as one of a handful of "next generation" sites and will be receiving assistance as part of this program in the future.

<http://www.greenandhealthyhomes.org/>

Sustainable Neighborhoods Program – Lakewood, CO

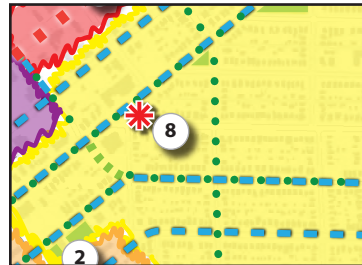
The City of Lakewood provides guidance to neighborhoods with sustainability goals by hosting workshops, assisting with projects, and promoting events aimed at enhancing livability within their borders. The program supports neighborhood efforts through strategic assistance and "Sustainable Neighborhood" designations. It also fosters neighborhood engagement, goal-setting, and a positive image for participating neighborhoods.

<http://www.lakewood.org/GreenNeighborhoods/>

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Section Nine

Implementation and Action Plan



CHARACTER

PRESERVED SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING



CONTEXT-SENSITIVE ATTACHED HOUSING



REVITALIZED AND REDEVELOPED COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR



PLAN ELEMENTS AND INITIATIVES



IMPROVED CIRCULATION AND CALMED TRAFFIC



ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN AMENITY AND STREETScape

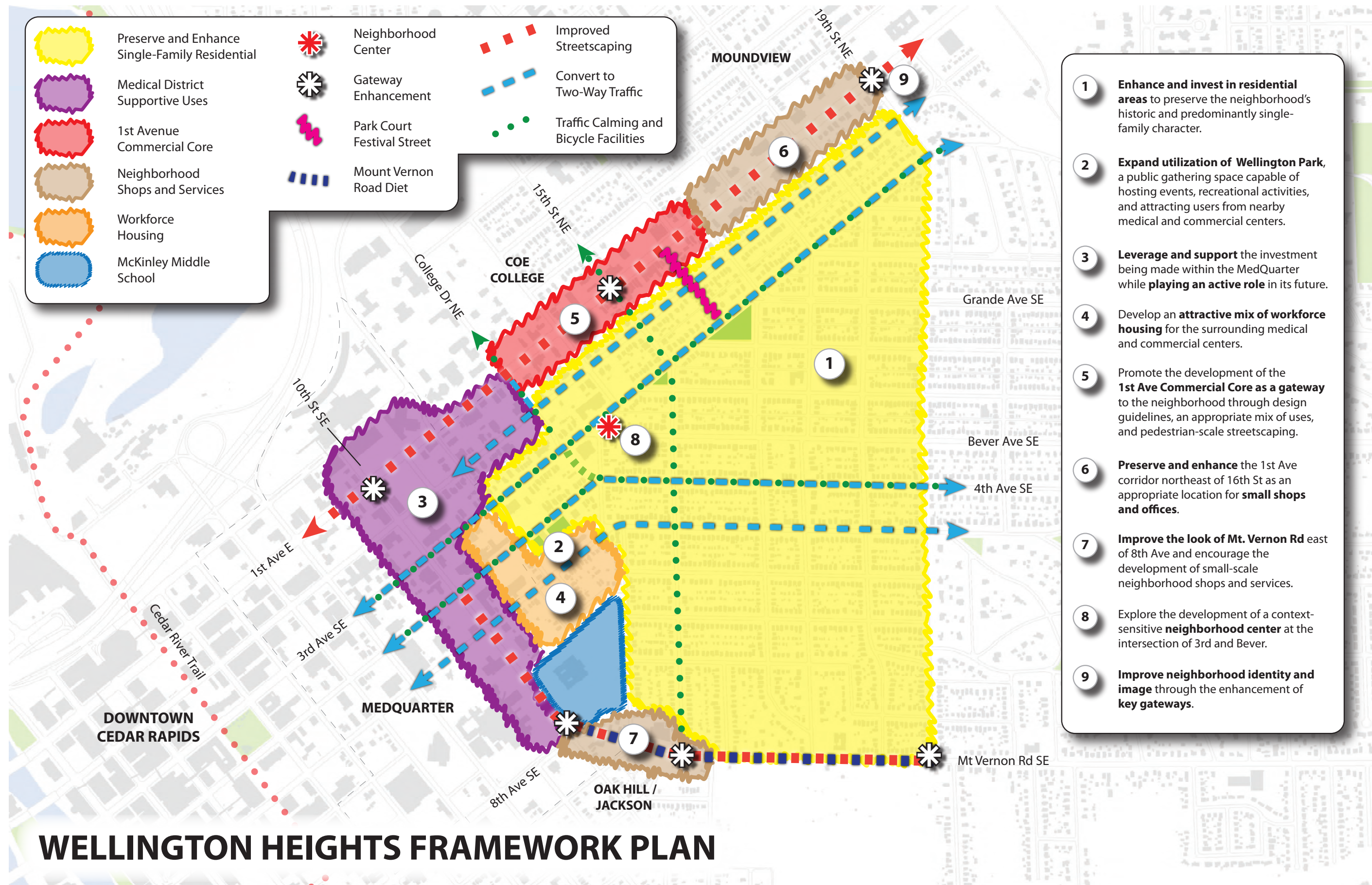


IMPROVED CONNECTIVITY TO REGIONAL TRAILS

The proposed framework plan for the Wellington Heights neighborhood provides a proactive and attainable physical improvement strategy that preserves the neighborhood's historic housing stock, promotes investment and owner-occupancy, vastly improves the "public realm" in both formalized and subtle spaces, improves connectivity to proximate and regional destinations and resources for all travelers, and maximizes the economic potential of this unique and truly dynamic urban neighborhood. The initiatives illustrated on the maps on pages 37, 41, and 42 and summarized below represent an ambitious and comprehensive - **but ultimately "doable"** - list of actionable items to meet the neighborhood's vision.

Social Capital and Public Safety

- Improve **lighting** throughout the neighborhood, with a focus on **pedestrian-scale** lighting (see example images A through C on page 38) for most corridors. Priority corridors include:
 - ◇ 1st Avenue SE
 - ◇ 15th Street SE
 - ◇ Bever Avenue SE
 - ◇ 3rd Avenue SE
 - ◇ Park Avenue SE
 - ◇ Park Court SE
- **Educate and inform neighborhood residents** of proper contacts and procedures for reporting all levels of unlawful activity, and encourage them to diligently follow-up with law enforcement.
- Encourage law enforcement professionals' **outreach and patrol** within the neighborhood



Pedestrian Scale Lighting



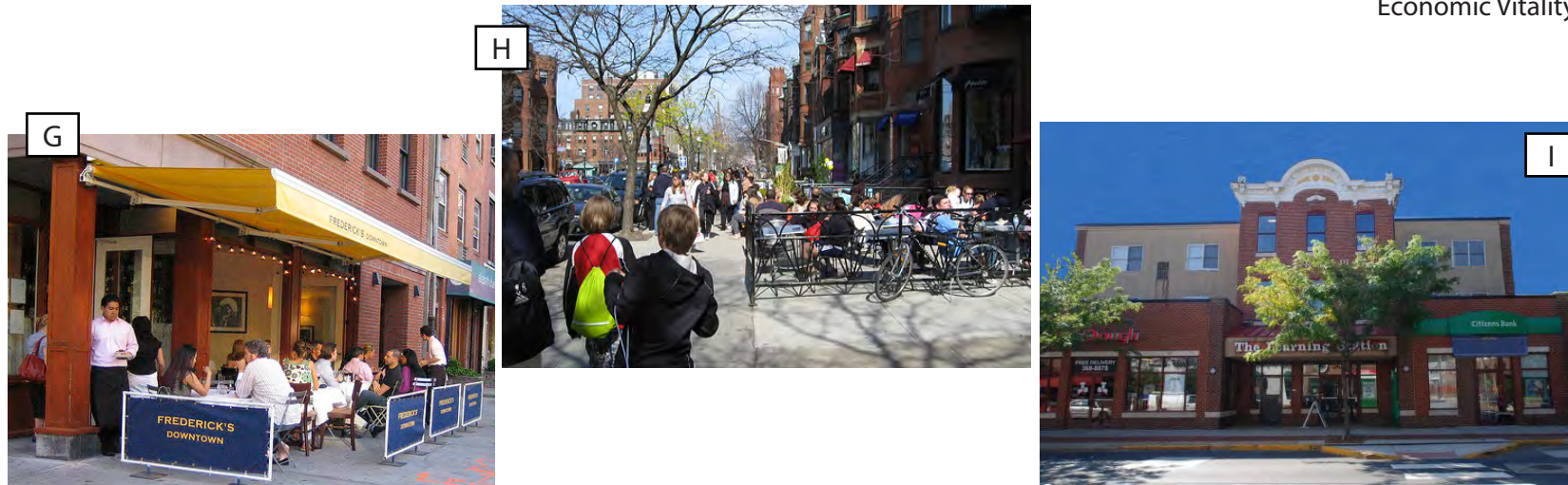
Transportation



Workforce Housing



Economic Vitality



Open Space and Recreation



Sustainability



on foot and by bicycle, and maintain a **consistent staffing level and schedule at the 1st Avenue substation**.

- Continue to investigate and enforce all levels of unlawful activity, with an objective to communicate the neighborhood's position of **zero-tolerance for threatening, unsafe, or unlawful behavior** of any sort (including speeding, jaywalking, graffiti, harassment, etc.).
- Recognize the vital **role of community institutions** within the neighborhood, including schools, churches, transitional living facilities, food pantries, and other social services, and work collaboratively to ensure that they can continue to provide service in harmony with changes in character, connectivity, and land use as proposed by this plan.
- As redevelopment is proposed to occur within the neighborhood, **follow existing city procedures and plans for relocation assistance** for any businesses, individuals, or families that are directly impacted.
- Continue to **plan and host organized, citizen-initiated neighborhood gatherings and outings** as often as possible at existing and proposed public spaces within the neighborhood.

Housing and Historic Character (Note 1 on Framework Plan Map, p. 37)

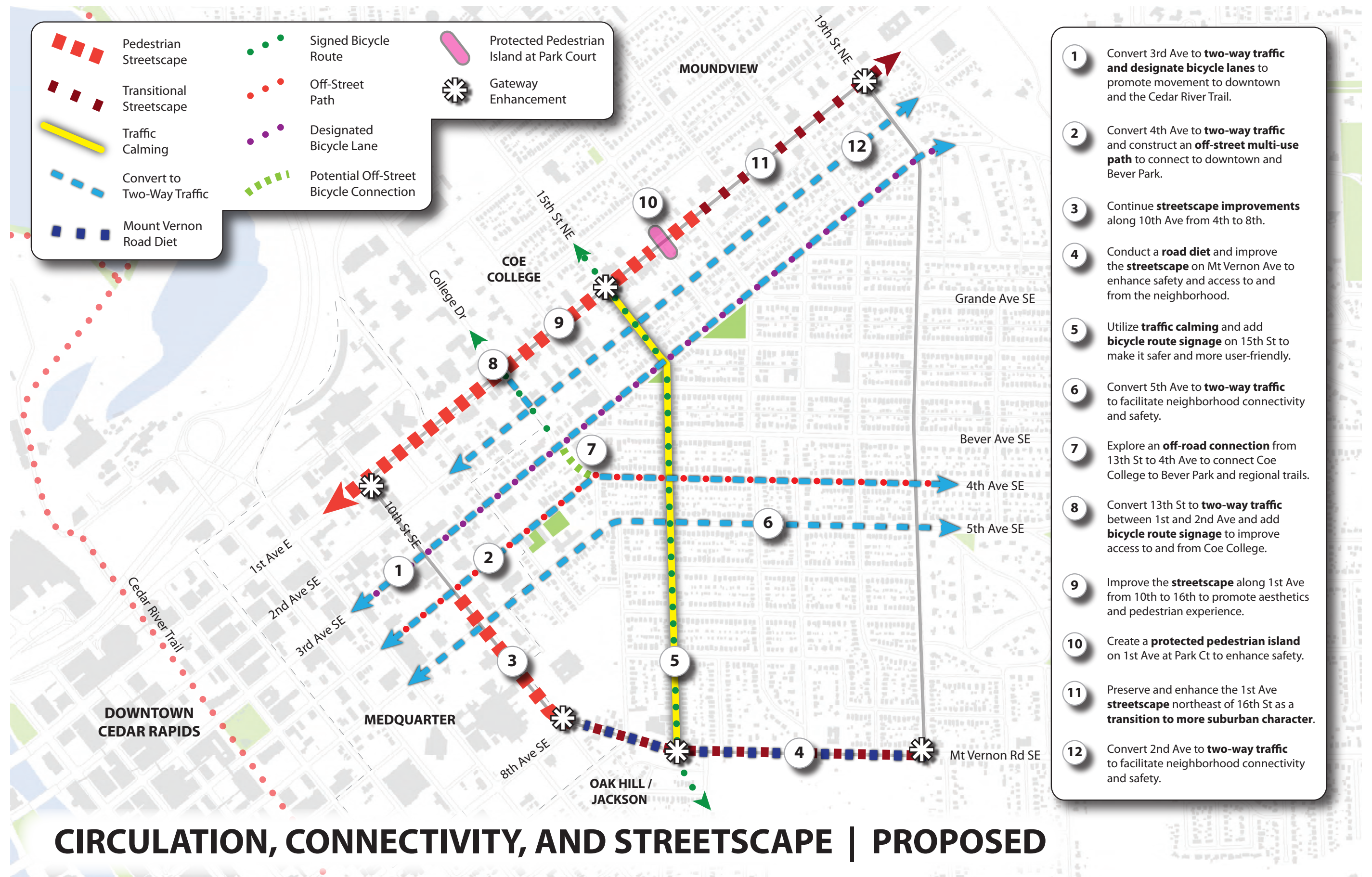
- Consider establishing a stand-alone homeownership and home repair **revolving loan fund that is not restricted based upon income**.
- Continue to **educate and inform citizens of the many programs currently available** to assist in purchasing, financing, rehabilitating, and repairing a home.
- **Collaborate with the major employers/institutions** in the immediate vicinity (Coe, St. Luke's, Mercy, PCI, etc.) to explore marketing and incentivizing housing opportunities in Wellington Heights.
- Provide an **incentive for the de-conversion** of homes from multi-unit to single-family homes, such as an annual property tax rebate, waived permit or other fees, or a lump-sum payment to the individual undertaking the deconversion.
- **Undertake a comprehensive re-zoning** of Wellington Heights residential areas to the City's "Residential Traditional Neighborhood" (R-TN) District, or create a new district that better fits the spirit and intent of the neighborhood.
- **Promote workforce housing** in the form of townhomes, rowhouses, and small-lot car-free housing in the area northwest of McKinley Middle School and 3rd Avenue SE (Note 4 on Framework Plan Map, p. 37). (See example images D through F on page 38)
- Develop **residential design guidelines** to apply to all new residential construction and substantial renovation of residential structures in the neighborhood. The guidelines should complement the Historic District guidelines but should stand alone and encourage creativity and a certain degree of flexibility.
- To the extent practical, **consider demolition of residential structures with public resources only as a "last resort"** and after independent cost/benefit analysis deems rehabilitation and/or relocation not feasible.
- **Educate all neighborhood stakeholders**, including tenants, property owners, property managers, and business owners about the **proper contacts and procedures for reporting all manner of code violation, nuisance, unsafe, and/or unsanitary behaviors** associated with a property in the neighborhood.

Economic Vitality (see example images G through I on page 38)

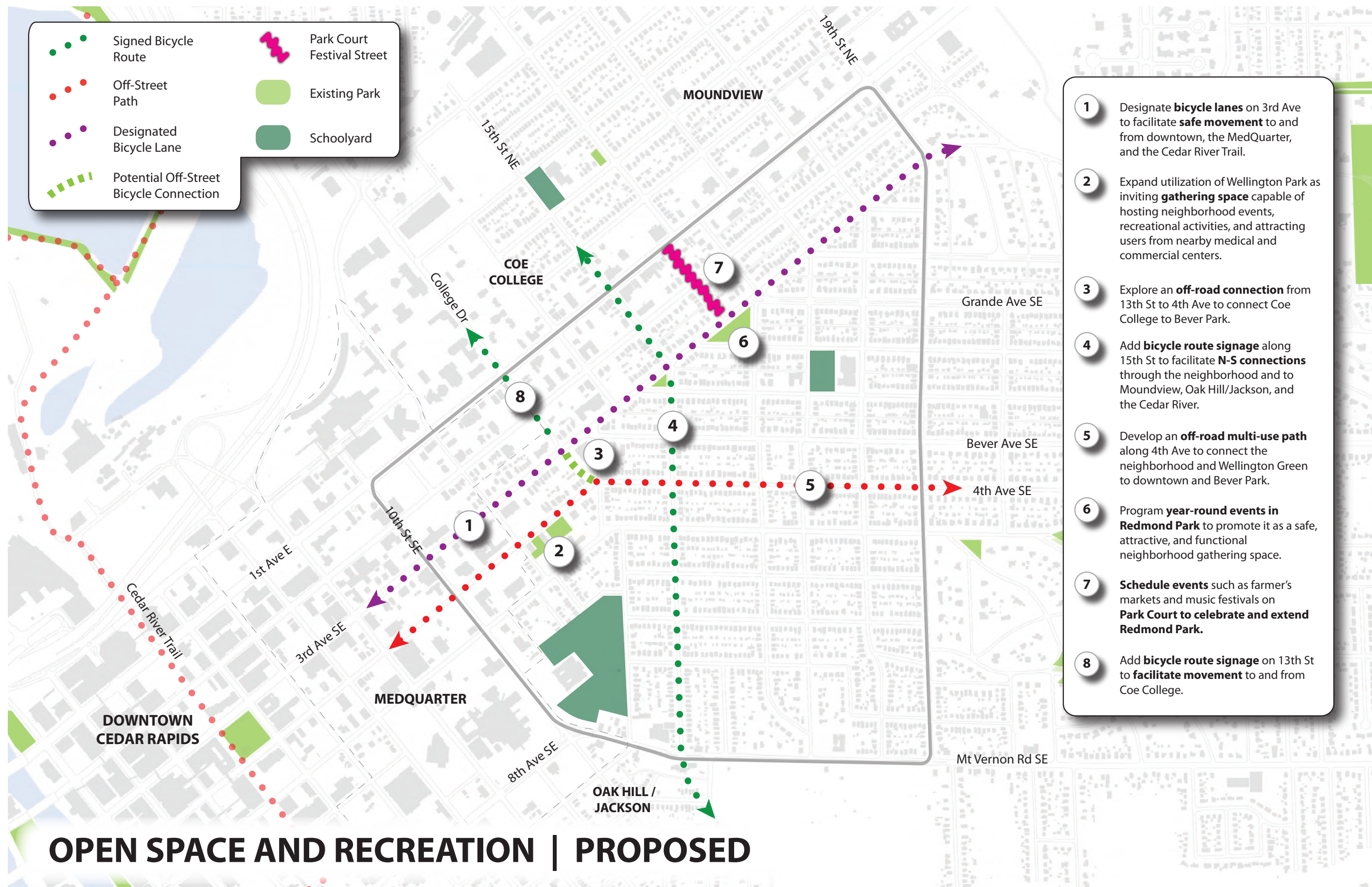
- Leverage all available City resources (e.g., TIF, Enterprise Zone) to **promote higher and better uses for the Uptown/College district** than most of those that occupy the corridor today.
- Prepare corridor-specific **design guidelines for all new development and redevelopment on the 1st Avenue Corridor**, from (at minimum) 13th Street to 19th Street, and institute design review for any change in use or proposed structural or site modification in this area.
- **Undertake a comprehensive re-zoning of the 1st Avenue Corridor, possibly to the City's Commercial-Mixed Use district**, to better facilitate commercial development that is less auto-oriented (current zoning requires a minimum 25-foot setback from the sidewalk, for example) and accommodates a mix of high-value, pedestrian-friendly uses and a more cohesive environment.
- Consider redevelopment proposals for the 1st Avenue, 10th Street, and Mount Vernon Road corridors comprehensively, seeking to **build a physical coherence and complementary business mix to strengthen the neighborhood's identity** as a thriving urban shopping, dining, and services district.
- **Densify** and, where appropriate, **promote mixed-use development** (possibly horizontal) along 1st Avenue SE from 10th to about 16th. (Notes 3 and 5 on the Framework Plan Map, p. 37).
- Collaborate with Kirkwood Community College and other education and training providers to assure that resources to provide **career-building skills and opportunities remain in the neighborhood**.

Transportation and Connectivity (see map on Page 41)

- **Minimize the elimination of on-street parking in the neighborhood.**
- Undertake a comprehensive assessment of sidewalk conditions throughout the neighborhood, and begin to **program sidewalk improvements**.
- **Convert most one-way streets to two-way streets with parking to improve neighborhood connectivity, slow traffic, and enhance opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian travel within and from the neighborhood.**
- Develop a **10-foot separated bicycle path** on 4th Avenue SE (south side of street preferable). (See example image J on page 38)
- Add **on-street 5-foot bicycle lanes** in each direction on 3rd Avenue SE. (See example image K on page 38)
- Mark 15th Street SE and 13th Avenue SE as **designated bicycle routes** with signage. On-street sharrows may be considered for these routes, if warranted and deemed appropriate. (See example image L on page 38)
- Undertake a **“road diet” for Mount Vernon Road SE** from 19th westward, to eliminate the raised concrete median, reduce the number of lanes from 4 to 3, and expand the pedestrian zone on the north side of the road. (See example image M on page 38)
- **Engage Westminster Presbyterian** to explore bicycle connectivity through their parcel at 3rd Avenue and 13th Street.
- **Improve bus stops** within the neighborhood to include seating and, where feasible, additional route information and/or maps.



CIRCULATION, CONNECTIVITY, AND STREETScape | PROPOSED



- Introduce **traffic calming elements on 15th Street SE** to reduce speed of traffic and discourage “cut-through” traffic. (See example images N and O on page 38).
- Consider providing **structured public parking** in the west/northwestern portion of the planning area to free up more space on 1st Avenue and 10th Street for redevelopment and to minimize impervious area.
- Construct a **pedestrian refuge median** at the crossing of 1st Avenue from Park Court to the HyVee supermarket. (See example image P on page 38)

Open Space and Recreation (See map on page 42)

- Utilize **Park Court as a “festival street”** during special events in Redmond Park. This would entail diverting traffic off of Park Court as well as setting up a detour route on 2nd and 3rd to avoid crossing Park Court. (See example image Q on page 38)
- **Utilize Wellington Park** as an active public park space capable of hosting events and attracting users from the nearby MedQuarter.
- Identify and explore redevelopment of an **appropriate location within the neighborhood as a “neighborhood center”**. Potential uses could include indoor recreation, athletics, performance, and creative space as well as some outdoor recreation space. (See example images R and S on page 38)
- Encourage continued neighborhood-driven and maintained public gardens and small outdoor spaces for relaxation and gathering.

Aesthetics and Neighborhood Design

- Design and Implement **pedestrian streetscape improvements** on 10th Street SE (4th to 8th Avenues) and on 1st Avenue SE (10th to 16th). Elements of a “pedestrian” streetscape could include: brick paver terraces, concrete walkways with broomed and troweled finish, historic period style street lights, street trees in planters with ornamental railings, historic period benches & trash/recycling receptacles, intersection bump-outs & mid-block crossings for increased pedestrian safety and convenience, bike racks, informational kiosks, bollards, banners, floral planters, and wayfinding signage.
- Design and implement **transitional streetscape improvements** to Mount Vernon Road SE and 1st Avenue SE from 16th to 19th (at least). Elements of a “transitional” streetscape might include: decorative roadway & pedestrian lights, landscaping, paved decorative or grass terraces with street trees, wayfinding signage, banners and enhanced pedestrian crosswalks.
- Enhance neighborhood gateways at 1st Avenue intersections with 19th, 15th, and 10th and at Mount Vernon Road intersections with 19th, 15th and 10th Avenue/8th Street to communicate a strong and consistent sense of identity and entry for the neighborhood.
- Prepare and adopt residential and commercial **design guidelines** as introduced earlier in this section.
- Continue to proactively enforce property maintenance codes to abate conditions of blight in the neighborhood. **Educate all neighborhood stakeholders**, including tenants, property owners, property managers, and business owners about the **proper contacts and procedures for reporting all manner of code violation, nuisance, unsafe, and/or unsanitary behaviors** associated with a property in the neighborhood.

- Conduct an annual “**parade of homes**” or **walking tour** of the neighborhood, and publicize the event to local media, local public figures, the MedQuarter, and Coe College.
- Hold **seasonal clean sweep days** to engage the whole neighborhood in litter clean-up, and offer free trash hauling for larger or “special handling” items (electronics, furniture, etc.).
- Improve the condition of subtle and shared public spaces such as **terraces, curbs, and alleys** through ongoing assessment of condition and programming of priorities.
- Encourage **front-yard landscaping and gardening** that is well-kept and complements (i.e., either high or low) the architectural character of the neighborhood and preserves the strong **urban canopy** found along many neighborhood streets.

Sustainability

- Assure that zoning, historic district standards, and other **regulations do not discourage the reasonable utilization of sustainable practices** in building and site design.
- Enhance the bicycle and pedestrian network to **reduce motor vehicle trips and the consumption of fossil fuels** by the neighborhood.
- Leverage and **maintain the neighborhood’s compact, mixed-use character** to encourage walking and biking as transportation modes of choice.
- Select street lighting fixtures that are rated for high energy efficiency to **reduce life-cycle costs for maintenance and operation**.
- Educate and encourage the use of raingardens, rainbarrels, green roofs, and similar low-impact means to **divert surface water runoff from the City’s drainage system and local waterways**. (See example images T and U on page 38)
- Explore the feasibility of **converting neighborhood alleys into “green alleys”** (See example image V on page 38), which may include features such as:
 - ◊ Light colored paving to reduce heat island effect;
 - ◊ Crosswalk striping, to encourage pedestrian use and activation of alleys;
 - ◊ Plants that are preferably native and tolerant to drought, road salt, and other environmental factors;
 - ◊ Innovative techniques to capture and infiltrate stormwater.
- Encourage the use of **low-VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds) materials in all redevelopment and rehabilitation**.
- Continue to provide leadership and training in **lead safe renovation, remodeling, and painting**, and increase outreach and education efforts within the Wellington Heights neighborhood.
- Provide **incentive for developers pursuing LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification** for new development and redevelopment, which might include reduced permit fees, expedited review, or density bonuses, for example.

ACTION PLAN

The Wellington Heights neighborhood will realize its vision through a coordinated, continuous program of plan implementation, evaluation, and update. The action plan's purpose is to identify high priority implementation steps, timeframes, and responsible parties to develop a process and criteria for subsequent amendments to the City's comprehensive plan and capital improvements plans. The table on the following page provides a description of key action steps to implement this plan.

Responsible Agency

The action plan identifies the most appropriate agency or agencies to implement the action item.

Timing

The action plan provides a proposed time frame for implementation as follows:

- Ongoing – a continuation or refocusing of an action already in place or in progress
- Short-Term – an action to be undertaken within 2 years of adoption of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan.
- Mid-Term – an action to be undertaken within 5 years of adoption of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan.
- Long-Term - an action to be undertaken within 15 years of adoption of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan

Cost

Finally, the Action Plan characterizes anticipated implementation costs for each action, as presented below:

- \$: Anticipated implementation costs of \$10,000 or less; presumably most significant costs are time and labor
- \$\$: Anticipated implementation costs of more than \$10,000 but less than \$50,000
- \$\$\$: Anticipated implementation costs of more than \$50,000 but less than \$200,000
- \$\$\$\$: Anticipated implementation costs of more than \$200,000

(Note: The recommendations of this Plan serve as a guide to future action and decision making and are not a commitment to funding. Funding for specific projects/actions will be allocated based on availability and consideration of priorities.)

ACTION/PROJECT PLAN ELEMENT	RESPONSIBLE AGENCY	PARTNERING AGENCY	TIMING	COST
SOCIAL CAPITAL & PUBLIC SAFETY				
Improve lighting throughout the neighborhood	CRDPW		Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$ (\$6,000/fixture installed)
Increase law enforcement outreach and patrol	CRPD		Ongoing	\$
Maintain consistent staffing level and schedule at substation	CRPD		Ongoing	\$
Plan and host neighborhood-wide gatherings and outings	WHNA	CRPR	Ongoing	\$
HOUSING AND HISTORIC CHARACTER				
Establish stand-alone revolving loan fund	CRCD		Short-Term	Varies (annual)
Establish incentive for de-conversion	CRCD		Short-Term	Varies (annual)
Undertake comprehensive re-zoning	CRCD	CRPC	Short-Term	\$ - \$\$\$
Develop residential design guidelines	CRCD	CRPC, WHNA	Short-Term	\$ - \$
ECONOMIC VITALITY				
Develop commercial design guidelines	CRCD	CRPC, WHNA, UCR	Short-Term	\$ - \$
Undertake comprehensive re-zoning of 1st Avenue Corridor	CRCD	CRPC, WHNA, UCR	Short-Term	\$ - \$\$\$
TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY				
Improve sidewalk conditions to ADA throughout	CRDPW		Ongoing	\$\$\$\$ (\$6/square foot installed)
Convert 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, Ave and 13th St to two-way w/ parking	CRDPW		Short-Term	\$\$\$\$
Design/construct 4th Avenue bike path	CRDPW		Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$ (\$100/linear foot)
Design/implement 3rd Avenue on-street lanes	CRDPW		Short-Term	\$ (\$5,000 - \$7,000/mile)
Implement traffic calming (incl. signed bike route) on 15th Street	CRDPW		Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
Road Diet for Mount Vernon Road	CRDPW		Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
Expand bus service hours and assure schools are appropriately served	CRT		Short-Term	\$\$\$
Add benches and informational signage at bus stops	CRT		Short-Term	\$ - \$\$\$\$
Structured Public Parking	CRDPW		Long-Term	\$\$\$\$ (\$15,000 - \$20,000/space)
Design/Construct Pedestrian Refuge Median @ Park Court	CRDPW		Short-Term	\$\$\$ (\$100,000 - \$150,000)
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION				
Utilize Park Court as a "festival street"	WHNA	UCR, CRDPW	Short-Term	\$
Redmond Park - promote a safe and attractive functional space	CRPR	CRPD, WHNA, Property Owners	Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
Explore opportunities for Wellington Green	CRPR	WHNA, Property Owners	Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
Explore opportunities for a Neighborhood Center	WHNA	Property Owners, CRCD	Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
AESTHETICS AND NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN				
1st Avenue pedestrian streetscape (10th to 16th)	CRDPW	CRCD, UCR, WHNA	Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
10th Street pedestrian streetscape (4th to 8th)	CRDPW	CRCD, WHNA, MQD	Short-Term	\$\$\$\$
1st Avenue transitional streetscape (16th to 19th)	CRDPW	CRCD, UCR, WHNA	Mid-Term	\$\$\$\$
Mount Vernon Road transitional streetscape	CRDPW	CRCD, WHNA	Long-Term	\$\$\$\$
Design and install identity signage at neighborhood gateway intersections	CRDPW	UCR, WHNA, MQD	Short-Term	\$\$\$\$ (\$50,000 - \$80,000/sign installed)
Improve condition of terraces, curbs, alleys throughout	CRDPW, WHNA	WHNA	Ongoing	Varies
Hold seasonal clean sweep events	CRDPW	CRCD, WHNA, UCR, MQD, CRPR	Ongoing	\$
SUSTAINABILITY				
Explore and implement "green alleys" where feasible	CRCD, CRDPW, UCR, WHNA		Mid-Term	\$ - \$\$\$\$
Establish incentive policy and code amendments for LEED developments	CRCD, CRDPW, WHNA, MQD		Short-Term	\$
KEY:				
CRDPW = Cedar Rapids Department of Public Works	UCR = Uptown District			Short-Term = 0 - 5 Years
CRPD = Cedar Rapids Police Department	CRT = Cedar Rapids Transit			Mid-Term = 6 - 10 Years
CRCD = Cedar Rapids Community Development Department	MQD = MedQuarter District			Long-Term = 10+ Years
WHNA = Wellington Heights Neighborhood Association	CRPR = Cedar Rapids Parks and Recreation Department			
CRPC = Cedar Rapids City Planning Commission				

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Appendix

Neighborhood Profile

A. GEOGRAPHIC AND MARKET CONTEXT

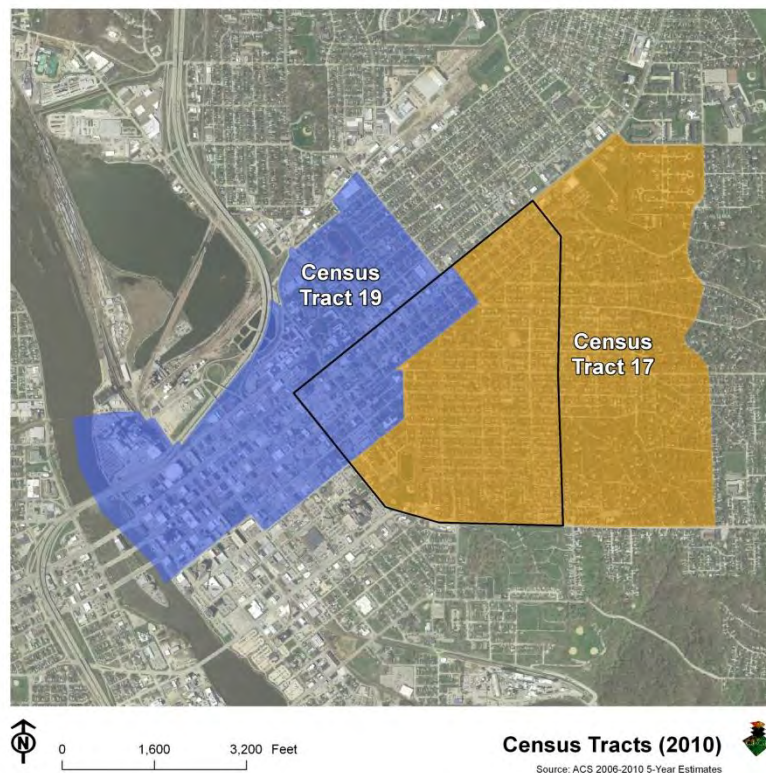
The Wellington Heights neighborhood has a history that is closely intertwined with that of the City of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. The neighborhood encompasses the area between 1st Avenue E, 10 Street SE, Mount Vernon Road SE, and 19th Street SE. Its location adjacent to downtown Cedar Rapids, Coe College, and the city's bustling MedQuarter make it unique among Cedar Rapids' neighborhoods. Unlike many areas near the Cedar River, Wellington Heights was not inundated by the 2008 flood. Despite this, several trends in the neighborhood mirror those in areas that were impacted.



A. OVERVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Overview

Wellington Heights falls within Linn County Census Tracts 17 and 19, which also encompass surrounding areas in the city. Because of data sensitivity, some information is only available at this level, which means that the data is not exclusively Wellington Heights. Where available, data was gathered for Census Blocks, which align with actual city blocks. In general, data was collected at the finest grain and from the most recent sources available, while retaining accuracy and reliability.



Population

Despite the impacts of the 2008 flood, the population of Cedar Rapids increased 5% between 2000 and 2010. Over the same time period, the neighborhood's population decreased 6% from 5,877 to 5,231. In 2010, the population density was 1,784 persons per square mile in Cedar Rapids compared to 8,709 persons per square mile in Wellington Heights.

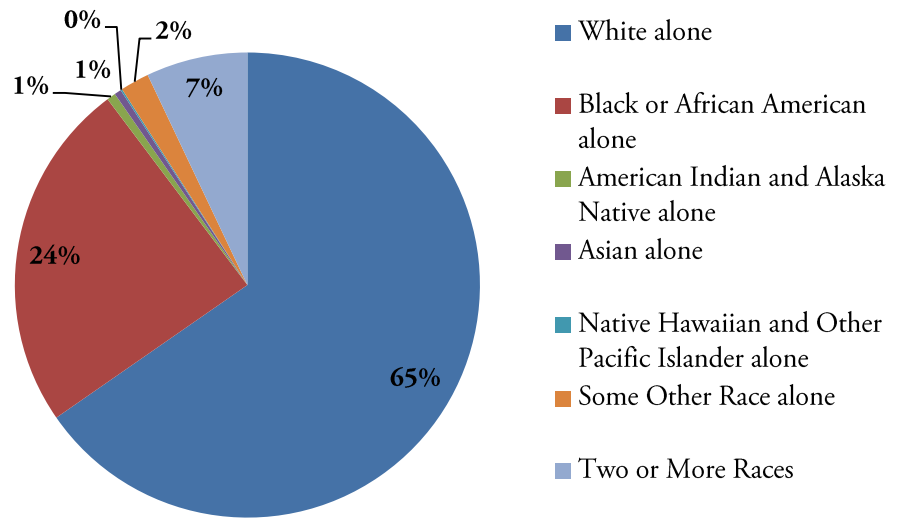
Race and Ethnicity

Wellington Heights has been more racially diverse than the City of Cedar Rapids over the past two decades. This trend grew between 2000 and 2010 for all minority races except for those who classified themselves as “Asian alone.” While the city witnessed increases in all race classifications, Wellington Heights saw decreases in “White alone” and “Asian alone.” Remarkably, despite an 11% decrease in overall population, all other races increased in population. Wellington Heights was home to 25% of the city’s African-American population in 2000, a percentage that decreased to 18% in 2010.

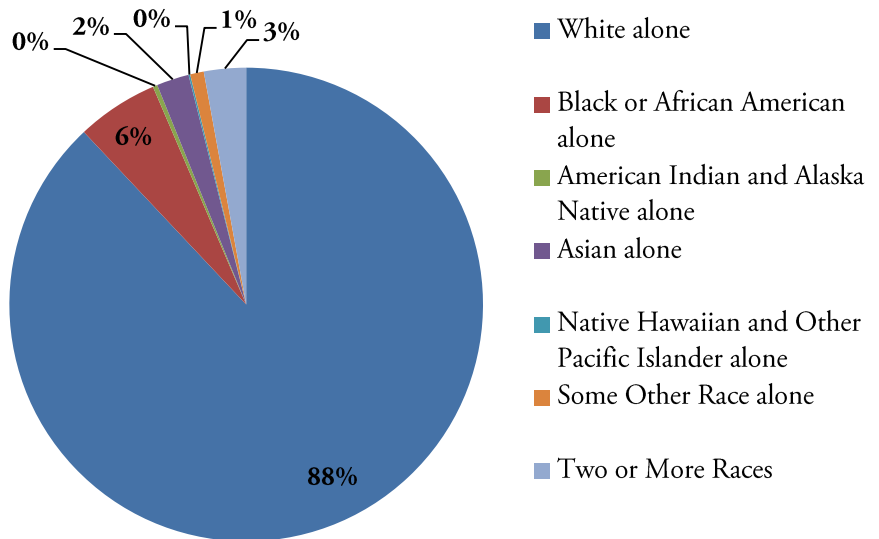
Wellington Heights - Population by Race						
	2000		2010		Change	% Change
Total	5,877		5,231		(646)	-11%
White alone	4,251	72.3%	3,418	65.3%	(833)	-20%
Black or African American alone	1,098	18.7%	1,276	24.4%	178	16%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	32	0.5%	32	0.6%	0	0%
Asian alone	113	1.9%	25	0.5%	(88)	-78%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	4	0.1%	6	0.1%	2	50%
Some Other Race alone	91	1.5%	105	2.0%	14	15%
Two or More Races	288	4.9%	369	7.1%	81	28%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010 SF-1 Data

Wellington Heights Race Distribution



Cedar Rapids Race Distribution



Between 2000 and 2010, the Hispanic and Latino population more than doubled in the city, rising from 2,065 to 4,176. In Wellington Heights, the same population grew by 67% from 219 to 365. This is especially notable given the 11% total population decrease neighborhood-wide. The Hispanic and Latino population accounted for less than 2% of total city population in 2000 and over 3% in 2010. Within the neighborhood, the same population accounted for just less than 4% of all population in 2000, compared with 7% in 2010.

Cedar Rapids – Ethnicity						
	2000		2010		Change	% Change
Total	120,758		126,326		5,568	5%
Hispanic/Latino	2,065	1.7%	4,176	3.3%	2,111	102%
Non-Hispanic/Latino	118,693	98.3%	122,150	96.7%	3,457	3%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010 SF-1 Data

Wellington Heights - Ethnicity						
	2000		2010		Change	% Change
Total	5,877		5,231		(646)	-11%
Hispanic/Latino	219	3.7%	365	7.0%	146	67%
Non-Hispanic/Latino	5,658	96.3%	4,866	93.0%	(792)	-14%

Source: U.S. Census 2000, 2010 SF-1 Data

Income

It is evident that household income tends to increase as one moves from southwest to northeast through the neighborhood. Males who live in the northeastern portion of the neighborhood tend to earn more than women, while women who live in the southwestern portion of the neighborhood tend to earn slightly more than men.

Median Household Income					
Census Tract 17	Margin of Error	Census Tract 19	Margin of Error	Cedar Rapids	Margin of Error
\$55,368	+/- \$8,885	\$25,375	+/- \$4,589	\$51,108	+/- \$1,197

Source: ACS 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates

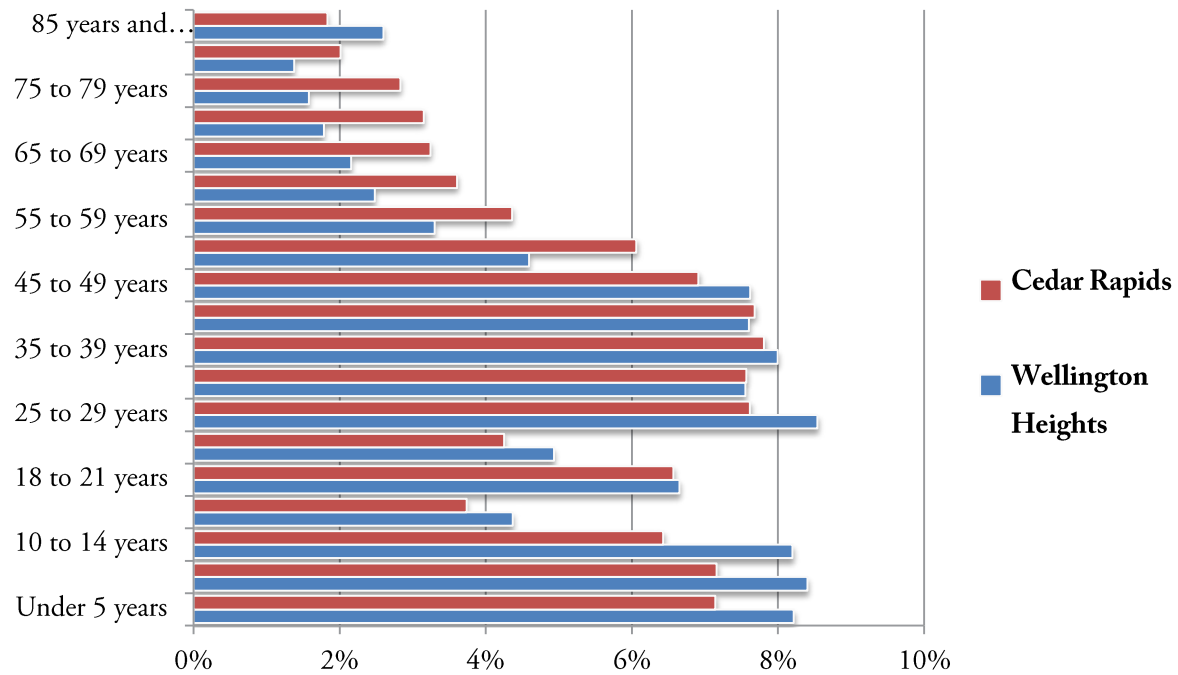
Percentage of Families Whose Income Was Below the Poverty Level						
	Census Tract 17	Margin of Error	Census Tract 19	Margin of Error	Cedar Rapids	Margin of Error
All Families	10.0%	+/- 6.0%	30.7%	+/- 25.5%	7.9%	+/- 1.2%
Married Couple Families	3.3%	+/- 3.3%	0.0%	+/- 28.5%	1.7%	+/- 0.5%
Families with Female Householder	18.1%	+/- 15.7%	41.4%	+/- 37.9%	29.3%	+/- 4.5%

Source: ACS 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates

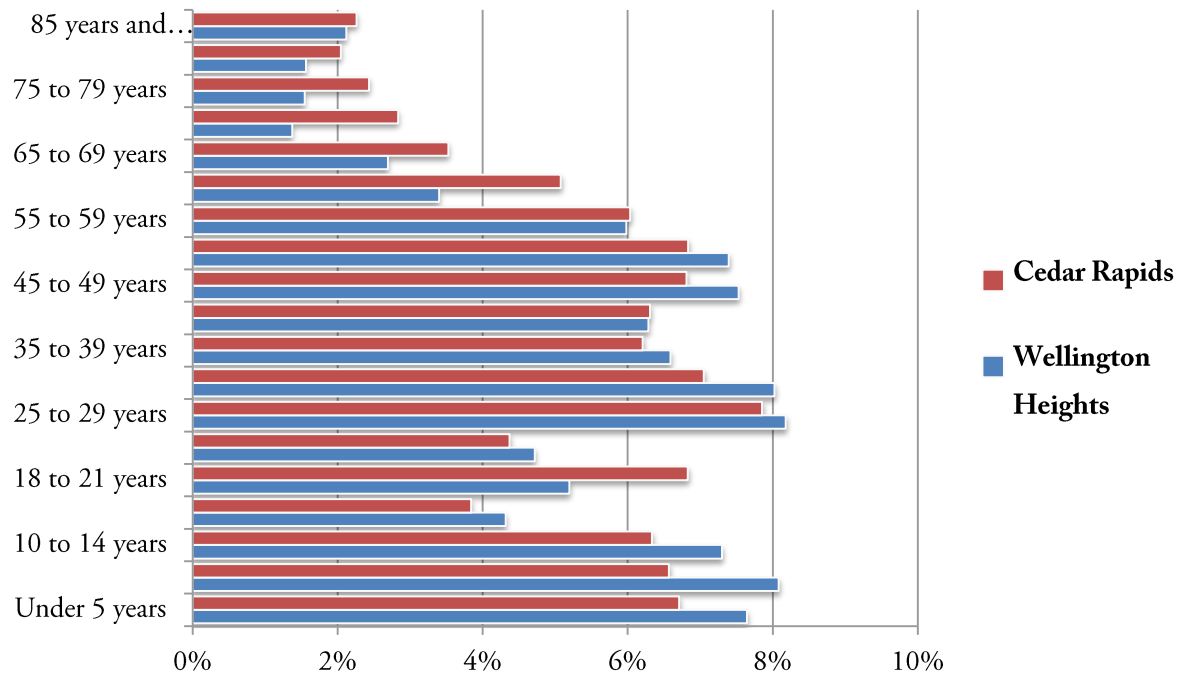
Sex and Age

Within the neighborhood, almost all of the population loss between 2000 and 2010 came from those less than 50 years of age. While some of this is attributable to people aging over time, it is apparent that the neighborhood is home an increasing percentage of older residents. Despite this, school-aged children still account for over one-quarter of total population while those aged 25 to 49 make up over one-third. In general, the population in the neighborhood is younger than in the city as a whole, particularly for those under 17 years of age. People aged over 60 make up a higher percentage of total population citywide than in Wellington Heights.

Age Distribution (2000)



Age Distribution (2010)

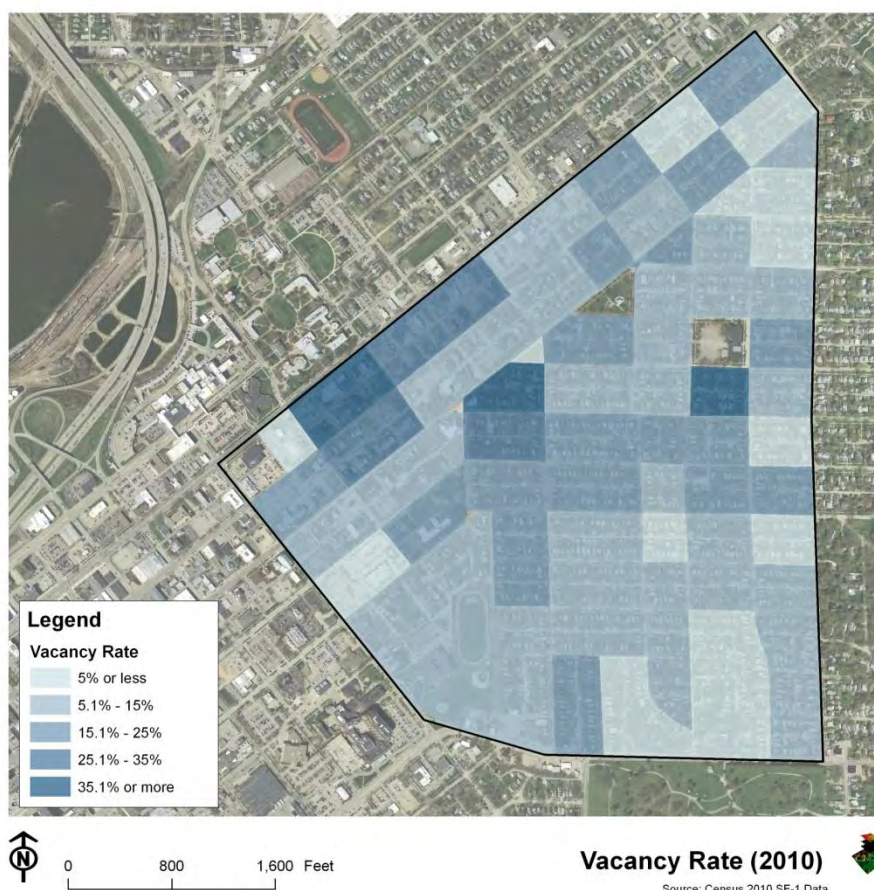


Housing

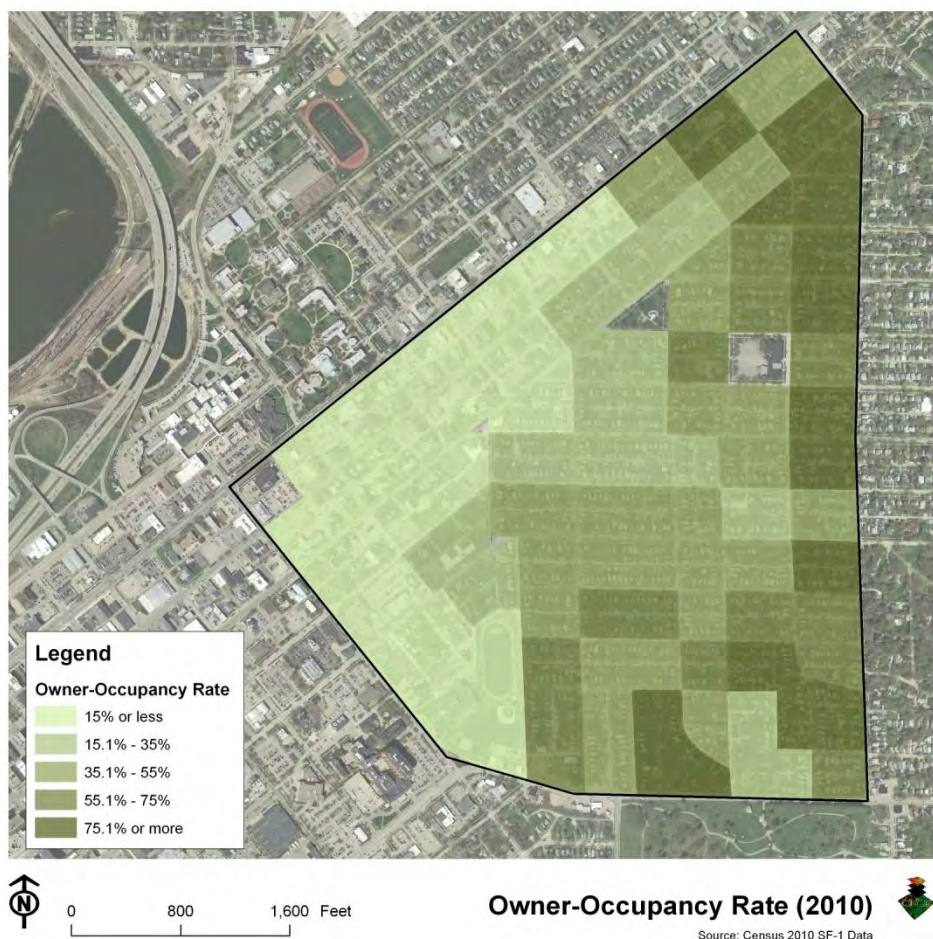
Wellington Heights is fortunate to have some of the city's most historic housing stock with much of it predating World War II. The neighborhood contained 2,294 housing units as of 2010, which was 4% of the city's total and 6% less than in 2000. In 2010, residential density was 1.26 dwelling units per acre in Cedar Rapids and 5.97 dwelling units per acre in Wellington Heights.

According to ACS 2011 5-Year Estimates, almost 75% of all housing units were built prior to 1940. Citywide, this number is just over 18%. Less than 10% of new residential construction occurred after 1980 in the neighborhood while this number is over 32% in the city as a whole. Almost half of neighborhood residents moved into their housing units after 2004 and 87% moved in after 1989. These numbers are slightly higher than Cedar Rapids, where 44% moved in after 2004 and 82% moved in after 1989.

Housing vacancies increased by 80% (from 193 to 347 units) between 2000 and 2010. This is evident of a city-wide trend, where vacancies increased 65% in the same time period. While the 2008 flood clearly had a significant impact on this statistic city-wide, it does not fully explain the situation in Wellington Heights. Neighborhood housing units for rent accounted for approximately half of all vacant units in both 2000 and 2010. Although this figure varies within years based on the rental cycle, it appears to be a relatively stable percentage of all vacancies.



Both owner and renter occupancy decreased between 2000 and 2010, mirroring the overall decrease in occupied housing units. The percentage of owner-occupied housing units remained stable at about 45% neighborhood wide. Owner-occupancy rate of housing units in the neighborhood generally increased from southwest to northeast. In 2011, median housing value was lower in Wellington Heights than in the city as a whole, though rents were somewhat comparable. Again, there is a trend towards higher housing values and gross rent in the neighborhood from southwest to northeast.



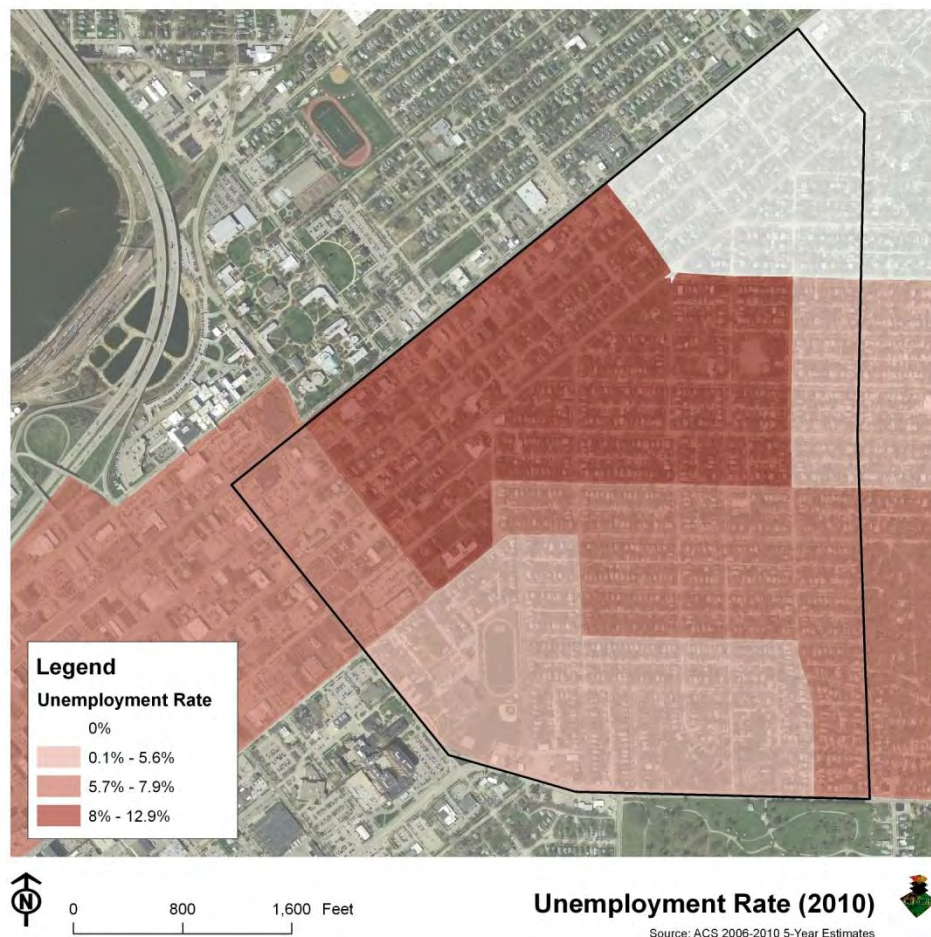
Median Housing Value and Gross Rent Paid						
	Census Tract 17	Margin of Error	Census Tract 19	Margin of Error	Cedar Rapids	Margin of Error
Median Housing Value	\$118,000	+/- \$12,827	\$77,800	+/- \$15,793	\$129,200	+/- \$1,598
Median Gross Rent	\$645	+/- \$127	\$560	+/- \$117	\$641	+/- \$17

Source: ACS 2007-2011 5-Year Estimates

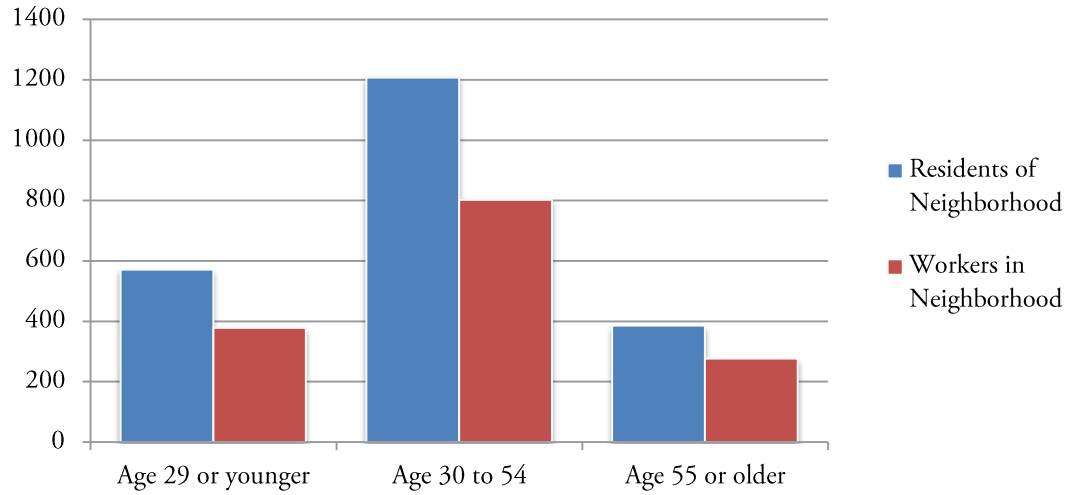
Employment

Of the 5,231 people who live in Wellington Heights, 2,164 reported being employed in 2010. Meanwhile, there were 1,457 primary jobs located in the neighborhood in 2010. Only 26 people (1.2%) lived and worked in the neighborhood. The Health Care and Social Assistance, Manufacturing, and Retail Trade sectors each employed between 10% and 15% of working residents. The Health Care and Social Assistance sector accounted for 62% of all employment in the neighborhood. Of employed neighborhood residents, 51% were male, while 49% were female. On the contrary, almost 75% of those employed in the neighborhood were female.

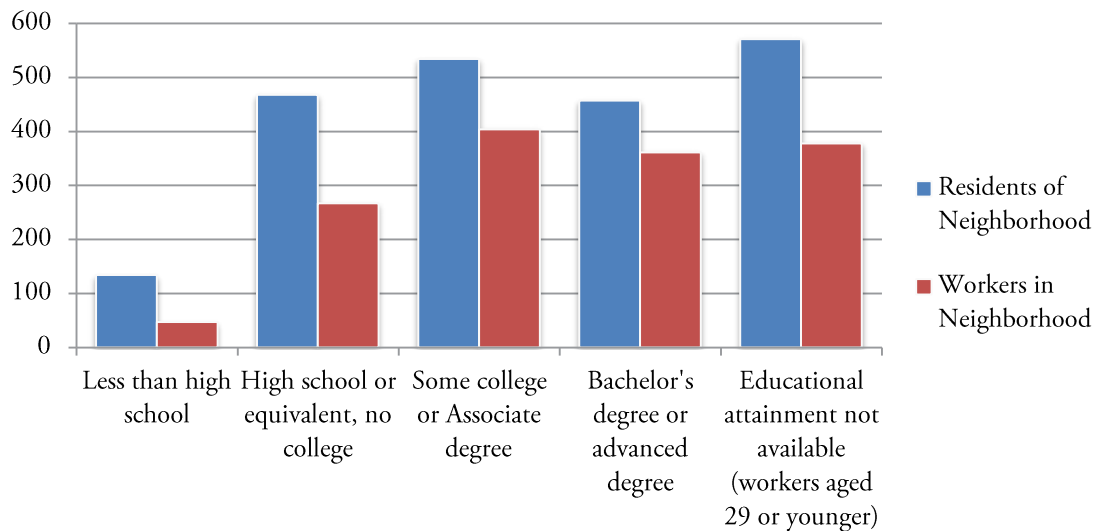
The unemployment rate in the neighborhood varies from 0% to almost 13% according to American Community Survey 2006-2010 5-Year Estimates. Higher unemployment rates were found in the neighborhood's central and western portions.



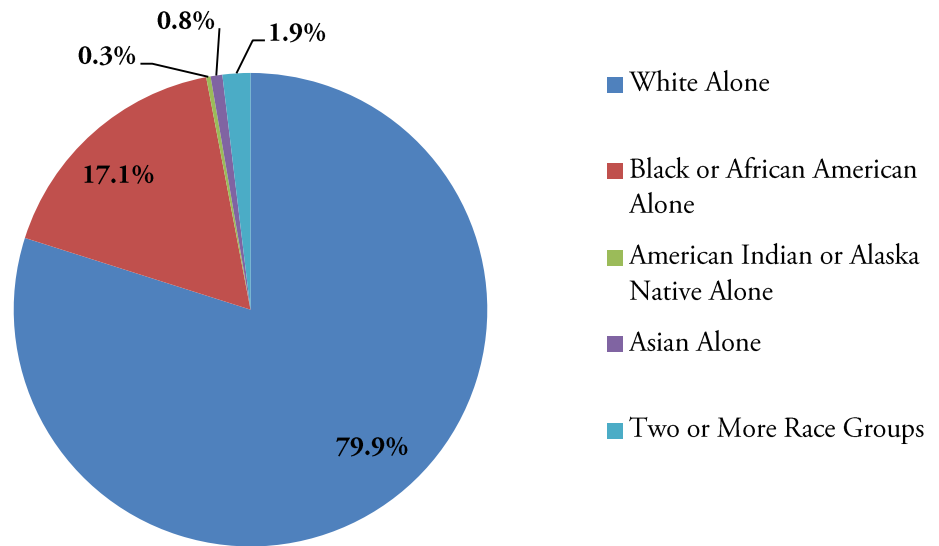
Age of Employed Persons



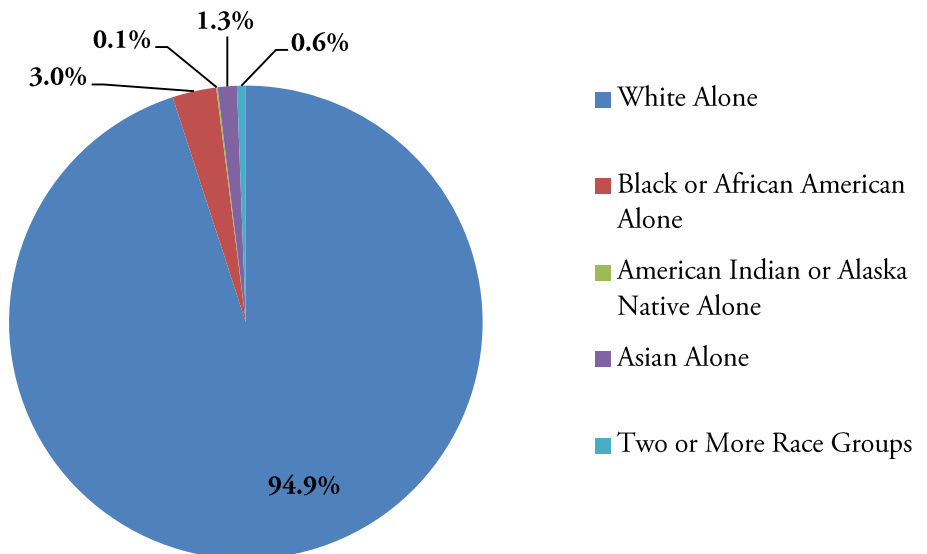
Educational Attainment of Employed Persons



Race of Employed Neighborhood Residents



Race of Workers Employed in Neighborhood



C. PAST PLANS AND STUDIES

Comprehensive Plan for Cedar Rapids – 1999

The 1999 comprehensive plan sets the city's vision through the year 2030. Principles emphasized in this plan include Cedar Rapids' livability, diversity, growing economy, social responsibility, and vibrancy. There is a strong focus on the city's neighborhoods with goals aimed at making them attractive and stable places to live and celebrating their stories in light of their context within the city. The Wellington Heights Neighborhood Framework Plan operates in the context of this plan.

Parks & Outdoor Recreation Plan – 2004

The Linn County Regional Planning Commission identifies existing parks and open space areas throughout the county and recommends future acquisition priorities. Wellington Heights is well-situated to many parks but accessing them often requires crossing major thoroughfares. Connections from the neighborhood to existing local and regional trails are not clearly addressed.

Cedar Trails – Cedar Rapids Comprehensive Trails Plan – 2012

This plan addresses the city's bicycle and pedestrian trails system. It includes recommendations for both on and off-street routes. Within Wellington Heights, the plan calls for sharrows along 2nd, 3rd, and Bever Avenues, connecting downtown to points north and east, including Bever Park and the Sac and Fox Trail.

Strategies for the Downtown – 2009

In 2009, a panel from the Urban Land Institute conducted a week-long study focusing on future land use for the U.S. Cellular Center and the city's Arts, Culture, and Entertainment District. Recommendations focused on creating a contemporary image for the area, promoting events, and creating a management organization to program downtown activities and events. Spillover effects from downtown improvements have the potential to reach Wellington Heights.

Framework Plan for Reinvestment and Revitalization – 2008

Immediately following the flood, the city and several consultants began a four-month process to prioritize reinvestment and redevelopment primarily in areas affected by the flood. The plan addresses three main areas; flood management, connectivity, and sustainable neighborhoods. While Wellington Heights was not included in this plan, it did address several adjoining neighborhoods. Initiatives include densification of the medical district, maintaining neighborhood character in Oakhill Jackson, and providing incentives for homeowners to relocate near their existing neighborhood.

Neighborhood Planning Process – 2009

The next phase of post-flood planning took the form of neighborhood-level action plans for areas impacted by the flood. Both the central and south area plans touched on the area immediately south and west of Wellington Heights. The plan called for various improvements in transportation, open space, arts and culture, and housing and business reinvestment. Specific projects include streetscape

improvements, enhanced recreational connections, cultural corridor developments, and strengthened neighborhoods and commercial districts. Wellington Heights will ultimately be able to benefit from the positive effects of this reinvestment.

Connections 2040 - 2010

The Corridor MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan formulates a vision for addressing the area's future transportation needs. It analyzes recent local and national trends and develops a strategy to efficiently utilize existing resources, offer a range of modal options, support economic vitality, and conserve important resources. Given its location, Wellington Heights has the opportunity to benefit from many of the proposed guidelines and projects identified in the plan, particularly regarding complete streets, transit improvements, and pedestrian and bicycle connections.

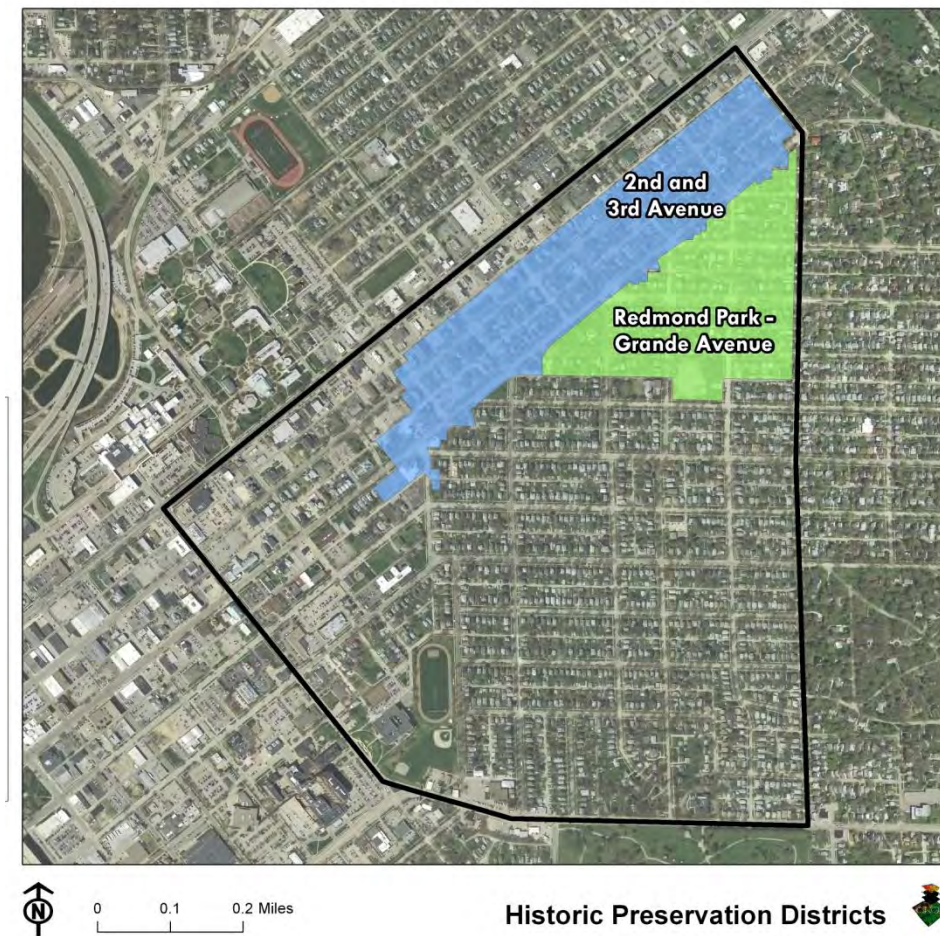
Consolidated Plan – 2010

The Consolidated Plan analyzes housing and community development needs in the city and identifies programs and projects to address the needs. The 2008 flood damaged a relatively high percentage of affordable housing in the city, so demand is currently outweighing supply. The plan also sets strategies for homeless, special needs, and low income residents, as well as for developing stable neighborhoods.

D. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Historic Preservation

The city's two historic districts – 2nd and 3rd Avenue and Redmond Park /Grande Avenue – lie within the neighborhood. Any changes to structures in these districts require a special application process and certificates of appropriateness and no material effect. These designations encourage the preservation of neighborhood character as well as uniform design guidelines that support well-maintained properties.

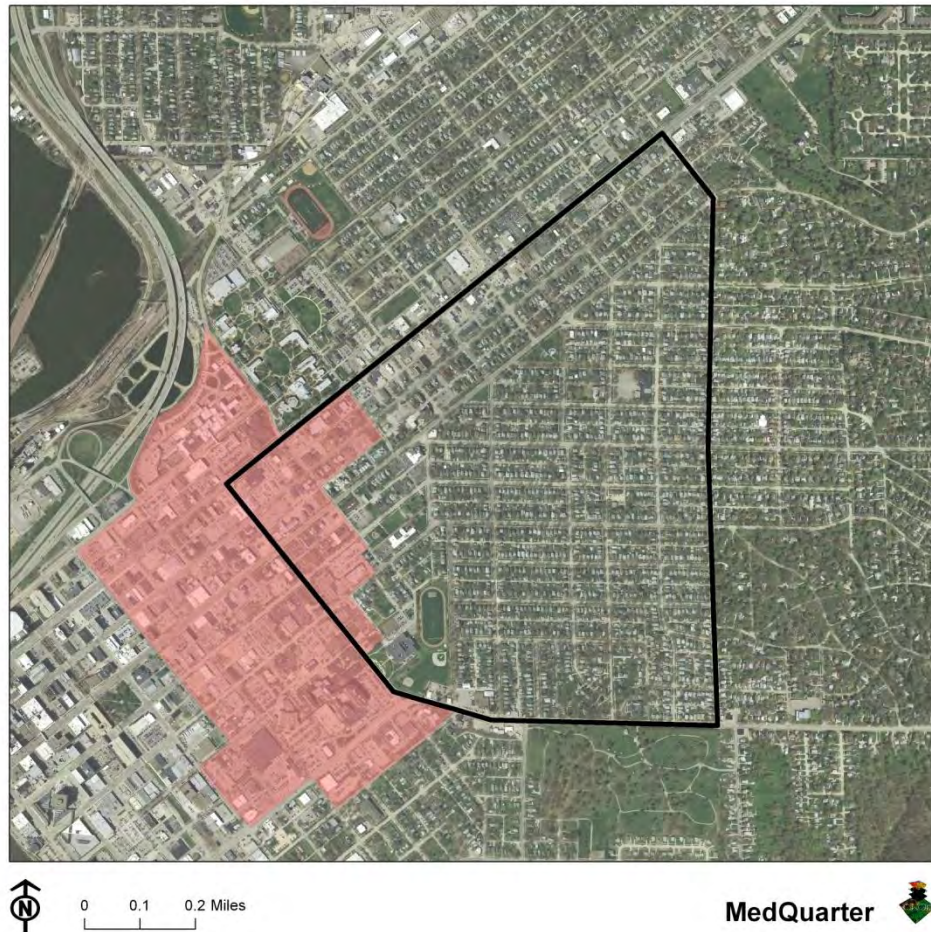


Nuisance Abatement Ordinance

In January, 2013, the City of Cedar Rapids passed a nuisance abatement ordinance which aims to ensure that properties within the city are safe and well-maintained. It identifies several activities and property characteristics as nuisances and utilizes several techniques to report and resolve these issues. If a property becomes a nuisance, the property owner is required to submit a nuisance property abatement plan specifying the corrective action to be taken. If a nuisance is left unresolved, the city can fine the property owner or abate the nuisance itself at cost to the owner.

Medical Self-Supported Municipal Improvement District (MedQuarter)

The Medical SSMID was the result of Vision Cedar Rapids 2007 and the 2009 Neighborhood Planning Process. The district, also known as the MedQuarter, uses funds raised through tax levies to maintain and improve the district. The MedQuarter recently began an initiative to develop a Medical District Master Development Plan aimed at establishing the district as a nationally-recognized medical destination. The southwestern corner of Wellington Heights is located within this district.



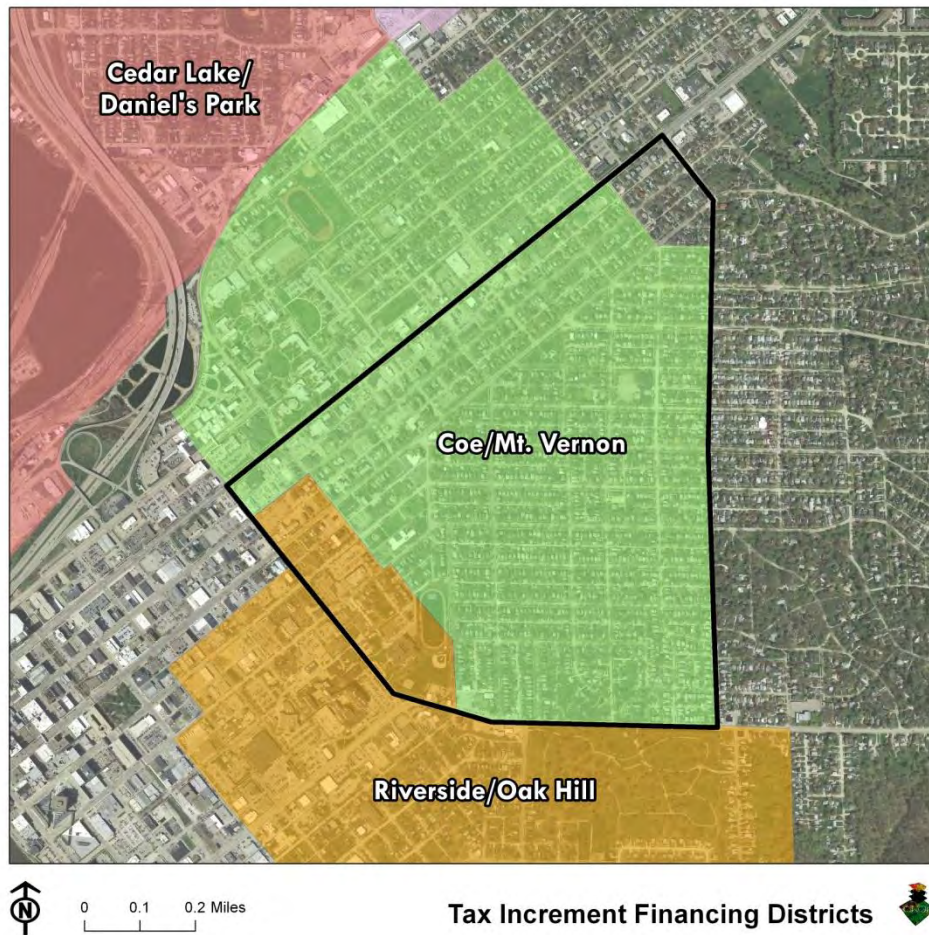
Enterprise Zone

The State of Iowa provides financial assistance for certain business and residential development s located within the city's enterprise zone. Assistance includes tax credits, refunds, and exemptions, forgivable loans, and no-cost employee training. Much of Wellington Heights is located within the city's enterprise zone.



Tax Increment Financing District (TIF)

TIF districts allow property taxes generated from new development or building renovations to be put towards improving the district through economic development incentives. Once a portion of the city is designated as an Urban Renewal Area, it is eligible to become a TIF district. Virtually all of Wellington Heights is located in one of two districts – Coe/Mt. Vernon or Riverside/Oak Hill.



Revitalization Areas

In these areas, financial incentives are available where there is a demonstrated need and resulting community benefits for the redevelopment of property by providing tax exemptions for all qualified improvements in areas meeting the requirements of this program.

Housing Programs

The city offers many programs aimed at assisting home buyers and home owners. These include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Home Investment Partnership (HOME) grants, first-time home buyer assistance, Rebuilding Ownership Opportunities Together (ROOT) assistance, Section 8 rent assistance, housing rehabilitation programs, rental rehabilitation programs, and multi-family new construction programs. Each of these programs promotes the goals of providing decent housing, enabling a suitable living environment, and expanding economic activity. Other housing-related community services include accessibility programs (W.R.A.P.), ABBE Aging Services, Waypoint Services for Women and Children, and the Hawkeye Area Community Action Program.

Zoning Ordinance

The zoning ordinance sets requirements for land use within the city. Much of Wellington Heights is zoned as single or multi-family residential, with various commercial and office/service districts along the southern and western boundaries. A large portion of the neighborhood is also located in the Cedar Rapids Core Area and thus is subject to alternative development standards due to the historic character of the lots.

Subdivision Ordinance

Any subdivision of land is required to abide by the city's subdivision ordinance. Requirements are based on the number of lots created by the division and generally include preliminary plat submission, review and approval by staff and relevant commissions, and final plat submission and approval. Development plans must be in line with the comprehensive plan and must follow zoning guidelines and design standards. Street signage and lighting plans must be submitted and the applicant is required to pay a storm water management impact fee to the city.

E. EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT FABRIC

Community Facilities

Wellington Heights is fortunate to have many engaged community organizations with facilities located in the neighborhood. These facilities contribute greatly to the neighborhood fabric and are a tremendous asset to the community.

Facilities include:

- Catholic Worker House
- Foundation 2
- Harambee House
- Paul Engle Center
- Schools
- Churches

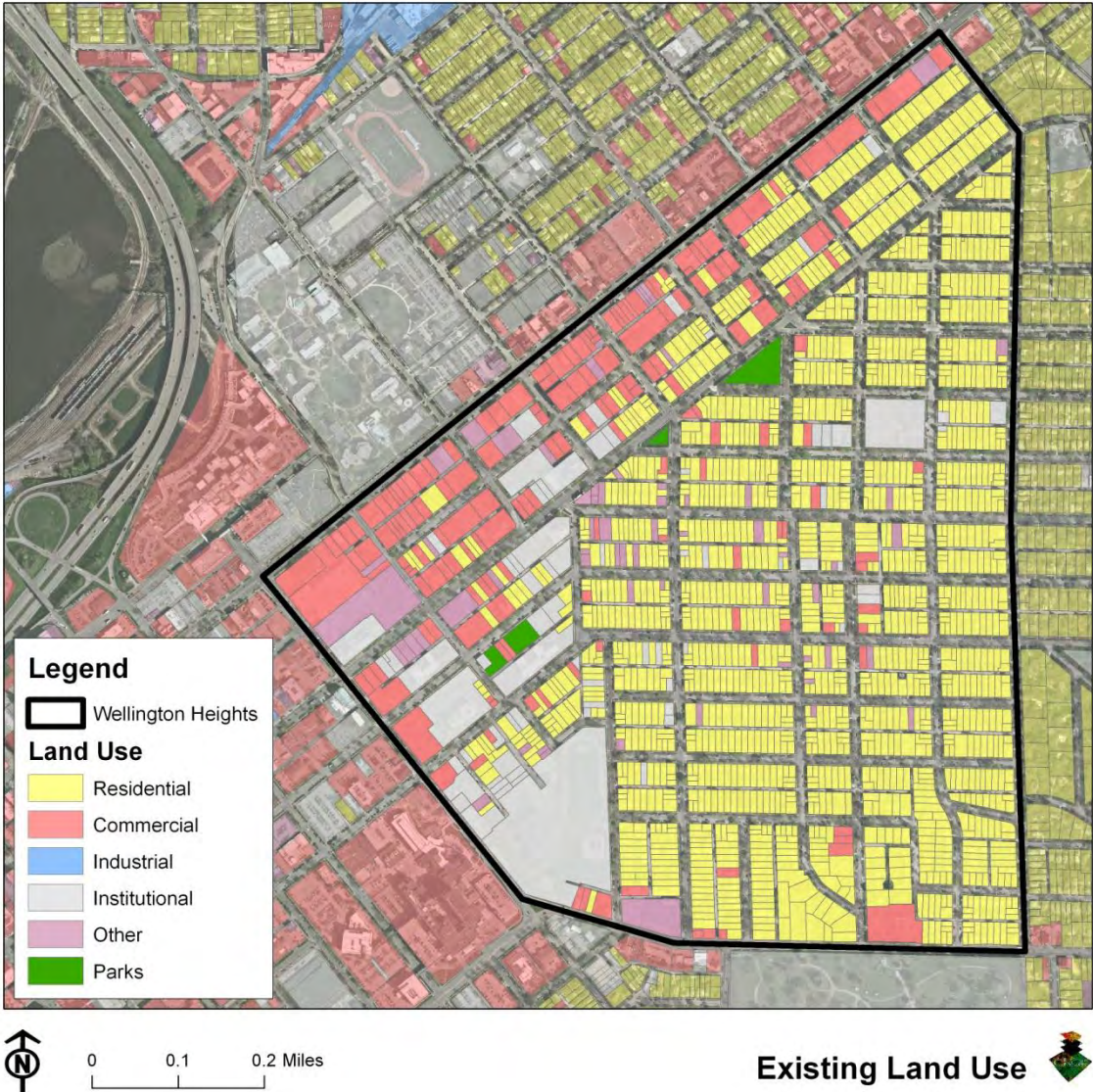
Wellington Heights is home to two schools. McKinley Middle School is located on the southwestern side of the neighborhood along 10th Street and Johnson School of the Arts is an elementary school located in the northeastern portion of the neighborhood on 18th Street. There were 1,031 school-aged children in the neighborhood in 2010, a decrease of 202 since 2000. Most neighborhood children attend Johnson Elementary School for the Arts. Those who live in the neighborhood's southeast corner attend Grant Wood Elementary School. All neighborhood children attend McKinley Middle School and Washington High School.

Existing Land Use, Housing, and Economics

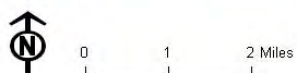
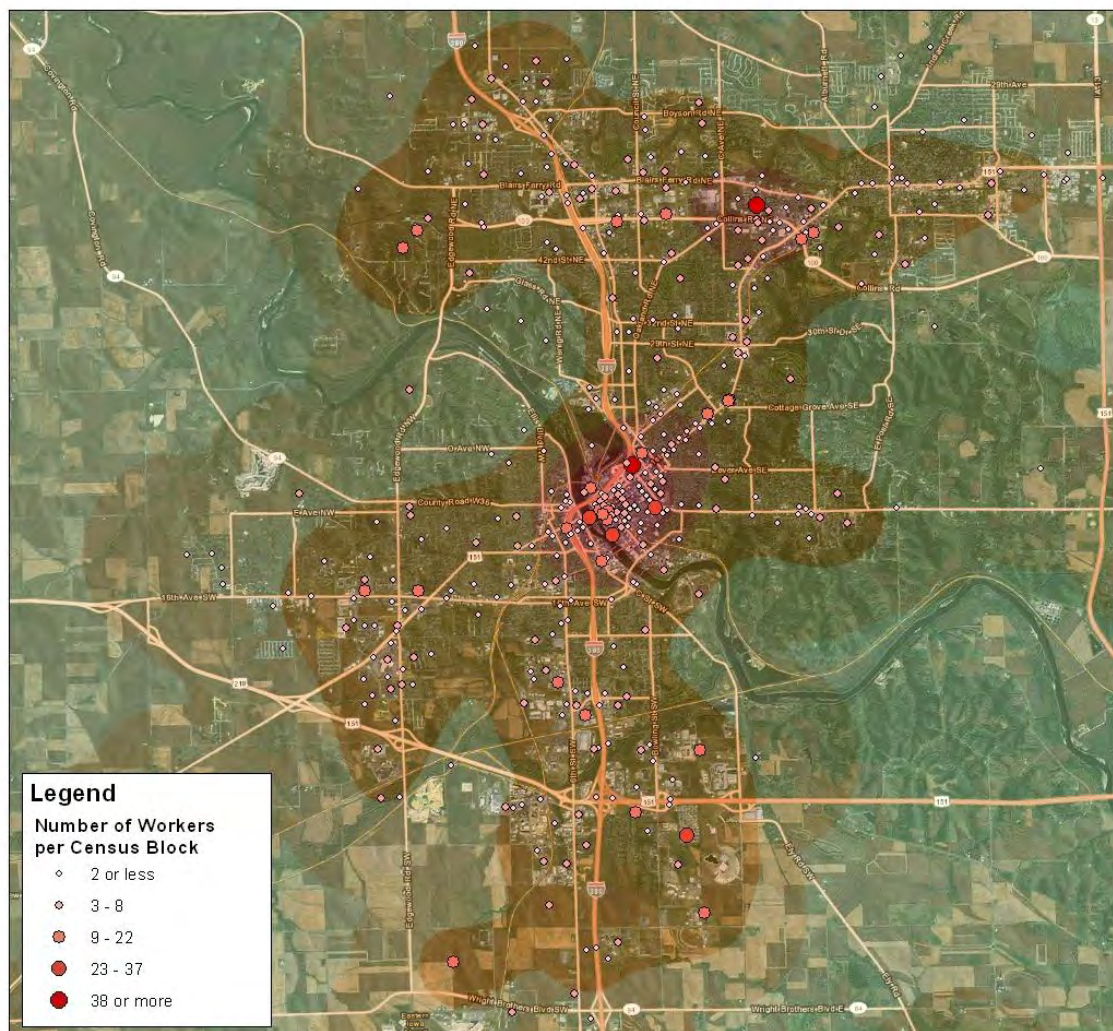
About 80% of the 1,727 parcels in Wellington Heights are classified as residential. Another 10% of parcels are commercial and the rest are a mix of institutional, civic, and parking use. Residential uses tend to be located east of 14th Street and southeast of 2nd Avenue. There are some neighborhood commercial properties mixed in the central portion of the neighborhood, but the majority of commercial uses are located along 1st and 2nd Avenues and 10th Street, in and around the MedQuarter.

Two historic districts, the 2nd and 3rd Avenue District (along 2nd and 3rd Avenues between 19th Street and Bever Avenue) and the Redmond Park – Grande Avenue District (bounded by 3rd Avenue, Washington Avenue, and 19th Street) are located within the neighborhood. The housing stock within these districts tends to be well-maintained and neighborhood character is uniform and recognizable. The same is true of properties along 19th Street and Mt. Vernon Road. While character is still noticeable in the central and southwestern portions of the neighborhood, there tends to be more renter-occupied housing, less uniformity among housing condition, and higher vacancy rates.

While commercial uses are present along the western boundaries of the neighborhood, high employment centers tend to be located in the southwest corner, south and west of 16th Street. The presence of medical, educational, and associated support services attract employees from around the region to this corner of Wellington Heights.



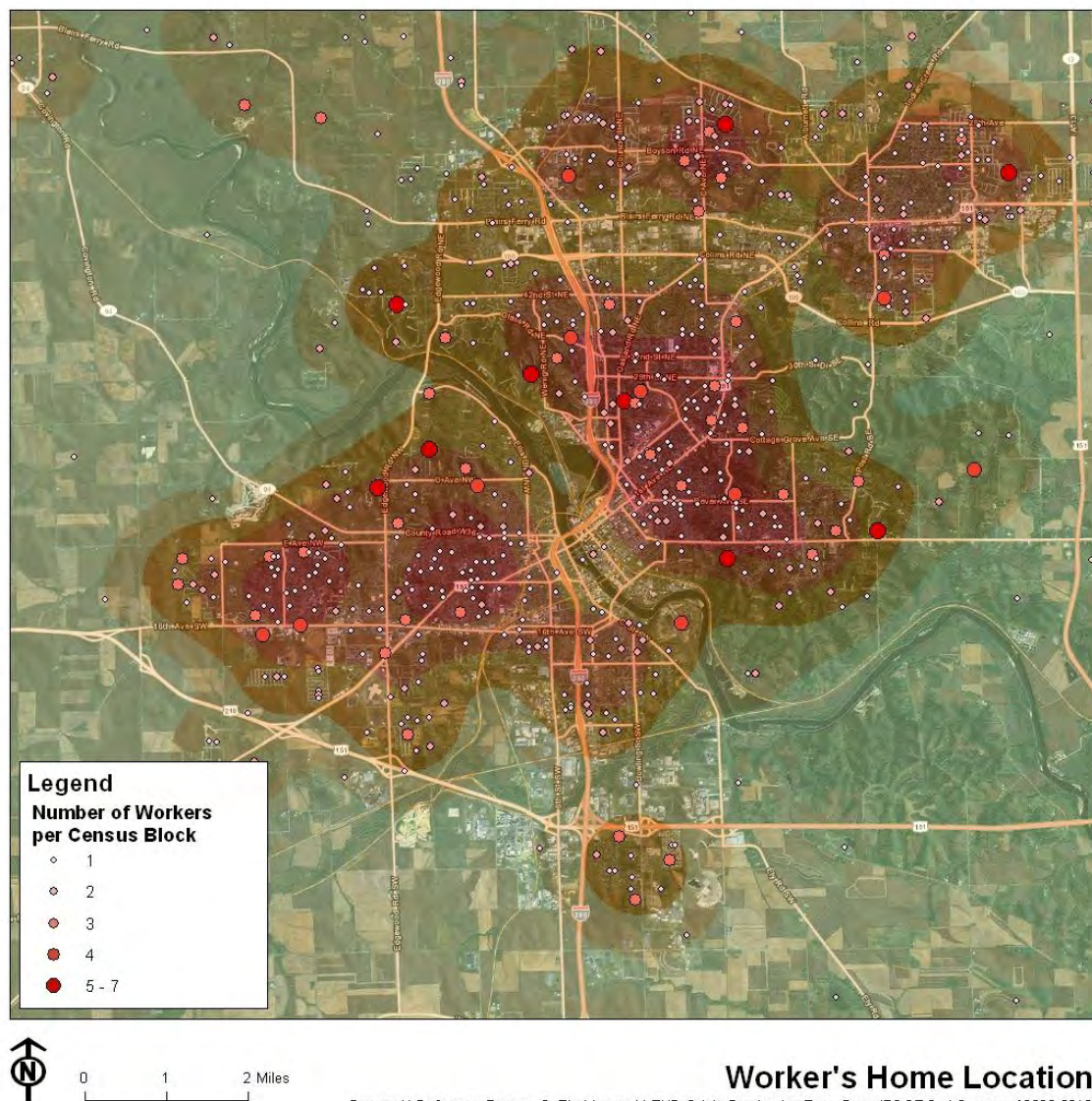
Over 64% of employed residents commuted less than 10 miles to work. Similarly, about 64% of those who worked in the neighborhood commuted less than 10 miles. Residents tend to be employed in two employment centers – the area just west of the neighborhood near downtown; and the Collins Boulevard corridor near the Lindale Mall and Rockwell Collins campus.



Resident's Work Location

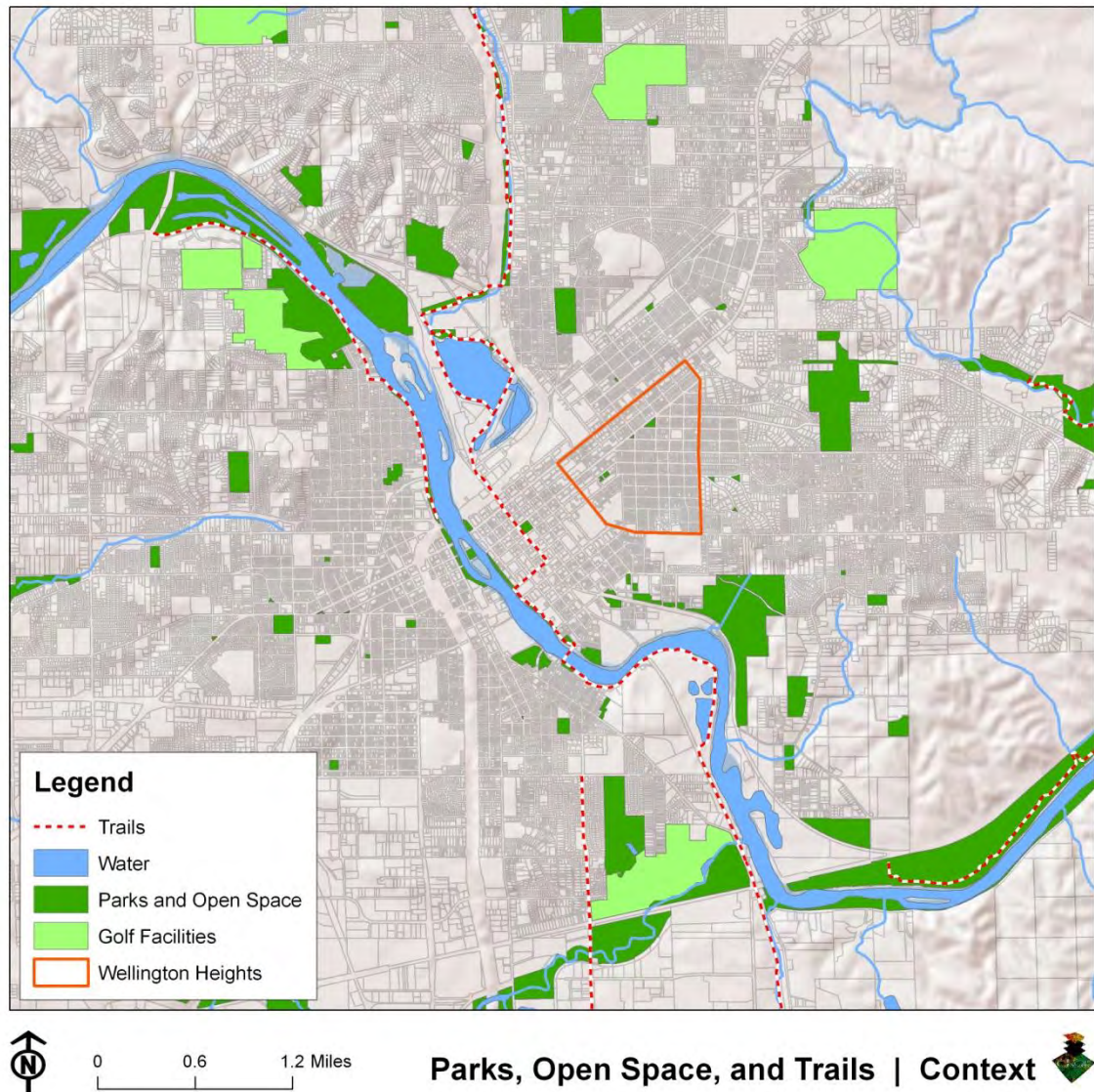
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap and LEHD Origin-Destination Emp. Stats (BOQE 2nd Quarter of 2002-2010).

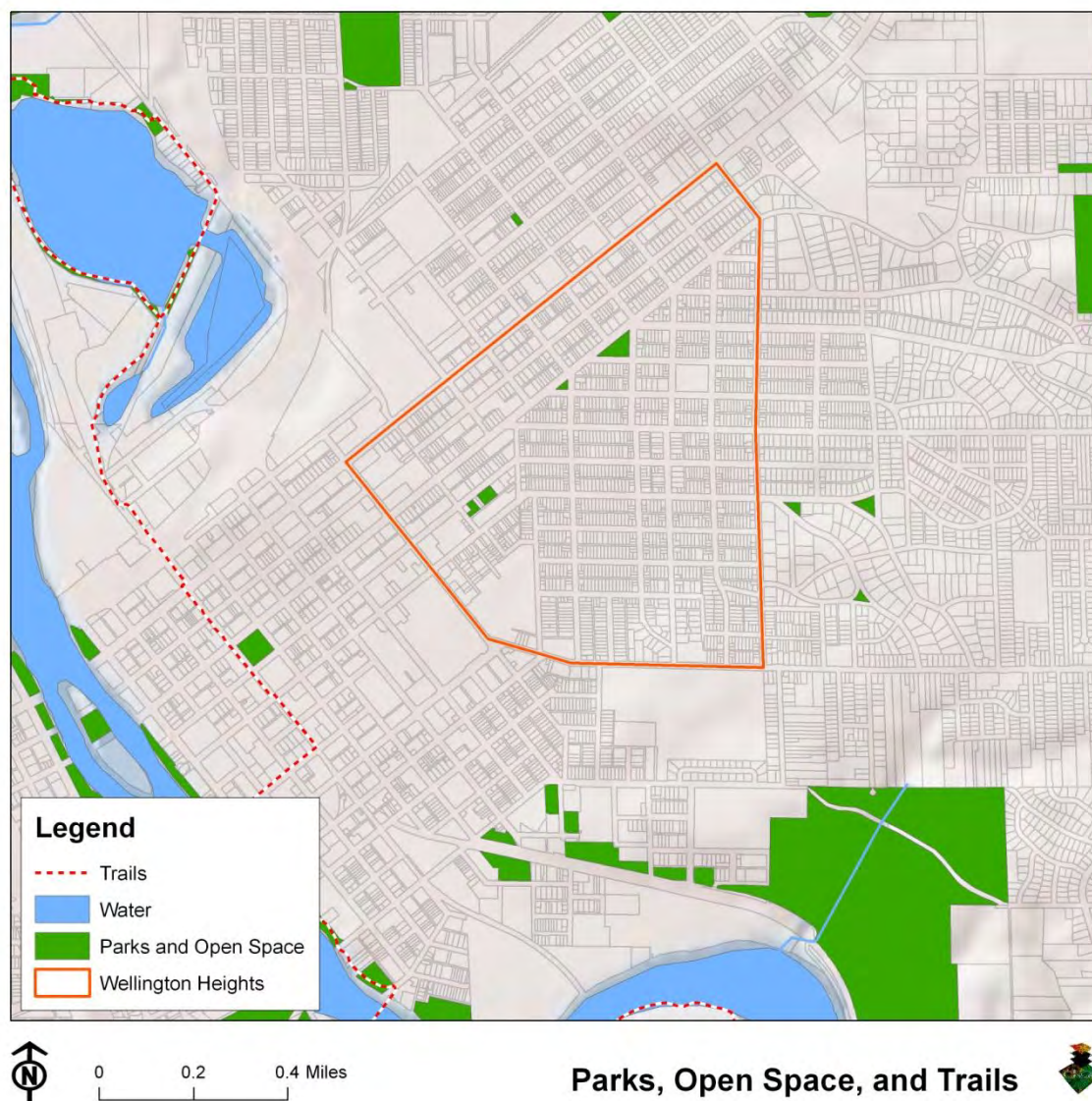
Employees who work within the Wellington Heights neighborhood tend to commute from many different areas, including in and around downtown, southwest of the Cedar River, and the cities of Marion and Robins.



Parks and Open Spaces

Wellington Heights is home to two city parks – Huston and Redmond. Huston Park is a 0.17-acre parcel surrounded by 15th Street, Washington Avenue, and 3rd Avenue. Redmond Park is 1.26 acres and features a playground structure and small splash pad. Other public open spaces include several community gardens dispersed throughout the neighborhood as well as large spaces for active and passive play at Johnson Elementary School and McKinley Middle School. The neighborhood is situated in close proximity to many of the city’s parks and trails but access from the neighborhood to these spaces is not always well-defined.





Neighborhood Safety

According to city police records, total crime in both Wellington Heights and the City of Cedar Rapids has been on the decline since 2008. Total reported crime has decreased by nearly 22% in the neighborhood and by 15% citywide. In 2012, the most prevalent forms of crime in the neighborhood were assault, criminal mischief, theft, intoxication, and burglary.

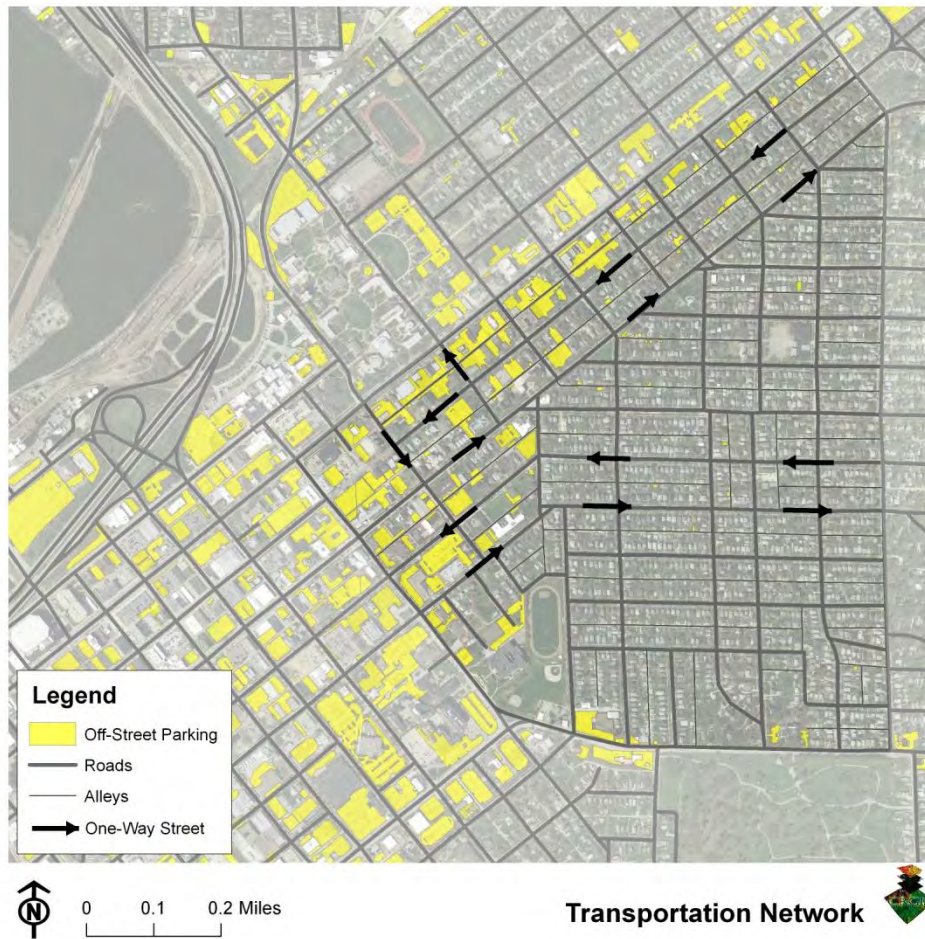
In both 2008 and 2011, Wellington Heights was the site of two out of the city's three homicides. In 2011, the neighborhood also accounted for over 10% of all city reports of arson, burglary, and domestic abuse, and nearly 20% of all reported instances of carrying concealed weapons and robbery. In 2012, the neighborhood accounted for around 10% of assault and miscellaneous sex crimes.

Neighborhoods surrounding Wellington Heights include Mound View, Oakhill Jackson, Uptown, and Vernon Heights. When compared to the average incidence of crime in these neighborhoods, Wellington Heights sees more crime in all categories except for bad checks, possessing drug paraphernalia, and shop theft. Compared to the average number of arrests and calls in surrounding neighborhoods, Wellington Heights saw over twice as many in 2012.

Transportation Characteristics and Conditions

The portion of the neighborhood east of 14th Street and southeast of 3rd Avenue has a north-south grid pattern with east-west intersecting streets. There are a few interruptions to this pattern in the southeast corner. West of 14th Street and northwest of 3rd Avenue, the grid travels northeast-southwest with perpendicular intersecting roads. Through most of the neighborhood, 2nd Avenue is a one-way southwest towards downtown while 3rd Avenue is a one-way northeast away from downtown. Additionally, 4th Avenue is a one-way away from downtown and 5th Avenue is a one-way towards downtown. Short portions of 12th and 13th Streets are also one-way.

Within the residential portions of the neighborhood, alleys run east-west between most streets and northeast-southwest between 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Avenues. The neighborhood has a comprehensive sidewalk system covering both sides of all streets with the exception of a small portion of Mount Vernon Road. Parking is available in private driveways or on-street in the residential portions of the neighborhood, and in parking lots in much of the commercial portions of the neighborhood. Several bus routes run through, or along the edges of the neighborhood, including routes 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9. No off-road bicycle paths serve the neighborhood and there are currently no designated bicycle lanes or shared-lane arrows.



Neighborhood Image, Identity, and Character

Wellington Heights was one of Cedar Rapid’s original neighborhoods, housing the city’s early workforce, including much of the higher-earning workers such as lawyers and doctors. Thus, the neighborhood’s housing stock is some of the oldest in the city. The neighborhood has traditionally thrived on its single-family character, providing easy access to schools, businesses, institutions, and downtown Cedar Rapids. Much work has been done over the past few decades to maintain and enhance the historic character of the neighborhood.

Despite the neighborhood’s historic character, there is a lack of unity and identity in many areas. Disinvestment over the past few decades has caused some of the housing stock to deteriorate. Unified streetscaping is not present, and several of the neighborhood’s roads, sidewalks, and alleys are in disrepair. There is limited neighborhood visual identity, particularly along 1st Avenue and Mount Vernon Road. The neighborhood has often been perceived relatively poorly among city residents due to instances of dilapidated housing and criminal activity.

Despite these challenges, there are many strong assets on which to build. Neighborhood stakeholders display a strong inclination to continue improving and investing in Wellington Heights. This attitude, along with the many physical and social assets already in place, will prove vital to the future success of the neighborhood.

Appendix

Summary of Stakeholder Input

Memorandum - DRAFT

To: City of Cedar Rapids Department of Community Development

From: SAA Design Group, Inc.

Re: Summary of Results from Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan Stakeholder Charrette

Date: 5/3/2013

Overview

On May 1-2, 2013, neighborhood stakeholders, city staff, and the consulting team took part in a planning charrette for the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Framework Plan. The event was designed as an intensive, focused, highly participatory process aimed at providing neighborhood stakeholders with an opportunity to voice their desires, issues, and vision for Wellington Heights. The results of this process will be used to develop the draft framework plan, which will guide the future of the neighborhood for the next ten to fifteen years.

Process

The charrette took place over the course of two days, with two identical sessions taking place each day – one in the early afternoon and one in the evening. The first day's sessions provided opportunities for stakeholders to share ideas about the neighborhood's attractions, concerns, and future in a structured format consisting of four separate activities. After a brief introduction to the plan's scope and timeline, participants were separated into groups and rotated through four concurrent activities.

As a part of the first activity, participants were asked questions relating to why they first came to the Wellington Heights, where in the neighborhood they bring guests, and how they would feel upon entering the neighborhood for the first time. The goal of this activity was to reflect on the fundamental importance of Wellington Heights to participants and to provide the planning team with a foundation for the preservation and improvement vision that will guide the plan.

The second activity consisted of participants using maps of the neighborhood to identify places that are special to them. This identified assets within the neighborhood and allowed the planning team to target areas for preservation, definition, and celebration. The activity was facilitated by a member of the planning team and fostered dialogue between participants as they identified these areas of affinity.

Areas of concern were identified in the third activity. Using maps, sticky dots, markers, and notepads, participants identified both specific problems areas within the neighborhood and issues of concern neighborhood-wide. The goals of this activity were to identify concerns of participants regarding the neighborhood, and to determine areas for improvement and investment in the future regarding safety, image, housing, property maintenance, and other relevant issues.

The fourth and final activity aimed to identify neighborhood aspirations, desires, and attitudes regarding new or re-development, public space, safety, and connectivity, among other themes. Participants used

different colored “Lego” blocks to identify areas where they envisioned change. The goals of this exercise were to begin to see trends relating to preservation and future investment, and to stimulate ideas about what improvements were desired in the neighborhood.

The planning team took the results of the first day’s exercises and identified key issues, trends, and ideas as expressed by participants. The results were used to formulate eight principles for a neighborhood vision, eleven key issues, and five broadly-themed character image boards. On the second day, two additional “open house” sessions were held to gather more ideas from participants, and to begin prioritizing vision principles and key issues to be further address in the framework plan.

The vision principles were listed on large notepads spread throughout the room. Participants were able to read and discuss these principles and voice their own thoughts and ideas using markers and small notepads. Key issues were also listed on large notepads and participants were given ten dollars of “Monopoly” money to invest in the ideas they saw as most pressing in the neighborhood. Character image boards displaying visual examples of ideas for neighborhood improvements and programs were places around the room. Participants were given ten sticky dots to vote for the ideas they thought would be most beneficial, suitable, and implementable in the neighborhood. As in the first day’s activities, dialogue and idea sharing between participants, city staff, and the planning team was strongly encouraged.

During all four sessions, questionnaires were provided to participants to allow them to offer more detail on the importance they place on key issues and the ideas they have for making improvements in the neighborhood. Completed questionnaires were tallied and displayed online for public review. A final “thank you” and information on the next steps in the process were provided after the final two sessions, as was information on how the results of the charrette would be provided to the public and used by the planning team to develop the neighborhood framework plan.

Results

Upon completion of the charrette, the results of the open house sessions were compiled in order to identify priorities as deemed by neighborhood stakeholders. Each activity allowed city staff and the consulting team to gain precious insight into the values, concerns, and vision of charrette participants. The results identified here will be used to craft the neighborhood framework plan.

Principles of Vision

The results of the visioning exercise on Day 1 of the charrette were used to develop draft principles of vision for comment on Day 2. The principles of vision describe how stakeholders imagine the Wellington Heights neighborhood in 10 to 15 years. These principles along with recurring comments are described in detail below.

It's the year 2025, and the Wellington Heights Neighborhood is recognized both within the neighborhood and throughout the city of Cedar Rapids as...

Rich in historical and architectural character

Participants displayed a strong affinity for the existing character of the neighborhood and a desire to preserve and strengthen it. Residents take pride in the amount of effort they have put into neighborhood preservation over the past several decades and want to continue, but see the need for financial and programmatic assistance in this endeavor.

Friendly and neighborly

The neighborhood has many assets to gather around but events promoting such gatherings occur less frequently than desired. Participants value activities that included *all* neighbors and expressed a desire for city flexibility in accommodating neighborhood events through expedited permitting, assistance with temporary road closures and traffic management.

Ideally located with excellent bike, bus, pedestrian, and automobile access to culture, the arts, dining, shopping, jobs, and education

Value was placed on providing *safe* access to all attractions, including churches, parks, and childcare. A strong emphasis was also placed on providing safe routes for children to walk to school amid busy streets and intersections.

A stable, safe neighborhood with a sense of pride and community service evident throughout

Activities and events that bring people together, such as neighborhood cleanup days, were seen as beneficial ways to promote neighborhood pride. It was also noted that neighborhood pride often starts with having a safe, affordable home.

A neighborhood where all individuals and families from all walks of life can afford safe, sanitary, and sustainable housing

Participants saw the importance of having *all* individuals promoting a culture of safety in the neighborhood and also recognized the need to educate owner-occupants, absentee landlords, and renters of property maintenance standards and regulations as they apply to *all* properties in the city.

A truly diverse neighborhood where people of all ages, ethnicities, backgrounds, and beliefs are welcome and integral to the neighborhood's identity

The neighborhood's diversity generally seen as an asset, however, expanded economic opportunity and diversity was seen as somewhat lacking.

A neighborhood with well-lit, tree-lined, walkable streets

The need for better lighting neighborhood-wide that promotes nighttime safety while still being sensitive to the historic context was emphasized. Safe and well-maintained alleys, streets, and sidewalks, along with preservation and enhancements of trees and vegetation were also supported.

A neighborhood enriched with public spaces and invested institutions that provide opportunities for children and families to play, learn, and celebrate together

This principle was seen as important to the neighborhood but the lack of safe, year-round event spaces, activities for adults and seniors, and quality after-school programs were viewed as barriers to its realization.

Comments from the charrette will be discussed and addressed as the planning team develops a vision statement for Wellington Heights to be included as a part of the neighborhood framework plan. The vision statement will address the goals of the neighborhood over the coming decade and will guide the content of the framework plan.

Issues

Maps from the issue mapping exercise completed on Day 1 were reviewed, compiled, and condensed into eleven overarching issues as identified by participants. These issues were presented to participants on Day 2 and they had the opportunity to “invest” in the issues they viewed as most pressing. Along with their investment, participants could add notes regarding their thoughts on each issue, what could be added, and what was not relevant. The issues are discussed below, beginning with those that received the most investment.

Lack of Owner Occupancy

The trend towards renter-occupied housing in the neighborhood received the most investment from charrette participants. Many saw absentee landlords and landlords who do not maintain their properties as a root cause of the issue. Effects include tenants who are not invested in the neighborhood and houses in disrepair, both of which hurt the image of the neighborhood and promote disinvestment. Participants also noted that real estate agents/firms are not painting a positive image of the neighborhood to potential residents or investors. In general, participants believed that the neighborhood could include rental housing, but that it should be a small portion of the market and that development policy should prioritize or incentivize establishing single-family, owner-occupied housing.

Proactive Crime Prevention and Enforcement

Inadequate crime prevention and law enforcement was seen as the second key issue in the neighborhood. The need for increased police visibility, citation issuance, proper recordkeeping, and

adjusted operating hours of the 1st Avenue police substation were all recurring themes throughout the charrette. Foot and bike patrols in the neighborhood were desired, as was the need for more landlord communication and involvement in enforcement. Another related idea was creating opportunities for youth to engage in profitable activities that keep them off the street, such as summer employment programs. This issue was seen as pervasive throughout the neighborhood and ultimately affects nearly all other issues.

Personal Safety and Health

Related to crime prevention and enforcement is the issue of personal safety and health. The presence of drugs and guns in certain areas of the neighborhood, as well as dark streets, property crime, jaywalking, animal control, and a high incidence of disease (lead poisoning, asthma, etc.) are included under this category. A lack of police visibility, as well as inadequate neighborhood watch and citizen policing were seen as components of this issue.

Property Maintenance and Code Enforcement

Inadequate property maintenance and code enforcement also saw a good deal of investment and is perhaps the most visibly noticeable issue in the neighborhood. Landlords and homeowners who are not adequately maintaining their properties contribute to the poor image and unsafe conditions that were also identified in the neighborhood. Concerns related to maintenance of the city's infrastructure and code enforcement also arose. Citizens' lack of knowledge of both the language of the ordinance and ways to report violations were also noted as barriers to improving this issue.

Lack of Family-Oriented Activities and Spaces

While the neighborhood does have good access to parks and other public open spaces, stakeholders were concerned about their safety and usability. The need for more activities catering to people of all ages was an overriding concern. Along with increasing the prevalence of organized activities, providing a neighborhood recreation center or increasing access to nearby, existing recreation centers were ideas that were also discussed.

Image/Public Perception

The often negative image associated with the neighborhood is without a doubt influenced by nearly all of the other issues discussed here. Participants cited many factors that impacted the neighborhood's image, including media portrayal, lack of property maintenance, crime, litter, and lack of positive internal marketing, among others. Along with taking a proactive approach to improving the neighborhood's image, progress in other areas will also enhance the public's perception of Wellington Heights.

Automobile Traffic and Safety

Due to its location and the nature of the street pattern in the neighborhood, traffic in Wellington Heights is particularly impacted by projects in surrounding areas. These include downtown, the Medical

District, Coe College, and surrounding neighborhoods. Issues such as blind corners, speed limits, signage, enforcement, one-way streets, dead end streets, and general street maintenance all contribute to automobile traffic and safety. In addition, the lack of a defined, comprehensive approach to assessing the impact of nearby projects on traffic in the neighborhood was also discussed as an issue.

Density

Density that is too high for the context of the neighborhood was discussed over the course of the charrette. Noticeable effects include a lack of available on-street parking in certain portions of the neighborhood and unsafe living conditions in properties not designed to house more than a single family. This issue is related to the desire for a higher percentage of owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood.

Single Entities/Individuals Owning a Large Amount of Property

While several programs exist within the neighborhood aimed at rehabilitating and upgrading deteriorating housing stock, some concerns exist as to the unintended effects of large amounts of property being owned by a single entity. Concerns arose regarding market effects of organizations buying properties at low values and the lack of incentives aimed at saving and refurbishing historic properties.

Aesthetics of the Public Realm

The need for improvements to the look and feel of public spaces such as parks, streets, and alleys was also mentioned throughout the charrette. Deteriorating infrastructure, pervasive litter, and lack of well-lit, attractive corridors all fall under this category. Additionally, participants saw the need for more trash receptacles, street paving, and ADA-accessible thoroughfares.

Poor Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Poor bicycle and pedestrian facilities received the least investment, but this issue is ultimately related to personal safety and health. It includes concerns such as dangerous street crossings, lack of safe routes to school for children, inadequate sidewalk maintenance, and lack of designated or signed routes for bicycles and pedestrians.

Things We Missed

In addition to the issue categories, participants were also provided with an avenue to tell city staff and consultants about other issues that they felt were not adequately addressed. These issues included poverty, excessive influence of institutions in the planning process, overreaching boundaries of tax increment financing districts, and some inability to find private developers with community interests in mind. While several additional comments were written on this sheet (i.e. littering, youth facilities, dog parks, historic preservation, law enforcement, etc.), all were deemed to fit sufficiently into one of the other categories.

Character Image Boards

Character images were used to get a general sense of what improvements participants thought would be most beneficial and suitable for the neighborhood over the next 10 to 15 years. While results from this exercise were not intended to translate directly into plan recommendations, they did provide a sense of the appetite of stakeholders for certain types of projects. The character boards were separated into five broad themes (housing, connectivity, sustainability, economic vitality, and other community needs) but the results will look at the images/ideas that received the most overall interest.

Of the ideas presented, a *property maintenance ordinance* was seen as most significant. While a property maintenance ordinance already exists within the city, increasing enforcement, knowledge about ways to report violations, and citizen obedience were all mentioned as ways to improve its effectiveness.

Increased neighborhood safety was also seen as important to participants. This could take the form of a well-lit, well-maintained, tree-lined sidewalk as shown in the character image, or increased citizen policing, city police visibility and law enforcement, and promoting activity in the neighborhood through organized events, walkable streets, and safe public spaces.

Developing *community facilities*, such as a library, recreation center, children's center, or other public facility also received interest. Related ideas include increasing access to existing community facilities outside the neighborhood, promoting use of existing facilities inside the neighborhood, and organizing community activities.

Compact mixed-use development was seen as desirable for the neighborhood in suitable locations. This idea could refer to ground-floor shops with residential units above, or a mix of residential and commercial or institutional uses in close proximity to one another along a street or on the same block. This provides easy access from residences to shopping and dining and keeps people on the street day and night which can also increase neighborhood safety.

Other ideas that received the most interest include *small-lot, single-family housing, easy connections to commercial centers, neighborhood markets/services, and preservation/development of historic or context-sensitive commercial development*.

Summary

The purpose of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Plan Stakeholder Charrette was to identify key neighborhood values, issues, and priorities and to allow for meaningful public input and involvement and is a key step in the successful completion of the Wellington Heights Neighborhood Framework Plan. As the process moves forward, continued stakeholder involvement will be vital to developing a successful plan that will assist Wellington Heights in achieving its future vision. The planning team will take the results of this event, as well as those from other community meetings and focus groups to be held during the month of May, and begin to address key issues and action strategies. The draft

framework plan will be developed and reviewed at an open house to be held at the end of May. Comments will be considered and used to develop a final neighborhood framework plan to be presented to the Cedar Rapids City Council for approval.

Appendix

Stakeholder Survey

Wellington Heights “State of the Neighborhood”

1) In three words or less, what is the most important issue currently facing Wellington Heights?

2) How important are accessible parks and open space to the neighborhood?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not important
at all

Extremely
Important

What would you do to improve access to or provision of parks and open space?

3) How important is neighborhood safety and crime prevention?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not important
at all

Extremely
Important

What can be done to improve safety in the neighborhood?

4) How important is it to have owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not important at all									Extremely Important

What can be done to improve this issue?

5) How important is it to have affordable rental properties in the neighborhood?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not important at all									Extremely Important

What can be done to improve this issue?

6) How well is the neighborhood connected to its surroundings (e.g. downtown, Coe College, Medical District)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
The neighborhood is isolated from its surroundings									The neighborhood is fully connected to its surroundings

What can be done to improve the neighborhood's connection with its surroundings?

7) How important is it for the neighborhood to have a well-maintained housing stock?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not important
at all

Extremely
Important

What can be done to increase the number of well-maintained housing units?

8) How important is it for the neighborhood to have good bicycle and transit connections to the rest of the city?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not important
at all

Extremely
Important

What can be done to increase the neighborhood's bicycle and public transit connections?

9) How important is it for the neighborhood to have organized activities for youth and families?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not important at all									Extremely Important

What can be done to improve youth and family activities?

10) How important is it for the neighborhood to have places to work and shop nearby?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not important at all									Extremely Important

What can be done to improve this issue?

Appendix

Survey Responses

Wellington Heights “State of the Neighborhood” Responses

1) In three words or less, what is the most important issue currently facing Wellington Heights?

Yellow – Poor housing maintenance, landlords

Green – Image/Public Perception

Pink – Density

Blue – Crime/Safety

Red – City investment

Grey – Maintain/enhance character

Dark Grey – Programs for families

- Poor housing; “slum-lords” not having code enforcement
- Crime and litter - 2
- Bad public relations
- Density
- High density; impression of area; landlords being held accountable
- crime
- Safety, housing
- Density, dilapidation, safety
- Our image
- Infrastructure, crime, landlords, density
- Needs appreciated/respected
- Safety, historic preservation, business development
- Programs for parents, family & children
- Multiple city failures
- Better public order
- Overcoming the Wellington “stigma”
- Crime/density
- Too much crime
- Safety
- Special interest groups
- Safe neighborhood, sustainability, maintain character of historic and architecture diversity
- Low property values

- Improve/maintain character
- Perception and balance
- Negative image perceived by littering, loitering of menacing looking characters
- Improved neighborhood order
- Crime, perception and vision (lack thereof)
- Historic property disrepair
- Density, declining housing stock, investment in the neighborhood, high crime, poorly cared for properties
- Crime, built environment, health inequities
- Poverty
- Opportunities for families
- Negative stigma
- Terry Bisland & crew
- Safety
- Affordable housing
- Buildings and safety
- Planned, balanced development
- Negative stigma & crime
- The wealthy
- Housing property maintenance
- Reputation
- Reputation (it's bad)
- Bad PR, 15th Street
- Community rehabilitation

2) What would you do to improve access to or provision of parks and open space?

- Open gardens/community gardens
- Bigger parks, accessibility is fine, bigger parks would see more use
- Can we knock down any old, hopeless houses to create open space?
- Use small empty lots for pocket parks and gardening
- Enforce city codes
- Knock down dilapidated houses
- Bike lanes, off-street parking, better/improved sidewalks
- Find space and build park and rec center for kids & hire a supervisor or agency like YMCA or Boys & Girls Club to oversee it.
- Structured programs for kids
- Neighborhood policing, more events in these parks
- Knock some homes down to create space
- Increase the number of them
- Community policing
- Limit beer
- Work with C.R. Parks & Recreation
- Safety
- Additional parking by parks, bike lanes, walking trails
- Slow traffic around major parks, maybe with speed bumps
- Make the parks safe
- Strategically plan for increased green space
- We have empty areas/lots that could be converted to Basketball courts, small sitting parks
- Density is the issue – which is not the same as parks & open spaces
- Can you close side streets on weekends? Bike paths to and around parks; “cool” equipment for kids.
- Lights, walkways to and from parks
- Create and strengthen partnerships among schools, churches, neighborhood assoc., residents, etc.
- More planned activities/outreach
- Put gates around them to stop others from passing through
- Have programs
- Lights, safety, ballfields, soccer.....sports
- More parks, more open spaces, better condition of sidewalks, bussing longer on Saturdays and running on Sundays
- Continue to demolish homes/structures that are not inhabitable and turn the property into park/garden space; have recreation program in the parks of neighborhood youth and children
- Keep them patrolled and free of crime
- I would put in a rec center so there is something positive families of Wellington Heights could do
- Look @ unoccupied homes or abandoned homes for demolition – small parks
- Improve sidewalks and streetscapes
- Continue to reduce density
- Need to add more areas; redevelop dilapidated areas

3) What can be done to improve safety in the neighborhood?

- Lighting throughout
- Better lighting, cleaner neighborhood
- Well lighted boulevards, new sidewalks, well paved alleys
- Lighting
- Lighting, holding the wrong people accountable
- More bike patrols (??)
- Code enforcement, nuisance abatement; stronger police presence
- Deal with landlords who rent to anyone; provide jobs for teens and young people in poverty
- Street and ally lighting
- Neighborhood policing, neighborhood watch, rental policies
- More citizen policing, more lighting, restricted alley access
- More diverse police population to mirror the population.... Builds trust
- Set CR police to recognize the crime problem and actually investigate the crimes – not just traffic offenses
- Community policing, zoning/housing enforcement
- More police
- Loosen restrictions on home ownership, income guidelines; increase police presence; enforce ordinances
- Less section 8
- Police foot & bike patrol; neighborhood watch; more lighting that is well maintained; neighbors looking out for each other
- A true police substation that is staffed during peak hours
- All residents need to be pro-active to what is going on around them; report problems & help police
- Continued police presence throughout the area with a focus on enforcing the new codes to decrease multiple families living in single-family structures
- Enforce- littering, joy-walking, no parking broances ??
- Police lack accountability; neighborhood is not perceived as safe, especially in evening and night hours; improved lighting would help
- More single family homes; improved perception of neighborhood; neighborhood watches
- Zero absentee landlords; neighborhood accountability
- Neighborhood involvement
- Activities for young people; police presence – sympathetic, empathetic, constructive
- Create opportunities for people to get to know each other
- Increase police presence; reporting of criminal activity
- Neighborhood watch
- Police satellite stationed 24/7
- Faster response time; foot patrol presence
- More police presence, no k2 selling
- Address gang and drug activity – w/ outreach program, police enforcement, community events
- Take a stand; police patrolling; address rental and landlord issues

- I think safety is (issue?) here in Wellington Heights however safety is an issue everywhere
- Staff police station 24/7
- Lighting, presence in Redmond; formal youth activities, family activities, follow-by CRPD after 8pm
- Lighting, writing more citations by police
- Better lighting on streets; more police presence; more activities for kids
- Community involvement

4) What can be done to improve this issue (owner-occupied housing)?

- Affordable/no income limits to ownership
- Continue urban redevelopment w/affordable Housing network – city should sponsor a sale of distressed/back tax houses for a \$1.00 to qualified buyers
- Continue the work of AHNI – make landlords accountable
- Rehab the old homes, rebuilding
- Improve image of the neighborhood
- Acquisition rehabs; code enforcement – force out bad landlords
- Affordable Housing Network is doing things; also deal with the stigma among realtors and others
- More programs such as Affordable Housing Network
- Continue to enhance tenant/landlord policies; support efforts to re-introduce single family, owner-occupied homes
- Restrict the amount of rental properties allowed in the district, incentives for new home owners/buyers
- Zoning & planning
- Encourage home ownership by getting rid of problem properties that no one wants to live next to
- First time program for homebuyers NOT income restricted
- Grants
- More support to Affordable Housing Network and Habitat for Humanity
- Change zoning to single family – owner occupied
- Aggressive code enforcement
- It's a free country 😊
- Owners are fleeing, if they can afford to; stable neighborhoods are anchored by firmly entrenched owners & landlords committed to providing decent housing
- Must develop pride in area; total child may the only way to turn the tide; people need to embrace some change
- Tax and financial support to assist homeowners in upkeep
- Mixed housing – owner occupied as well as rentals
- Get rid of stigma, maintain neighborhood & keep housing affordable
- Lower prices
- New zoning
- Open minds on renters & home owners – we can all get along
- Affordable housing
- What AHNI is doing; return former single living dwelling back to single housing
- Rental units are important, but good landlords are key in renting; keep units maintained, do background checks (offenders need housing too), address tenant issues
- I think having a mixture is very healthy for any neighborhood
- Affordable housing to encourage low income families to buy
- Improving properties and maintenance plus neighborhood development of walking and biking with improved sidewalks and pleasant streets

- Continue on current plan
- Let AHNI keep doing what it's doing currently
- Better PR – affordability of homes
- Landlord evaluation

5) What can be done to improve this issue (affordable rental properties)?

- Have owners live in neighborhood too
- The entire city, not just Wellington Heights, needs to provide affordable housing
- Better landlord background checks
- Grants need to rehab houses, Afford Housing Network
- Create some higher end rental housing in the more commercially developed areas that already exist; maybe even mixed use properties
- Build new affordable rental properties – states – federal – churches
- It's important to have affordable rentals, but in with affordable rental = derelict property; we don't want any more derelict properties
- This would be better received if landlords were held more accountable to take care of property & thorough background checks of tenants
- Encourage development of well managed affordable housing that requires residents to uphold minimum standards
- Make attractive to 1st time home owners ; limit density
- "affordable" is not the issue for rentals – "condition" is the issue
- Tougher city code enforcement; more police patrols; lower density apartments; an elderly housing project
- Upkeep
- Cap rent income
- Better landlord accountability
- Change the minds of others about what this looks like
- Police what the volume is
- Responsible building owners/landlords
- Affordable Housing Network is doing great work & could use support
- With the poverty level I think families shouldn't have to worry about how rent is paid
- Renovate/upkeep on current properties
- There is already a lot of rental
- Enforce codes
- Let AHNI keep doing what it's doing currently

6) What can be done to improve the neighborhood's connection with its surroundings?

- Bring these services in the neighborhood
- **Bike trails**; improve current roads
- **Better pedestrian walkways/signage**
- Communication
- Encourage people to live in neighborhood; recruit people from neighborhood for jobs in those places; help them train, then hire as food service, office, etc.
- Better bus service and **walking conditions**
- It has been and could be stronger
- Stop cutting off major arteries; **bike trails**; safe transportation to schools
- **Bike trail**
- Improved businesses on 1st Avenue, not payday loans, tobacco shops, etc.
- WHNA needs to do a better job of representing residents, often business/non-profits approach WHNA for input and the association responds without soliciting neighborhood input; WHNA is completely ineffectual
- Loosen income restrictions for new home buyers
- Safety
- Longer schedule of busses
- Encourage green space near the surroundings
- This is subjective – I believe there is a certain segment that will not be connected to the surrounding area no matter what
- Ok as is
- Get people into the neighborhood to tour historic sites so they'll discover it is safe and can be beautiful
- Discontinue major commercial development
- Neighborhood is separated by 10th /Mt. Vernon/1st Avenue
- More communication/connecting
- More one-on-one with businesses
- Improve condition of alleys
- Work to change adversity attitudes among business/school/agency/institution/neighborhood
- Unsure
- Make (??), downtown etc. aware & invite neighborhood activities
- Create goals & activities to begin connections
- Partner with these (hospitals)
- Small business involvement
-

7) What can be done to increase the number of well-maintained housing units?

- Enforce code
- Better infrastructure, cleaner neighborhood
- Increase private homeowner occupied units
- Provide education and \$ for home maintenance; enforce building code
- More owner occupied
- Incentives for new; infill & “gut” rehabs; code enforcement/nuisance abatement on rentals
- Deal with landlords who allow their stock to deteriorate; more frequent inspection, more enforcement, shut them down if non-compliant
- Revert single family homes back to single family homes
- Support redevelopment of historic homes; keep commercial development (meaning business) to a minimum; a moratorium on doctors’ offices
- Owner occupied
- Preserve historic buildings
- Encourage home ownership; do not allow multi-family dwellings to be made out of single family homes; provide incentives for people to return multi-family dwellings to single family
- Redo density by zoning changes of multi-family to ?? or single
- Code Enforcement
- Promote painting grants and other programs
- Enforce code
- A home is the longest investment for most people; It needs to be maintained and have pride of ownership
- Perception and positive imaging
- Need more owner occupied; need tighter housing inspections on rentals
- Total child is a tremendous opportunity to make significant changes; allow moving or tear down homes not worth fixing; build pride in area
- Tax and financial incentives
- Improve ordinances/enforcement
- Front porch dress up contests; zoning-why is this area more rental versus OO (?owner occupied) when compared to rest of city
- City inspections & follow-ups on nuisance properties
- Encouragement to others
- Zoning by city
- Street beautification projects; enforce zoning and other codes
- Fix up current buildings, build new
- Promote programs such as Affordable Housing, Habitat for Humanity, Block by Block and Tapestry
- Enforce current (?) property maintenance & landlord laws
- Tax incentives to home improvements
- Neighborhood grants, help team to assist disabled and elderly
- Access to more grants & loans by both owners & landlords
- Clean up garbage, paint, tear down structures not up to code
- Housing rehabilitation

8) What can be done to increase the neighborhood's bicycle and public transit connections?

- Lengthen bus hours
- Bike Trails
- Bike lanes
- Bus Transfers
- Bike lanes; longer bus hours
- Bike trails
- Busses in the area; a real transit center; Make routes more convenient
- Better bus system that have fares people can afford who need the service
- Extend 3rd Avenue bike lane to and past 19th
- Safe access, more trails
- Improve sidewalks, gutters, off street parking
- Need bike lanes and bike friendly streets; too much on street parking makes biking dangerous
- Reduce traffic
- Increased funding resources to build more trails and increase hours of transit operations
- Bike trails/bike lanes
- Work closely with schools school and major employers to make more direct routes during peak hours; use transfers rather than requiring payment when changing busses
- I think we are well connected
- This is the city's responsibility
- Dedicated bike lanes
- I'm not concerned re:bikes; daytime busses ok, but the neighborhood bus service could be expanded
- Bike paths or highlighting existing paths would help
- Less street parking on both sides of street for visibility
- Put in bicycle paths and trails
- Bike lanes, secure storage/parking for bikes
- Sidewalks, bike routes
- Discussions
- Bike routes well marked, more side trails, walking
- Need more public transit, better routes-aligned w/ school districts; later run times; Sunday service
- Busses running longer & on weekends; fix sidewalks/alleys; bike paths
- Return to 2-way streets; improved sidewalks, add bike lanes, clean up the streets, curbs & gutters; expand streets repair streets rather than patch them
- Maintain bike paths & sidewalks; identify specific bike routes; make more crosswalks
- I am not sure
- Pretty good now, but maintenance of various facilities should be addressed
- Good at present
- Busses later in day & on Sundays

9) What can be done to improve youth and family activities?

- Recreation center
- A rec center w/ indoor & outdoor activities
- Rec Center
- New youth center
- Community rec center
- A rec center, also helping groups organize things
- Park programs for kids
- The more people mix the more they know and can care about their neighbors
- Festivals, events, become a destination not a pass through
- YMCA facility in the neighborhood
- Need public library, gathering places, internet access – free
- It's important that they take place in the neighborhood, but don't need to be organized by the neighborhood; fix the housing situation and families with means will come – activities will come with them
- Community Involvement
- Safety
- Community events, promote YMCA, promote Boys & Girls clubs, after school activities
- Keep in mind that population we are serving need low/no cost to these activities; also, coordinate when possible w/ local school to give children in poverty an anchor
- Planned city rec activities in the parks
- I believe that families should find and pursue their own activities through existing venues: school, church, sports leisure, etc.
- This should not be primary city function – let churches, etc. do this
- Many neighborhoods handle this internally and that probably needs to happen here. Goes back to pride, safety, single-family homes, green space
- Make them affordable & well publicized
- Build rec center, supervised activities
- Improve relations to allow this
- More city involvement, city parks department
- More centers with low cost or no cost programs
- Youth/rec centers
- Allow churches, other non-profit the opportunity to have programs and support them with facilities and funding
- Network w/other agencies to have programs hosted; provide incentives for family involvement
- Either build or use existing facilities for a rec center that is not only for children but also for the parents
- Churches, schools support ?? activities for families
- Support and organizational efforts for community groups like neighborhood assoc. Paul Engle, Affordable Housing.....etc.
- Sr, youth and family activity center
- Open space/parks, recreation center(?), organized activities
- Youth centers, within walking distance of neighborhood

10) What can be done to improve this issue (places to work and shop nearby)?

- Areas to work close by; more shopping in area
- Mixed use
- Encourage small business to try; visible police
- Encourage businesses to move into the neighborhood
- Build, build, build
- Incentives for restaurants and shopping
- Support for small business, economic, educational
- Look at partnership in work force development so persons have skills to become employed
- Small neighborhood stores and businesses
- Improve perception of safety and businesses and people will come; support existing churches to allow them to provide support & services to the area; Med Quarter would be a huge chance for both of these; embrace change
- The only successful neighborhoods have shopping, quality schools, etc.; from previous experience with city projects, I feel the city doesn't really want our input – that this is a “lip service” project
- Get businesses to be stake holders
- Control on commercial real estate taxes
- Wellington Heights is the most centrally located w/ easy bus access
- Keep current buildings & houses and allow mixed use
- Safety
- Recruit investors
- Better zoning and planning; we need desirable business, not liquor stores and smoke shops, convenience stores, etc.
- More interesting shops, gathering places, interesting entertainment venues
- Tax incentives to bring higher end businesses in
- Better business development along 1st Avenue; zoning code restrictions on certain types of negative businesses
- Mixed use; Don't let St. Pauls tear down the 3 historic properties; move them, restore them to single ownership –whatever
- A neighborhood business incubator where people can sell garden veggies, food, crafts & services; maybe encourage a couple of small stores
- Would be nice to have more small business in the immediate area- not just 1st Avenue
- More enjoyable companies present
- W.H. has a great walkability score!
- A condo development on 15th St., mixed use w/ shops on 1st level, street level – i.e. floral, deli, coffee shop & accessible housing above

	2) Accessible Parks and Open Space	3) Neighborhood Safety and Crime	4) Owner- Occupied Housing	5) Affordable Rental Properties	6) Connections to Surroundings	7) Well- Maintained Housing Stock	8) Bicycle and Transit Connections	9) Activities for Youth and Families	10) Places to Work and Shop Nearby
	10	10	10	5	5	10	10	8	7
	7	9	9	7	9	8	9	10	9
	10	10	10	10	8	10	10	10	10
	10	10	10	7	7	10	8	8	8
	10	10	10	10	9	10	10	10	10
	10	10	7	7	5	9	8	8	8
	10	10	8	8	10	na	na	10	10
	8	10	10	10	7	10	10	10	10
	10	10	7	10	1	10	8	10	8
	10	10	10	6	8	10	10	10	10
	8	9	9	6	5	8	8	9	8
	7	10	10	5	8	10	9	8	10
	10	5	8	10	1	7	10	10	10
	10	10	8	8	3	10	8	10	10
	10	9	10	3	8	10	9	na	10
	8	10	10	3	1	10	7	6	6
	6	10	10	4	9	10	5	8	5
	10	10	10	5	10	10	5	8	6
	10	10	na	na	na	10	9	na	na
	10	10	10	na	na	10	10	10	10
	10	10	10	4	4	10	7	8	10
	8	10	10	5	5	10	7	8	8
	10	10	9	10	8	8	10	6	5
	8	8	8	8	8	10	9	7	8
	10	10	10	6	8	9	8	7	8
	7	10	7	5	6	9	7	5	8
	10	9	6	7	9	10	8	10	10
	na	10	15	10	8	15	6	6	10
	8	10	9	7	5	8	6	6	8
	7	7	8	8	6	10	7	7	7

	10	10	10	8	8	8	10	10	10	10	na	na
	2) Accessible Parks and Open Space	Neighborhood Safety and Crime Prevention	4) Owner- Occupied Housing	5) Affordable Rental Properties	6) Connections to Surroundings	7) Well- Maintained Housing Stock	8) Bicycle and Transit Connections	9) Activities for Youth and Families	10) Places to Work and Shop Nearby			
	8	8	8	8	3	9	8	7	9			
	9	9	9	7	na	9	8	9	7			
	10	10	8	10	8	10	10	10	10			
	8	9	9	8	7	na	9	10	9			
	8	10	6	10	4	10	9	10	10			
	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10			
	9	10	6	9	7	9	9	9	9			
	10	10	6	7	6	8	9	10	10			
	10	10	10	6	6	10	10	10	10			
	10	10	6	8	9	9	7	10	5			
	10	9	4	10	9	9	10	10	10			
	9	9	9	9	5	9	9	9	9			
	8	10	10	5.5	10	10	8	9	6			
	10	10	8	8	7	10	6	10	9			
	9	10	7	9	7	10	5	8	8			
	10	10	8	5	8	9	6	9	8			
	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10			
AVG	9.15	9.58	8.72	7.42	6.78	9.61	8.32	8.73	8.61			

