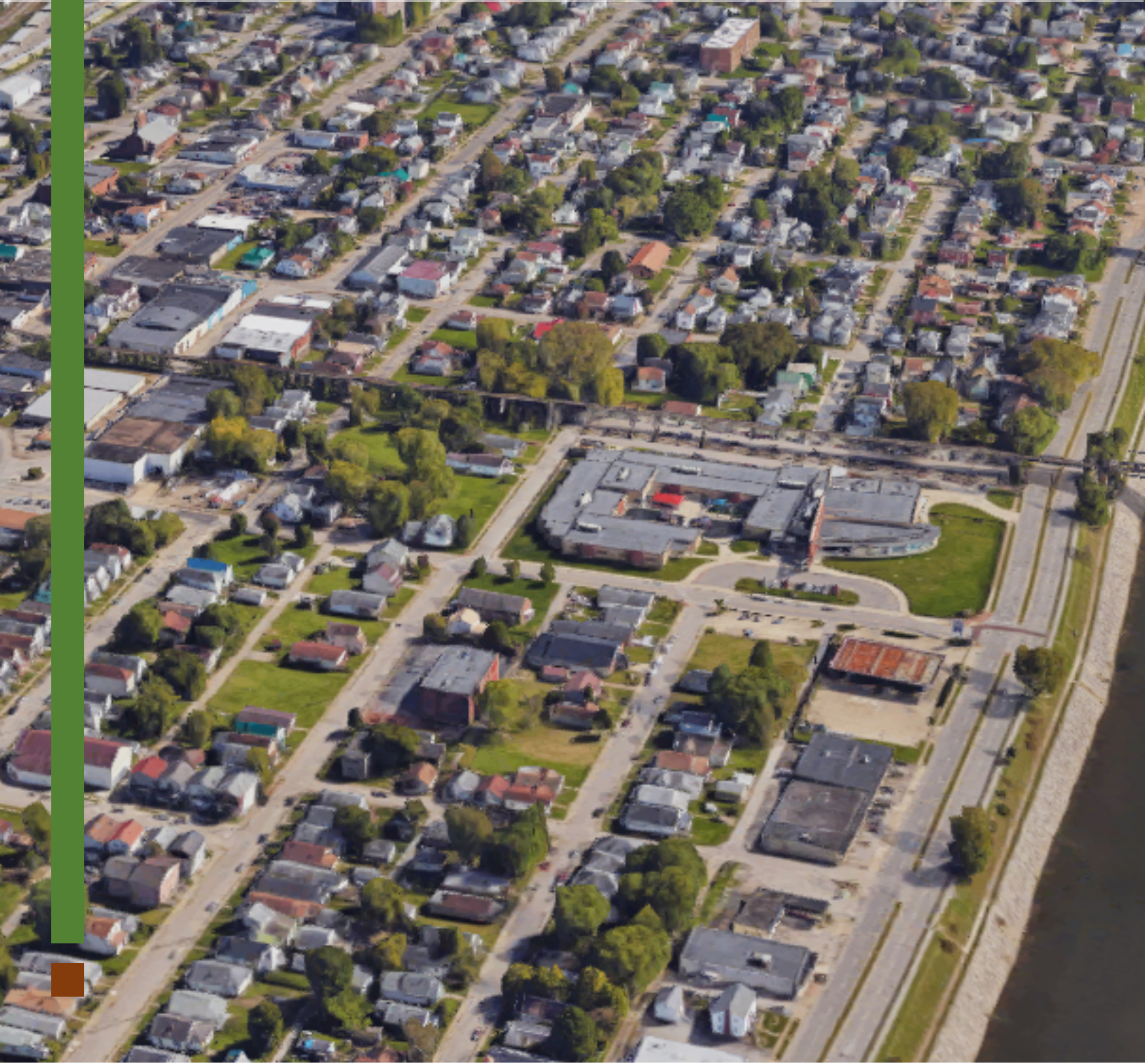




WEST SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

BAD BUILDINGS FINAL REPORT

MAY 25, 2018



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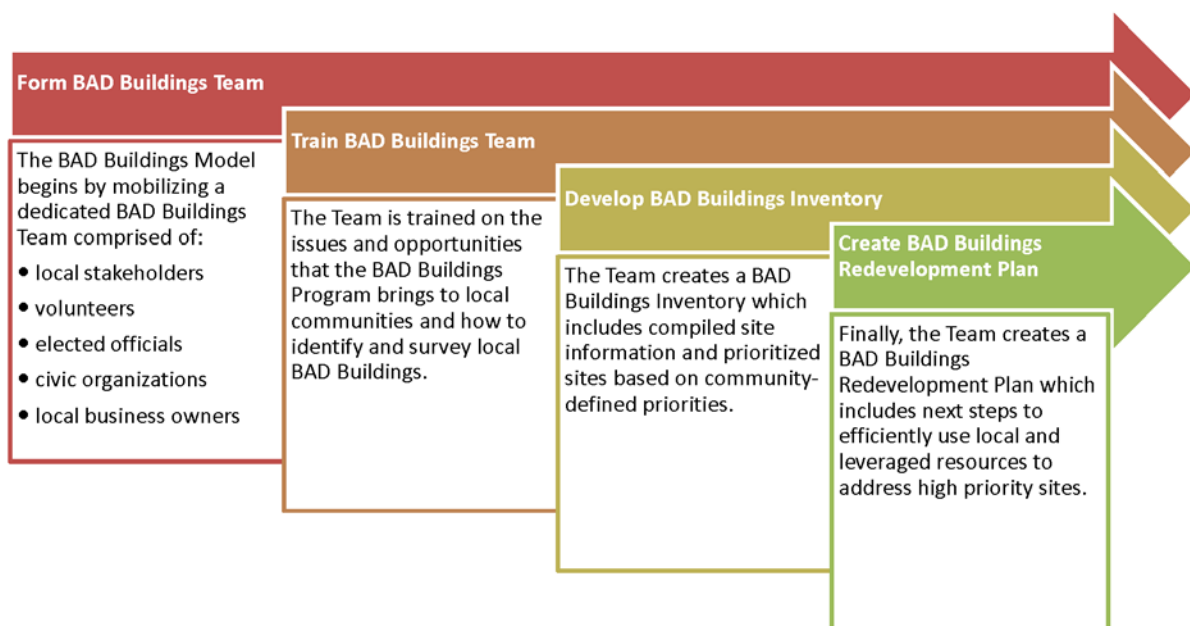
Introduction

Summary of BAD Buildings Program

The Brownfields, Abandoned, Dilapidated (BAD) Buildings Program is a statewide initiative of the Northern WV Brownfields Assistance Center (NBAC) to provide communities with a step-by-step process, technical assistance, and site analysis tools to develop or enhance local abandoned/dilapidated buildings revitalization efforts. The program helps communities address barriers to identifying, prioritizing, and redeveloping BAD Buildings.

The BAD Buildings Program was developed in response to a need in West Virginia for a citizen-based process for a community to understand the scope and challenges it faces in addressing local community blight. BAD Buildings impose severe social and economic costs on WV communities. They negatively impact communities through reduced tax revenue, depressed property values, straining local infrastructure, and increased costs of public services. Further, community blight demoralizes citizens, encourages disinvestment in local civic engagement, and discourages investment from potential new residents or businesspeople. Additionally, these properties pose significant environmental, health, and safety hazards as well as provide an attractive nuisance for illegal activity.

The BAD Buildings model supports communities which have limited capacity or expertise to address blighted property. The model is designed to mobilize a “BAD Buildings Team” comprised of local stakeholders, volunteers, elected officials, city employees, business owners, and civic organizations. This Team is educated on the issues, challenges, and opportunities that often accompany BAD Buildings. Next, Team volunteers are trained to conduct a community-wide window survey to identify potential BAD Buildings. Once the survey is complete, volunteers and NBAC staff create an inventory of properties and analyze survey results to determine the facts of the community’s particular challenges related to blighted properties. Additionally, Team volunteers define community priorities which can be used to rank properties in the inventory in order to identify high priority or high value sites and refine the focus of next step efforts. Finally, a BAD Buildings Redevelopment plan is compiled by the NBAC and



presented back to the community as a living document to guide next steps and begin addressing community blight.

The West Side BAD Buildings Plan is intended as a living document to provide information and guidance to the West Side Neighborhood Association BAD Buildings Team, the City, and other partners who have a role in the redevelopment and revitalization of community blight. The Plan includes the results of the work of the West Side BAD Buildings Team's window survey of potentially blighted properties as well as a descriptive analysis of the compiled BAD Buildings Inventory. The plan also identifies potential high priority properties to focus energy and resources.

Local Information and Demographics

Local History

Charleston is not only the capital of the state, but it's also West Virginia's largest city. It's situated right at the confluence of the Elk and Kanawha Rivers. Much of the land around the mouth of the Elk River was given to Thomas Bullitt, and when he died in 1778 his brother Cuthbert inherited it. Ten years later, the first permanent settlement, Ft. Lee, was built by some Virginia Rangers and their company leader, Col. Savannah Clendenin. The city

was named Charles Town by Col. Clendenin after his

father, Charles. However, the name was shortened to the Charleston we know today to avoid mixing this city up with the other Charles Town (named for George Washington's brother) in Jefferson County.

In 1806, the first salt well was drilled along the Kanawha River. The salt industry was big in Charleston and neighboring areas. The city was also home to the first natural gas well, discovered by Captain James Wilson in 1815. Two years later, coal was discovered, and it started being used to fuel salt drilling operations. And in 1818, the Kanawha Salt Company became the first trust in the country. The salt industry started to decline after 1861. However, it picked back up during World War I since chlorine and sodium hydroxide, chemicals that can be derived from salt brine, were in high demand.

During the Civil War, after Virginia had seceded from the Union, the Battle of Charleston was fought. The Confederate side won, but Union soldiers took the city back just six weeks later. In fact, most of the western part of Virginia (including Charleston) was under Union control, which was one of the reasons West Virginia became a state in 1863. The state capital was switched between Wheeling and Charleston until 1877, when citizens voted to make Charleston the official capital.

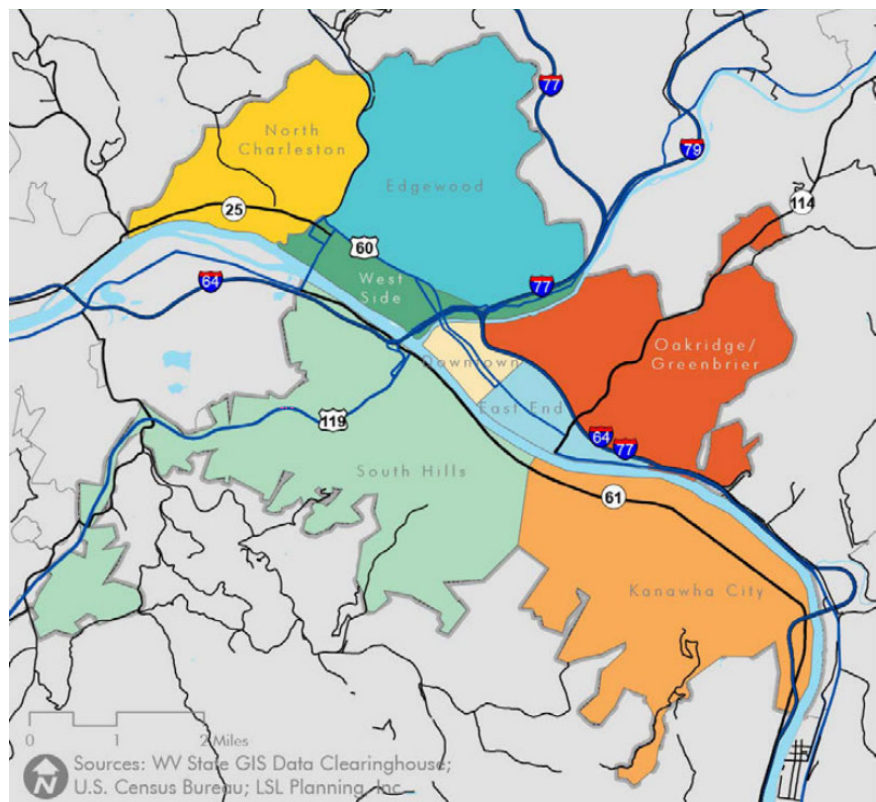


Figure 1 - Charleston Neighborhoods

In the mid-19th century, Charleston was overflowing with coal and natural gas, and railroad expansion also increased the city's growth. The economy was boosted even further by migration of the chemical, glass, timber, and steel industries to the area.

Charleston West Side – A Brief History of Urban Decline

It is no secret to the residents of West Side that, on top of the decline that West Virginia's urban areas have faced as whole, the West Side has faced additional decline that spurred from a history of disinvestment and discrimination. Several major events and policies contributed to this greater than average urban decline.



Figure 2 – The Kelly Axe Manufacturing Company on West Wide where Two Mile Creek enters the Kanawha River

Even early in its history when West Side was a blue color working neighborhood with factories and warehouses adjacent to the densely packed residential blocks, redlining and other discriminatory practices were put in place. In the 1930's, the vast majority of the West Side was zoned C - "Definitely Declining" or D - "Hazardous" on the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC) map of Charleston. This is in line with historical trends across the country with this rating system to discriminate both against minority racial neighborhoods but also downtowns or dense urban neighborhoods. The rating system, which impacted on where you could get a home loan, drastically declined urban centers and racial minority neighborhoods by driving investment and growth into urban sprawl.

This amplified the poverty in West Side for decades, even after this discriminatory practice was ended in law by the Fair Housing Act, part of the Civil Rights Act, in 1968. Property value appreciation and investment continued to increase in newer neighborhoods which generated more wealth for those living there. This contributed to a wealth gap between those in West Side and other disinvested

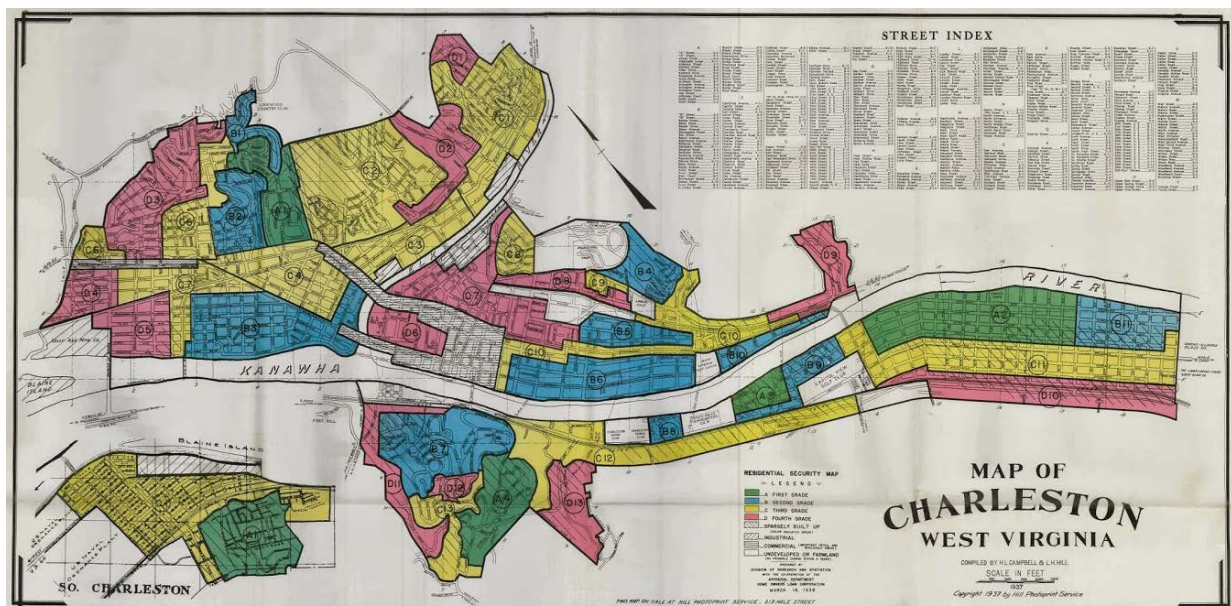


Figure 3 - The HOLC or "Redline" Map of Charleston, WV from the 1938

neighborhoods in comparison to these newer neighborhoods built on the fringes of the city.

These newer neighborhoods also lacked the density of the urban core neighborhoods such as the West Side which would lead to a greater strain on use of tax money for civil infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, waterlines, sewer, etc. Charleston's population has declined overall from its height in 1960 of 85,796 people to almost half at 49,138 as of 2016 estimates. That means Charleston has a smaller population paying into taxes directly for city infrastructure, yet the city has

seen major physical growth costing more for civil infrastructure

maintenance. With blight being cast in a light as a civil infrastructure issue in terms of how cities deal with it, this means the city is more limited on what it has to offer.

The West Side faced additional physical barriers when in the 1970's Interstate 64 and Interstate 77 cut through the West Side creating a roughly 300 foot wide concrete and asphalt landscape that removed more than approximately 70 acres of homes and businesses. This also widened the physical gap between West Side neighborhoods and downtown. Before the interstates, the Elk River created a 250foot wide gap crossed by many automobile bridges. Today that gap with the interstates adjacent to the Elk River this physical barrier can be over 700 feet: more than two standard Charleston city blocks. These same interstates that took away much of the mixed-use of the West Side along Elk River also gave greater connection to the growing suburban sprawl south across the Kanawha River such as Fort Hill, South Hills, Oakwood, Weberwood, Joplin, Forest Hills, London Heights, Cross Lanes, and further suburbs in neighboring Putnam County.

These highway construction projects were often done as a method to remove poor neighborhoods and blight. Cities themselves historically had limited funding and ability to remove poor neighborhoods and

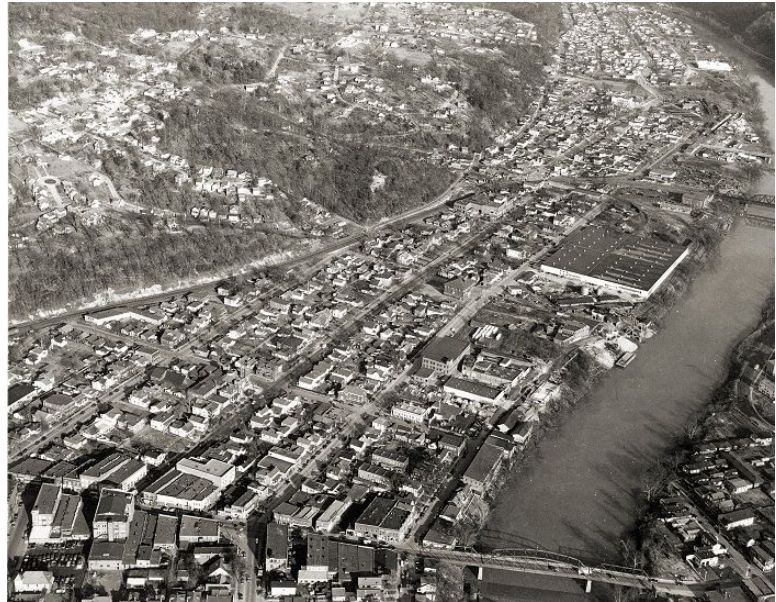


Figure 4 - West Side of Charleston along the Elk River prior to the construction of the interstates



Figure 5 - West Side of Charleston along the Elk River today

blight. By using Federal Highway dollars, city and state governments utilized eminent domain to obtain the land and then removed the structures to construct the highway rather than addressing the causes of poverty and blight directly. This then would remove neighborhood identities as main street type buildings and blocks of single family homes were removed, displacing those who were often already struggling. The idea was to construct better neighborhoods for those displaced to move into.

Unfortunately, it oftentimes created greater concentrations of poverty in a new area as different classes separated into more socio-economic homogeneous neighborhoods.



Figure 6 - Interstate 64 creates a physical barrier between West Side and Downtown; Also note from this picture the lack of urban density on West Side along the Interstate despite ease of access for business

On West Washington Street between I64 and Ohio Avenue, you can see the remnants of a once thriving main street style community on West Side. Adjacent to it on the hillside are the first suburban developments of Charleston, complete with cul-de-sacs and convoluted street layouts that strongly favor automobile use over pedestrian. These stand in contrast to the dense urban lifestyle by which areas like the West Washington main street relied on to thrive.

The construction of the highway through West Side also removed the traffic flow from the main streets of the neighborhood. As drivers bypassed the historic main street businesses of West Side, business would decline even more as they relied more heavily on locals for demand. Slowly though, more automobile oriented development would come about in and around Charleston, further encouraging the convenience of traveling farther and faster to obtain goods and services.

The response for creating successful businesses was to build additional parking for the automobile since a large proportion of the population was now automobile dependent in the suburban-style neighborhoods. This brought about minimum parking requirements set in the zoning code. To meet these requirements, businesses would then purchase lots often twice the size of their building, and sometimes demolishing neighboring buildings, just to build these larger parking lots.

Although these large businesses bring in sales and B&O tax, they can significantly reduce the property taxes. Parking lots generate roughly 20% of the tax revenue than their adjacent building do per acre. In some circumstances this is even more significant. For example, the Rite Aid in West Side at the corner of West Washington and Rebecca Street, the building and the acreage the footprint that it occupied assesses for \$2,735,000 per acre. The parking lot assesses at \$100,056 per acre. The land dedicated to parking is roughly 1.08 acres while the building occupies roughly 0.30 acres.

By taking up the land with more parking lots, governments are generating less property tax revenue. In turn, this impacts schools, civil infrastructure, and the communities at large. It is more difficult for these communities to be self-sustaining and therefore healthy if the government can't generate the revenue it takes to maintain all the of the services it gives to the public. Slowly decline increases more and more as we continue this path of development and disinvestment becomes not just intentional but necessary to keep what services can be provided with what is generated.

Community Vision

The Charleston Comprehensive Plan *Imagine Charleston* serves as a vision for the City by promoting coordinated efforts and identifying issues, concerns, and realistic strategies to fulfill the community's needs for the future.

Existing Conditions

The following information on Charleston West Side comes from the overall census of the city as well as individual census tracts within. The study area for this report includes parts of census tracts 1, 6, & 7 from within the city. Therefore the data gathered from census tracts 1, 6, & 7 show a picture of an area larger than the study area for the BAD Buildings Report.

Demographics

At the 2010 census, there were 51,400 people, 23,453 households and 12,587 families residing in the city. The population density was 977.9 inhabitants per square mile (607.6/km²). There were 25,771 housing units at an average density of 490.3 per square mile (304.7/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 78.4% White, 15.5% African American, 0.2% Native American, 2.3% Asian, 0.3% from other races, and 3.2% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1.4% of the population.

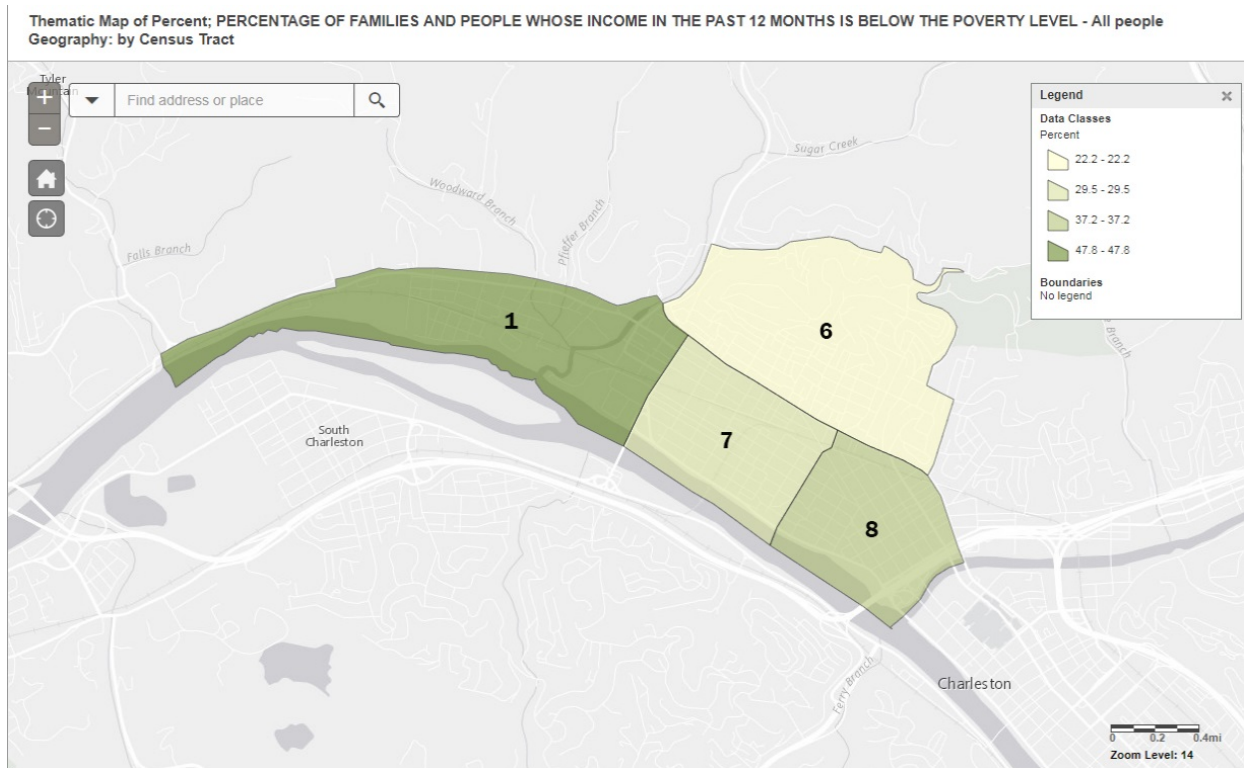
There were 23,453 households of which 21.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 35.6% were married couples living together, 14.1% had a female householder with no husband present, 3.9% had a male householder with no wife present, and 46.3% were non-families. 39.4% of all households were made up of individuals and 13.5% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.11 and the average family size was 2.83.

The median age was 41.7 years. 16.7% of residents were under the age of 15; 6.1% were between the ages of 15 and 19; 6.3% were from 20 to 24, 24.9% were from 25 to 44; 29.9% were from 45 to 64; and 16.1% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the city was 47.6% male and 52.4% female.

Demographics of Target Survey Area

The demographics of Charleston's West Side are provided below, because the poverty rate is higher here than in the rest of the city. In the 2015 estimate, Tract 1 had 47.8% of individuals below the poverty line, Tract 6 was 22.2%, Tract 7 was 29.5%, and Tract 8 was 37.2%.

Data Summary Tables



Income Data

	Kanawha County Tract 1	Kanawha County Tract 6	Kanawha County Tract 7	Kanawha County Tract 8	West Virginia
Estimated median household income (2015):	\$23,750	\$41,048	\$23,021	\$23,255	\$41,751
Unemployment (population 18 to 64)	13.9%	12.8%	9.4%	10.5%	4.2%
Poverty rate (2015)	40.6%	17.2%	39.7%	37.0%	18.0%

This data comes from the American Community Survey 2015 Estimates.

Population

	Kanawha County Tract 1	Kanawha County Tract 6	Kanawha County Tract 7	Kanawha County Tract 8	West Virginia
Total population	1309	4235	2183	1438	1,852,994

Percent minority	33.5%	22.1%	55%	36.2%	6.5%
19 and under	323	1016	628	209	439,213
20 to 44	460	1345	676	453	575,396
45 to 64	393	1164	602	447	540,981
65+	133	710	277	329	297,404
Median age	37.6	42.0	33.8	48.5	41.3

This data comes from the ACS 2015 Estimates.

Housing Data

	Kanawha County Tract 1	Kanawha County Tract 6	Kanawha County Tract 7	Kanawha County Tract 8
Percent of renters (28% in West Virginia)	59.1%	30.4%	53.8%	68.8%
Housing units in Charleston with a mortgage	141	794	205	95
Houses without a mortgage	118	526	222	160
Median monthly housing costs with a mortgage	\$691	\$931	\$817	\$983
Median monthly housing costs without a mortgage	\$306	\$313	\$276	\$328

This data comes from the ACS 2015 Estimates.

Transportation

Some of the major roads with access to Charleston's West Side are US 60, I 64, and I 77.

The Charleston Riverfront Trail runs alongside the Kanawha River, and it provides access to all of the West Side as well as Magic Island Park.

Charleston sits at the confluence of two rivers: the Kanawha River and the Elk River. The Kanawha River can be used to transport coal, aggregate, minerals, and chemical supplies as well as commercial traffic. The Elk River, however, is not as important for transport. It was traveled by rafts and freight canoes during the 1800s, but could only be traveled effectively during flooding seasons in winter and spring since it has no lock and dam system. Once railroads came to the area, the Elk River stopped being utilized for transport.

The Kanawha River Railroad and the Elk River Railroad carry freight to the Charleston area. There is also a nearby train ride available for tourists, on the New River Train.

The West Side of Charleston is only about a 10 minute drive from the Yeager Airport.

Charleston is also a one hour drive from Huntington, an hour and 15 minutes from Parkersburg, two hours from Clarksburg, two and a half hours from Morgantown, two hours and 45 minutes from Columbus, OH, three hours from Lexington, KY, three and a half hours from Pittsburgh, three and a half hours from Cincinnati, OH, and five and a half hours from Washington, DC.

Primary Interstate Exits

- 100 (I 77)
- 101 (I 77)
- 58A (I 64)
- 58B (I 64)
- 58C (I 64)

Parks

There is a large number of both city and county parks in and around the West Side. These include:

- Haddad Riverfront Park
- Henry Gassaway Davis Park
- Elk River Trail Park
- Magic Island Park
- Cato Park
- Mary Price Ratrie Greenspace
- Barton Street Park
- North Charleston Dog Park
- Coonskin Park

Trails: To include those within city parks

- Elk River Rail Trail
- Garrison Trail
- Charleston Riverfront Trail
- Magic Island Park Trail
- Fire Road Trail
- Cub Trail
- Pine Trail
- Oak Trail
- Fern Trail

- Cougar Trail
- Capital Trail

Natural Resources

Along with the West Side's parks, historic districts, and Elk River Trail, these are some of the other things Charleston has to offer:

- Capitol Market (fresh produce)
- Kanawha State Forest (hiking, biking, camping, fishing, hunting, etc.)
- Kanawha Boulevard (biking and walking along the river)

Historic Places

Charleston's West Side has a plethora of historic sites to go along its rich history. Some of those places include:

- Elk City historic district
- Luna Park historic district
- Edgewood historic district

Market Analysis

The top ten largest employers in Charleston / Kanawha County are:

1. State Government
2. Charleston Area Medical Center
3. Herbert J. Thomas Memorial Hospital Association
4. City of Charleston Municipality
5. Kanawha County Schools
6. WV Department of Administration
7. WV Department of Highways
8. US Postal Service
9. WV Department of Health and Human Resources
10. Verizon West Virginia

Existing Ordinances and Zoning

Charleston, as a whole, leads the state with the most up to date ordinances that deal with problem properties. Charleston was the first city to adopt the newest version of state code §8-12-16 which gives municipalities the authority to obtain search warrants to inspect the interior of a structure to determine if it is structurally sound or poses other health and safety risks to the public.

Charleston also has adopted the full State Building Code, Vacant Property Registry, Uninhabitable Property Registry, and other legal tools to help in dealing with their BAD Buildings.

Charleston also has an up to date Euclidean Zoning system in place for the city. Euclidean Zoning is a system that controls land use by type of use. This gives a parcel a single use type such as industrial, residential, or commercial. These can then be broken down into more specific types of a specific use such as the types, size, and density of residential housing or light or heavy industrial. The West Side features an array of uses under the zoning plan to include a commercial village district which contains mixed-use structures.

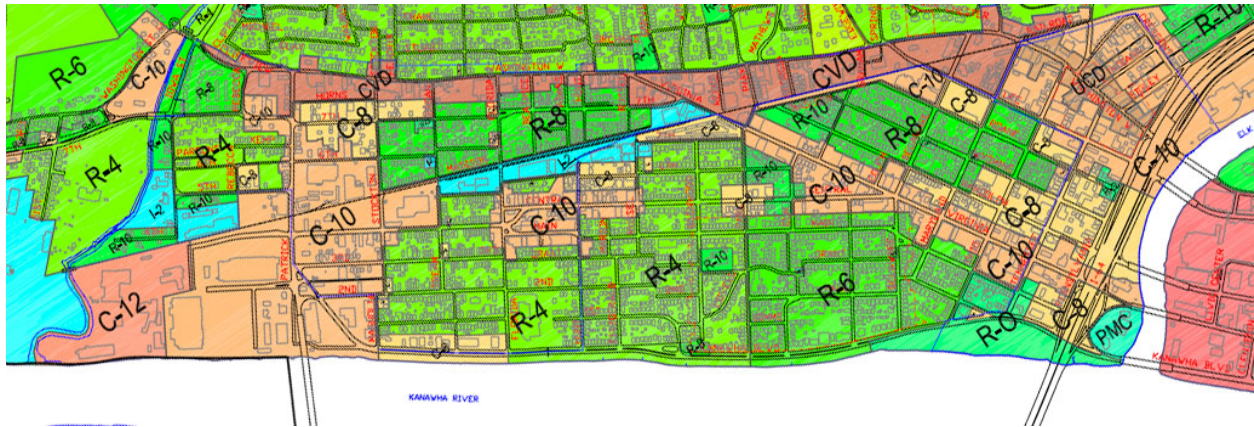


Figure 7 - Zoning Map of West Side - Adopted 2016

Despite all this success and setting the precedent for the state, Charleston is still in need of zoning and policy changes to help drive greater reinvestment into the urban core and adjacent neighborhoods such as West Side. Some smaller changes are suggested in the recommendations section of this report such as the establishment of a new residential zoning type.

A larger conversation could be had about the overall impact of Euclidean Zoning in Charleston. In recent years Form Zoning has been seen as a progressive way to regulation the build out of new neighborhoods or infill by instead controlling the massing and style of structures being constructed rather than their uses. Buffalo, New York has a form-based zoning code available online that can be viewed as a precedent. Other communities across the country have also adopted hybrid zoning ordinances that mixed Euclidean and Form Based. Buffalo's Form Based code can be found here:

http://www.buffalogreencode.com/UDO_four-pager.pdf

Existing Redevelopment, Revitalization, and Comprehensive Plans

Charleston's West Side has a Community Renewal Plan that was adopted in 2008. The West Side also has a neighborhood section in the 2013 Charleston Comprehensive Plan, *Imagine Charleston*. For more information on *Imagine Charleston* contact the City of Charleston Planning Department.

Community Renewal Plan – 2008

The Community Renewal Plan written by the Floyd Brown Group (now CT Consultants) was adopted by the city in 2008. The plan includes an extensive list of action items and recommendations. Most of these are so specific that it calls out recommendations by each parcel rather than neighborhood block or area.

Section B of the Redevelopment Plan Outlines the objectives set forth for the redevelopment plan. The overall goals set forth were:

- Preserve and enhance the existing environment in West Side
- Acquire and remove blight, structurally substandard and obsolete buildings as any be detrimental to the safety or welfare of the community, or which otherwise hinder the purposes of this plan
- Encourage the assembly and coordinated development of adjacent properties to the extent that coordinated development represents a potential benefit to West Side
- Encourage owners of existing properties not to be acquired to extend the useful life of structures on those properties, in a manner compatible with the land uses proposed in the Redevelopment Plan
- Strengthen the tax base in West Side through new development in a manner that will bring about the rehabilitation of existing structures to the maximum extent possible, the replacement of deteriorated buildings where rehabilitation is not possible, and the gradual renovation of portions of the area through the encouragement of selected projects based on joint public and private efforts, development incentives and other means
- Provide civil infrastructure improvements to complement and serve new development
- Develop recreational amenities for residents of varying age and physical ability, giving high priority to locations where facilities are most limited and the need is greatest
- Strengthen neighborhoods through positive action rather than demolition. Develop infill housing on vacant lots and rehabilitate existing housing where appropriate

Section B and C also give specific objectives on top of methods and general recommendations. Below is a breakdown of those items and their status.

A Note on Feasibility of Projects

Project feasibility on projects from the 2008 Community Renewal plan as listed in this report was determined based on a number of different factors. Consideration was taken on whether the project could be physically completed, if it made financial sense in a fiscally limited environment, if it would have been a reasonably pragmatic solution, or if it would have addressed a substantial issue for the

community. This is not intended to be a subjective review, but simply a snapshot of progress and current feasibility.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
B.3.b.	Open Space Recommendations		
1	Upgrade Tiskelwah Center with improved landscape features such as trees, picnic shelter, recreational areas, and improved parking lot. Upgrade indoor facilities.	Partially Complete ¹	Yes
2	Upgrade Second Avenue Center outdoor space and interior similar to Tiskelwah recommendations. Acquire land across 2 nd Avenue for outdoor space or additional housing.	Partially Complete ²	Yes
3	Use Stonewall Jackson Middle School grounds for neighborhood festivals and events	Complete	Yes
4	Construct new school on Cabell Field	Complete	-
5	Development fishing pier where Florida Street meets Kanawha Boulevard	Incomplete	Yes

¹The former elementary school has been turned over to Kanawha Valley Senior Services. Indoor facility has been upgraded. No exterior upgrades made. Facility feels separated from community with barb wire fence and open grass giving an impression of a prison like environment rather than a community and senior citizen center.

²Roof, HVAC, and window upgrades have been made. Other upgrades still needed. Space has high utilization by community.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
B.3.c.	Proposed New Open Space Recommendations		
1	Maintenance management and site improvements along hillside of West Washington Street from Greendale Drive to Barton Street.	Partially Complete	Yes
2	Trail development along CSX trestle	Incomplete	Yes
3	Create park at Barton Street and West Washington Street	Complete	-
4	Create open space at the former Go-Mart site at the southwest corner of Patrick Street and 7 th Avenue (Parcel 12-10-173)	Incomplete ¹	No
5	Create a Sixth Avenue Open Space between Iowa and Patrick	Complete	-

	Street		
6	Create Iowa Street Open Space for a small park new Two Mile Creek and a pedestrian bridge over to the North Charleston Recreational Center	Incomplete ²	No

¹ Currently under remediation for underground storage tanks and cannot be transformed into a green space until that is complete.

² This plan was not the best option for the location for a pedestrian bridge to cross Two Mile Creek and would potentially interfere with the private business currently using the parcel. Open space should not be recommended at the expense of removing successful small businesses or hindering their ability to conduct business. This area is also highly flood-prone making some park uses not feasible.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
B.4	Safety and Infrastructure Plan Recommendations		
a	Sidewalk updates on Florida Street from 2 nd Avenue to Washington Street	Partially Complete ¹	Yes
b	Adequate and safe pedestrian improvements	-	
	Washington Street	Complete ²	Yes
	Seventh Avenue	Partially Complete ³	Yes
	Fourth Avenue	Partially Complete ⁴	Yes
	Iowa Street	Incomplete ⁵	Yes
	Fifth Avenue	Incomplete ⁶	Yes
	Patrick Street	Incomplete ⁷	Yes
c	Other Streets	- ⁸	-
d	Improved Street Lighting	- ⁸	-

¹ Improving the sidewalks in this area is greatly restricted due to topography, retaining walls, the setback of private structures, and the railroad underpass. A majority of the project has been completed.

² From the Elk River to Edgewood Drive has almost been completely redone to include thermoplastic striped crosswalks and ADA features. A small section in front of Stonewall Jackson Middle School has been redone. Added thermoplastic striping at West Avenue, Garvin Avenue, Hunt Avenue, Barton Street, Stockton Street, and Oakland Walk. Completed sidewalk upgrades from Rebecca Street all the way to Two Mile Creek. Some other upgrades have also been made more sporadically along Washington Avenue. A few stretches remain in disrepair, inadequate width, or improper curb heights.

³ Seventh Avenue has had significant upgrades to include numerous ADA curb ramps and crosswalks. However, not all crossings have been upgraded. Some areas are in disrepair or lack proper curb height.

⁴ Fourth Avenue has seen some crosswalk and ADA curb ramp upgrades. Some areas are in disrepair or lack proper curb height.

⁵ Iowa Street has only seen upgrades at the intersections of Seventh Avenue and Washington Street.

⁶ In addition to no upgrades, there are no sidewalks on Fifth Avenue where it meets Iowa Street.

⁷ Patrick Street has received minimum upgrades, most of which are ADA curb ramps. The sidewalks vary in width from a size suitable for a small residential neighborhood to mixed-use or busy commercial. Pedestrian crossing is difficult with only two signalized crossings and no delineated crosswalks.

⁸ This project did not have objective and easily measurable goals.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
B.4.e	Elimination or Improvement of Dead End, Narrow, and One-way Streets		
1	Fourth Avenue to Two Mile Creek	Incomplete ¹	No
2	Sixth Avenue to Two Mile Creek	Incomplete ²	No
3	Clyde Court	Incomplete ³	Yes
4	Parsons Court	Incomplete ³	Yes
5	Madison Street	Incomplete ⁴	No ⁴ / Yes ⁴
6	Fifth Avenue to Kanawha Trestle	Incomplete ⁵	No
7	Georgia Street	Incomplete ⁶	Yes
8	Bream Street at the Railroad Right-of-way	Incomplete ⁷	Yes
9	Alley off Lee Street near Wilson Funeral Home	Incomplete ⁸	Yes
10	Several alleys near the Kanawha Trestle	Incomplete	Yes
11	Atkinson Court	Complete	-
12	Rebecca Street	Incomplete ⁹	Yes
13	Sixth Avenue between Patrick and Iowa Streets	Incomplete ¹⁰	No

¹ Street dead ends at Two Mile Creek with insufficient space to create a cul-de-sac or other major civil infrastructure for turning around a vehicle. Additionally, there is nowhere for the street to be extend to so that it would not be a dead end. The house serves approximately 13 homes and is of adequate capacity for this use.

² Street dead ends at Two Mile Creek. There is potential for turnaround piece of civil infrastructure. However, given there are only two homes on the entire section of dead end street, it would be unnecessary to create any additional infrastructure for vehicular traffic.

³ Both alleys are dead ends servicing a total of 11 homes with no other road access. These two alleys could be connected to each other and Sixth Avenue, but would require the acquisition of property and demolition of an existing structure.

⁴ The first section of Madison Street end ends at a commercial property along the northern side of the railroad right-of-way. There is vacant space available to acquire a vacant lot used as a side yard to connect to 7th Avenue. However, the dead end portion of Madison Street here only has three homes and

the investment may not justify the impact. The second dead-end section of Madison Street is a few blocks east of the prior section and south of the railroad right-of-way. This section is two-lanes wide with no sidewalks and several homes that nearly touch the street and are protected by guardrails. Informal parking exists between the street and the railroad tracks and there may be potential there to expand the road with sidewalks to better protect pedestrians and homes from vehicles. A third section of Madison Street between Bream and Florida Streets on the north side of the rail road right-of-way is very narrow and is a dead end at Florida Street. Grade and the adjacent underpass makes this impractical for an interconnection and, without property acquisition at the dead end, there is not sufficient space to create an adequate turn-around.

⁵ Fifth Avenue at the Kanawha Trestle is a one-lane alley that services the rear portion of residential lots and a few commercial structures. There is little need to widen or otherwise adjust this alley given its limited pragmatic function.

⁶ Georgia Street and Lowes Court are dead end streets that terminated at the railroad right-of-way and are only connected to West Washington Street. One feasible option is the acquisition of property and demolition of homes to connect both streets together. A second option would be to create crossings over the railroad right-of-way onto Madison Street.

⁷ Where Bream Street terminates on the south side of the railroad right-of-way there is an entrance to a major business and a sidewalk that dead ends. On the north side of the railroad right-of-way, Bream Street terminates into Madison Street. There is evidence there may have been a railroad crossing here but was removed. The topography on the northern side is inhibitive for vehicles to cross the tracks without dragging on the ground. There is a possibility to raise the street where Madison and Bream meet to help create a lower slope and connect Bream Street once again. Another option would be to eliminate the Bream Street dead end on the south side of the tracks and redesign the commercial lot entrance. Either way, a formal pedestrian crossing is recommended as pedestrians already cross the railroad tracks here and will continue to do so as it is an easy and natural path for foot traffic.

⁸ The alley is on the south-eastern property edge of the now Bollinger Funeral Home. This extremely narrow, one lane, dead end alley is the only direct vehicular access for a couple of residential structures. There are a couple of options for property acquisition to extend the alley to connect to Maryland Avenue so residents could have more egress for safety.

⁹ Part of Rebecca Street is a small one-lane alley between Sixth Avenue and Seventh Avenue that intersects Kemp Avenue. The portion between Kemp Avenue and Sixth Avenue could be widened and improved. The other half is narrower but sits immediately adjacent to several homes and serves as driveway access for some. The narrower portion is one way and may not be widened without property acquisition and demolition of several homes.

¹⁰ This portion of Sixth Avenue directly services two homes and supplies rear lot access for several others along with additional parking lot access for several commercial structures. Widening the street, adding sidewalks, or other improvements would only serve two homes and would have minimal impact on the quality of life or safety of the neighborhood.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
B.4	Continued - Safety and Infrastructure Plan Recommendations		
h	City target dilapidated and vacant structures in possession of absentee or negligent owners	Ongoing	Yes
i	Maintenance of vacant lots in private ownership and apply liens to property	Ongoing	Yes
j	Install surveillance cameras for use by Charleston Police Department	Incomplete ¹	Yes
k	Upgrades to sewer and storm water systems to mitigate basement flooding	Partially Complete ²	Yes

¹ This is a possible undertaking that would require significant time and fiscal resources. Use of these should be focused where crime rates are higher but still available in places with lower crime rates. The system could cost

² The city has invested in upgrades to the sewer and storm water systems since 2008. Only a small number of the properties impacted by the insufficient storm and sewer systems remain. The remaining problems will be remedied as upgrades continue over the next several years.

	Description	Parcels Completed	Parcels Remaining
C.4.a	Special Redevelopment Requirements for Selected Properties		
1.a	Redevelopment of parcels within home ownership zone for single family infill	Map 23: 118, 123	Map 23: 115, 198, 211, 206 Map 24: 30
1.b	Rehabilitation of homes within home ownership zone	Map 23: 57, 171, 242, 243	Map 23: 54, 115, 182, 241.1
2	Redevelopment of multiple parcels within home ownership zone for single family residential development ¹	Map 23: 96, 102	Map 20: 87, 88, 89, 90, 91 Map 23: 92, 93, 94, 95, 98, 99, 100, 101
3	Redevelopment of these parcels for single family infill ²	Map 10: 185, 486	Map 10: 178, 181, 459, 489.1

		Map 11: 237.1	Map 11: 215
4	Rehabilitation of property for residential use within all the residential development / rehabilitation zones of the project limits ⁷	-	-
5	Redevelopment of this parcel for commercial use	Map 9: 21	
6	Redevelopment/Rehabilitation of property for commercial use ³	Map 10: 255, 260, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 276, 277, 278, 279, 279.1, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 287, 287.1, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 318	Map 10: 256, 257, 258, 259, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275
7	Redevelopment of this property for commercial retail use	Map 20: 14, 15, 16, 17	Map 20: 13
8	Redevelopment of property for commercial warehouse use	Map 20: 171	
9	Redevelopment of property for commercial retail and warehouse use ⁴	Map 21: 191, 192, 193, 194, 194.1 Map 24: 1, 2, 3, 4	
10	Redevelopment of property for commercial retail use	Map 22: 212, 213, 214, 215, 217, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 438	
11	Redevelopment of property for commercial use	Map 15: 23	
12	Redevelopment of property for commercial / office / service use ⁵		Map 23: 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22
13	Redevelopment and rehabilitation of property for commercial / office / service	Map 23: 222, 223,	Map 23: 231

	use	224, 226, 227, 246.1	
14	Redevelopment of property for commercial use ⁶	Map 10: 226	
15	Redevelopment of property into commercial or mixed-use		Map 10: 331
16	Redevelopment of property for commercial use		Map 3: 97

¹ The majority of these undeveloped parcels are held by nonprofit and community groups such as HOPE, Greater Emmanuel Gospel Tabernacle, and Charleston Economic Community Development Corporation.

² Parcel 486 has been developed as parking for a church.

³ Most of this land has been cleared, zoned, and prepared for new commercial infill.

⁴ These properties are already warehouses and retail spaces but are underutilized.

⁵ This is unfeasible; Parcels 17 and 18 are homes; the remaining parcels are a power substation that cannot be feasibly relocated.

⁶ Building was demolished; Now vacant land ready for commercial infill.

⁷ This project did not have objective and easily measurable goals.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
C.4.b.1	Public Redevelopment Projects		
a	Complete Florida Street Streetscape (Third Avenue to Washington Street) ¹	Partially Complete	Yes
b	Complete Washington Street Streetscape from Maryland Avenue to Florida Street	Complete	Yes
c	Sidewalk upgrades on:	-	-
	Seventh Avenue	Complete	Yes
	Fourth Avenue	Complete	Yes
	Iowa Street	Complete	Yes

	Fifth Avenue	Incomplete	Yes
	Patrick Street	Complete	Yes
d	Street Connectivity to Eliminate Dead Ends	Covered in B.4.e	Covered in B.4.e
e	Other neighborhood streets within the project area deficient of any sidewalks ²	-	-

¹Performing upgrades at the tunnel under the active railway for pedestrian improvements is nearly unfeasible. It would take significant engineering, down time of the active railway, and a large amount of capital to make these upgrades possible. This is the only element that makes these upgrades partially complete.

²This project did not have objective and easily measurable goals.

Section	Description	Status	Feasible
C.4.b	Public Redevelopment Projects		
2	Assist Charleston Sanitary Board with separation of storm and sanitary sewer lines to prevent flooding in more impacted areas of the project area	Complete	Yes
3	Assist with acquisitions and development of a new school site at Cabell Field and adjoining parcels if required	Complete	Yes
4	Creation of a home ownership zone surrounding the new school site	Complete	Yes
5	Acquisition of individual lots within the home ownership zone for single family residential infill	Complete	Yes
6	Acquisition of parcels for development of a multi-family residential project ¹	Incomplete	Yes
7	Acquisition of parcels for redevelopment for new neighborhood/community commercial areas ²	Partially Complete	Yes
8	Acquisitions of parcels for redevelopment for adaptive reuse of the parcels and structures if	Incomplete	Yes

	applicable for new commercial use ³		
9	Acquisitions of parcels for new park lands west of Patrick Street to improve access to recreation and open space in this area ⁴	Partially Complete	Yes & No ⁴
10	Acquisitions of the CSX Trestle and right-of-way for trail and green space development	Incomplete	Yes
11	Acquisition of easement or right-of-way for trail development along Norfolk & Southern Railroad from Iowa Street to the eastern boundary of the project limits and beyond ⁵	Incomplete	No
12	Redevelopment of existing recreation venues of Tiskelwah, Second Avenue Centers, and Cabell Field as envisioned in the redevelopment objectives ⁶	Partially Complete	Yes
13	Develop a fishing pier off the Kanawha Boulevard lower walkway at Florida Street	Incomplete	Yes
14	Maintenance management and landscape enhancements along the hillside and within the right-of-way along West Washington Street ⁷	Complete	Yes
15	Demolition of selected properties to improve roadway visibility on Map 3 parcels 4,5,6,7,8, and 9 ⁸	Incomplete	No
16	Acquisition of parcels with vacant, dilapidated structures for demolition and then develop infill housing ⁹	Partially Complete	Yes

¹These lots were purchased by an adjacent church and turned into a parking lot.

²Some of the lots outlined for this project have been redeveloped to meet other needs such as housing. Some parcels are existing commercial structures with potential for rehabilitation or are already move-in ready. The remaining parcels are vacant lots except for on map 21 parcels 100, 101, and 102. These three parcels are single family homes on two dead end roads. These dead ends provide limited access to emergency personal and create an unsafe and undesirable area. These three parcels should continue to be looked at for future commercial redevelopment.

³One of these 4 parcels, number 202 on Map 20 is an existing commercial structure. The other three lots, 186, 187, and 188, are now vacant lots.

⁴This project is separated into 4 different groups of parcels. The first segment, Map 9 parcels 36, 37, and 22, are not feasible. A pump station or other sanitary infrastructure was built at the intersection of these three parcels. Additionally, the current access to 36 and 37 is off of a residential street that is part of the removal of dead ends project listed earlier in the plan. The next group is parcels 74, 75, and 76 which are currently occupied by single family residential structures with three points of access. One structure on parcel 74 should be removed to widen an alley for safety reasons. The other two parcels and their two structures do not need to be removed for installation of civil infrastructure and removal over them to increase open public space in an area of town now covered in open but private green space because of demolitions doesn't appear to be a productive project goal. The third group of parcels containing Map 9 parcels 106, 107, 109, 110, and 111 have been transformed into the community garden off of 6th Avenue. The last group containing Map 10 parcels 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, and 210 are mostly vacant lots owned by private entities. One parcel, 206, still has a single-family home. Parcel 211 has a church on it. These parcels collectively are in the 100 year flood plain which has an elevation of 593 feet. The elevation at the front of these lots facing 5th avenue is close to 592 feet. This can make it feasible for new structures to be erected safely with the dwelling and occupied spaces raised about the 593 foot elevation mark as required.

⁵This is commonly referred to as rail with trails. This type of development isn't impossible but is highly unlikely. Railroad companies see their liability drastically increasing by placing pedestrians so close a possible derailment by running parallel and adjacent to an active line. Railroad companies can also be skeptical of the safety for pedestrian due to increased risk of trespassing on the active line.

⁶Tiskelwah has not had any exterior upgrades for public or recreational space. In fact, Tiskelwah is enclosed by a chain linked and barbed wire fence to separate it from the public. Second Avenue Center has received some building repairs and some outdoor space upgrades such as playground equipment. More can be done for this location. Cabell Field has been redeveloped into the Mary C Snow Elementary School which does feature some outdoor space such as raised bed gardens and a playground in the courtyard space of the school.

⁷This is an on-going process, but the city and along with private property owners have shown significant effort in taking care of the landscape in this area.

⁸Although these structures, four in total, do rest along W Washington Street, they have their own off-street parking in a 25MPH zone. The structures themselves sit eight or more feet off of the roadway. The street also widens throughout this wide arched turn allowing for adequate field of vision in 25MPH zone. As long as the properties are properly maintained and pose no risk to the public, the city should not be using its limited resources to remove them.

⁹The parcels completed are Map 23 parcels 57, 124, 135, 136, 147, 172, and Map 24 parcel 28. The ones remaining to be addressed are Map 23 61, 148, and 170. With 7 out of 10 properties reconciled, this project objective is almost complete in regards to demolition and preparation for new infill housing. Redeveloping vacant lots of Map 23 parcels 117, 118, and 119 for new residential housing has not occurred yet.

BAD Buildings Methodology

Survey Methodology

The West Side BAD Buildings team was originally set to form in 2015 working through the West Side Main Street office along with the West Side Neighborhood Association. However, when work went to begin, the West Side Main Street and the East End Main Street had merged into a single entity known as Charleston Main Streets and asked to delay the process while two Main Streets were restructuring.

In late 2016, the West Side Neighborhood Association took over the role as the BAD Building process in the West Side of Charleston. The WSNA pulled together a variety of local stakeholder groups to help conduct the survey. Those groups included church organizations, the police department, Recovery Point, local business owners, and Charleston Main Streets among others.

The boundary for the survey area is as shown below and encompasses portions of the CURA district on the West Side. The surveyors were organized into groups that then selected survey routes set up by the West Side City Planner, John Butterworth. There are a total of ten routes. Those routes are shown in a map below.

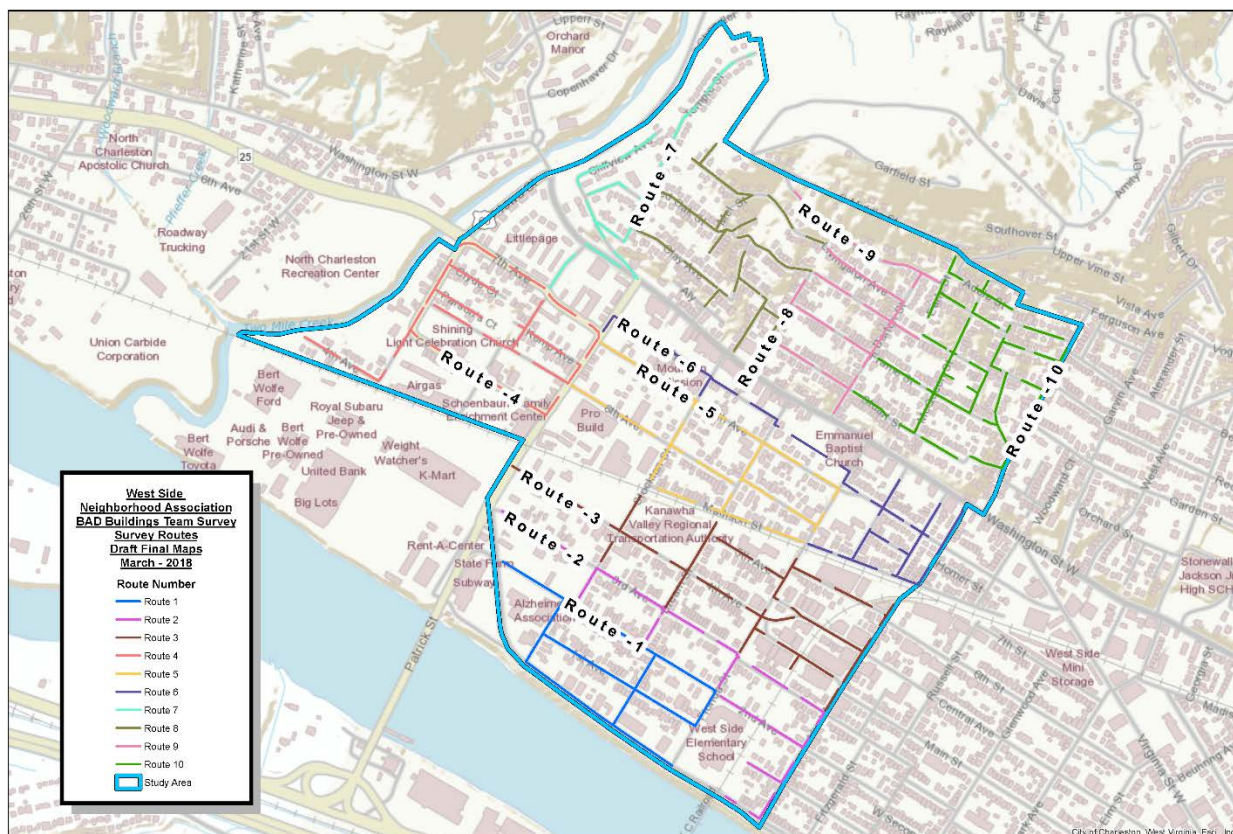


Figure 8 - West Side BAD Building Survey Routes

The survey began in February of 2017. The teams spent the first half of 2017 surveying these routes. The team collected more than 400 surveys during that time to exclude vacant lots. The initial inventory of

BAD Buildings was 396 structures within the survey area. The inventory has since grown to include the cities database of vacant lots within the study area. Any property not surveyed didn't have condition or vacancy issues.

This information was then shared with the public after being aggregated into an Excel sheet by the BAD Buildings Program and the West Side City Planner. The goal was to reveal the scale of the problem objectively through the data, gain community reaction and feedback, and begin evolving the use of data and mapping moving forward.

The BAD Buildings data was used by City Planning to overlay with other data such as parcels in GIS software. This assisted the stakeholders in analyzing the current condition of the neighborhood during meetings.

Prioritization Process

During the late Summer and early Fall of 2017, the West Side Neighborhood Association held a public meeting to create the priorities for BAD Buildings. A list of 7 possible priorities were given to be rated by the community. Only the top three would be used. The attendees separated into various groups at large tables through-out the room. Each group rated these priorities between 1 and 10.

Those priorities were:

- Health and safety
- Redevelopment and reuse potential
- Visibility
- Concentration of blight
- Historical Significance
- Consistent with comprehensive plan or vision
- Vacancy

The top three priorities after totaling the scores given by each team were health and safety, redevelopment and reuse potential, and vacancy.

However, a final list of prioritized properties was formulated through discussion of the community members, leaders, and the city. The team leaders ran into the issue that there was no information on the length of vacancy of the properties and reorganizing the entire survey group and volunteers would be too burdensome to gather this information on over 186 properties.

Instead, the key groups representing the community such as the West Side Neighborhood Coalition had a meeting with the City Building Department, CURA, and others to discuss the priorities and needs of the community and compare those to the city's. The data gathered through the BAD Buildings survey was used to make points about those needs by objectively showing the scale and severity of problematic properties. This in turn helped build a better relationship with the city and the neighborhood. What came of it was a more concentrated focus of enforcement and demolition within the neighborhood.

Survey Results and Analysis

Overview of BAD Buildings Inventory

West Side has a total of 656 individual properties surveyed and entered into the inventory. 30 of those properties were removed after determining their condition or vacancy didn't qualify them to be in the inventory. These 30 properties were occupied and had a good condition rating. 11 of the properties have been removed from the list due to demolition, rehabilitation, or redevelopment. As of April 1st, 2018, there are 615 active properties on the inventory.

Of the 615 active properties, 348 of them are structures, 262 vacant lots, and 5 being other such as garages or sheds.

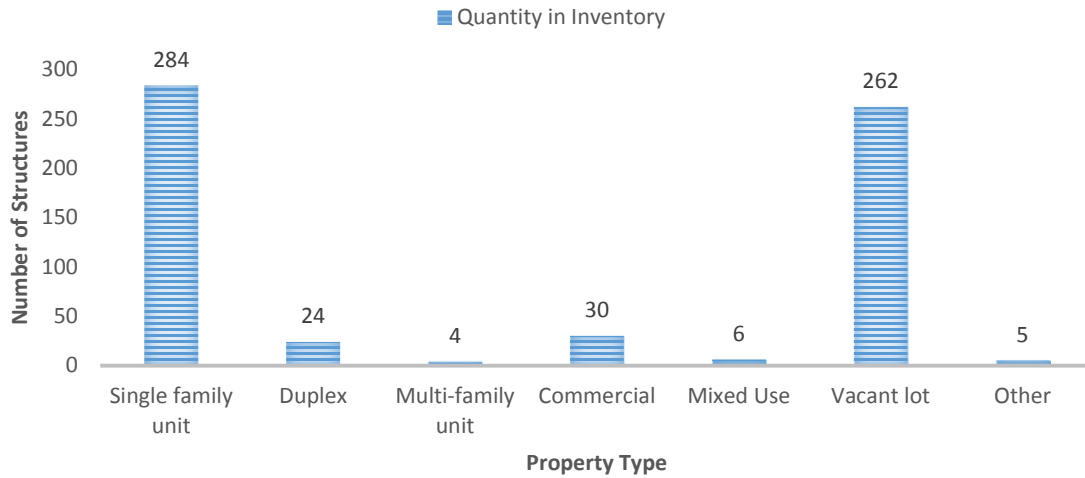
312 of the active properties are residential. 24 are duplexes, 4 multi-family units, and 284 are single family homes. The residential properties make up the vast majority of the BAD Buildings inventory at 84.5%. Of the 284 single-family residential homes, 135 are vacant and 143 are occupied. 6 single-family homes have unknown vacancy status.

There are 30 commercial properties and 6 mixed-use properties. The others are vacant lots or "other".

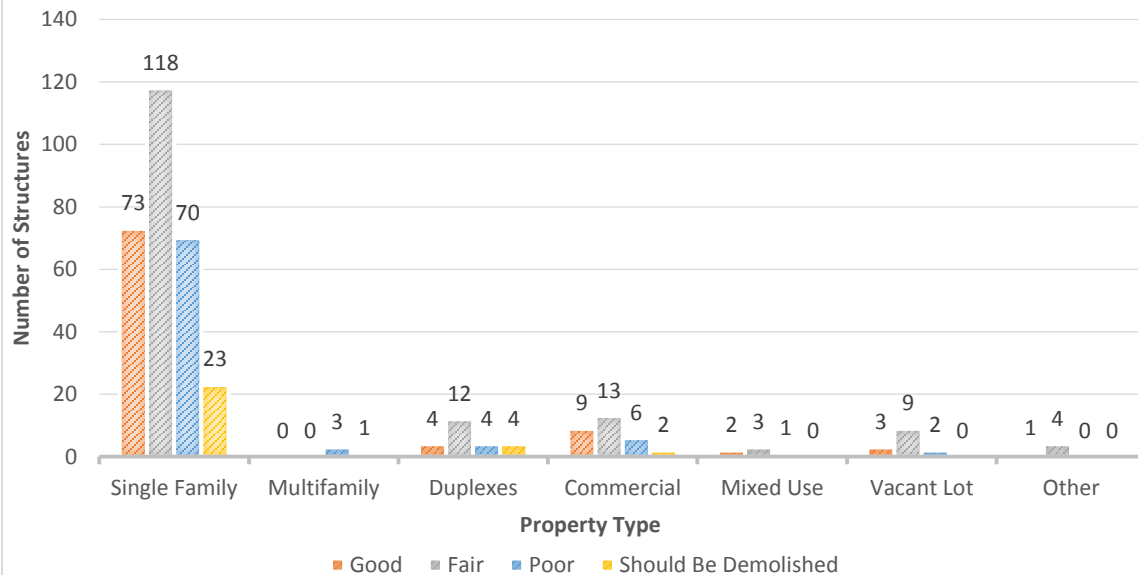
Of all the active properties, 89 are rated good, 150 fair, 84 poor, and 30 should be demolished. Of the single family residential homes, 73 are rated good, 130 fair, 77 poor, and 28 should be demolished.

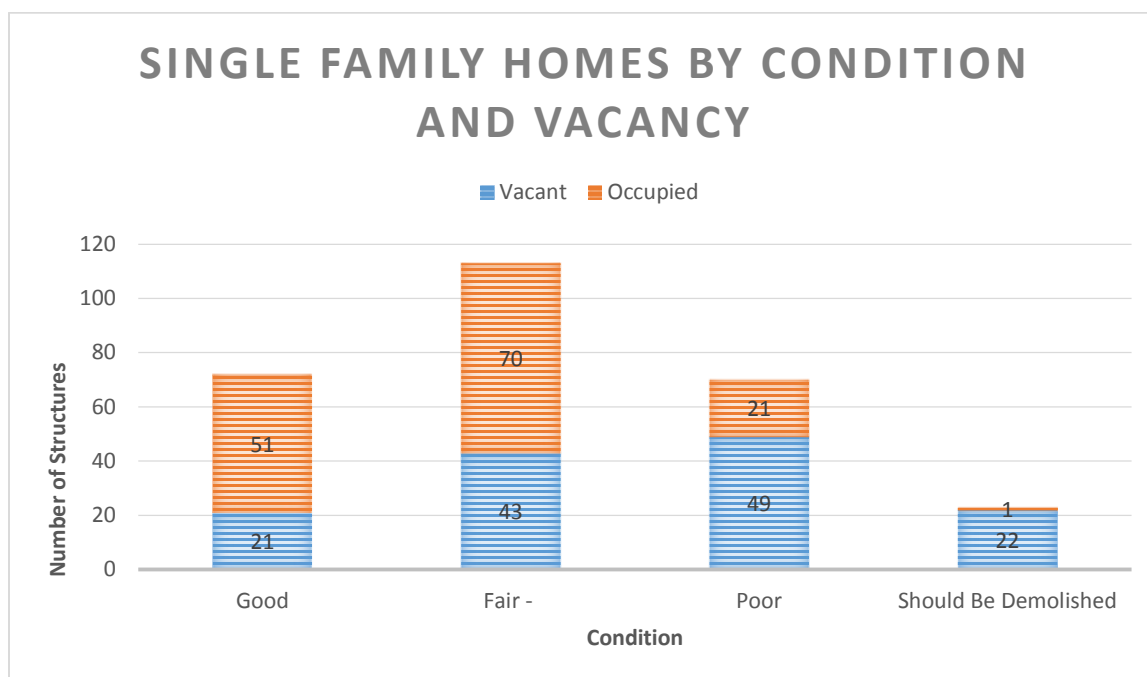
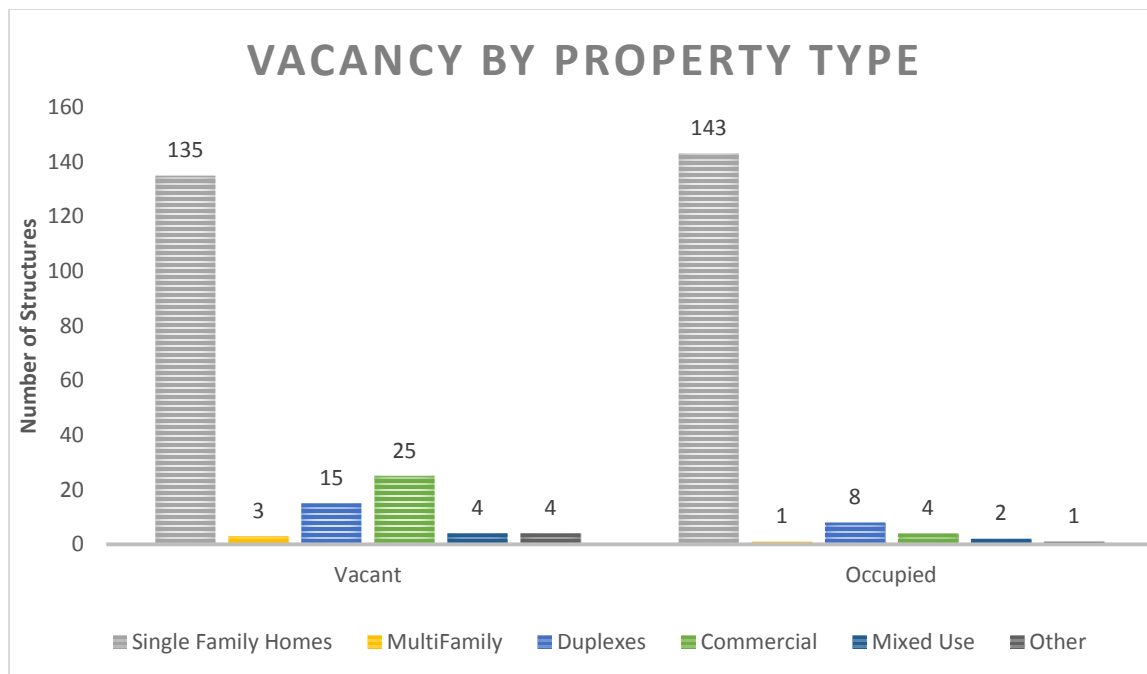
See below for a breakdown of these figures.

NUMBER OF ACTIVE PROPERTIES BY TYPE IN INVENTORY



PROPERTY CONDITION BY TYPE





Property Condition Progress since Initial Inventory

Several of the property conditions have changed since the initial inventory. Property conditions changed for several reasons to include demolition/deconstruction, rehabilitation, new vacancy, new construction, or updating previously missing information in the inventory.

Property in Progress

Since the initial BAD Buildings survey, many properties are being rehabilitated. Not all of these properties were on the BAD Buildings Inventory but are being addressed as part of the communities' momentum for revitalization and development. Those include:

- 1010 2nd Ave
- 417 Randolph St
- 402 Bream St
- 1016 Madison St
- 1439 3rd Ave
- 1437 3rd Ave
- 715 Washington St W
- 412 Thompson St
- 1728 Kemp Ave
- 1535 3rd Ave
- 606 Hunt Ave
- 203 Bream
- 618 Randolph St
- 301 Florida St
- 1519 4th
- 1045 Main

Property Demolition

Since the initial BAD Buildings survey, many buildings have been demolished. Those include:

- 1416 1st Avenue
- 1513 1st Avenue
- 1527 2nd Avenue
- 1613 3rd Avenue
- 1603 4th Avenue
- 1513 6th Avenue
- 710 Adams Street
- 201 Bream Street
- 1005 Burgess Street
- 1007 Burgess Street
- 1312 1/2 Grant Street

Current Initiatives

The City of Charleston and CURA are actively demolishing properties on the West Side. To help target community priority properties, a meeting was held between the city, CURA, and BAD Buildings Team Volunteers in late 2017. During that meeting the team shared their BAD Buildings inventory with the city leadership to discuss where public funding should be used for demolition. Since this meeting, more than

11 buildings have been demolished that are on the BAD Buildings Inventory. Many more structures were demolished across the city, to include some in West Side that resided outside the study boundaries.

Target Sites

The focus sites for the community are all properties with a condition rating of poor and should be demolished. There are, as of this report, 61 poor condition properties that are also vacant and 30 should be demolished in total. These properties should be focused for demolition and infill work, with a significant focus on any gateway properties in addition to the state of dilapidation.

The 30 should be demolished properties are the top priority due to their increased health and safety risk to the community as well as having the least potential for rehabilitation. However, the 61 vacant poor condition structures should be sought for demolition as the opportunity arises.

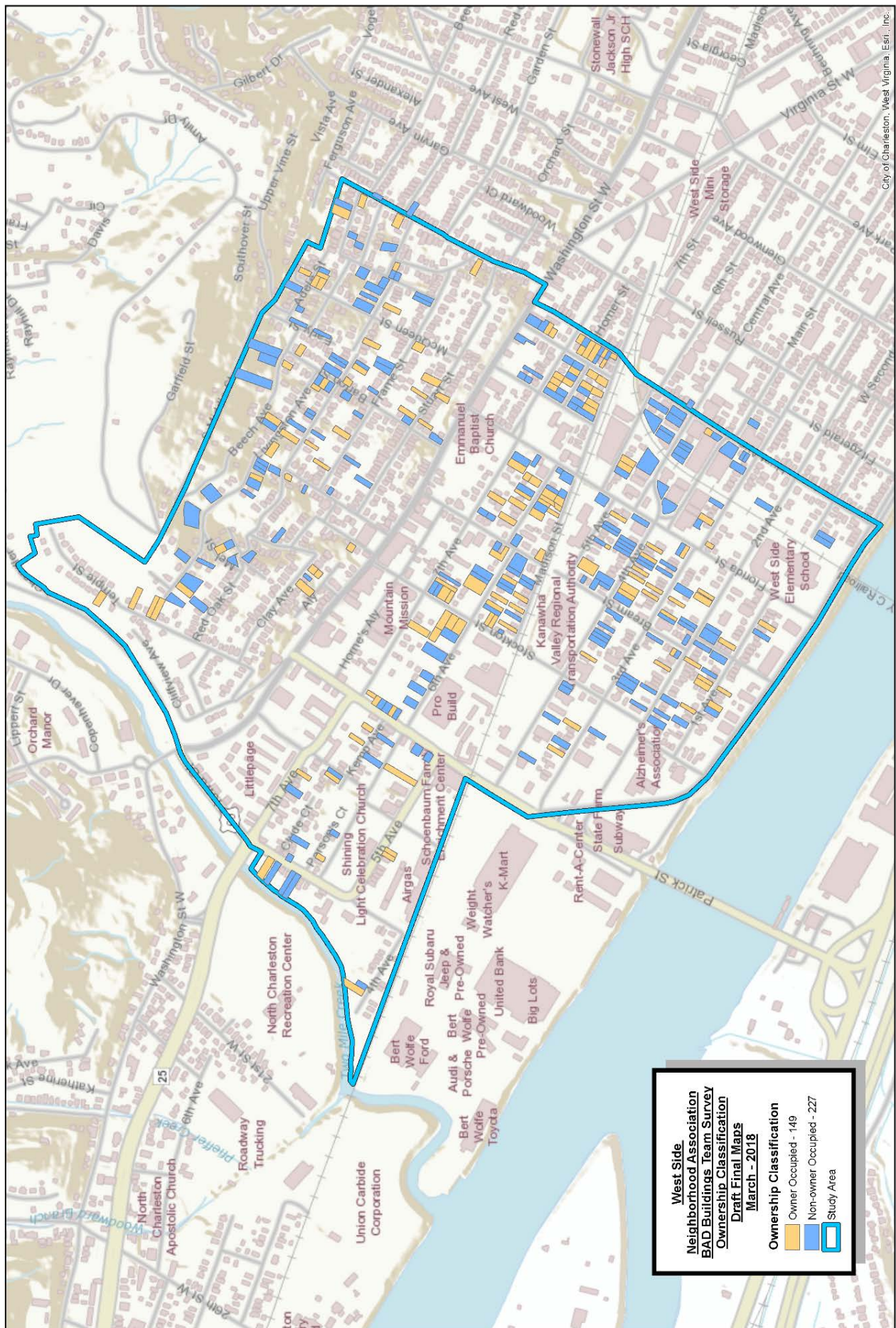
In addition to these, below are a few potential target areas and properties.

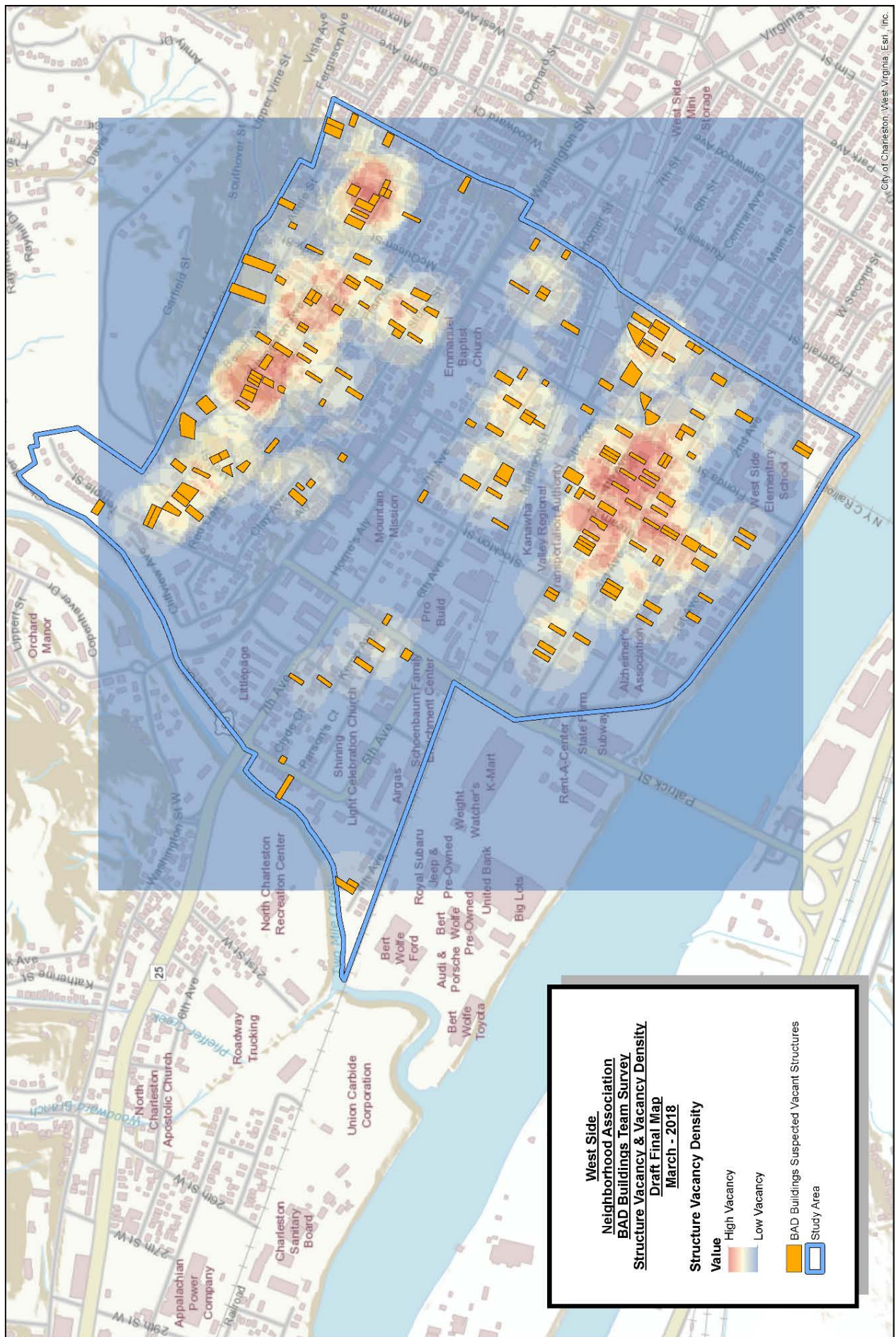
Suggested Target Sites

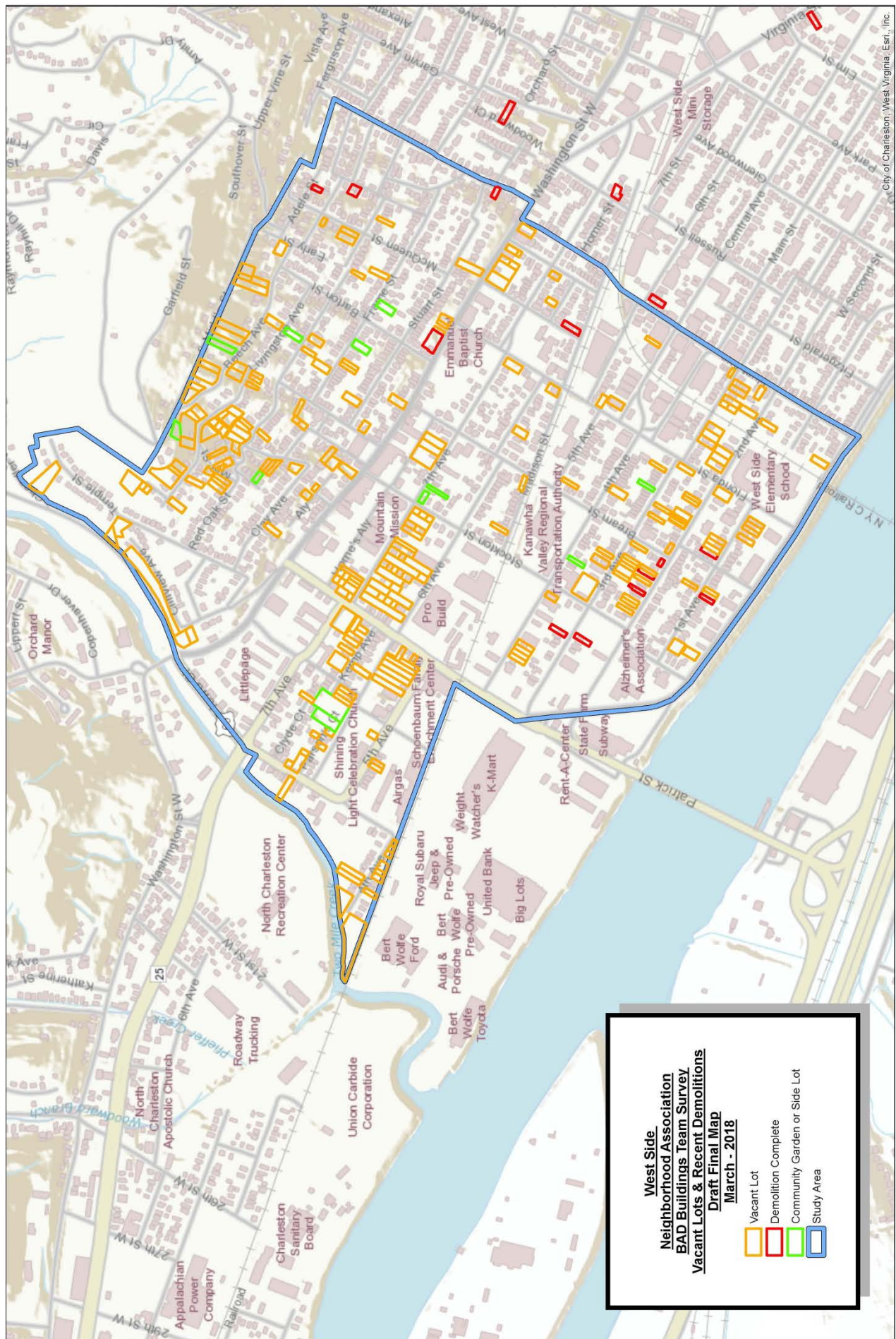
- 1200 Block of W. Washington Street
- 1600 Block between 6th and 7th Avenue
- 1100 Block on Main Street and Central Avenue
- Infill housing in Home Ownership Zone
- Pedestrian Corridor
- Livingston Hill Vacant Lots
- Tiskelwah & Second Avenue Centers

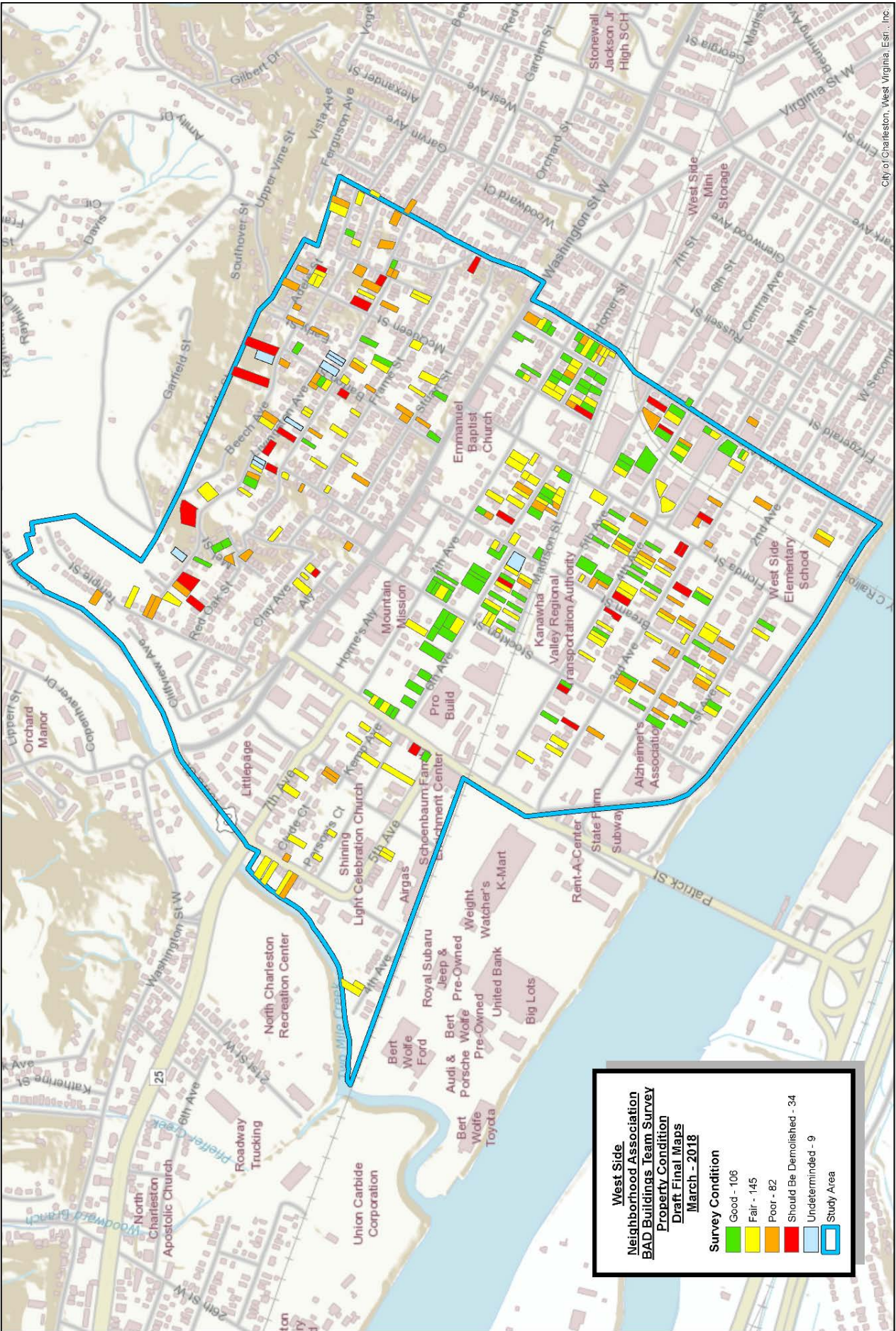
BAD Buildings Inventory Maps

The following are the maps of the inventory. These maps are at roughly 50% of their original scale and are for reference of the analysis of this report.









Conclusion, Recommendations, and Next Steps

Summary

Charleston West Side is faced with a multitude of complex and widespread issues regarding problematic properties. The study area alone, which is roughly a third of the total area that is West Side, has hundreds of vacant lots, over a hundred vacant single-family residential units, and almost 30 vacant commercial and mixed-use structures.

These problem properties are decentralized across the neighborhood. A greater concentration of these properties lay in the “flat”, the area between West Washington Avenue and Kanawha Boulevard. However, when looking at the issue by condition of the property, there is no significant grouping of “should be demolished” or “poor” ratings. Vacant lots are only concentrated together where some non-profits and the city have acquired them in an effort towards new development of those parcels as the 2008 Redevelopment Plan had called for.

Charleston West Side and other urban areas such as the central business district have been facing disinvestment from many directions. The systematic disinvestments from the 1930’s through the late 1960’s starting with the Housing Act of 1934 began a large drain on neighborhood capital and population. Pair this up with a decline in the state economy that was primarily focused on resource extraction, the way highways transformed and expanded cities, and the highway itself cutting through the neighborhood creating a concrete no man’s land with the urban core, the West Side has been hit by several key events that contributed to decline.

Knowing these things, the plan to move forward in West Side should include those recommendations listed here, the current initiatives of the city and community, and new ideas drawn from collaboration, brainstorming, and the unknown changes to come. These plans should be widespread with focus on not only stabilization but growth. They should include considerations for all of the complexities which impact the West Side such as urban planning, community capital, and social equity.

Target Site Redevelopment Recommendations

1200 Block of West Washington Street

This row of parcels between Adams Street and Beatrice Street are mostly vacant lots aside from three small structures. These parcels are the largest section of undeveloped land along West Washington Street. Development



Figure 9 - 1200 Block of West Washington Street

of a key project here could be a major catalyst for the West Side.

One option would be the development of a public green space for urban agriculture or an urban orchard. Many communities across the US have already implemented such projects such as Milwaukee. The orchards can be managed by neighborhood groups, community non-profits, or a local resource or public outreach group. The food can be open to the public, harvested for those in need, or supplied to local schools or public entities such as the Tiskelwah or Second Avenue centers.

Another option for the 1200 block could be a skatepark. The topography of the site would place the structures downhill of West Washington Avenue helping to naturally eliminate many safety concerns of skateboarders near an active road. The primary entrance could be from the side streets or alley with numerous design possibilities to make this an excellent space for active youth. A skatepark could also be constructed alongside other projects on these parcels as the space requirement would not have to be significant. However, if the community wanted to dream big, the skatepark could be constructed across a majority of the site creating a premier destination in the state for skateboarders.

A combination of the public orchard and some sort of public open space/recreation opportunity could be a great way to create a space that draws a wider demographic and better serves the community. This could also assist in increase pedestrian activity along West Washington Avenue.

1600 Block between 6th and 7th Avenue

A large part of the block is vacant lots and is ready for redevelopment for commercial use. These parcels have been zoned C10 and C8 but still include a few single-family homes and some small commercial structures. A majority of the vacant lots are owned by a local non-profit. These parcels can be combined for adequate square footage to use in new commercial development.

Another option is the development of affordable and senior housing as part of the commercial development. A precedent to this is the Seneca Center in Morgantown. This development features a repurposed building full of restaurants, stores, and offices attached to housing for senior citizens. The development is adjacent to the Monongalia River Rails to Trail providing excellent pedestrian access to other green spaces and businesses across Morgantown. Similarly, development of this type on the 1600 block would give residents easy pedestrian access to West Washington Avenue, many local churches, the Tiskelwah and Second Avenue Centers, and much more.

1100 Block of Main and Central Avenue

This block between Florida Street and Hunt Avenue is filled with commercial structures and warehouses. A large portion of the structures are vacant or underutilized.

Through the middle of these structures runs the abandoned CSX Kanawha Trestle. This redevelopment plan recommends the CSX railway be transformed into a pedestrian corridor. To coincide with that project, adaptive reuse of these large, open space commercial building should be considered.

Open square footage with ephemeral partition walls is a great way to divide up the interior space for various uses without sacrificing the versatility of the building. Alternatively, public events such as flea markets or farmers markets could be held in these spaces in the time being until new permanent occupants can be found. The events could be treated as open houses to showcase the space that is ready for a new use to a new or existing business.

Businesses with a positive evening or nightlife such as restaurants, evening continuing education or art classes, etc. should be heavily encouraged. Positive nightlife enhances the perception of the neighborhood which not only helps adjust the narrative of West Side but also creates a desire to be a part of it. This can foster an atmosphere of entrepreneurship, investment, stronger community culture, and increases public safety.

Pedestrian Corridor

An abandoned CSX railway goes from the Kanawha River and runs north east through West Side and connects to an active Norfolk Southern railway. This railway is a raised railway using concrete, steel, and wooden piers to lift the railroad approximately 15 to 20 feet above ground level across most of the neighborhood.

25% of the BAD Buildings within the CURA zone identified during this survey are within 1 block of this abandoned railway. Over 6% of the properties identified are directly adjacent to the railway. Among this is also a significant number of vacant lots from demolitions prior to the beginning of the BAD Buildings survey. The railway also borders the new elementary school.



Figure 10 - A map showing the proposed pedestrian trail in the West Side

This project could serve as a redevelopment catalyst. By creating this pedestrian corridor, this will drive greater interest for housing in an area where housing has been significantly neglected and removed. It

will help stabilize a community before it loses too much of its built environment and identity. It will also create an open, safe green space that cuts into the residential neighborhood. This linear, open space will be visible all the way from the riverfront to the active railway is designed and constructed with respect to safety and with the dignity and quality the neighborhood deserves for recovering. This will create an active safe routes to school where kids could collect and travel together to their new school every morning and afternoon in line of site of the middle of their neighborhood.

Railway Crossings

With some creative thinking, possible use of vacant lots, and public support, there is also potential to create pedestrian crossings over the active railway that divides West Side into two. From Florida Street to Virginia Street, there is 2100 feet of railway impassible to both vehicles and pedestrians. Starting at Stockton just west of Florida, the railway raises above the neighborhood until it comes back to even footing at Virginia Street, although Virginia Street drops and goes through a tunnel below the railway.

The neighborhood has been formally divided like this since the 1950's based on USGS maps of the city. In the 1930s, when the West Side still had a more organic street form before urban planning transformed it into a more uniform and rigid rectangular grid, streets still crossed the railway allowing the community to be more connected. As roads became more standardized to accommodate the automobile, this changed how city streets could formally cross this raised railway.

Many other cities across the world have created safe pedestrian crossings for walkers, joggers, and bicyclist over active railways. These street level crossings usually have plenty of visual warnings aside from the tracks themselves such as striping, flashing signals, yellow signs, and barrier that force pedestrian to break up their direct path of travel before crossing the tracks help guarantee safety.

These formal crossings could also help reduce illegal crossings which are dangerous.

Potential new pedestrian crossings include: Bream Street which would give more direct foot traffic to the Mixed-Use buildings on Washington Street; and Adams, Hunt, or Russell which would give cross railroad access for the pedestrian trail system proposed.

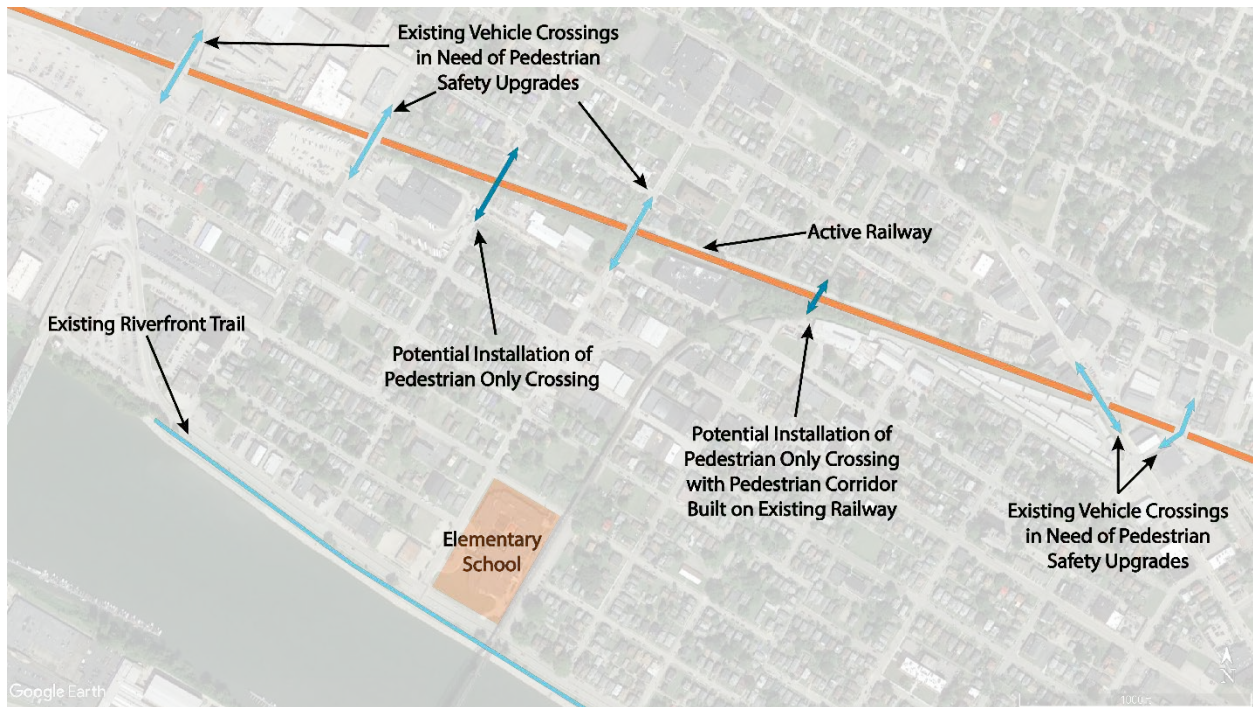


Figure 11 - A map showing the locations in need of better pedestrian railroad crossings

Improvements need to be made on every existing sidewalk crossing over the railway on West Side. As of right now, the sidewalks seem to disappear or look exactly like the roadway as they cross over the track which reduces the perception of pedestrian safety.

The railway is currently owned by Norfolk and Southern. These improvements would reduce dangerous trespassing and therefore some liability related to being within a dense area of town.

Next Step Recommendations

Increased Single Family Unit Density

By increasing dwelling unit density, Charleston can maximize the sustainability for the neighborhood. Increased density means more tax dollars collected per acres to be used to maintain or upgrade civil infrastructure. Increased density also creates more pedestrian oriented communities in which people walk more to businesses, schools, and events. Neighborhoods with higher density also have better average health statistics.

One way this can be accomplished is through a new incentivized residential zone. This new zone, R5, would somewhat blend the requirements of R4 and R6. R4 is a single family residential district and R6 is the medium density residential district containing single family, duplex, triplex, and multi-family structures. An R5 zone would allow single family by right but would allow multifamily by certain conditions. This incentivizes the vacant lots to be developed by either private owners or developers who

adhere to certain conditions for the overall improvement of the neighborhood. This would maintain or increase the density to help counter the current declining population and number of dwelling units.

Charleston should also consider limiting the continued encroachment of commercially zoned property farther into the residential streets of West Side. A significant portion of the residential neighborhood has been zoned as commercial lots more permanently reducing the number of single-family dwelling units. The areas currently zoned commercial should be seen as adequate available parcels for the ratio of commercial versus residential space.

Tiny Homes and Accessory Dwelling Units

There are many factors that should be considered when addressing housing issues on the West Side aside from just their physical condition and vacancy rates. One such issue is quality, affordable housing. Many new townhouses and apartments have been constructed to improve to quality of life for residents.

One strategy could be to construct owner occupied housing that is more affordable and would diversify the current housing stock of the neighborhood. Tiny homes are one way to accomplish this. Tiny homes are often small and transportable dwelling units with limited square footage, often as little as 160 to 400 square feet of space. These homes cost on average \$40,000 dollars for 160 square feet although this varies greatly based upon material choices and construction methods. This comes to a much higher price per square foot at \$250 compared to the national median price per square foot of roughly \$170. However, the overall price is lower making the home more affordable.

The small square footage of these spaces makes them ideal for singles and couples. They can be ideal for people wanting to be first time home buyers and also for empty nesters desiring a smaller square footage.

These structures are typically more ecologically conscious in design and have intrinsic environmental characteristics such as less use of material and less need for energy consumption for heating and cooling.

Another option is accessory dwelling units. These are smaller homes constructed in a permanent fashion usually in the rear portion of a lot to an existing home. These single bedroom or small two bedroom units are great for supplemental income as rental property, housing for older family members who want to be near other family but maintain privacy and independence, or even for young family members just starting out on their own.

A big advantage to accessory dwelling units is an increase in density for a neighborhood without changing the single-family home fabric of the block. The increase of density has many benefits that contribute to sustainable communities that were covered in the “Increase Single Family Unit Density” section above.

Vacant Lots: Streamline and Clarify Sales Process

Vacant lots for sale by the city or CURA are currently difficult to acquire, hindering local residents from acquiring them. The sale process itself should be evaluated to be streamlined to get these vacant lots into productive use and out of the responsibility for maintenance by the city.

One way to help would be to create a webpage or information pamphlet discussing the incentives for purchasing these lots and a step by step guide on the process of purchasing vacant lots. The city could also create a listing of these vacant lots with photographs, descriptions, and zoning type.

Passive Maintenance of Vacant Lots

Vacant lots require significant maintenance from the city to prevent them from becoming a nuisance or a danger to public health and safety. With the large number of existing vacant lots on the West Side and more anticipated through demolition, the city and community should implement plans and designs for more passive vegetation.

For lawns, companies have developed multiple grass seed types that work better depending upon conditions such as shade or foot traffic. The benefit to these grass type variations is they require very limited mowing. One such product is No Mow by Prairie Nursery in Wisconsin. This seed works well within the climate of West Virginia and only requires mowing twice a year. If not mowed, the grass lays flat to create a smooth bed of grass that is aesthetically pleasing. This grass seed currently runs at \$36 per 1,000 square feet.

Another way to reduce maintenance of vacant lots would be to plant native vegetation. Various shrubs, trees, and native flowers could be planted onto vacant lots that are likely to go unused for a longer period of time. The initial upfront investment for preparing and creating the site would be beneficial to the city and community. This would create a positive use that enhances the lot but require little to no follow up based upon the plants selected, how they handle the environment, and how they interact with each other. Design of these spaces should be done by people familiar with the plant species and the site conditions such as botany or gardening enthusiasts.

More on No Mow grass can be found here: www.prairienursery.com/resources-and-guides/no-mow-resources/

Split-rate Property Tax System

A flat-rate property tax system that assesses land value and improvement values together at the same rate can impede property improvements and new construction. With the flat-rate system, vacant lot owners are typically not penalized and are even encouraged to speculate for the potential chance property values will go up and they can sell for a profit. Owners may perceive the increased taxable basis and the tax liability to exceed the economic value that could be derived from improving the property. As a result, vacant and under maintenance lots remain this way until economic conditions improve, driving speculation. This type of speculation and lack of improvement incentive leaves a large number of vacant lots within neighborhoods. These vacant lots do not generate the same tax revenue

for the government. These makes the already in place civil infrastructure less financially efficient as cities have to maintain a larger quantity of roads, sidewalks, water, and sewage compared to the taxes generate per acre and the number of dwelling units and commercial units served.

A split-rate tax system imposes different rates on the land and the improvements on the land. The system more heavily weighs on the value of the land to generate property tax revenue. For example, a government may tax land at a 0.70% and improvements on the land at 0.15%. This raises the consequences for leaving property vacant while simultaneously incentivizing improvements. Owners are encouraged to put their land to maximum productive use to make it worth the tax burden they have for owning the land.

Split-rate property tax system should not be an umbrella for all areas of the city. It works best in zones where higher density is desired, in neighborhoods with smaller lots, in downtowns, or in a main street village district. Where available lots are large and zoning doesn't restrict significant open space, the split-rate tax system could encourage sprawl. Land owners could build significantly larger homes on open land without facing the tax burden for that significant improvement to the property. These types of structures, often called McMansions, are already common practice on the periphery of cities. Instead, these areas of a city should still be taxed more traditionally.

Pittsburgh is the closest major city that uses the split-rate property tax system, although it is also used across various Pennsylvania cities as authorized by their state law. Case studies and analysis have been performed on Pittsburgh implementation of this system to help foster best practices and its effectiveness.

Side Lot Rental Program

Create a side lot rental or leasing program for vacant lots held by CURA or the city. Adjacent property owners or community organization could rent these lots for a minimum amount of money and take on basic maintenance responsibility. The renters would be allowed to utilize the lot to include placing ephemeral structures such as an above ground pool, toolshed, or swing set.

This program would allow vacant or underutilized lots to become temporarily productive and inviting spaces for the neighborhood. At the same time, the lots can be held for future infill development to increase the neighborhood density where appropriate. When lots are sold for new infill development, property owner can be given an adequate timeframe to remove any ephemeral installation that have on the lot prior to new construction beginning.

This program would limit the tax base for the city as the properties would remain in the possession of CURA or other entity but would generate revenue through the rental fee. This would then be a new funding stream for CURA during the period of time that a significant number of vacant lots remain.

The function of such a program would only be possible using a land bank. This is one of the key functions of such an entity as it pertains to the stabilization and redevelopment of neighborhoods. The land bank

has the tools necessary to manage such a program and was created to hold such properties until opportunity came to transfer ownership for new development.

This program should be considered separately from a split-rate property tax system.

Encourage Home Renovation and Rehabilitation in Existing Neighborhoods

The city, specifically the MOECD and CURA, along with the neighborhood association, could partner with other non-profit or trade groups to conduct homeowner maintenance classes. One such example is Habitat for Humanity has a Master Homeowner curriculum. They regularly offer classes at 10 dollars each. There are a total of 9 classes in the total curriculum which are conducted in the evening. The classes cover basic tools, legal and insurance, fire safety, home and neighborhood safety, electrical basics, plumbing basics, when to bring in a professional, neighborhood relations, and energy efficiency.

The city and CURA could offer home owners scholarships to these courses to people owning homes in the renewal area or Home Ownership Zone.

Convert Livingston Avenue Area Hill Vacant Lots into Public Orchard Project

The city should consider discouraging new development in the hillside area of the West Side around Livingston Avenue and Beech Avenue. The topography makes new development a challenge. The low number of dwelling units remaining makes maintaining street and other infrastructure less cost effective.

As homes become obsolete or abandoned and are removed, the city should allow the lots to remain undeveloped. The city could then plan to abandon selection portions of road as they are no longer needed. The hillside in these topographically undesirable and low-density areas could be transformed into public lands such as fruit tree orchards, arboretum, or simply a hilltop park. If feasible, very low-density housing on large lots may be considered.

Fruit tree orchards could be integrated into school curriculum during the summer and fall to help on education covering subjects such as biology, phenology, farming, and health. Fruit trees could also be harvested for free my local residents or coordinated to help feed populations at risk of malnutrition or hunger.

A similar initiative has been underway by Grow Ohio Valley and the city of Wheeling. The city started at the end of the 1990's to remove blight from the Vineyard Hills area of town. New housing units were constructed but some of the hilltop has been set aside for apple orchards.

The West Side could do the same, and based on recent research by WVU on health impacts of having diverse ecosystems the orchard could feature a greater variety of trees such as Pawpaws, Black Walnut, or White Oaks that have harvestable fruits or nuts.

Tiskelwah & Second Avenue Centers Improvement

The Tiskelwah Center serves the senior citizens of the area through various programs and daily activities. However, the site around the center gives a perception of a secure location not open to the community. High rusted fences, gates, and the open air without trees or bushes create the sense more of a prison or similar correctional institution.

The Second Avenue Center is a hub of community activity, especially for young people. The facility could be greatly improved to better address community needs ranging from afterschool programming to general recreation.

A collaborative effort between the Tiskelwah and Second Avenue Centers and other stakeholders should be formed to rework the sites. The sites should be inviting for the public. Landscaping and public space along the perimeters could be created to help form the connection. This will also have a positive impact on the senior citizens who go to the Tiskelwah Center and the youth who utilize the Second Avenue Center as they will feel more connected to the community around them while on site. This positive change can significantly improve the perception and morale for the surrounding blocks and the community overall.

Continuation and Expansion of Open Information Between the City and the Public

The BAD Buildings process and open information has improved the relationship between the neighborhood, the neighborhood organizations, and the city. By objectively discussing the scale and resources allocated to addressing dilapidated, abandoned, or underutilized properties, the public can have a better sense that the city is doing its part and the city can in turn demonstrate to the public their commitment to solving the problems that come with BAD Buildings.

The neighborhood and city should continue to have open dialog and support one another. The public should be willing to volunteer to support the city in collecting data to update the BAD Buildings inventory or similar tasks while the city should continue to track its investment of resources into solving these issues.

The GIS maps created by the city planning office to show the BAD Buildings data graphically should be continued. Future versions could create overlays that demonstrate change across various periods of time. This will be important especially for demonstrating progress towards achieving projects objectives adopted from this and other plans such as housing infill, number of vacant properties, new commercial development, etc.

Further, there is a great opportunity to increase momentum in the revitalization of the West Side by updating the *2008 West Side Community Renewal Plan* by CURA. At this time CURA has selected consultants to complete this update and the WSNA and BAD Buildings Team will support and encourage the work on updating this plan. Clearly this report shows that conditions and viability pertaining to projects have changed since 2008 and new ideas and information are necessary to inform decision-making going forward.

General Tools and Strategies for Every Community

This following is a list of general ordinances or tools that could be utilized by the city for further redevelopment. The city may have already used some of the tools, but things such as urban beautification or public pressure are ongoing efforts that should be kept in mind so they are listed in this report. The ordinances included may be something the city could consider as an enhancement on their primary redevelopment goals.

Urban Beautification

Urban beautification is a constant process and should be continuously in the mind of the community.

The community can always do more and should continue the momentum occurring for urban beautification. By doing small projects over time, the community can become more welcoming to visitors and enhance the morale of the locals. When selecting urban beautification that is location specific such as a mural, it is important to focus on the community gateways and high visibility areas.

Painting

Painting buildings can make a big difference. One way this is done is by painting the entire façade to make look well maintained. You can paint any standard façade material such as wood or aluminum siding, to include brick. Brick buildings have often been painted in the Eastern United States historical areas and should not be seen as a taboo. A well painted brick building also helps preserve the building by sealing the brick and mortar from water damage.



Existing mural in Welch, WV

Another way to paint buildings is to do murals on large facades. This was often done in the past with advertising and can still be seen across cities today. Painting murals can be a way of portraying the culture or history while enhancing the city. Murals don't have to be applied directly to the building. Murals can be painted on a weather resistant cloth or panels and then attached to the building with anchors or adhesive.

Storefront Renovation and Activity

Another approach to beautification is cleaning and decorating the storefronts. Storefronts should be free of soot and dirt which naturally builds up from vehicle traffic passing by. The building features should be in good condition, such as awnings that are fully assembled. Building owners can decorate the display windows or building fronts. This will give people the perception the town is well kept, the buildings are occupied and being used, and an overall more welcoming feeling.

Sustainable Urban Planting

Decorating the streets with live planters is another simple improvement. Planters can either be hanging such as from buildings and lamp posts or sturdy planters that sit on the sidewalk or open space. The town should select sturdy plants that require little maintenance. They should be able to withstand the conditions of being next to a major roadway if placed in downtown. Plants should also have a maximum size of growth depending on the planter size and type. Optimal plants will need very minor maintenance or slight watering during dry spells.



Downtown Charleston

Trees can make a large difference too. They create a more enticing urban center for pedestrians by providing shade and enhancing aesthetics. They can also be used to control traffic speed. By removing a curb side parking space and bringing the curb out to make a green space, drivers naturally feel constrained and are less likely to speed. This is also a great way to designate street parking areas by capping both ends with a small green space. Trees should be selected based on resiliency, vertical growth, canopy coverage, root system size and depth depending on location, and optionally if they are native or invasive species.

Fruit trees should be considered in certain instances too. These allow the growth of the trees to do more than benefit the community with aesthetic enjoyment and thermal comfort. Fruit trees allow the landscape to also nurture the people utilizing it. It is a terrific way to engage tourists with the local foods from the region. The fruit trees can be native species such as southern crabapple and pawpaw, but it is recommended to use other non-invasive species suitable for the climate. Native fruit trees do best in large spaces and orchards as most grow to thirty feet in height or greater with a vast canopy. Most importantly, the trees should be planted so that the canopy does not extend over public sidewalks or roads. These trees should be given adequate soil area so that any unpicked and fallen fruit does not create a hazard or unsightly mess.

Public Spaces

For the enhancement and creation of public spaces, it is important to always take into account comfort and seating. People will not use a space if conditions within it create discomfort through noise, temperature, humidity, air flow rate, or fear of safety. Studies show some of the best public spaces are so simply because good seating is available. Public seating such as benches or even a tiered or low wall are a great way to naturally invite people to reside in certain areas within the city. However, great consideration should be given to their placement. A metal park bench in the summer sun will likely not attract any use. The same goes for the opposite conditions of a metal bench on a shaded lot in the winter. A park bench a few feet from a roadway with fast moving traffic makes users uneasy.

Some good strategies for public spaces are to shade public seating using deciduous trees so that sunlight and shading change with the seasons, wooden benches that aren't uncomfortable due to solar heat gain, running water features to act as a noise cancellation tool from busy streets, and a variety of places.

A variety of places comes from placemaking. Placemaking is a multi-faceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. By having a variety of such places, it allows people to dwell in places that appeal to them personally. The places do not have to be different sites. Multiple places may dwell in the same space.

Way Finding and Signage

Locals often take for granted that they know where things are in their communities. Visitors will have a difficult time locating shops, outdoor spaces, and everything else the community has to offer if something doesn't adequately tell them it is there.

Way finding mostly involves signage. A sign such as the ones with street names are often too small for casual visitors and are meant for people looking for them. Signage such as this would not grab your attention if you weren't actively looking for it. Basing signs to public libraries, water way access, and parks on the same format as standard street name signs is sure not to help visitors know the resources within a community. These signs should be unique to communities to grab the attention of those passing through. Using vibrant colors is a great way to grab visitors' attention and to designate types of commodities such as red for the public library, blue for water front access, and green for public parks or squares. Signs should have large enough lettering to be visible at a distance in which you want to catch a visitor's attention. For example, signage intended for motorists will be larger as they travel faster and will need to read signs much sooner than pedestrians.

Signage can also be a way for the community to be expressive and welcoming. Artisan signs that hang over the sidewalk from storefronts help give a sense of a traditional American main street. Artisan signs are also a great way for local businesses to express their services artistically and catch the eye of potential customers. Plastic or vinyl illuminated signs and neon signs should be avoided in a main street or downtown area. These become popular in the 1950's as businesses competed over attracting motorists and were developed for wide open roadways, not a dense urban environment.

Additionally, the Americans with Disability Act defines parameters for typefaces to ensure they are readable for those with vision impairment. Following these standards can ensure your wayfinding is universal for all who wish to visit your communities. Not all of these standards need to apply but important aspects such character proportions, stroke thickness, character spacing, and line spacing. The standards are found in the Communication Elements and Features chapter.

<https://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADAStandards/2010ADAstandards.htm>

Gibson, David – *The Wayfinding Handbook*

For more on urban beautification check out *Destination Beautification* by the West Virginia State University Extension Service. The book contains an array of information of façade improvements, historic preservation, public arts, and urban agriculture.

Liens for Blight Removal from the City

The City may choose to demolish or make necessary repairs to a dilapidated property, impose a lien for these costs on the property, and sue to recover the cost of the lien. The City can gain this authority through adoption of the WV State Building Code or the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC).

Advantages of this approach include allowing the municipality to recover costs associated with addressing dilapidated structures, prevent structures from becoming further deteriorated, and motivate property owners to act through imposition of liens.

For more information see the WV LEAP Toolkit. <http://wvleap.wvu.edu/home>

Creation of Entity Dedicated to Blight Removal and Redevelopment

The City may consider creating a public entity dedicated to community and economic development through addressing blighted properties and returning them to a productive use. Entities that can be created in West Virginia include land reuse agencies (LRA), urban renewal authorities (URA), buildings commissions, and local development authorities.

Land reuse agencies are often designed to address those properties which do not have an immediate reuse or may not have a viable market for reuse. LRAs often function best by focusing on properties which may be reintroduced into a market in the medium or long term. LRAs help address site control and maintenance of properties by preventing further blight and stabilizing properties.

Urban renewal authorities are often used to redevelop particular properties or neighborhoods for a specific purpose, such as a commercial development or neighborhood stabilization. URAs are often focused on short- and medium-term redevelopment and revitalization of blighted areas.

For more information see the WV LEAP Toolkit. <http://wvleap.wvu.edu/home>

Public Pressure

Another option the City may take is public pressure of those property owners who are unwilling to maintain their properties to community standards. These strategies can be effective at motivating local properties to act. The City may choose to publicize a property owners name, address, or the address of the dilapidated property through traditional or social media. Several WV communities have taken this approach, such as Fayette County utilizing large “Notice of Violation” signs placed on properties listed on their vacant buildings registry. The Fayette County Commission has noted that this has been an extremely effective motivator for local property owners.

For more information see the WV LEAP Toolkit. <http://wvleap.wvu.edu/home>

List of Potential Funding Sources

There are a variety of funding, grant, loan, tax credit, and technical assistance programs available for the redevelopment, remediation, and revitalization of blighted properties. All of these programs rely on a reuse plan for the target properties as well as community engagement and support to drive these projects forward. There are many advantages to reusing and revitalizing dilapidated structures including infill and stabilization of existing neighborhoods, utilizing existing infrastructure, and often lower overhead costs for businesses.

WV Development Office

The West Virginia Development Office has a number of programs designed to foster community participation, local capacity, and project development in WV communities throughout the state. Many of these programs can be utilized in an effort to tackle community blight.

The WV Development Office manages the Neighborhood Investment Program which is designed to increase charitable giving to local nonprofit organizations to apply for tax credit vouchers which can be distributed to business and individuals who contribute to the organizations. A wide variety of activities are eligible for the program including housing programs, preservation/revitalization, domestic violence shelters, and children's shelters.

The WV DO manages a variety of loan and grant programs designed to encourage community and economic development projects. The Small Cities Block Grant (SCBG) program is available for units of local government and is meant to support job creation and retention as well as provide affordable infrastructure systems and community efforts to improve the quality of life for low- to moderate-income citizens. The SCBG program funds are intended to meet national objectives include "activities benefiting low- and moderate-income people, aiding in the prevention or elimination of slum or blight, or meeting community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to public health or welfare".

Additional information on the WVDO programs can be found online at <http://westvirginia.gov/community-development.html>.

EPA Brownfields Grants

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) brownfield grants are available to eligible entities, including municipalities, development authorities, and non-profits, for the assessment and cleanup of brownfield sites. The EPA defines a brownfields as "a real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant". Grants are awarded on an annual basis. Types of brownfields grants include:

- **Assessment Grants:** Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfields sites.
- **Revolving Loan Fund Grants:** The purpose of revolving loan fund grants is to enable states, political subdivisions, and Indian tribes to make low interest loans to carryout cleanup activities at brownfields properties.

- Cleanup Grants: Cleanup grants provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup activities at brownfields sites.
- Area-Wide Planning Grants (AWP): Grant funding to communities to research, plan and develop implementation strategies for an area affected by one or more brownfields. Developing an area-wide plan will inform the assessment, cleanup and reuse of brownfields properties and promote area-wide revitalization.
- Environmental Workforce Development and Job Training Grants (EWDJT): Environmental workforce development and job training grants are designed to provide funding to eligible entities, including nonprofit organizations, to recruit, train, and place predominantly low-income and minority, unemployed and under-employed residents of solid and hazardous waste-impacted communities with the skills needed to secure full-time, sustainable employment in the environmental field and in the assessment and cleanup work taking place in their communities.

More information on EPA brownfields grants available at <https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/types-brownfields-grant-funding>.

FHLB AHP, BoB

The Federal Home Loan Bank (FHLBank) of Pittsburgh supports local housing, community development, and new business development. FHLBank's programs include the Affordable Housing Program (AHP), Banking on Business (BoB), Blueprint Communities, Community Lending Program, First Front Door, and on-going educational workshops. Communities must partner with a FHLBank member institution. A full list of FHLBank lending partners can be found at <http://www.fhlb-pgh.com/about-us/our-customers.html>.

FHLBank's AHP program helps community developers and public agencies develop affordable housing in local communities. AHP grants and subsidized loans can be used for the acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of single- or multi-family housing for individual and families with incomes at 80% or less of the area median income.

Banking on Business (BoB) is a program to assist eligible small businesses in need of equity or cash flow to meet lending standards. Funding is offered as "recoverable assistance" and is available to members enrolled in the program through several funding rounds each year. This program can be used to help finance commercial projects based around the reuse of a vacant or dilapidated commercial structure.

The Blueprint Communities initiative is designed to help a community create momentum for the revitalization of older neighborhoods by building local leadership capacity, developing local and regional planning skills, and encouraging coordinated investments in targeted communities by public and private funders. Blueprint teams consist of a diverse group of local leaders and receive leadership training and use their skills to create and implement revitalization plans for the communities. Blueprint communities also receive priority access to FHLBank products.

FHLBank's Community Lending Program (CLP) is a revolving pool of funds available to member financial institutions to fund bridge, construction, and permanent loans to support a variety of housing and economic development projects. First Front Door is a program designed for first-time home buyers that

matches qualified homebuyers' contribution 3-1. This program can be used to encourage new homebuyers to invest and rehabilitation vacant and dilapidated structures.

<http://www.fhlb-pgh.com/housing-and-community/programs/>

HDF PRI, Rental Rehab, Mini-mod, New Construction, Home-owner Assistance

The West Virginia Housing Development Fund is a public body corporate and governmental instrumentality of the State of West Virginia established to increase the supply of residential housing for persons and families of low- and moderate-income, and to provide construction and permanent mortgage financing to public and private sponsors of such housing. The HDF has a variety of programs designed to assist the development of new housing as well as the reuse and remediation of existing properties.

- New Construction Financing Program - Encourages builders to construct and market single family homes.
- West Virginia Property Rescue Initiative - Provides cities and counties with resources to acquire and remove dilapidated properties from their communities.
- Rebuild West Virginia - An affordable loan initiative to help those whose homes were damaged or destroyed by high water.
- The HOME Program - The primary objective of the HOME program is to expand the supply of decent, safe, sanitary and affordable housing, primarily rental housing; to strengthen the abilities of state and local governments to provide housing; to ensure that federal housing services, financing, and other investments are provided to state and local governments in a coordinated, supportive fashion; to expand the capacity of nonprofit community-based housing development organizations; and to leverage private sector participation in financing affordable housing.
- Land Development Program - Provides low, fixed-rate interest loans to builders and developers to buy land and install infrastructure improvements to create buildable subdivision lots and commercial developments.
- Leveraged Loan Program - Provides construction and/or permanent financing for new multifamily rental developments or those requiring acquisition and rehabilitation.
- Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTCP) - Generates low-income residential rental units by encouraging private investment through federal tax credits.
- Mini-Mod Rehab Program - Provides landlords affordable financing to renovate existing apartment units.
- On-Site Septic Systems Loan Program - This program is designed to help eligible households repair or replace on-site septic systems or connect to a public treatment system.
- Special Assistance Lending Program (SALP) - A multi-purpose finance program designed to provide financial assistance to organizations engaged in the development and operation of programs and properties to improve housing opportunities and promote the general welfare of low-income and special needs populations. SALP funding will now be awarded on an RFP basis.

SHPO Historic Preservation Grants

The WV State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) offers two grant programs for historic preservation projects. Development grants are for rehabilitation of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places or a contributing property in a historic district. Grant funds can be used for preservation, protection, rehabilitation, restoration, or stabilization of eligible properties. In addition, survey and planning grants can be used for historical/architectural survey projects, archaeological surveys, comprehensive site planning, national register projects, heritage education, and predevelopment projects.

AARP Livable Communities

The American Association of Retired Persons Livable Communities program encourages states, cities, towns, and rural areas to plan and prepare for a rapidly aging population by addressing the environmental, economic, and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults.

The AARP livable Communities website contains a number of toolkits and resources to help communities plan and prepare themselves to serve their aging populations. Communities can become members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities and access to a step-by-step to create an action plan and implement programs to ensure the health of aging citizens. More information can be found online at <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>. In addition, the AARP offers a free handbook “Where We Live: Communities for All Ages” which highlights over 100 initiatives across the country that towns have launched to improve their communities, respond to issues affecting local aging populations, and build partnerships to continue to plan and improve their communities. This handbook can be accessed at <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2016/where-we-live-communities-for-all-ages.html>.

Revolving Loan Funds

Revolving loan funds (RLFs) can be a powerful tool to encourage blight remediation and reinvestment in vacant or dilapidated properties. RLFs are designed to offer low-interest or even no-interest loans for specific purposes, such as rehabilitation of an historic property, rehab of an owner-occupied residence, or new/expanded commercial activity. Revolving loan funds can be managed by a variety of entities including municipalities or non-profits.

One example of a revolving loan fund in West Virginia is the Mid-Ohio Valley Regional Council’s (MOVRC) microloan program. This is an RLF designed to provide below-market-rate loans to local businesses for startup and expansion costs. This program was funded through several programs including the USDA, US Department of Commerce, Appalachian Regional Commission, and state programs such as the Microloan and State Small Business Credit Initiative.

Additional Digital Resource Links

http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

<http://westvirginia.gov/businesses.html>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charleston,_West_Virginia