

# IMAGINE CHARLESTON

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

March 2024



Adopted: October 2013  
Amended: March 2024





Adopted by the Charleston City Council October 7, 2013 by Bill No. 7591

"Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody."

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*



# Acknowledgements

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## Plan Sponsors



Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation

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# Table of Contents

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction .....	3
B. Process.....	4
C. Demographics .....	5
D. Relationship to Other Plans .....	6
E. Community Assets and Recent Accomplishments .....	7

## CHAPTER 2: NEIGHBORHOODS AND LAND USE

A. Introduction .....	11
B. Land Use .....	12
C. West Side .....	17
D. East End .....	18
E. Kanawha City.....	19
F. South Hills and Corridor G.....	20
G. North Charleston.....	21
H. Edgewood.....	21
I. Oakridge/Greenbrier .....	21
J. Neighborhood Best Practices Tool Kit .....	22
Subarea Application: Patrick Street Gateway .....	25
K. Neighborhoods and Land Use Actions .....	26

## CHAPTER 3: TRANSPORTATION

A. Introduction .....	29
B. Opportunities and Challenges .....	30
C. Transportation Best Practices Tool Kit.....	32
Subarea Application: MacCorkle Avenue .....	34
D. Infrastructure .....	39
Subarea Application: Kanawha Boulevard.....	42
D. Mobility and Infrastructure Actions .....	43

**CHAPTER 4:  
QUALITY OF LIFE**

A. Introduction .....47  
 B. Opportunities and Challenges .....48  
 C. Quality of Life Best Practices Toolkit .....49  
 Subarea Application: Leon Sullivan Gateway/Cultural District .....55  
 D. Quality of Life Actions .....56

**CHAPTER 5:  
DOWNTOWN**

Executive Summary .....57  
 (complete plan published separately)

**CHAPTER 6:  
ACTION PLAN**

A. Tenets of Successful Implementation .....71  
 B. Zoning Recommendations .....72  
 C. Signature Implementation Opportunities .....74  
 D. Action Table .....75





# Topic Index

Following the introduction, this plan is organized into topical chapters, concluding with an Action Plan. Many of the subjects within the chapters overlap. This table can be used as a guide to locate discussion about a particular topic. The action plan is similarly organized by the chapter topics. Some of the more detailed information on data, crime, historic preservation, neighborhood organizations, and the city's infrastructure programs is located in a technical appendix, published separately.

✓ primarily referenced in this chapter

✓ secondarily referenced in this chapter

	Chapter			
	Neighborhoods	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown Plan
Retail potential and mix	✓			
Placemaking	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parking		✓		✓
Housing Options	✓			✓
Residential Neighborhoods	✓			
Neighborhood Business Districts	✓			
Downtown	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land Use Plan	✓			
Reuse of Vacant property and Infill Opportunities	✓			✓
Historical Areas	✓			✓
Mixed-use	✓		✓	✓
Citywide Transportation System		✓		
Non-motorized transportation		✓	✓	
Transit		✓		
Infrastructure		✓		
Stormwater Management		✓	✓	
Right-of-way/Streetscape Enhancement	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cultural and Entertainment Resources			✓	✓
Education and Academic Institutions			✓	
Safety and Health	✓	✓	✓	
Parks and Recreation	✓		✓	
Greenways	✓		✓	
Local Food	✓		✓	
Sustainability	✓	✓	✓	✓



Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION





## City Council's Vision for Charleston: Charleston is the recreational, cultural, and business capital of the Appalachian Mountains.


- Perfect and Perpetuate Strong and Sustainable Neighborhoods
- Conduct Efficient and Collaborative Government
- Produce and Facilitate Events and Recreational Opportunities
- Develop and Maintain Sound and Adequate Infrastructure
- Foster and Support Business Development and Attraction

**What is a Comprehensive Plan?**  
The Comprehensive Plan is a document created by the City of Charleston Planning Department and adopted by the City Council to guide decisions on land use, development, and capital improvements. A sound Comprehensive Plan helps ensure that Charleston remains a highly desirable place to live, work, learn, or visit. This can be accomplished by preserving and enhancing the qualities of the city that the residents, businesses, and property owners consider important.

The Comprehensive Plan identifies and analyzes the city's physical elements to create a set of goals, policies, and recommendations to direct decisions regarding future land use, neighborhood and transportation improvements, and special strategies for key areas in the city. This plan strives to a balance the interests and rights of individual private property owners with those of the entire community.

In looking at the cumulative and long-term impacts of individual decisions, this plan will assist city leaders in making substantive, thoughtful decisions for the next 10 to 20 years. Actions to help attain the goals of this plan are included. Some are short-term or relatively simple, others are complex or longer term. Because the plan is intended to be implemented over more than a decade, there may be alternative ways to achieve the plan's goals. The Action Plan should

**Sustainability**  
As part of Charleston's commitment to sustainability, key recommendations that support a greener, more socially and economically sustainable future are highlighted with a green leaf.



be reviewed yearly to track accomplishments and reassign priorities. It is recommended that the entire plan be reviewed every five years to ensure the goals and recommendations are keeping pace with current trends and recent developments.

### The Differences between a Comprehensive Plan and a Zoning Ordinance

The Comprehensive Plan provides policies and general direction for future development, and while it does not change the zoning of or any zoning regulations applying to any property, implementation of the plan will be through zoning ordinance text and map amendments. Some of the other differences between the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance are listed below.

Comprehensive Plan	Zoning Ordinance
Provides general policies, a guide	Provides specific regulations, the law
Describes what should happen in the future – recommended land use for the next 20 years, not necessarily the recommended use for today	Describes what is and what is not allowed today, based on existing conditions
Includes recommendations that involve other agencies and groups	Deals only with development-related issues under City control
Flexible to respond to changing conditions	Fairly rigid, requires formal amendment to change

**Using the Comprehensive Plan**

- Review development proposals against the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Review rezoning requests for consistency with the plan's future land use map and goals.
- Provide a basis for amendments to the zoning ordinance and zoning map to help realize and enforce plan goals.
- Understand expectations for the future land use pattern and desired land use types in the community to guide new development and redevelopment.
- Identify and recommend physical improvements to important resources such as streets, access management, streetscape and entryways, sidewalks, parks, and public facilities.

**Downtown Plan**  
Prepared as part of this Comprehensive Planning effort, the 2013 Downtown Plan, while published separately, is considered a chapter of this plan. An executive summary of that document is included as Chapter 5 of this document.



Chapter 2: Neighborhoods and Land



Chapter 3: Transportation and Infrastructure



Chapter 4: Quality of Life



Chapter 5: Downtown

## B. Process

Charleston, as the state's capital, has a wealth of organizations and individuals interested and committed to making the city a better place. Individuals from a cross-section of the city's agencies, organizations, and businesses provided background information and ideas throughout the process. This Comprehensive Plan brings together these efforts, projects, and plans for several areas of the city and strives to develop a single set of prioritized recommendations for the city into a unified vision.

This document was prepared primarily in cooperation with the Planning Department, the Charleston Urban Renewal Authority (CURA), and the Charleston Area Alliance. In addition, early drafts of the plan were reviewed by a Comprehensive Plan Executive Committee comprised of representatives from City Staff, City Council, and the Charleston Area Alliance, as well as the Advisory Committee, including representatives from non-profit, for-profit, and local advocacy groups, and the consultant team. The following is an overview of the process that ensued:

**1. Project Start Up.** Early in the process, the City formed an 80-member Advisory Committee. The Executive Committee recommended members to the Advisory Committee that represented a broad cross section of the city's interests. The consultant team met with the Advisory Committee and the Executive Committee and began data collection.

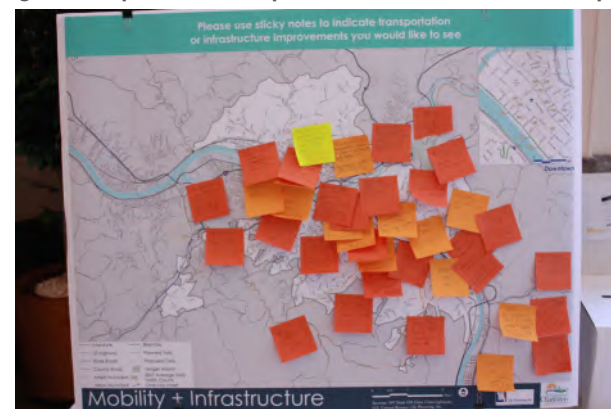
**2. Listening and Learning.** Once all relevant and updated data was collected, the City began to involve the public. A varied and widescale public involvement process was undertaken, including Technical Committee subgroups of the Advisory Committee, outreach with social media and local news sources, and extensive public and one-on-one meetings with the community. Efforts made to engage interested stakeholders through interviews and Technical Committees and the



Advisory Committee members brainstormed "What is on your radar?" at their first meeting

general public as described in the Summary of Public Involvement are found in the next section.

**3. Vision and Goals.** Based on comments received through the public involvement process, draft vision statements and goals were developed for each topic area and presented to the Advisory Committee and the general public. The public "voted" for their top priority



Ideas are recorded on a map at the first open house goals at the second open house in September 2012.

**4. Development Concepts.** A two-day design charrette was held in the middle of the planning process to allow the consultant team and City Staff to work together to prepare key design-related development concepts. These subarea applications draw from the goals and best practices for each topic area and provide an



Participants voted on plan goal priorities at the second open house

example for plan implementation. Concepts were presented to key stakeholders at the end of the charrette and to the public at the second open house.

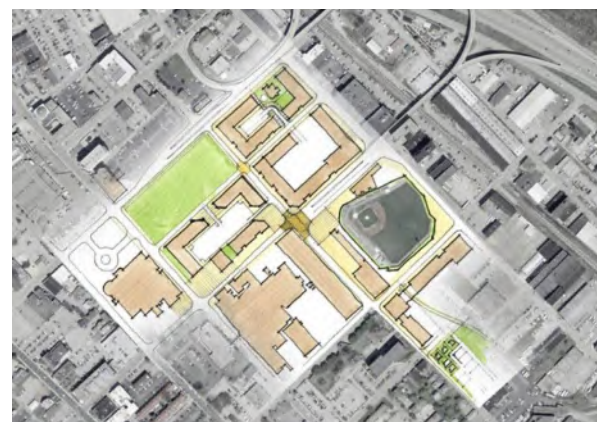
**5. Preparing the Plan.** Upon agreement on the direction of the plan, the consulting team developed a draft plan which was reviewed by the Advisory Committee and general public.

**6. Plan Adoption.** Once the City was satisfied with the draft plan, the Planning Commission held a public hearing, recommended adoption to the City Council, who in turn held a public hearing and adopted the plan

in accordance with the West Virginia Planning Enabling Act.

### Public Involvement

The Comprehensive Plan effort sought out public input to engage the broader community in addition to intensive one-on-one work with stakeholder groups. While the process included traditional community



A concept drawing for the Cultural District prepared at the Development Concepts Charrette

meetings, it also included social media outreach methods, including Facebook and Twitter. A summary of the public involvement process follows, and a summary of the results is found in Appendix A.

**Stakeholder Interviews.** City Staff and the consultant team met with a variety of stakeholder groups at the beginning of the process. Topics ranged from historic preservation to infrastructure to healthy living.

**Technical Committee Meetings.** In order to better facilitate discussion, the 80-member Advisory Committee was broken down into five Technical Committees based on members' areas of expertise. Technical Committee meetings were held where participants provided input on goals and areas to Preserve, Enhance, and Transform relative to their topic area. In addition, members were asked to review their committee's chapter of the draft plan. Technical Committees represented the following five topics:

- Neighborhoods and Land Use
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Quality of Life
- Downtown Business
- Downtown Living

**Community Open Houses.** Two community meetings were held during the process to gain input on key elements of the plan. The meetings were in the form of open houses, which allowed people to drop in at anytime. A brief presentation was given to provide an overview of the process and participants visited stations,

each allowing attendees to express their ideas either verbally, in writing, or through interactive exercises. The stations covered topics including Neighborhoods and Land Use Transportation and Infrastructure, Quality of Life, and Downtown. There were over 200 attendees at the community meetings.

**Internet.** The City utilized its "Imagine Charleston" website to inform people about the process and to provide comment. In addition to the website, Charleston developed a Facebook page and Twitter account. Over xxx people signed up to be a fan of the plan on Facebook and received regular updates, meeting notices, and partook in discussions regarding the city.

**Public Presentation.** Once the complete plan was drafted, the consultant team presented the plan at a public presentation and the draft plan was posted on the Imagine Charleston website. The public was given the opportunity to ask questions and offer additional comments before the public hearing.

**Public Hearing.** Once a draft of the plan was completed and reviewed by outside agencies and the public, public hearings were held to allow an additional opportunity for public comment at a Planning Commission meeting September 4, 2013 and a City Council meeting October 7, 2013.

### 10-Year Update

A comprehensive plan is intended to guide public policy and resource allocation for compatible land development and must be rooted in an understanding of the physical, social, and demographic characteristics of a community. The Municipal Planning Commission is charged with reviewing and updating the plan every 10 years. To that end, the following work was undertaken in 2023:

- Compiled new data to gain a better understanding of current conditions
- Analyzed economic and social trends and industry best practices
- Conducted a thorough review of the action plan
- Collected community input through a series of public meetings

The following stakeholders were incorporated in the review process:

- City of Charleston Green Team
- Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation
- CARE Team
- City of Charleston City Council
- Mayor's Office

# C. Demographics

## Highlights

- Charleston's population peaked in the 1960's and since then, has been gradually declining
- Baby Boomers are aging
- Slight increase in young adult age groups
- Household types are changing
  - the percentage of family households shrunk
  - the percentages of single and non-family households increased
- 1/2 of single mother families are below the poverty level - a notable decrease since 2010
- 37% of people over 25 years have a bachelor's degree or higher

## Median Age

U.S	38.8
West Virginia	42.8
Charleston	41.8

Source: 2021 American Community Survey

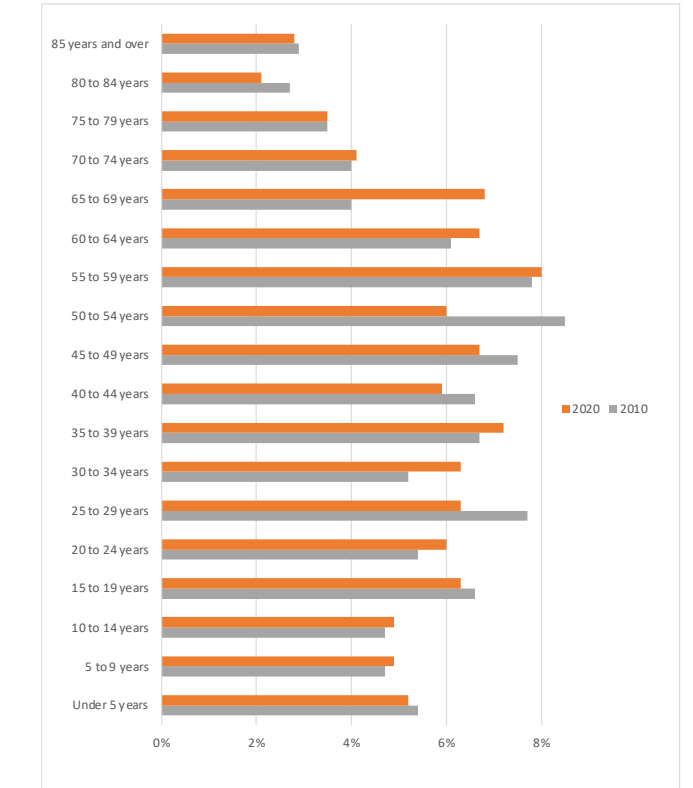
- An aging population impacts the need for accessible housing, medical services, increased dependency on transit, decreased ability to maintain homes from lack of mobility or finances

## Households by Type

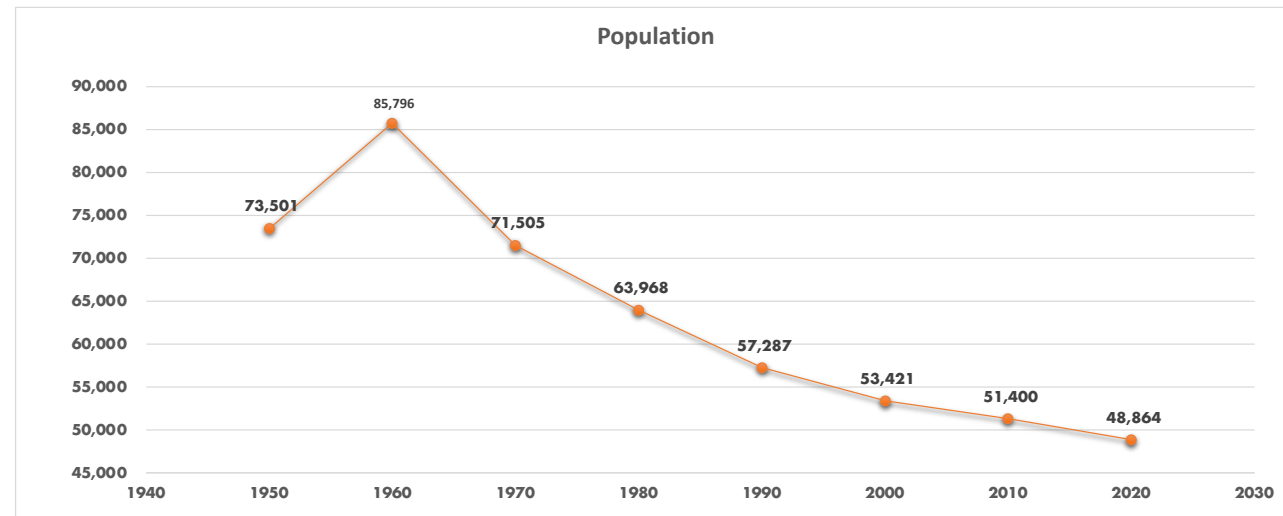


Household Types	2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%
Family Households	13,616	55.6	12,587	53.7
Single Households	9,537	38.9	9,241	39.4
Non-Family Households	1,352	5.5	1,625	6.9

## Population by Age (%)

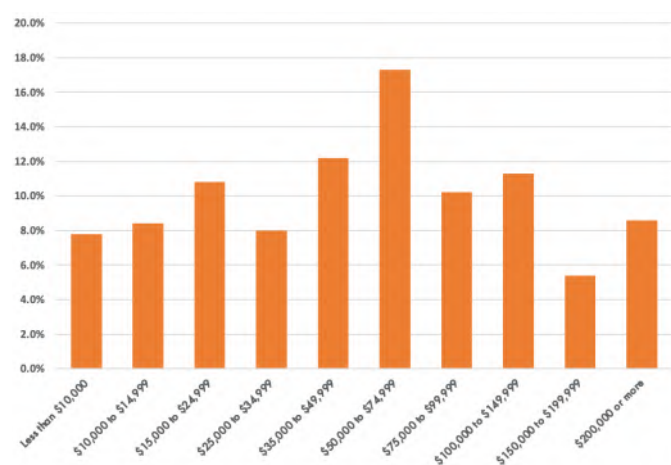


## Charleston Historical Population Data



\*A key contributor to the city's population growth was the City's annexation of 19 square miles in 1957

## Household Income



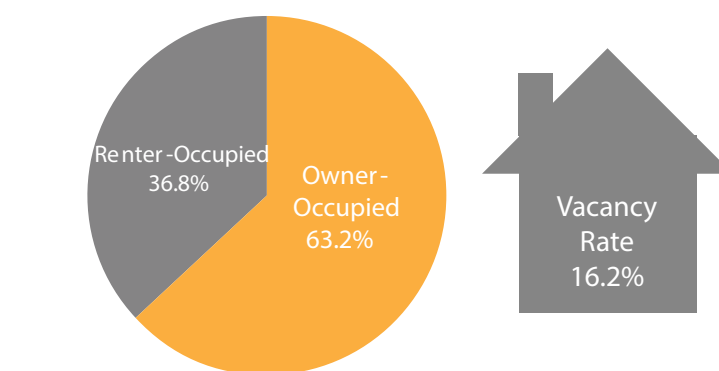
## Poverty

Percentage of families and people whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level

		with children
All families	15.4%	25.2%
Married couple families	5.6%	5.5%
Families with female householder, no husband present	38.4%	51.3%
All people	19.8%	

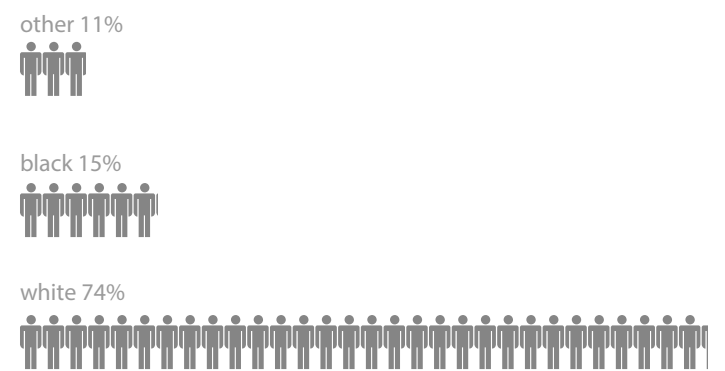
Source: American Community Survey 2021

## Housing Units



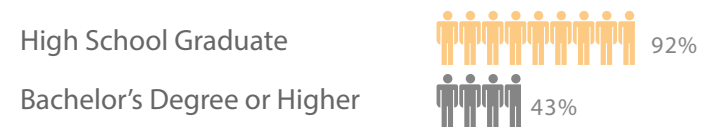
Data Source: American Community Survey 2021

## Race



Data Source: 2020 Decennial Census

## Education



Data Source: American Community Survey 2021

# D. Relationship to Other Plans

While this plan creates a vision for the future, it is important to realize its place in Charleston's history. This plan draws upon a rich planning history in the city, which stretches back to the beginning of the twentieth century, as described at right.

This plan replaces the 1996 Comprehensive Plan to respond to new challenges and opportunities and incorporates concepts and recommendations from recent neighborhood planning efforts. Several recent separate planning documents are to be considered chapters of this Comprehensive Plan including the following and any subsequently adopted as plan amendments by the city:

- **Downtown Plan (2013).** Prepared as part of this Comprehensive Planning effort, the 2013 Downtown Plan, while published separately, is considered a chapter of this plan. An executive summary of that document is included as Chapter 5 of this document. This Downtown Plan acknowledges past planning efforts including the C.E.N.T.R.A.L Plan (1997) and the recently expired Downtown Urban Renewal Plan (1985).
- **Riverfront Plan (2006).** The Riverfront Plan was created with the primary goals of creating a more accessible and usable park space along the river, integrating neighborhoods and downtown Charleston with the river, enhancing areas for special events on the river, and spurring economic development. Since the adoption of the plan, the City has implemented a scenic overlook at the end of Court Street, covered the seating bowl at Haddad Park and created a covered stage for special events at Haddad Park. This plan remains effective except where this new Comprehensive Plan has updated recommendations, such as the recommended separated bikeway along Kanawha Boulevard.
- **South Hills Business District Design.** Capital improvements plan for the business district.
- **Florida Street Revitalization Project.** A streetscape plan, being revised at the time of this plan to reflect recommendations for Kanawha Boulevard
- **Kanawha Trestle and Rail Trail Master Plan.** Being updated simultaneous to this Comprehensive Plan, especially in regards to bikeway connections near Patrick Street

- **MacCorkle Avenue Study.** Looking at streetscape and right-of-way improvements and character districts in preparation for a future form-based code
- **Bike and Transportation Master Plan.** Looking at infrastructure improvements and developing a plan to connect all parts of Charleston via safe and comfortable bicycle linkages

### Neighborhood Plans

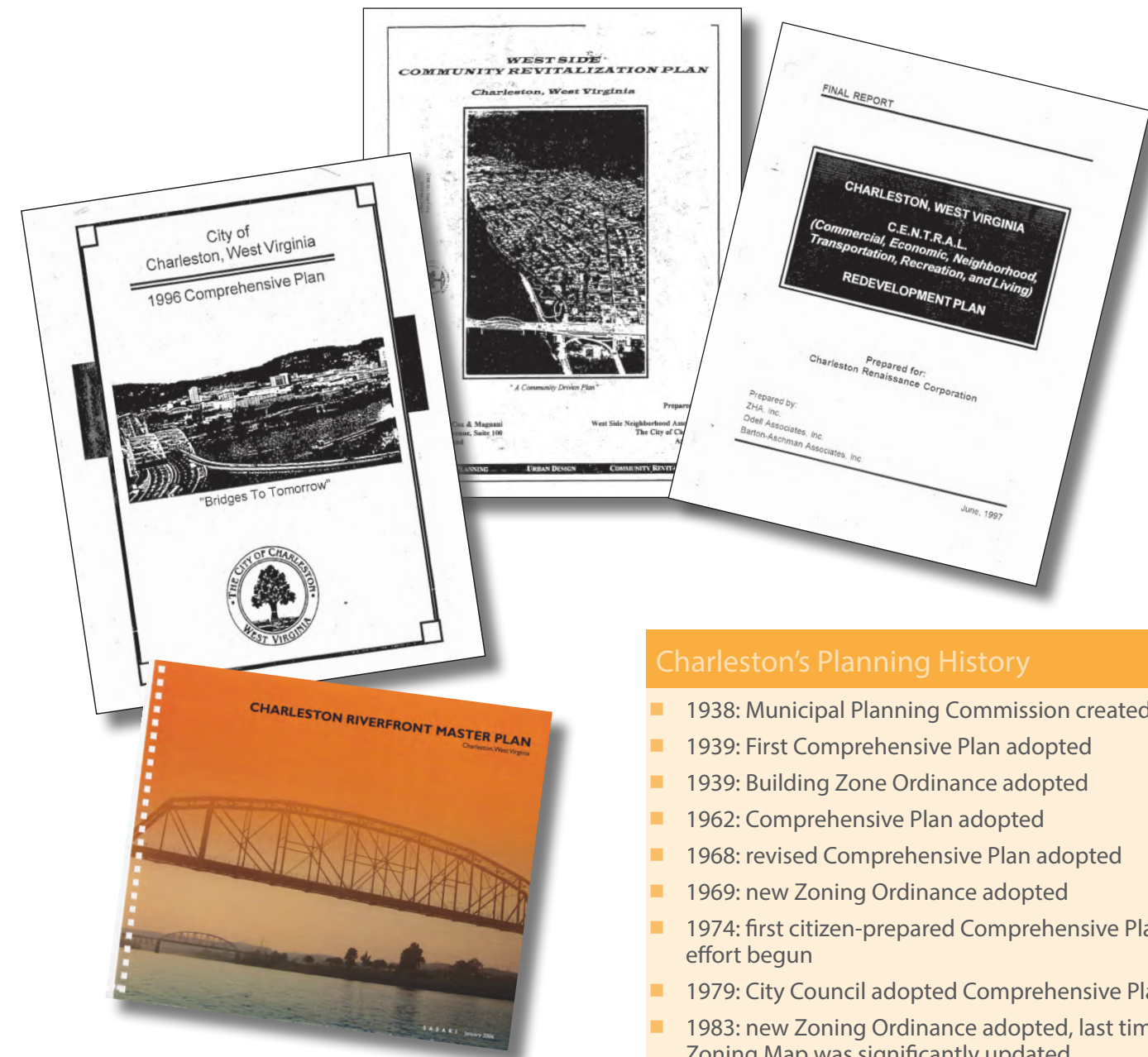
This plan builds upon neighborhood-specific plans written following adoption of the 1996 plan. The recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan took those plans into consideration and this plan replaces those plans. Any future area plans may be subsequently adopted as Comprehensive Plan amendments by the city. The recommendations outlined in this plan for these three neighborhoods should be used as a basis for creating new area plans that delve into more detail.

- **West Side Revitalization Plan (1996)**
- **East End Revitalization Plan (1997)**
- **Kanawha City Revitalization Plan (1999)**

### CURA Plans

The Charleston Urban Renewal Authority (CURA) has several plans that govern its various districts. These plans were consulted when analyzing the neighborhoods and creating recommendations. The City should continue to work hand-in-hand with CURA to implement recommendations from this plan in those redevelopment areas.

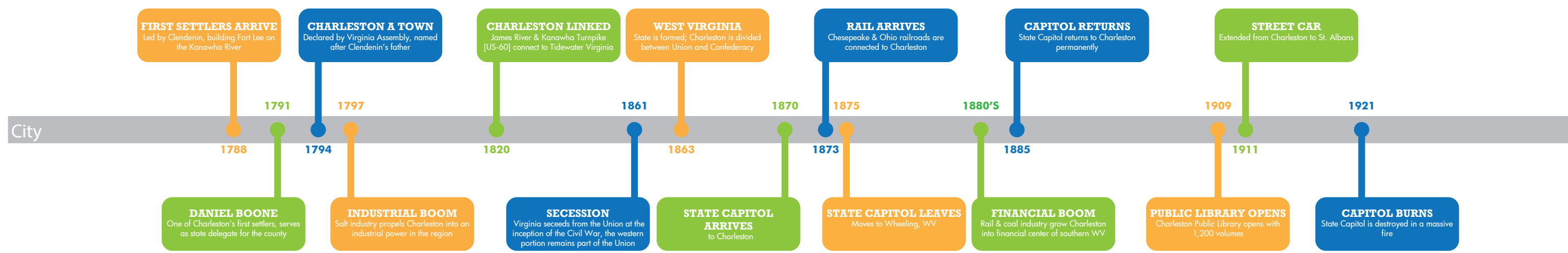
- **Strategic Urban Renewal for Downtown Charleston and Adjoining West and East Communities**
- **West Side Community Renewal Plan**
- **East End Community Renewal Plan**



Other plans are more specifically referenced in the topic chapters to which they most closely pertain.

## Charleston's Planning History

- 1938: Municipal Planning Commission created
- 1939: First Comprehensive Plan adopted
- 1939: Building Zone Ordinance adopted
- 1962: Comprehensive Plan adopted
- 1968: revised Comprehensive Plan adopted
- 1969: new Zoning Ordinance adopted
- 1974: first citizen-prepared Comprehensive Plan effort begun
- 1979: City Council adopted Comprehensive Plan
- 1983: new Zoning Ordinance adopted, last time Zoning Map was significantly updated
- 1996: Comprehensive Plan adopted
- 2005: new Zoning Ordinance adopted





# E. Community Assets and Recent Accomplishments

## Key City Assets

- Capitol complex brings visitors, tourists, and workers to city
- Water features add beauty and opportunities for water-related recreation activities
- The riverfront and Haddad Park
- Topography provides vistas, recreational opportunities and close proximity to nearby rural/natural areas
- Distinct neighborhoods offer a variety of housing options for all ages and family types
- Most services and destinations are within a 10 minute drive, it is very easy to get around the city by car
- Strong higher education presence as home to the University of Charleston, West Virginia State University, West Virginia University at CAMC, Bridgemont Technical School, West Virginia Junior College, and Garnet Career Center. Marshall University is also located in close proximity to Charleston.
- CAMC is a regional health center
- The Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center attracts regional events
- Capitol Street and the core downtown area generate big-city excitement in what otherwise is a "small town"

## Recent Accomplishments

It is important to recognize the significant improvements Charleston has made in the last 5 to 10 years. The City can build upon these efforts for the next 20 years.

### Development, Revitalization, and Preservation

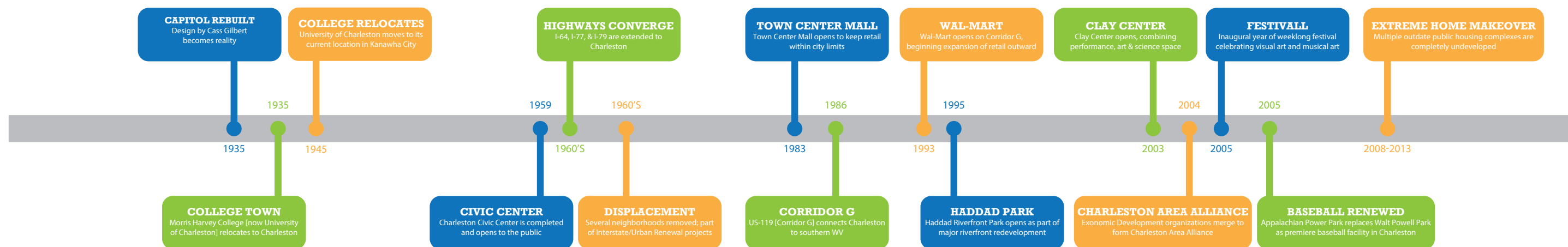
- Complete renovation/transformation of the public housing at Orchard Manor, Washington Manor, Littlepage Terrace and Renaissance Circle.
- Historic Districts added to the National Register: Downtown, Elk City, Luna Park
- Revitalization on the Washington Street East Corridor
- Growth at UC: three dorms, pharmacy school building, business school in downtown, parking garage, Triana Field
- Highland Hospital expansion
- Health Science addition at CAMC Memorial Hospital
- Renovation of the MacCorkle Mansion at the top of the Carriage Trail
- Downtown Outdoor Dining Ordinance
- Creation of both the East and West Side Main Street Programs
- Saved the historic YWCA building
- South Hills Business District improvements: sidewalks, light fixtures, landscaping beds, gateway signage
- Complete redevelopment of the Kanawha Mall

- Adoption of the East End and West Side Community Renewal Plans
- Temporary uses on vacant lots (especially CURA owned parcels) Dog Park, Community Gardens, East End Open Air Market(Coming soon)
- Renovation of the Quarrier Diner and Equities House
- Improved perception of the East End
- Opening of the Habitat for Humanity ReStore
- Provided more than \$1 million to businesses as part of the Small Business Investment Grant Initiative
- Established a Small Business Advance Team to engage with Charleston businesses to trouble-shoot concerns and interface with city resources to enhance small business investment and success
- Increased Mayor's Economic Incentives to allow flexibility to market and attract economic drivers to Charleston
- Created the City's first Business Improvement District
- Partnering with The McGee Foundation to create a master plan to improve the lives of those that live and work on Charleston's West Side.

### Parks, Recreation, and Greenways

- Appalachian Power Park
- Dog parks: East End, North Charleston
- Renovated sports fields at Kanawha City Community Center, North Charleston Community Center, Cato Park

- Riverfront beautification: Canopy at Haddad, Overlook at Court Street, Schoenbaum Stage
- Riverbank stabilization project from Patrick Street Bridge to Magic Island
- Mary Price Ratrie Gateway Greenspace across from the Clay Center
- Special Events: FestivALL, Rod Run and Doo Wop, Live on the Levee
- Revitalizing and renovating the center of our City with the redesign and construction of a new Slack Plaza
- Continued baseball in Charleston — under new ownership — as a result of collaboration between the City, The Atlantic League of Professional Baseball and the new team — the Charleston Dirty Birds
- Created the Holly Jolly Brawley outdoor holiday event
- Creating a pump (bike) track and extending the walking trail at Cato Park



## E. Community Assets and Recent Accomplishments Cont.

- Building a park in the heart of the West Side complete with a playground, basketball courts and more
- Renovating Celebration Station on the East End in partnership with Kanawha County Schools, The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation and the Charleston Rotary
- Bringing back the famed Charleston Sternwheel Regatta after being gone since 2009
- Installed kayak launch on Elk River
- Inspired by City youth, creating the City's first skate park in 2021
- Partnered with AARP of West Virginia to install a new "fit mobile" park on Charleston's East End
- Completed and opened the Mary Price Ratrie Arboretum at Spring Hill Cemetery - the largest arboretum in the State of West Virginia
- Partnered with Paralyzed Veterans of America to offer Bocce Ball for paralyzed veterans

### Streets and Infrastructure

- Streetscape improvements: Washington Street East, Washington Street West, Florida Street, Kanawha Boulevard at Haddad Park
- Joined the FEMA Community Rating System which offers lower flood insurance premiums in return for the city using best practices for flood plain management
- Lighting of the South Side Bridge, Kanawha Boulevard Bridge and Washington Street Bridge
- Historic façade renovations in Elk City Historic District
- Completed 125 public art projects including

permanent pieces, temporary installations, and conservation projects — with 108 artists being commissioned for their work since 2019

- All parking meters in the City of Charleston now have "smart" capabilities to accept mobile and credit card payment, as well as cash and coin.
- Installed approximately 325 ADA accessible ramps through the City
- Reduced speed limits on roads in residential areas and around community centers
- Working with federal, state and local partners on the Capital Connector project to better connect Charleston's East End, Downtown and West Side

### Service Delivery and Regulations

- Streamlined the process for nuisance violations and intensified property maintenance and code enforcement staff
- City Departments were moved to the City Service Center to create a "one stop shop"
- New Flexible Zoning Ordinance
- Noise Ordinance directed at boom cars
- Creation of the Wayfinding Commission and the Historic Landmarks Commission
- Adoption of the Rental Registration and Inspection Ordinance
- Established the Mayor's CARE (Coordinated Addiction Response Effort) - Which offers resources to address homelessness, addiction services, mental health disorders, and family reunifications.
- Created the City's first Mental Health and Homeless Outreach Coordinators and a

recovery support specialist.

- Established first LGBTQ Working Group to enhance inclusion and work to eliminate discrimination.
- Formed the Charleston Council for Outreach and Empowerment (C-COE), a citizen action group to promote justice and fair treatment for all
- Established Charleston's first Youth Council to engage and involve our city's young people in the future of the city.
- Created the "WHOOOPS" notice — in lieu of a parking ticket — as an educational opportunity on parking options.
- Updated parking ticket appeals process to allow for informal appeals that save time and money for City residents and visitors.
- Created the Neighborhood Reinvestment Overlay District to encourage the redevelopment on the West Side.
- Created the Charleston Land Reuse Agency (CLRA) to help get property back into productive use. Added a City Planner position (FY2022 budget) to support the expanding and ongoing work of the CLRA
- Established a local vendor preference to provide competitive advantage to Charleston businesses when certain criteria are met
- Developed a Vacant Structures Registry
- Partnered with the West Virginia Drug Intervention Institute to aggregate data for the Quick Response Team (QRT)
- Implemented a procedure to hold property owners accountable and ensure they are keeping an eye on their property for illegal activity

### Sustainability

- Engaged MSW Consultants to complete a Recycling Survey
- Established a "Green Team" to lead efforts to find environmentally-friendly, cost-effective measures to make Charleston greener
- Created the City's first Green Initiatives Fund

### COVID-19 Response

- In conjunction with the County, hosted more than 100 drive-thru COVID-19 testing events, performed more than 40,000 COVID-19 tests, prioritized testing in minority communities and provided more than 84,000 COVID-19 vaccinations as of January 2022
- Expanded outdoor dining to increase seating capacities and provided designated parking to accommodate curbside pick-ups
- During COVID, created outdoor recreational opportunities to come together as a community while maintaining social distancing such as drive-in movie nights, food truck Wednesdays and closing Kanawha Boulevard at times for walking and running
- Allocating Charleston's \$36.8 million in American Rescue Plan funding in an effort to promote economic recovery, healthy & safe communities while also investing in our city's future



Chapter 2

# NEIGHBORHOODS AND LAND USE





## A. Introduction

Neighborhoods are the heart and soul of Charleston. They are diverse and dynamic places with unique characteristics, recognized by both residents and the community at large. Each has a strong identity that helps define Charleston as a desirable place to live and invest. A neighborhood includes not just houses, but schools, parks, and businesses that all contribute to make each neighborhood unique.

Healthy neighborhoods do not come about by accident; maintaining healthy sustainable neighborhoods takes conscious, proactive decisions by non-profit organizations, community leaders, government, private sector partners, institutions, and the public. By examining current trends and character patterns, we can plan for a Charleston that builds upon neighborhood strengths and enhances them for future generations.

Charleston's neighborhoods are a key asset: each one is special, with a character that its residents wish to protect and enhance. Having this diversity is important because a resident can choose to live in Charleston, yet move from one neighborhood to another as their or their family's needs change over time. Public workshop participants overwhelmingly supported Charleston's strong neighborhood identities and broad consensus was reached to preserve and enhance Charleston's quality of life and livability through a vision for its neighborhoods, highlighted at right.

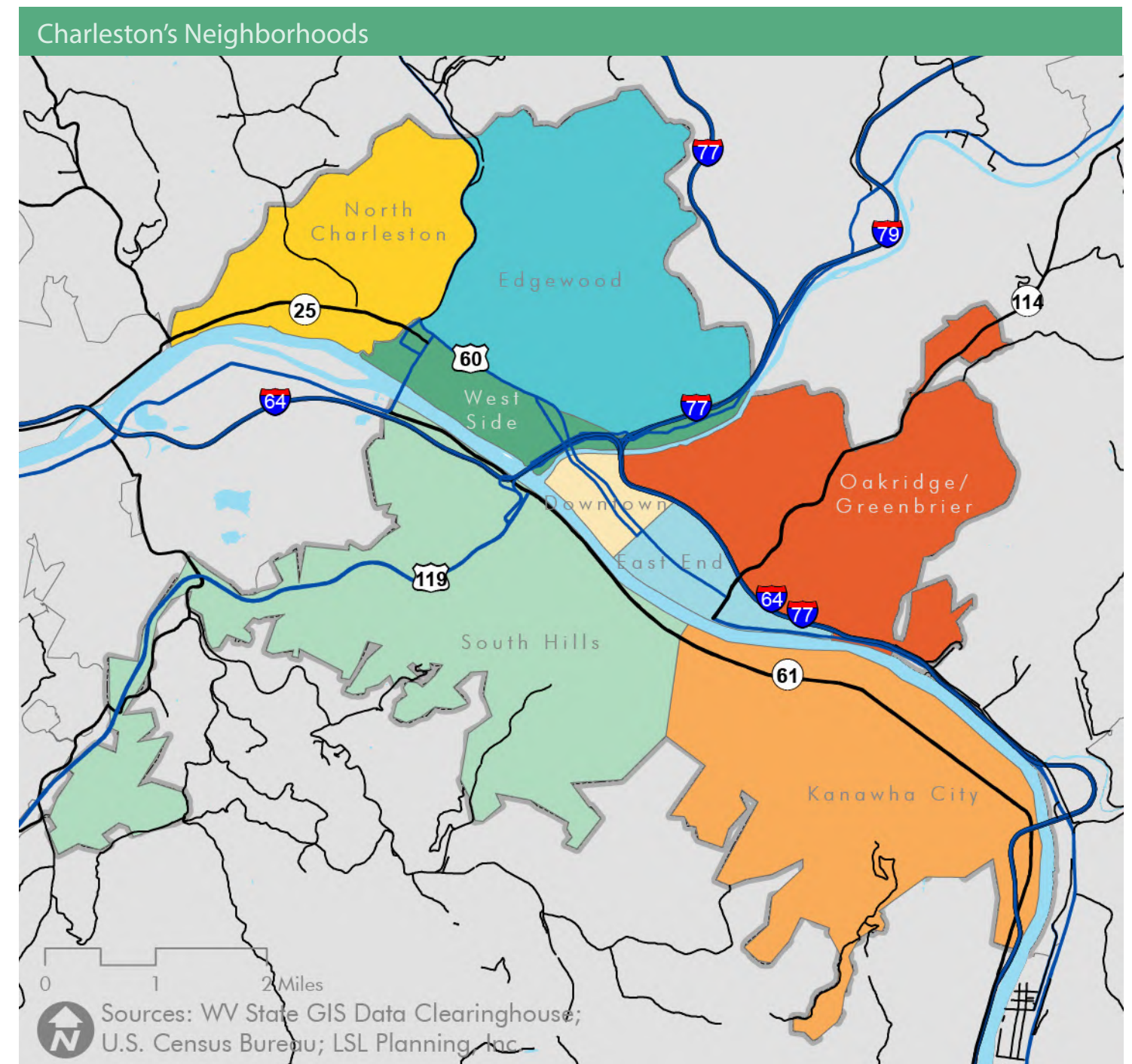
The differences between Charleston's neighborhoods are a unique strength; however, to remain vital they must continue to accommodate residents at varying stages of life and income levels. Some neighborhoods must realize that in order to prosper, they must adapt to remain appealing places to live. This chapter addresses the challenges Charleston's neighborhoods face and what can be done to support their unique character and ensure long-term viability.

While some of Charleston's neighborhoods formally identify themselves as neighborhoods, other areas of the city are loosely classified as neighborhoods for the sake of this chapter's analysis and recommendations, as depicted in the map at right. Each neighborhood has a section with specific recommendations, and overall citywide goals are listed below.

### Overall Neighborhood Goals

- Rehabilitate and maintain the existing housing stock and continue to enforce existing housing, rental, and maintenance codes to ensure neighborhoods remain strong and vital
- Emphasize home stewardship to promote home and property upkeep among renters, homeowners, and landlords
- Continue beautification effort to emphasize neighborhood character and eliminate blight
- Promote appropriate and compatible infill development
- Adopt reuse strategies for vacant and underutilized properties and buildings
- Ensure traffic in neighborhoods are at appropriate speeds to make it comfortable for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Provide housing to match the varied needs and income levels of the present and future population with particular attention to housing in and near the downtown for college students and young professionals and a variety of housing choices to meet the changing needs as seniors age
- Continue to build neighborhood identity through community organizing and physical
- Continue to utilize the LRA to bring underutilized property back to productive use

Provide safe, walkable, vibrant neighborhoods with distinct identities, and strong connections between commercial districts, residences, and green spaces



## B. Land Use

A neighborhood includes not just houses, but schools, parks, and businesses that all contribute to make each neighborhood unique.

This section draws from the other chapters and results in a plan that builds on Charleston's existing framework, recognizes economic realities, and emphasizes residents' strong appreciation of existing neighborhood character. The analysis of existing land use in conjunction with public participation has helped shape this plan; describing where land use and character relationships can be strengthened. In some cases, the land use arrangement causes conflicts that need to be addressed. For example, an industrial use with trucks in a residential neighborhood may have a negative impact. The plan might suggest ways the industrial use can be made more compatible or that the use become less intense over time.

### Land Use Planning

Communities employ land use planning as the primary tool to define sustainable and supportive land use arrangements and to avoid or correct conflicts. Land use conflicts occur when incompatible uses are co-located, resulting in various short and long term problems. In time, the resulting nuisances can depreciate the desirability and value of all affected properties.

Conversely, future development that is a potential community asset can be identified during this same process. Potentially conflicting land uses can benefit the neighborhoods in which they are located, and the community at-large, if appropriately designed and operated. The relationship between industrial uses and residential neighborhoods is a good example; when properly sited, industrial land uses can provide nearby jobs for residents and support area retail. But sometimes the use needs to change.

### Charleston's Land Use Pattern

As a relatively built out city, Charleston's land use patterns are largely established. The community's historic core has been its downtown and surrounding neighborhoods in the city's "flats." Later development occurred in the hills as residential neighborhoods throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. While most of Charleston was designed for the last century, its configuration helps support principles for more sustainable development:

- Neighborhoods have the density and character to support a more urban development pattern.
- Charleston has a healthy downtown and several vital neighborhood commercial centers.
- In keeping with principles of sustainability, renovating the existing housing stock will not require the same

commitment of resources and energy needed for all-new construction.

### Preserve, Enhance, Transform

While Charleston's land use patterns are well established, certain adjustments and improvements are needed. However, these actions must be considered within the context of neighborhood and district character. To that end, Charleston's character was analyzed using such indicators as street configuration, block size, building location and form, parking, and lot size. Along with public input received throughout the process in the form of mapping exercises, this analysis has led to a framework for recommendations based on the concepts of preserve, enhance, and transform.

That process helped identify features that shape a positive image of Charleston, not only for residents, but also visitors. These are the features that must be preserved or enhanced to make Charleston an even more desirable place. Other less desirable characteristics were also identified and have a much different impact on community perceptions. These are the areas or area characteristics that must be either significantly changed or completely transformed.

### Linking Land Use to Character

While previous Comprehensive Plans have focused on ways to classify use, density, and land use arrangements, this plan adds character as a key consideration. Character impacts how residents and visitors feel about a place and influences their decisions on where to live and visit. Therefore, first impressions about a place go well beyond just land use and include design. Blending land use and character is a new way for Charleston to guide future development that best fits the goals of this Comprehensive Plan. Key strategies include the following:

- increasing population in proximity to downtown,
- developing mixed-use centers that conform to recent neighborhood planning efforts,
- strengthening neighborhood commercial areas, and
- minimizing land use conflicts, such as buffering industrial uses from nearby homes.

### Recognizing and Respecting Neighborhood Character

To understand what Charleston and its neighborhoods should be like tomorrow, it helps to remember what makes Charleston unique today. This section looks at the characteristics that make the city special, and identifies the key features that should be reviewed when making decisions about future development and redevelopment. Residents celebrate the fact that Charleston's neighbor-

hoods are varied and those characteristics help define areas to preserve, enhance, or transform. Whether historic, urban, or more suburban in character, the public has expressed a desire to retain the character of Charleston's neighborhoods. However, even the most stable and vital neighborhoods were recognized as needing some level of intervention to make them more sustainable for the future. These predominantly "preserve" neighborhoods have fewer recommendations than those with more "enhance" and "transform" sites, but all the neighborhoods have been assessed in terms of land use and character, with descriptions highlighted on the following pages. By clearly articulating distinct character differences and communicating them in advance, property owners, developers, and investors will have a much better understanding about the kind of community Charleston wants to be. This will facilitate the review and approval of future redevelopment projects, removing much of the guess work. In addition, a character-based approach to planning begins to establish a foundation to review and potentially modify development regulations so they better reflect the desired character of a particular neighborhood, business area, or district.

Based on character, investment in neighborhoods located at the core of the city will improve quality of life by promoting a more efficient use of land and infrastructure and by directing growth back into Charleston. This can serve to reduce reliance on the automobile, minimize environmental impacts, and lessen the strain on public services. Further from the core, neighborhoods can be enhanced with strategic investments: improving streetscapes and lighting, connecting sidewalks and paths where practical, and interconnecting open spaces.



Members of the Neighborhoods Technical Committee document areas of the city to preserve, enhance, and transform

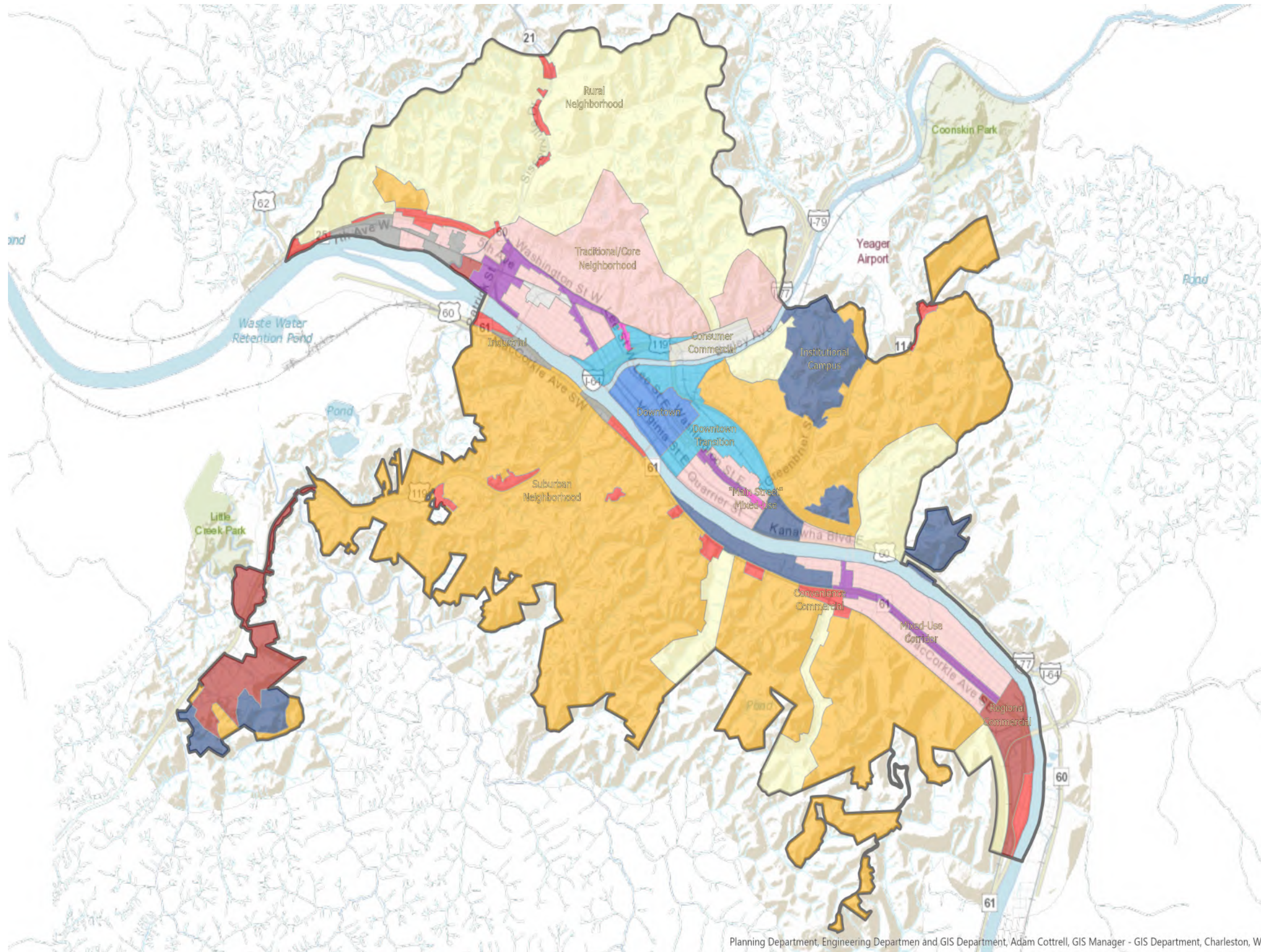
## Preserve, Enhance, Transform



Transform: Outdated shopping centers (for more detail on the Patrick Street Subarea, see page 25)



# Future Land Use and Character Map



### Future Land Use Areas

#### Land Use Class

- "Main Street" Mixed-Use
- Consumer Commercial
- Convenience Commercial
- Downtown
- Downtown Transition
- Industrial
- Institutional Campus
- Mixed-Use Corridor
- Regional Commercial
- Rural Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional/Core Neighborhood

For more detail on land use/character descriptions see pages 14-16.

Each neighborhood's land use opportunities are displayed in more detail on pages 17-21.

The Future Land Use and Character Map is a long-range vision of how land uses should evolve over time and should not be confused with the City's Zoning Map, which is a (short-term) mechanism for regulating development. It is a generalized map intended to provide geographic links to recommendations in this plan. More detailed evaluation would be required as part of any

Planning Department, Engineering Department and GIS Department, Adam Cottrell, GIS Manager - GIS Department, Charleston, WV

# Future Land Use and Character Descriptions and Examples

## Rural Neighborhood

- Hills
- No sidewalks
- Rural character
- Curvilinear streets

Purpose: To maintain rural living options within city limits and more flexible regulations for areas annexed into Charleston



## Suburban Neighborhood

- Hills
- Few sidewalks possible
- Mid-20th century-present
- Subdivisions, estate homes typical
- Curvilinear streets
- Larger lots
- Predominantly single-family homes
- Well-designed modern multi-family may reflect the suburban residential character along major streets, transit routes, as a transition between single-family and non-single-family with buffered site design, and where infrastructure can meet the need

Purpose: To provide opportunities for new homes outside the historic city core



## Traditional Core Neighborhood

- Flats
- Sidewalks
- 19th century-present, historic/urban style homes
- Grid streets
- Smaller lots
- Predominantly single-family character
- Duplexes, triplexes and multi-family units may respect the character of the surrounding urban, historic fabric, while large-scale modern multi-family is less appropriate
- Multi-family, urban housing types like townhouses are appropriate transitional uses

Purpose: To preserve the historic, walkable neighborhoods in Charleston's flat core city





Main Street  
Mixed-Use

- traditional historic “Main St” feel
- flats above storefronts
- on-street or rear parking
- very pedestrian friendly
- 2-3 stories

Purpose: To provide traditional “Main Street” nodes in Charleston’s historic neighborhoods



Mixed-Use  
Corridor

- less housing, more office/commercial mix
- pedestrian and auto friendly
- strong retail nodes at key intersections
- side and rear parking preferred, some front acceptable
- retooled “strip” commercial

Purpose: To promote quality development along Charleston’s main corridors



Convenience  
Commercial

- auto-oriented
- small/medium-scale retail
- more sensitive to neighboring context than regional commercial

Purpose: To provide small commercial nodes in auto-oriented parts of the city



Regional  
Commercial

- large scale, “big box”
- auto-oriented/interchange
- power centers: Corridor G, Patrick Street Plaza, Kanawha City interchange

Purpose: To provide shopping destinations for the greater Charleston region



## Downtown Transition

- Warehouse District near farmers market and Power Park
- Live/work opportunities
- Building heights transitioning down in scale from downtown heights
- Moderately intense multi-family residential (including senior housing, lofts, townhouses), also as a transition to more predominantly residential areas, buffering from non-single-family uses
- Cultural District "Midtown" blend of institutional uses

Purpose: to provide a transitional buffer between the intense downtown core and nearby neighborhoods



## Downtown

- Historic city core
- Capitol Street
- Mixed-use
- Tall buildings
- Civic/financial core

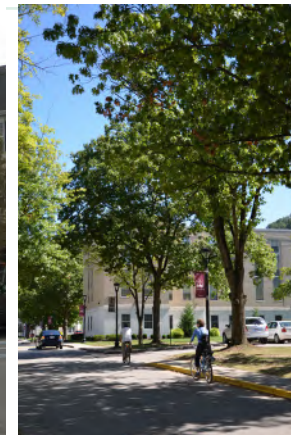
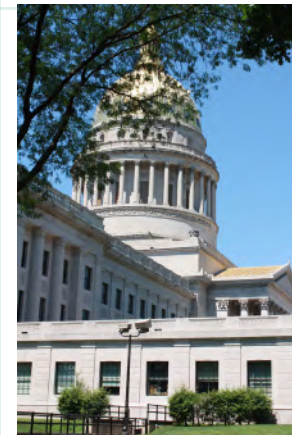
see Chapter 5: Downtown Plan Executive Summary and the separately published Downtown Plan



## Institutional Campus

- Medical campus
- Educational campus
- Capitol complex
- Mixed-use campuses (Research & Development business parks, senior living)

Purpose: to promote well-planned and designed large institutional campus



## Consumer Commercial

- Small-scale uses for former industrial sites within or near neighborhoods
- Distributors, limited warehousing
- Professional service shops
- Utilities
- Auto maintenance/service
- Research and development
- Low truck volumes
- Since relatively low intensity uses, these can be adjacent to residential neighborhoods when views are screened



## Light Industrial

- Manufacturing
- May include more truck traffic and activities that may create noise, outdoor operations, etc. than the less intense uses considered appropriate for the Consumer Commercial category
- Not adjacent to residential neighborhoods





## C. West Side

### Past Planning Efforts

- West Side Community Renewal Plan Update (Pending)
- West Side Neighborhood Association BAD Buildings Report (2018)
- Strategic Urban Renewal Plan for Downtown Charleston, Near East End and Near West Side Districts (2016)
- West Side Community Renewal Plan (2008)
- West Side Revitalization Plan (1996)

### Westside Together

The McGee Foundation, a Charleston-based charitable foundation, has invested in the establishment of a framework and working group that has undertaken collaboration and goal setting among community leaders and citizens on the West Side. This West Side collaborative has directed the funding of early action projects with funds made available by the McGee Foundation and the Kanawha Valley Council on Philanthropy. This work has been informed by a substantial community outreach program that has canvassed 2,795 occupied households and completed detailed needs assessments for 615 households. In collaboration with HOPE CDC the group will work to coordinate resources for residents that expressed a desire to be connected to assistance. Through this assessment four main areas of focus have been identified for the collaborative going forward: Humane Housing, Meaningful Work & Wealth, Health & Safety, and Belonging & Civic Muscle. The group will continue to meet and drive collaboration as well as helping to guide informed investments for positive change and real outcomes in the neighborhood.

### Charleston Main Streets, West Side

The Main Street Program on the West Side merged with the East End Program in 2015 to form Charleston Main Streets. This organization now serves both districts to promote business development, historic preservation, and community improvement. The group hosts prominent events such as the Ice Cream and the Arts event in conjunction with Festival Charleston and the OktoberWest craft beer event each fall. The group regularly hosts West Side Mingle business networking events throughout the West Side. The group has also partnered with the City of Charleston to implement the Elk City Lighting Project to improve safety, aesthetics, and sense of place in the Elk City historic district through street and architectural lighting.

### West Side Neighborhood Association (WSNA)

The West Side Neighborhood Association, a 501(c)(3), is an active neighborhood association that meets monthly. The group received a technical assistance grant from the West Virginia Northern Brownfields Assistance Center to complete the WSNA BAD Building Report in 2018. This planning process identified building condition issues throughout the study area along with policy and program solutions to abandoned and dilapidated structures. In 2019 the group undertook the Luna Park Historic District Art and Signage Project with funding support from the Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation to raise public awareness, community identity, and public space enhancement of the Luna Park Historic District. The group has conducted neighborhood litter cleanups in recent years and continues to support City of Charleston Team Up to Clean Up events each spring. The group is currently pursuing support from the McGee Foundation to support planning and improvement around trash receptacles and litter reduction strategies.

### CURA and HOPE CDC

CURA has been actively purchasing properties targeted for improvement. Several recent purchases and demolitions of blighted properties have since sprouted community gardens. While CURA's efforts have concentrated on commercial properties, it has also provided funding for the efforts of HOPE CDC, a community development corporation that has focused on purchasing residential properties to rehab them or to clear them for development, especially in the CURA Home Ownership Zone. Long-range goals of HOPE CDC promoting community and population's health by addressing poverty, substance abuse, education, housing, social services coordination, workforce development and economic development, and other social determinants of health.

For more information on recent initiatives on the West Side, please see the appendix.

## Opportunities and Challenges

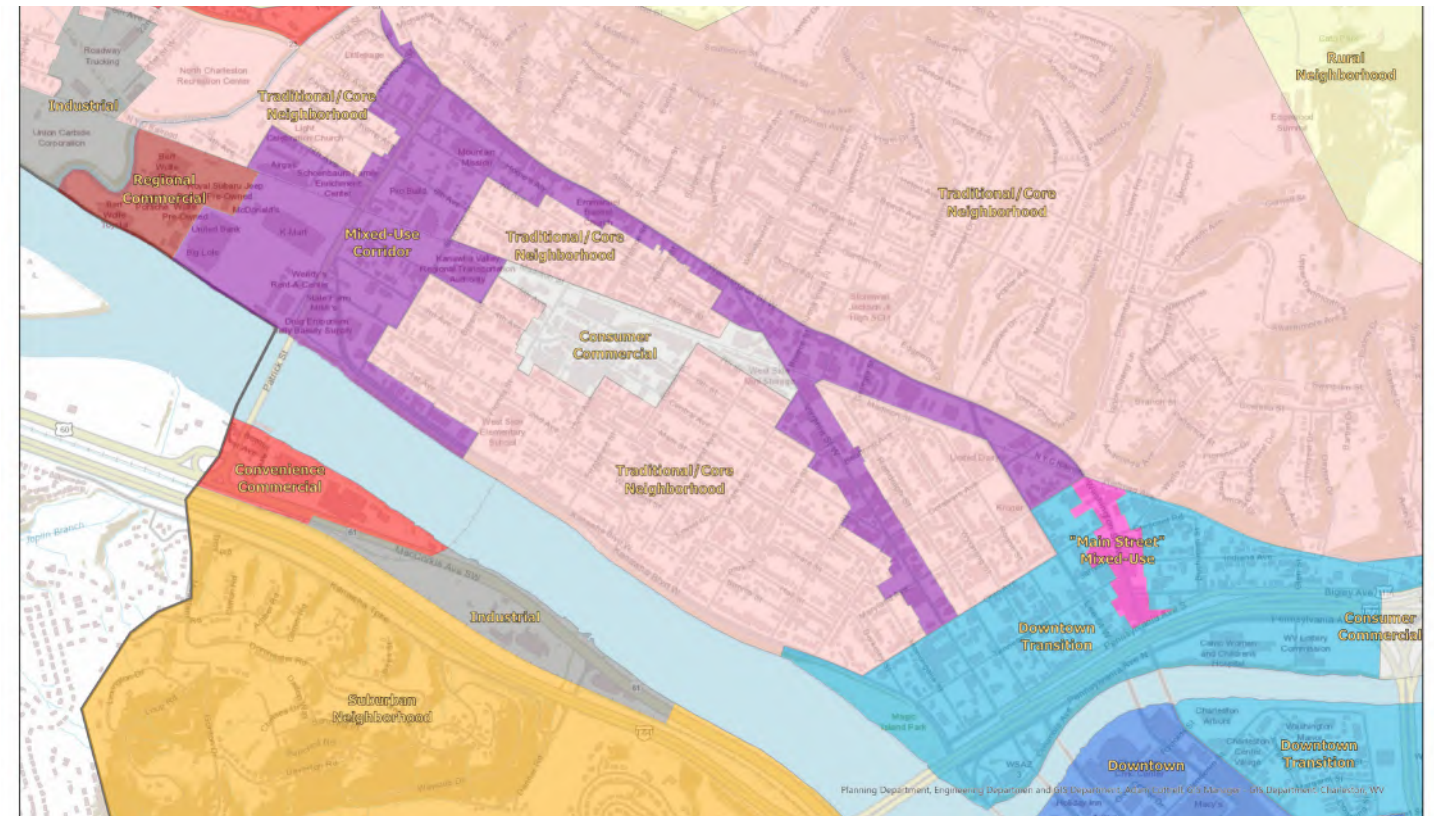
- Historic disinvestment
- Too much planned and zoned commercial land—former commercial sites lie vacant and underutilized
- Opportunities for creative reuse of old commercial buildings
- The Neighborhood Reinvestment Overlay District incentives, housing options for small lots are more viable
- Overcoming perception problems
- River and highway physically separate West Side from downtown, which makes it difficult to feed off the redevelopment energy there
- Possibilities to build on downtown synergy with close proximity as downtown “satellite” neighborhood
- Build upon core “Main Street” and Mixed Use Corridors areas for a vibrant mixed-use neighborhood node
- Look for historic preservation opportunities
- Build Ms. Ruby’s Corner Market
- Offer developer incentives such as property tax reductions, low cost redevelopments or low cost loans for property redevelopment
- Select one-way street conversions (see Mobility chapter)
- CURA or Main Street could buy, rehab, and resell vacant buildings
- Major new construction includes Mary C. Snow West Side Elementary, HOPE Townhouses, Bentley Apartments (Scattered Sites), Stockton Greene, the Beatrice Street Park, and Cato Park Improvements
- Promote utilization of Historic Tax Credits in the 4 National Register of Historic Districts/Absentee/out-of-state owners and landlords
- Absentee homeowners
- Declining housing stock

For more detail on recommendations for the Patrick Street business district, see the Subarea Application

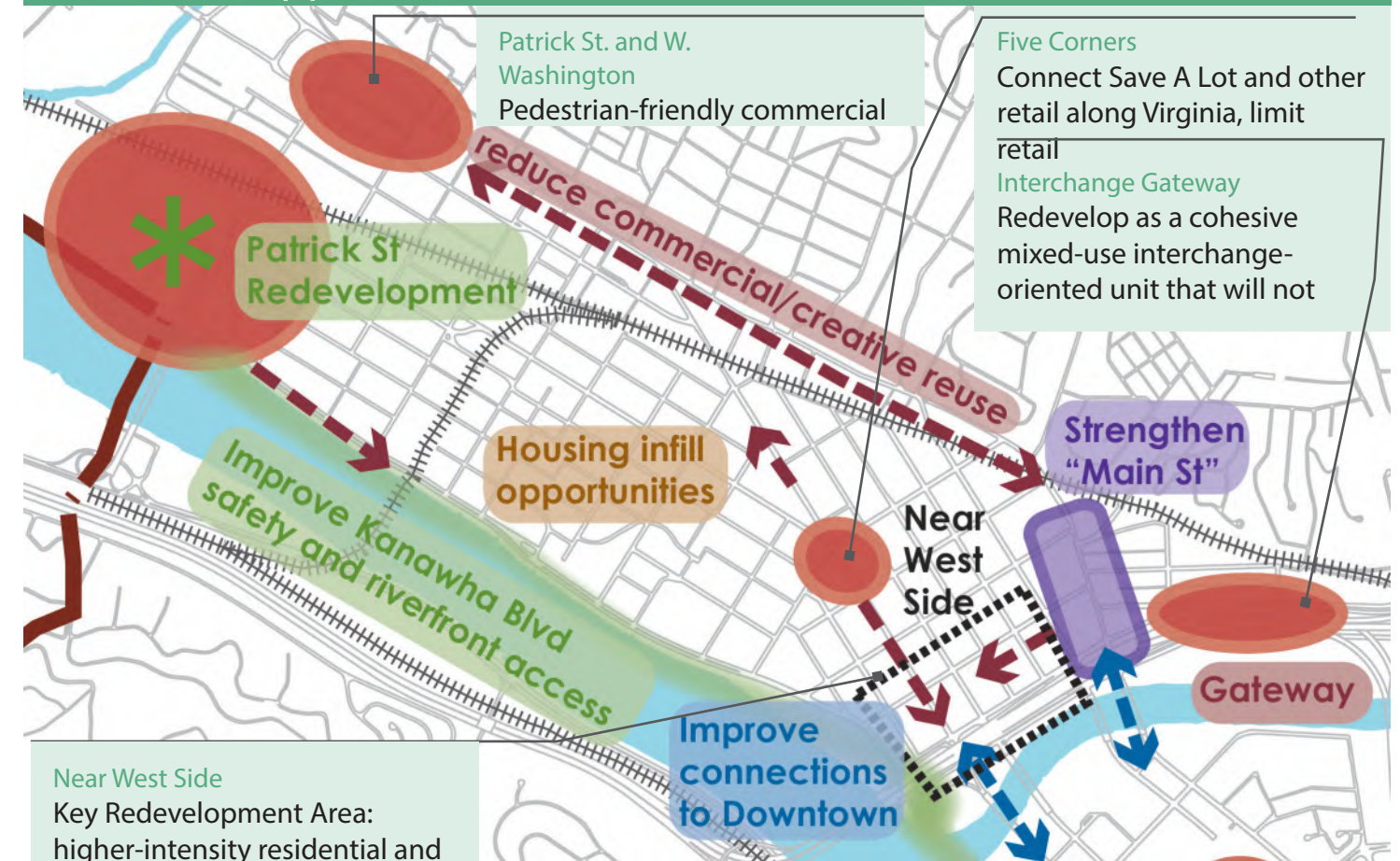
### West Side “Main St.” Retail Mix

- Pharmacy
- Bank
- Personal services
- Destination retailers
- Furniture and home furnishings
- Artists, art supplies, fabric and sewing
- Paint, wallpaper
- TSC or Farm and Fleet
- Eclectic cafes (coffee roastery)
- Used merchandise, antiques, vinyl records

## West Side Future Land Use



## West Side Opportunities





## D. East End

### Past Planning Efforts

**East End Community Renewal Plan (2005)** - an update to the 1990 plan; outlines a program for redevelopment of buildings and property; includes design standards for the Washington Street corridor.

**East End Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (1997)** - a supplement to the 1996 Comprehensive Plan; calls for beautification, crime mitigation, historic preservation, building social capital through community events and activities, and describes lack of recreational opportunities.

### Ongoing Community Development Initiatives

#### East End Community Association

The East End Community Association meets on an as-needed basis to tackle neighborhood issues like housing, beautification, public safety and neighborhood events. The East End Yard Sale is the Association's premier event, drawing thousands to the neighborhood on the Saturday before Mother's Day each year.

#### Charleston Main Streets

The East End established the State's first urban Main Street Program in the very early 2000s. Focused on commercial district revitalization through business promotion, retention, recruitment and historic preservation, East End Main Street lead the way for 181 building rehabilitations, 26

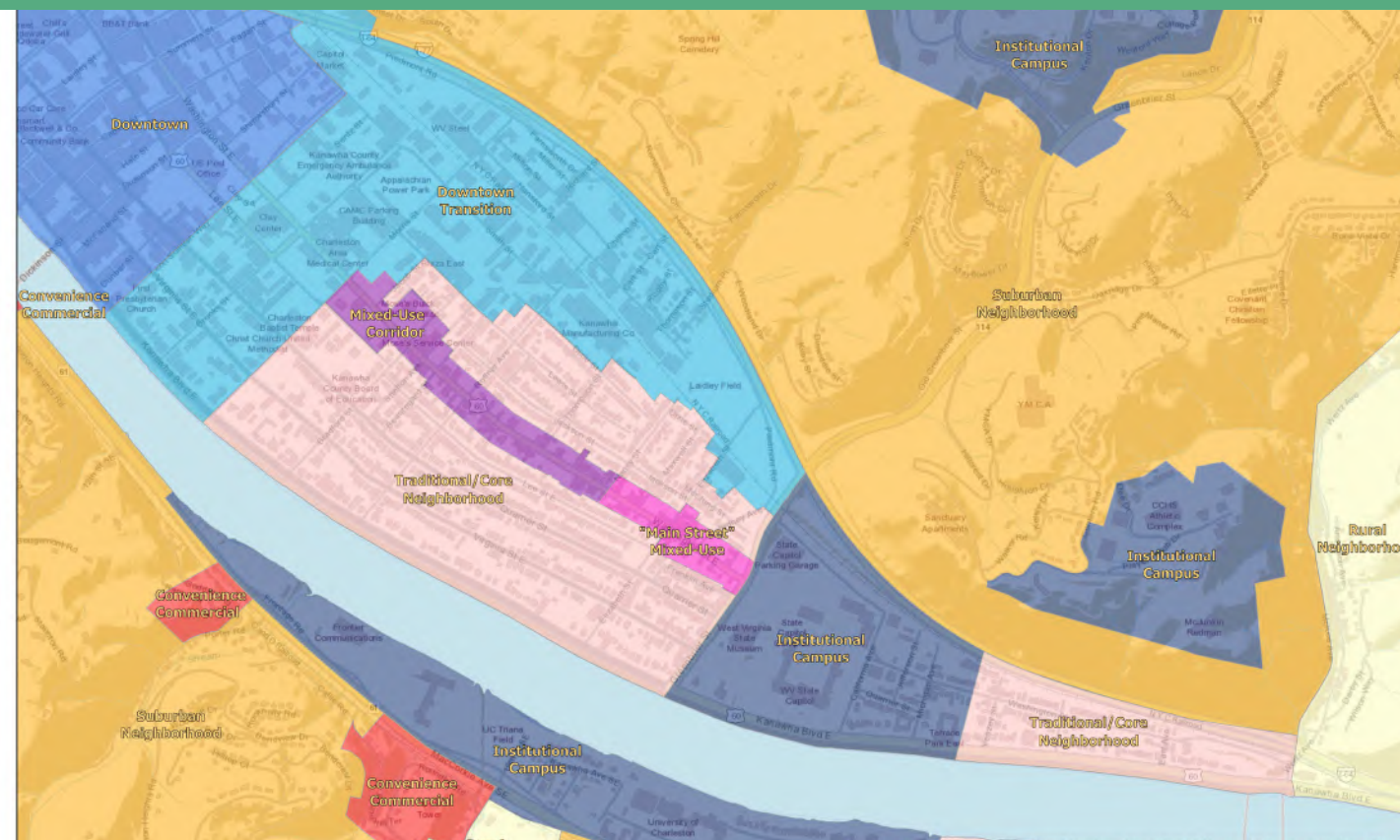
new businesses, 370 new jobs—and cut the vacancy rate in the district by more than half—in its first 10 years. Also during that time, volunteers affiliated with the organization constructed the East End Bazaar of pallets and metal roofing on property owned by the Charleston Urban Renewal Authority. The open air artisan market saw up to 500 customers each Saturday of its first season and experienced nearly \$20,000 in aggregate sales. Other ongoing initiatives include:

- StreetWorks: A drag queen-hosted art auction that raises funds for future public art projects.
- HallowEast: An annual multi-day Halloween celebration and business promotion featuring a horror-themed art show and a costume pub crawl.

The organization merged with a similar program on Charleston's West Side in 2015. A Façade Activation Program will roll out in early 2023 providing matching funds for business and property owners on the East End, West Side, and in the Downtown for façade improvements. The program is funded by CURA and Truist and will be administered by Charleston Main Streets.

For more information on recent initiatives in the East End, please see the appendix.

## East End Future Land Use

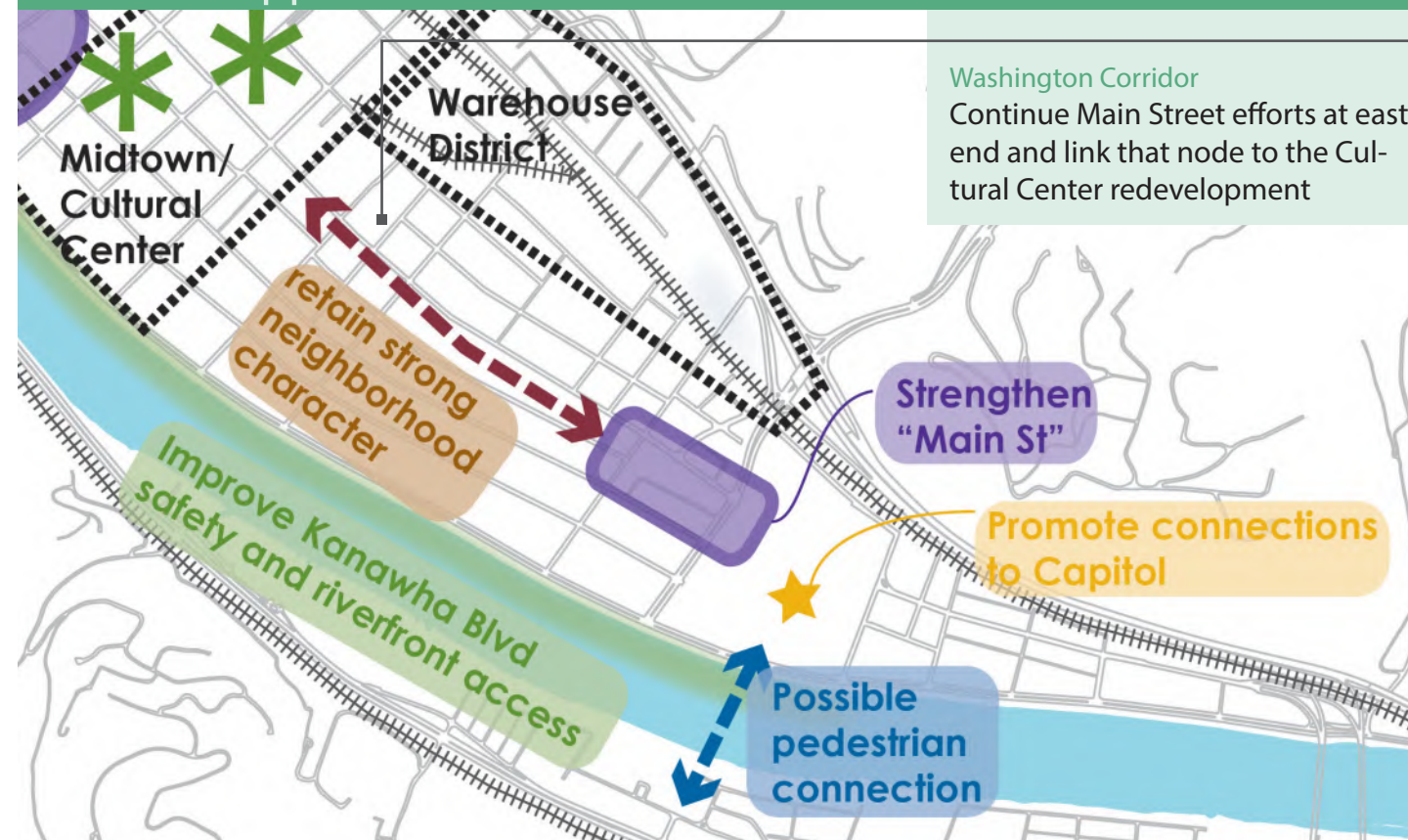


## Opportunities and Challenges

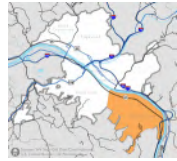
- Conveniently located between two major employment centers, an opportunity to entice hospital and capitol workers to live closer to work
- Lack of grocery store
- Lack of identity for transitional area between downtown and East End; rebrand as Midtown Cultural Center and Warehouse District with transitional mixed uses and building types
- Build upon core "Main Street"
- Historic District is a key asset; look for further historic preservation opportunities, particularly north of Washington Street
- The East End Historic District (Boundary Increase) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014 and is roughly bounded by Dixie, Greenbrier, and Lee Streets, and Shelton Alley. There is no design review process in place, but the listing makes available tax credits that encourage rehabilitation throughout the neighborhood.
- In 2019, the original boundary of the East End Historic District was re-surveyed. New historic property inventory forms were completed for each structure. These provide the Charleston Historic Landmarks Commission with updated information necessary to conduct design review.

- Design guidelines tailored to the specific characteristics within the original boundary of the East End Historic District were adopted in 2021. This document explains the CHLC's decision-making process and provides guidance for property owners wishing to take on rehabilitation and/or new construction projects.
- Improve gateways from downtown, expressway, and capitol
- The Capital Connector Project, discussed in detail on page #?, will include a road diet for both Greenbrier Street and Kanawha Boulevard. This will include enhancements to the gateways at the East End's business district and the State Capitol Complex.
- Minimize conversion of homes to businesses
- Develop higher density residential to the north of Washington Street
- Continue to work with the Charleston Urban Renewal Authority to establish creative temporary uses, like the existing dog park and the East End Bazaar, on their vacant properties within the East End
- Extend Ruffner Walk south to provide a pedestrian connection between the neighborhood and the commercial corridor.

## East End Opportunities



**Washington Corridor**  
Continue Main Street efforts at east end and link that node to the Cultural Center redevelopment



## E. Kanawha City

Kanawha City has the longest commercial corridor in the city and has interstate exits at both ends. It was planned as a self-sustained community designed with a traditional grid with either 25'x120' lots or 50'x120' lots. All right of ways are 60' wide with the exception MacCorkle Avenue which is 80' and 50th Street being 100'. 50th Street was designed to be the "Main Street." The Kanawha City Land Company still holds title to the land in fee on all the right of ways and alleys whereas the City has a public easement over the right of ways. Kanawha City was annexed into the City of Charleston in 1929.

### Past Planning Efforts

**Kanawha City Revitalization Plan (1999)** - two main goals: eliminate commercial encroachment into the residential neighborhoods and transform MacCorkle into slower, cleaner and greener corridor

### Kanawha City Community Association (KCCA)

Kanawha City Community Association is a 501c3 neighborhood association with several subcommittees including Beautification and Imagine, Crime Safety and Housing, Planning and Zoning and the Kanawha City Business Association.

### Lower Donnally Neighborhood Association

Neighborhood Association that deals primarily with issues along Lower Donnally Road including beautification projects and property maintenance issues.

### MacCorkle Avenue Redesign

The AIAWV Livable Communities Committee studied MacCorkle Ave from 31st Street to 58th Street. The study recommended ways to clean, green and slow down the corridor. The study is conceptual and recommended bold changes. **Since the adoption of the comprehensive plan, the KCCA secured grant money to further develop the plan. GAI Consultants was hired to create the Kanawha City Corridor Study with the goal of creating a safer and more walkable community; promoting economic development and guiding future growth; creating and reinforcing district identity; preserving greenspace and sensitive environmental areas; protect surface and groundwater quality; and advance stormwater management through best management practices.**

For more information on recent initiatives in Kanawha City, please see the appendix.

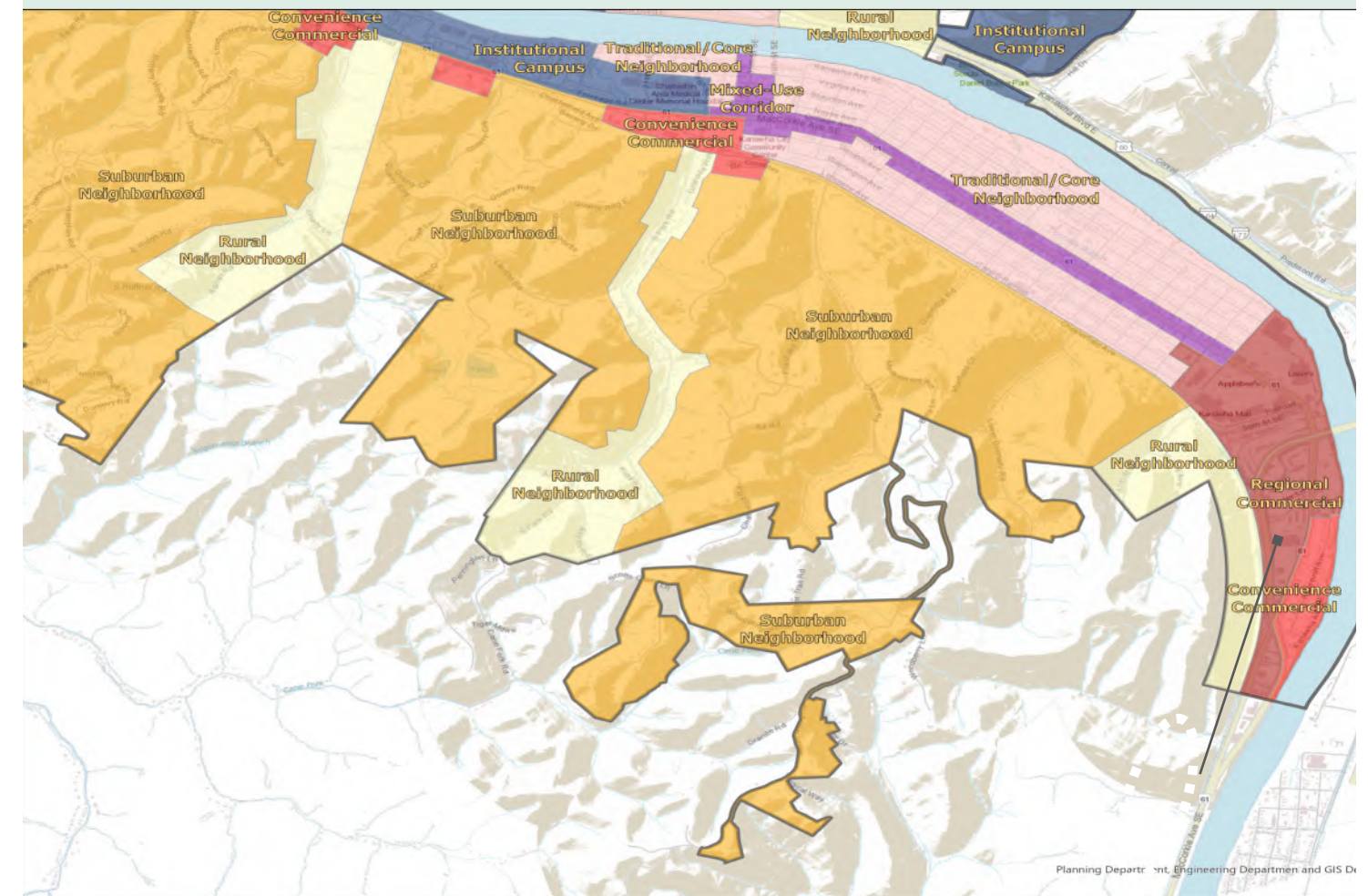
## Opportunities and Challenges

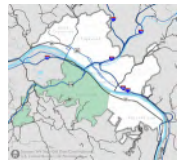
- Long commercial corridor, needs to be segmented into distinct nodes or pockets of intense retail activity and connectors of offices or residential
- Strong neighborhood residential in flats
- Continue beautification of corridor with landscaping and more uniform signage
- Improve MacCorkle pedestrian crossings
- Improve driveway access, look for opportunities for parking in the rear
- Encourage property consolidation and redevelop as better functioning plazas (potentially as mixed use with medical offices on the second and third floors)
- Focus on making MacCorkle an efficient shopping experience - easy access/egress, good selection of goods/services
- Ensure there are adequate buffers from commercial to the residential
- Explore possibility of a Business Improvement District (BID) to help plan for and fund reinvestment along MacCorkle
- Lack of parking along the corridor due to zero lot line development
- Commercial encroachment into the residential areas
- Both CAMC and UC are experiencing growth. Usually this involves encroachment into the neighborhoods. Both have long been acquiring property around their campuses for future expansion.
- Major new construction includes the Highland Hospital addition, WV Housing Development Funds new building. CAMC's new cancer center on the former Watt Powell site. The Kanawha Mall recently underwent a major renovation converting it into a plaza and is now starting to be successful again.
- CAMC has completed a major expansion of its Memorial Campus with the Robert C. Byrd Center and is currently completing a Training Campus on nearby Chesterfield Avenue.
- Creation of Two New Pocket Parks: South Park and Donnally

### MacCorkle Corridor Retail Mix

- Good quality grocery stores and specialty food stores
- Pharmacies and health care stores
- Convenience stores
- Casual restaurant dining, quick service eateries
- Personal services (beauty, dry cleaner, travel, etc.)

## Kanawha City Future Land Use and Opportunities





# F. South Hills and Corridor G

## Opportunities and Challenges

- Strong neighborhood character, new homes
- Lack of sidewalks and bikeways due largely to terrain and limited right-of-way widths
- Lack of connectivity, many dead end streets, which means emergency services, deliveries, etc. have fewer options or if there is an accident
- Potential for new homes and better connectivity with new development
- Maintain quality of older homes and support reinvestment, rehabilitation, and appropriate levels of expansion

## Bridge Road Recommendations

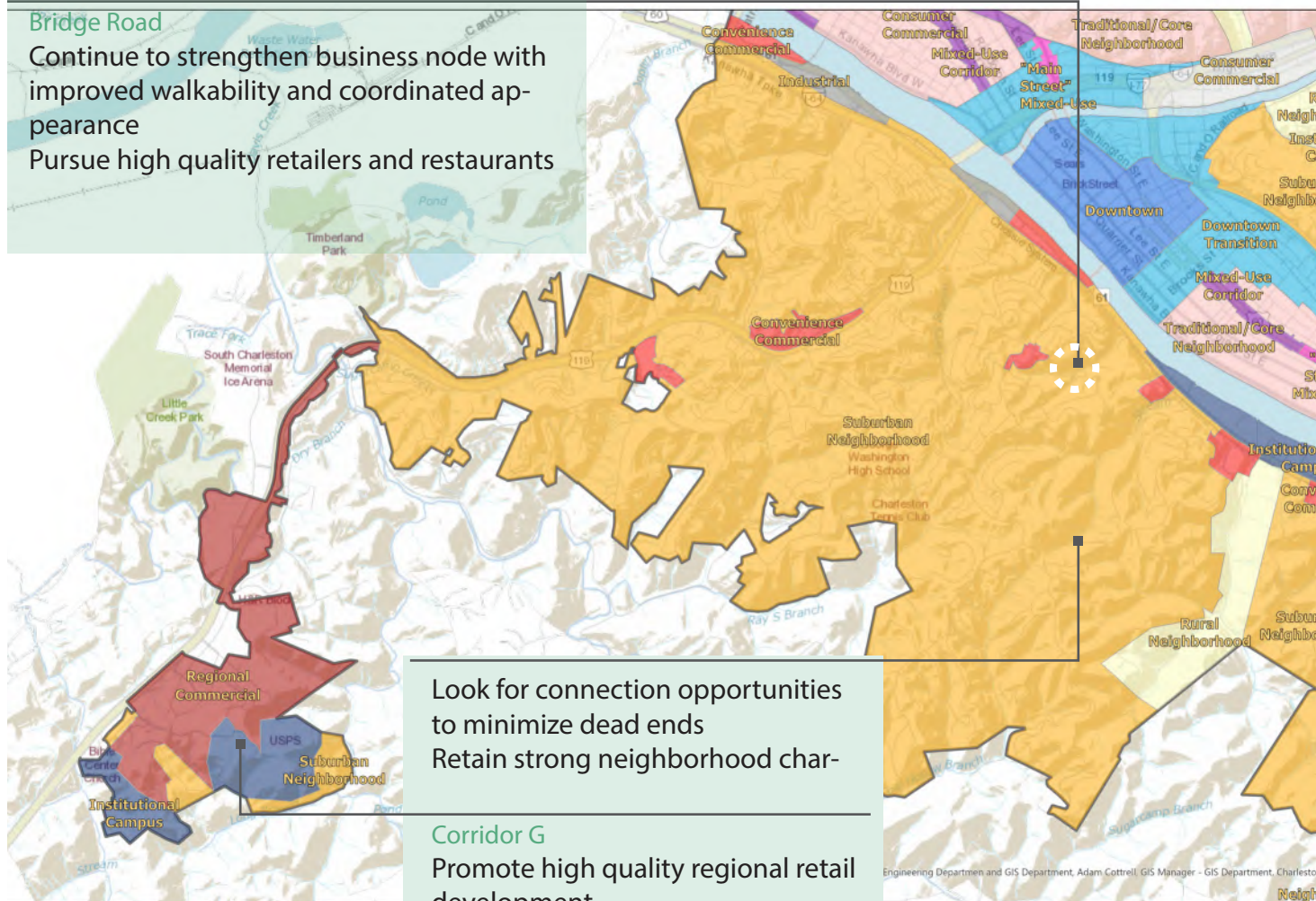
- South Hills Association has made great strides in improving the design and aesthetics of the Bridge Road shopping area
- Improve walkability around Bridge Road shopping node through
  - painted pedestrian crosswalks across street intersections and between sidewalk and building entrances
  - added landscaping where practical to help define pedestrian routes
- Improve wayfinding around Bridge Road

- Continue to improve facades but support an eclectic and colorful mix to reinforce the unique “vibe” of this district
- Coordinate signage to be similar look and higher quality
- Find opportunities for more landscaping to help accentuate unified district identity

- Potential uses to support the current retail mix:
  - Running/biking/yoga store
  - Tea room, coffee shops
  - Kitchen supply
  - Specialty food
  - Handmade gifts
  - Jewelry
  - High-end pet store
  - Beauty salon/spa
  - Small home furnishings

## South Hills Future Land Use and Opportunities

**Bridge Road**  
Continue to strengthen business node with improved walkability and coordinated appearance  
Pursue high quality retailers and restaurants



Look for connection opportunities to minimize dead ends  
Retain strong neighborhood character

**Corridor G**  
Promote high quality regional retail development

## Corridor G Recommendations

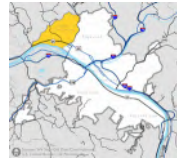
- Focus on redevelopment of older sections that need to be redeveloped to attract quality retailers
- Require retailers to pay into a redevelopment fund to be used in the future municipal redevelopment (over 50,000 sq. ft. e.g., Wauwatosa WI)
- Design standards to create a village-like setting



Design standards can result in a “main street” setting at Corridor G



Continued facade improvements and site design features will strengthen the character of the Bridge

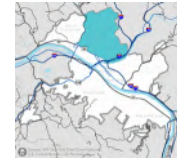
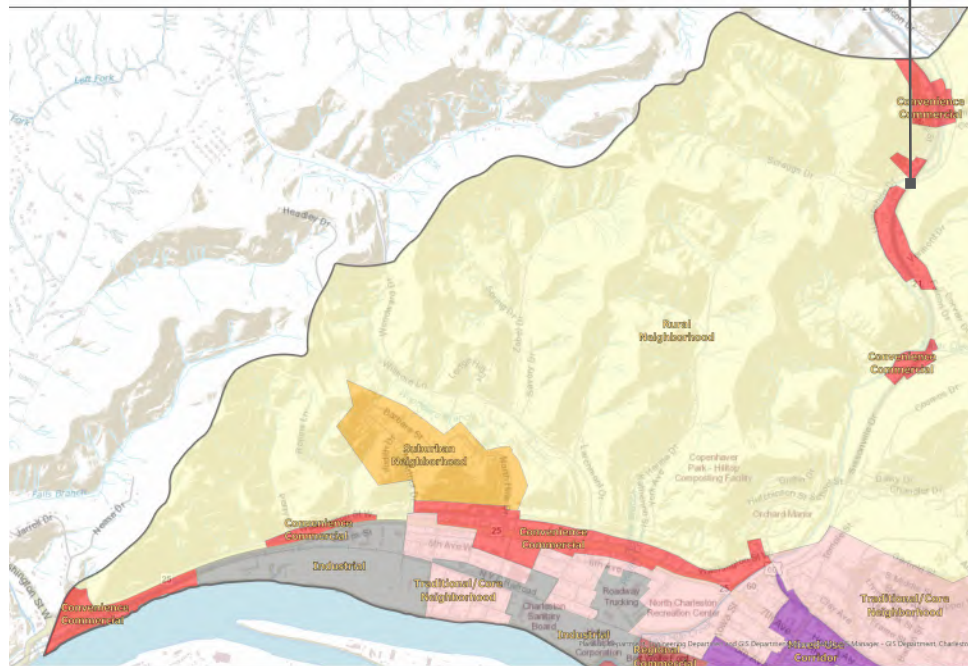


### Opportunities and Challenges

- Preserve rural character within city limits
- Flooding along Two Mile Creek
- Hilly topography lends itself to low-density rural residential
- Ensure adequate buffers between industrial and residential uses in the flats

## North Charleston Future Land Use and Opportunities

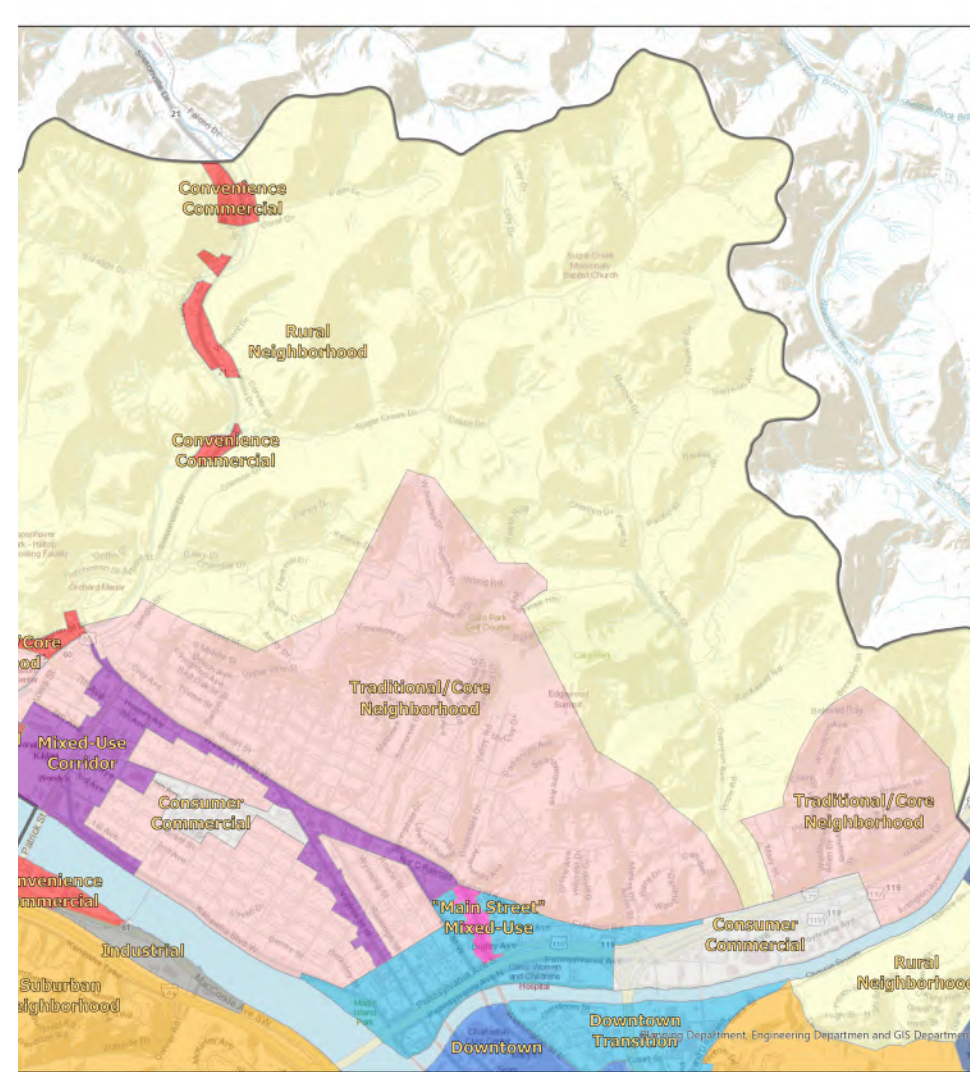
Retain rural commercial character  
Gradual site upgrades to improve aesthetics



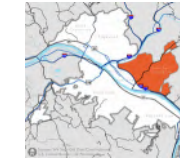
### Opportunities and Challenges

- Key redevelopment sites and adaptive reuse possibilities like how Glenwood School was converted into senior living; Edgewood Pool, Chandler School, and Watts Elementary School
- Key gateway enhancement locations: Greendale, Matthews/Park, Edgewood/Springdale
- Strengthen connections to West Side businesses
- Preserve rural neighborhood character at the periphery
- Continue to strengthen traditional historic neighborhoods

## Edgewood Land Use and Opportunities



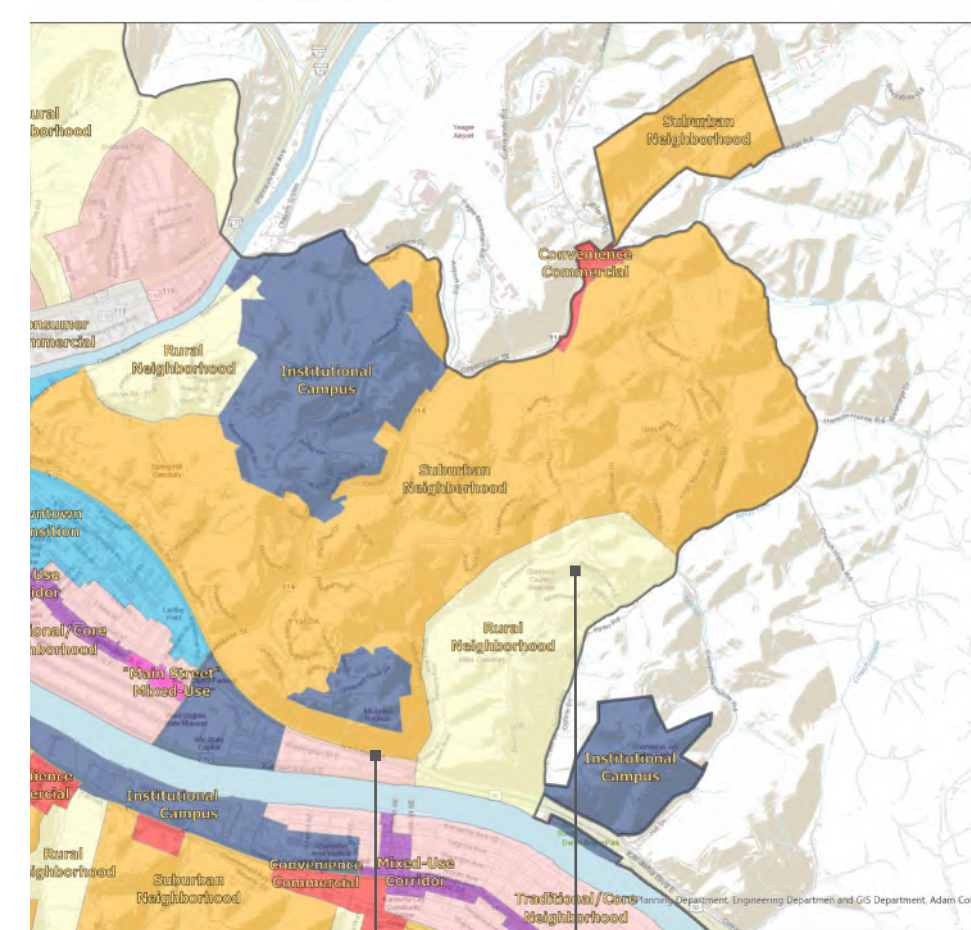
Allow more consumer-oriented industrial uses, cluster mature single-family residences at key locations. Subarea study on land use conflicts/zoning.



### Opportunities and Challenges

- Sidewalks are challenging due to steep slopes and narrow rights-of-way
- Further business park or retirement campus development possible
- Look for opportunities for more walking trails similar to those in Northgate Business Park
- Retain existing single-family neighborhoods
- Create a gateway along Greenbrier from the airport with inviting signage and streetscaping

## Oakridge/Greenbrier Land Use and Opportunities



Drainage improvements needed  
Installing sidewalks would be challenging

Investigate potential for curbside sidewalk near Ruffner Elementary

# J. Neighborhood Best Practices Tool Kit

INTRODUCTION  
NEIGHBORHOODS  
TRANSPORTATION  
QUALITY OF LIFE  
DOWNTOWN  
ACTION PLAN

## Vacant Property

- Land banking for Redevelopment & Conservation** Vacant Structure Registry In 2014 the City of Charleston established a vacant structure registration ordinance. Substantial revision was made again in 2019 simplify administration, increase compliance, and encourage reoccupancy of vacant structures in more a timely manner. Implementation of a vacant structure registration program has been limited by issues surrounding legal notice to property owners, staffing limitations, and administrative technology issues. Allocation of funds has been made to seek consultation services for development of program framework. Further, information technology upgrades are under way for registry tracking and workflow management. Implementation of a robust vacant structure registry is a key component of encouraging redevelopment of underutilized property, building vibrant neighborhoods, and retaining population.
- Unsafe Structure Demolition** The City of Charleston Building Commission identifies structures that are unfit for human habitation and a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of residents. Some of these structures are renovated or demolished by the owner. Some owners are unable to be found, will not take responsibility for their property, or have abandoned the property altogether. In these circumstances, the Building Commission acts to remove the safety issue through demolition of the structure. An expedited administrative search warrant process has greatly increased efficiency in the demolition program. For the years 2019-2022 the City of Charleston has spent \$3.1 million and completed 400 demolition projects. There remains much work to be done to remove dilapidated structures and promoting the constructive reuse of this land after the structure is removed.
- Land Banking for Redevelopment & Conservation** In 2019 the City of Charleston established the Charleston Land Reuse Agency with the charge of acquiring and redeploying tax delinquent and abandoned property

for redevelopment and conservation purposes. The CLRA continues to work on acquisition through the delinquent tax sale process as identifying properties that can assist in achieving improved quality of life for residents. Properties are prioritized based on their ability to support five different areas of reuse: Redevelopment, Strategic Acquisition, Investment Preservation, Infrastructure/Liability Reduction, and Conservation. Acquisition of property in clustered groups or areas of focus is key to assembling sites that can support redevelopment and conservation uses. The long-range effect of this acquisition and redeployment of property will result in more vibrant neighborhoods with an appropriate mixture new housing and amenities while supporting stability and growth of the tax base.

- Side lot programs.** The Charleston Land Reuse Agency should explore options to address the costs and responsibilities associated with vacant residential lots. Under this program a neighbor can purchase an adjacent vacant property for a nominal fee, thereby shifting the lot costs and maintenance responsibilities from the City to the homeowner.
- Pocket Parks.** Vacant lots on residential streets can be renovated into a community area for residents, as either a community garden, green space, or park. Pocket parks should be designed with seating, play structures or other amenities, but also any fencing, hedges or other landscaping needed to screen adjoining neighbors from the potential activity in the park. A community development corporation, a block club, a church group, or an informal alliance of neighbors will sometimes assume responsibility for the upkeep of a pocket park, so additional communication with homeowner associations and other groups will increase the success of these programs.

## Infill Housing

Since the city is relatively built out, anyone seeking a brand new house often looks to the hills of Charleston

or somewhere outside the city. However, Charleston can build on its previously discussed goal for “city living” and provide greater choices and opportunities for new homes within the existing urban fabric. Prospects for infill housing, either a single lot or a small redevelopment cluster of several new houses, built to fit the character of its surroundings, could have a positive impact on the neighborhood as a whole. To support such opportunities, the city should develop standards for infill development that define and are consistent with desired neighborhood character, described earlier in this chapter. Infill within already developed areas makes the most efficient use of existing infrastructure. Infill development can be encouraged with incentives such as density bonuses, height bonuses expedited permit reviews, and reduced permitting fees. The City could also maintain an inventory of land targeted for infill or redevelopment to help developers identify available sites. (see the Subarea Example for this chapter that identifies a targeted infill area near West Side Elementary).

- Appropriate Density.** For Charleston, increasing density and population in select areas is vital to help offset the loss of population in other areas and the increasing tax burden on its remaining residents and businesses. It will also provide the population concentration needed to support neighborhood stores and businesses. Density is frequently perceived as a “bad” word because it connotes a wide array of ill-conceived and designed buildings and developments. These include past attempts at public housing, overcrowded and out-of-scale apartment complexes, and the conversion of single-family homes into multi-unit boarding houses.

Well-planned and designed medium- to higher-density housing strategies could help transform and

Providing housing choices to meet the needs of a variety of income levels and age in the future.

reenergize certain areas. Depending on the neighborhood, the least intrusive of these may be to infill vacant lots with compatible single-family homes. More substantial options include redeveloping an area to accommodate mixed land uses that offer a variety of residential options. However, the primary focus for high-density development should remain downtown and adjacent transitional areas.

- Diverse Housing Options for all Generations.** Like many other communities, Charleston is growing older and its population is shrinking due in part to changing family size and makeup. Nuclear families are no longer the norm, and therefore housing options must accommodate a variety of family types. The housing needs of special groups, like the elderly, must also be an important part of the Charleston’s commitment to provide appropriate housing choices for all of its residents. Viable senior housing options that include remaining at home as long as possible, to special facilities, such as senior independent living, are especially important to residents who want to stay in the neighborhoods they are most familiar with and be near family and friends.
- Rental housing for lower income residents or supportive housing must be integrated with support services, and its design and construction should consider both long-term durability and security. Options for the younger sector of the population are just as important. Smaller families and couples may desire alternatives to single-family detached, owner-occupied housing, such as townhomes, flats, and apartments above storefronts.**
- Design Standards.** Develop design standards, criteria, and incentives for developing infill housing while utilizing resources already in place. Architecture and materials should be of high quality and while the design of individual units will be unique, they will appear to be related and “from the same chess set.” This type of development must still contain pedestrian connections throughout the applicable neighborhood and to the public street and surrounding developments.

## Neighborhood Reinvestment Overlay District



The Neighborhood Reinvestment Overlay District was created to support missing middle affordable infill housing on the West Side. Changes include allowing duplexes by right; quadplexes on corner lots; reduces parking, setbacks and lot size requirements; and adds modest performance standards to ensure compatible infill development.



- **Homeowner Guidebooks.** Typical housing studies identify gaps in the local housing market, and simply note which home products are most in demand. Charleston could expand on this concept by showing not just what is desired, but how existing homeowners can incorporate modern features like open floor plans, master suites, and second floor bathrooms into their current home. Smaller home sizes can sometimes lead to loss of residents, especially growing families who need additional living space. Developing simple renovation concepts for typical homes in the community can provide property owners with renovation ideas that might allow them to renovate and stay in their current home.

**Home Stewardship**

Residents who take pride in their dwellings, whether rented or owned, can contribute positively to a neighborhood's image and reinvestment opportunities. Therefore, home stewardship should be supported broadly, beyond owner-occupied residences to include rental home and apartment maintenance. Such a broad definition also begins to address issues associated with landlord accountability.

Without quality options, renters – who often include seniors, single professionals and young families - are likely to choose options in other communities. To channel resources wisely and retain quality neighborhoods, the City should focus inspection and code enforcement efforts to areas with a high number of code violations, vacant properties, or problems with absentee landlords. Some areas within Charleston could use improvement and, with minimal clean-up and more effective regulations, could become highly desirable neighborhoods. Housing funds should be targeted to stabilize these neighborhoods in transition or at the tipping point. Efforts to support home stewardship should focus on community training in home repair skills, mortgage assistance, and providing needed resources, such as tools and materials for physical renovations. Community clean-up days and regular rental inspections and can also improve the condition of existing neighborhoods and housing stock.

- **Code Enforcement.** Vigilant enforcement of local property maintenance and building codes acts as a preventative measure against inappropriate activity and blight in general.
- **Rental Inspection Codes.** An increasing concern in many communities is the emergence of additional rental properties throughout the core neighborhoods. Naturally, property renters do not feel the same obligation to maintain their home as property owners do. While the City cannot regulate ownership of land, it can initiate programs aimed at protecting buildings and those that reside there, from unsafe conditions. Charleston currently has a limited rental inspection program that could be modified to require annual inspections. Rental inspection policies can be implemented in a variety of ways, depending on the level of support for such programs. Below are a few options the City may consider:
  - The City could require new Certificates of Occupancy be obtained for homes that are foreclosed on or that are vacant for a certain time. This requirement is often triggered at the time property is sold, so they are often less controversial than policies aimed at immediate compliance. In fact, in today's economic climate, as more and more homes sit vacant, vandalism is more likely and inspections may be essential to ensuring that homes sold are still livable.
  - The City could also enact a general law requiring inspections for rental properties, however, such laws are likely to be more controversial because they would require more immediate compliance. These would mimic the current protocol for fire inspections, and could be required on an annual basis or as properties change hands.
  - The current Rental Registration Ordinance only allows inspections not to exceed once every two years. Locations chosen for inspection are chosen randomly and could be changed so that certain problem areas are targeted more frequently.

**Mixed-Use Development**

Mixed-use development is a development or building that blends a combination of residential uses, or that combines residential, commercial, cultural, institutional, or industrial uses, and where those functions are physically and functionally integrated.

- **Mixed Residential.** Mixed-use residential provides an array of housing types in one neighborhood or development, so that there is not an over-supply of any one type. Such developments

result in more moderate residential densities, and fewer public safety demands. Apply mixed-use standards where they best apply, not necessarily to every site.

- **Mixed-Use Buildings.** Mixed-use buildings located in neighborhood commercial districts can help strengthen the local economy. Mixed-use buildings include upper-story residential or office uses above commercial stores.

Historically, mixed-use environments were established out of need – lack of travel options and speed required one to live, work, shop and recreate within close proximity. As travel options increased and post-World War II suburbanization began, mixed use was gradually replaced with single use developments that separated residents from commercial uses from office uses from industrial uses. Such patterns have contributed to a decaying social quality that many communities wish to reverse. Today, mixed-use development is becoming desirable again due to the following benefits:

- Greater housing variety and density provides more affordable housing and options for those seeking lower maintenance or urban living options
- Reduced distances between housing, workplaces, retail businesses, and other amenities and destinations reduces travel time and improves convenience
- More compact development makes more efficient use of public services, utilities and infrastructure
- Stronger neighborhood character and sense of place result when citizens and businesses interact
- Walkable, bikeable neighborhoods increase accessibility, which results in improved travel options, reduced transportation costs and improved community health

**Commercial Rightsizing**

Much of the land zoned commercial in the city dates to when the population was greater and before the “big box” boom on Corridor G. The amount of land allocated for commercial use today is greater than what is needed, leading to vacancies and underutilized centers. Limited sufficiently-sized property on major arterials makes it difficult to meet the market need for “big boxes” or “mid boxes” and other retailers that serve a broader regional sales market. Revolutionary changes in logistics and information technologies give “big box” national retailers an aggressive advantage in pricing and selection that cannot be met by smaller independent stores typical to Charleston. Second, households are using the internet for more of their shopping needs, utilizing local shops less frequently. To respond to these factors, retail venues should be strategically located at neighborhood centers. One advantage city neighborhoods can have over more suburban environments like Corridor G is the potential for residents to walk to places, such as restaurants, grocery

stores, hair salons, and personal services. Convenient shopping and services can be an attraction for residents. Because of reduced demand, some of the neighborhood centers and corridors may need to be retrofitted to mixed-use neighborhood centers that allow a wide array of uses, including residential, that may be mixed within a building. Neighboring mixed-use activities must be compatible, and the facilities should be well kept and well designed.

**Commercial Site Design**

Depending on the context, the form and character of buildings can have a significant impact on the function and activity within an area. Furthermore, the quality of buildings impact the local economy, as declining commercial districts with dilapidated buildings can have a compounding negative effect on the perceptions of safety and property value. New and rehabilitated commercial development sites should possess the following qualities:

**Streetscape & Site Design**

- Streetscape treatment should be used to signify an entrance and contribute to a sense of place.
- Community amenities such as patio/seating areas, water features, art work or sculpture, clock towers, pedestrian plazas with park benches or other features located adjacent to the primary entrance to the building(s) are highly encouraged and may be calculated as part of the landscaping requirement.
- Include amenities for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit riders, including wider sidewalks, bike storage facilities, bus shelters, lighting and landscaping in the standards for site plan review.

**Parking and Access**

- Off-street parking should typically be located in the side and rear yards with an additional entrance oriented to the parking lot.
- Parking lots adjacent to the roadway should provide a setback and landscape greenbelt. In the downtown area, a knee-wall or hedge may also be appropriate.
- Driveways should be designed and located according to the Access Management standards in the Mobility Chapter.
- Parking lot landscaping is especially important in minimizing large parking lots. Parking lot islands that incorporate pedestrian access to storefronts, may be appropriate for larger lots or high traffic sites.
- Internal pedestrian walkways should be included for persons who need access to the building(s) from internal parking areas. Walkways shall be designed to separate people from moving vehicles as much as possible, vehicle drive aisles or parking spaces may not be used for this purpose.
- Crosswalks should be distinguished from the parking and driving areas by use of any of the following materials: special pavers, bricks, raised elevation or



scored concrete.

#### Landscaping, Buffers & Screening

- Development abutting residential should be screened with a mixture of treatment such as landscaping, walls, and fences.
- Loading and unloading areas should be located where they can be effectively screened from view and where they will create the least impact on residential neighbors. Where necessary, limited hours for trash pick up may be considered to further protect neighbors.
- Where required, detention areas should be designed to mimic natural environments, and steep basins requiring safety fencing should be discouraged.

#### Lighting

- Site lighting should be regulated so it does not spill into non-commercial areas or the public road, except where needed to illuminate driveways. Generally, levels between 0.5 and 1.0 footcandles at the property line are appropriate.

#### Signs

- Lower-level ground signs are preferred over taller pole signs.
- Signs should include a durable base constructed of materials compatible with the architecture of the building.
- Sign locations should respect clear-vision areas and traffic safety.

#### Land Preservation

The physical landscape in Charleston – its sloping hill-sides, riverfront, and varied topography - is one of the things that makes it such a desirable places to live. However, these features can also be a challenge to development. Physical constraints require additional engineering



A combination of fencing and landscaping buffers this parking lot from the adjacent sidewalk

and creative solutions that are often more costly. Over time, land costs in the flat, developable areas of the City have risen as supply dwindled, and the cost to develop in the rolling hills and floodplains at the city's outskirts also rose as concerns regarding foundation stability, soil erosion, wastewater management and utility systems have lead to increased regulation and construction costs. For these reasons, the City is considering ways to maximize development where utilities and site conditions are suitable, and encourage preservation of those areas that are particularly challenging to development or that contain important natural features.

Some of the benefits preservation can provide include:

- Prevent soil erosion by protecting steeply sloping land
- Maintain and improve water quality
- Perpetuate and foster the growth of healthy forest
- Maintain and improve wildlife habitat and migration corridors
- Protect scenic vistas visible from roads and other public areas
- Ensure that lands are managed so that they are always available for sustainable agriculture
- Provide passive recreation areas

The following are some ways to encourage preservation of land that should not be developed, and to provide incentives for development to occur where infrastructure and facilities exist to serve it.

#### Planned Unit Development

The zoning ordinance governs how property is developed. The conventional method of minimum lot sizes and rigid dimensional requirements often result in disturbances to valuable environmental features. These impacts can be minimized by encouraging Planned Unit Developments, which are currently allowed in the City.



Well-landscaped islands in parking lots reduce the heat island effect, improve views and pedestrian

PUDs allow development to be clustered on smaller and narrower lots in developable areas of the site, in exchange for permanently protected open space elsewhere. In this way, a Planned Unit Development can be considered as a density-based zoning approach that replaces the rigid dimensional requirements.

While environmental protection is usually the primary purpose of such ordinances, an additional benefit of clustering development is the efficiency of infrastructure that is afforded with a more compact design. In the illustration to the right, the same number of lots is provided, but the cluster design requires fewer linear feet of roads and utilities, which reduces overall sewer, water and road maintenance costs. Sometimes with a PUD, the developer receives certain incentives, such as density bonuses, reduced utility fees or streamlined reviews in exchange for providing a public benefit, such as those listed above.

#### Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are one way to permanently preserve land for open space or natural resource protection. A conservation easement is a permanent restriction placed on property that limits or eliminates future development. The idea of the easement is predicated on the "bundle of rights" theory of property ownership, which suggests that property owners maintain a set of "rights" which includes, among others:

- Development rights
- Air rights
- Subsurface resources (water, minerals, oil)
- Access rights
- Use rights

A conservation easement is executed after the development rights are purchased, donated or otherwise negotiated as a commodity between the property owner and the agency interested in preservation. Conservation easements are recorded the same way a deed of sale is, and once executed, it "runs with the land," meaning it restricts activity of both present and future owners of the land. As such, the easement will become part of the chain of title for the property, which notifies future owners of the restriction. Conservation easements are most often executed between the property owner and a governmental entity or non-profit agency that is responsible for enforcing the terms of the easement. Conditions of future use and development are negotiated into the easement. Then, the original property owner maintains ownership of the land, but must manage it according to the agreement.

#### Development Rights Banking and Transfer

As opposed to conservation easements, where development rights are sold for the purpose of permanently eliminating development of sensitive lands, the idea of development rights banking and transfer is to hold these rights for use by another property owner. It works when one property owner, whose land is located in the "send-

ing area," or area designated for protection, wishes to preserve their land and allow another property owner to build the equivalent amount of development on land that is located in the "receiving area," or area designated for growth. In this way, TDR is a tool to redirect growth from one area of the community to another.

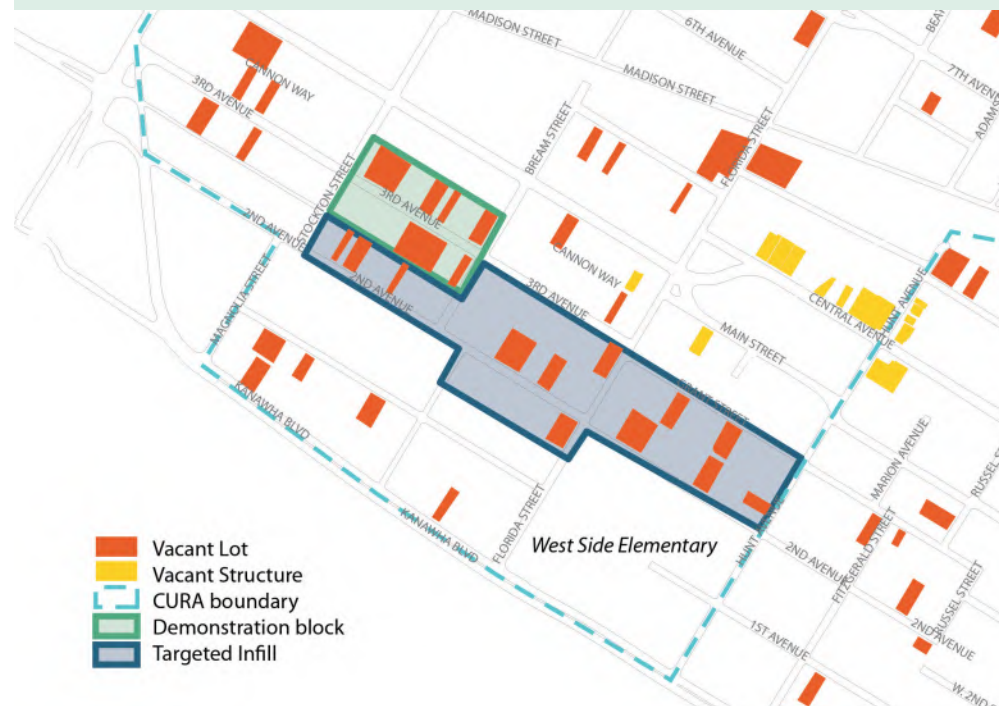
Under a TDR program, valuable land is identified for protection as part of the "sending area." Property owners in the "sending area" now own development rights, equal to the amount of development their land could yield. Those rights may be sold, donated or otherwise negotiated as a commodity. Conversely, areas where development is encouraged are designated as part of the "receiving area." Typically, these areas are located where public infrastructure exists to support growth, and where physical conditions are conducive to development. Ownership of land remains the same, but the TDR transaction involves the transfer of those rights from the preserved land to the development area. Now, land that is appropriate for development can be built at a higher density, and land that should not be developed, can be protected in perpetuity. Using the Planned Unit Development option discussed above, the City could allow for the transfer of development rights from one parcel of land to another. A TDR procedure could be included in the City's current planned unit development regulations. Some minor changes would be needed in the procedure, such as permitting both the Sending and Receiving parcels, separated by some distance, to be included within a single PUD. TDR density computations would also need to be included.

# Subarea Application: Patrick Street Gateway

## Objectives

- Create a Gateway to the West Side
- Provide an entertainment/retail destination
- Improve connections, especially Patrick Street pedestrian crossings, to adjacent residential neighborhoods
- Create a "restaurant row" along Kanawha River
- Improve entrance and visibility to auto dealers
- Provide strong retail power node for West Side residents and attract shoppers/diners from Greater Charleston
- Look for large and medium scale retailers including a grocery store
- Could catalyze further commercial redevelopment elsewhere on West

## Nearby Housing Demonstration Project



The residential area to the east of the Patrick Street commercial district is a prime site for concentrated infill housing. Located within the West Side Urban Renewal area, these few blocks host many vacant lots that could be used as a new housing demonstration project. Builders could showcase their model homes for small lots and the area would see an instant improvement. With the opening of the new Mary C. Snow West Side Elementary school and proposed Patrick Street revitalization, this infill development could spark more investment in this part of the West Side.

## Potential Development Concept



- Themed Restaurants
- Outdoor Car Display

### Housing

- Develop infill guidelines (sample sketches and photographs) and ordinance standards to promote new houses that complement the design of homes in that neighborhood (i.e. new homes with modern amenities but that look like they are part of the neighborhood) (R1)
- Continue to use property maintenance inspections so rental units are safe and well maintained but consider a more aggressive system of inspections and awards/publicity for the “highest level” buildings or landlords (to use in marketing and potentially at a higher rental rate) (R2)
- Modify the Rental Registration Ordinance inspection selection so that problem areas are targeted more frequently for random inspections (R9)
- Promote the development of a variety of new rental housing units to appeal to young adults and empty nesters near the downtown and East End and West Side Main Street districts. (P3); Coordinate with developers to create demonstration projects for attached and detached residential units on targeted urban blocks (P3a)
- Work with the institutions which can provide resources/grants/funding to faculty members to purchase homes in neighborhoods near the institutions – whether it is in an adjacent neighborhood or within Downtown Charleston (P15) Develop incentives (P15a), Promotional materials (P15b), select realtors to match faculty/students to targeted areas (P15c)
- Continue programs that encourage responsible homeownership while providing affordable, but quality rental options (P22)
- Support and partner with non-profits to strengthen and expand current programs that provide hands-on education and training for home maintenance and repairs (P22a)
- Ensure a mix of housing types across neighborhoods to accommodate various income levels so residents can remain in the city or their neighborhood as needs change (P23)

### Land Use

- Gradually adjust (reduce) the amount of commercially zoned land based on location, character, market demand and other factors (R3)
- Create new form-based districts for areas formerly and currently under CURA design

review (Main Streets and Downtown) and MacCorkle Avenue in Kanawha City (R4)

- Create a new rural residential district (R5)
- Allow non-commercial uses in select commercially zoned areas, have CURA target acquisition of outdated commercial properties and then rezone them for a more appropriate non-commercial use (R3a)
- Update the zoning ordinance to promote a transition of non-conforming uses within buildings that are worth saving into uses that are more compatible with the surrounding area and would preserve the integrity of the historic building (R3b)
- Consider design review/zoning overlay zones for each Historic District in the city (R11)
- Prepare a subarea study for the Bigley/Pennsylvania area sandwiched between the Elk River and I-77 to resolve land use and zoning conflicts (R13)
- Update zoning map with a comprehensive rezoning to implement land use recommendations of plan where future land use is different than current zoning (R12)
- Review, assess, and adjust city ordinances to support live/work and business incubators (R13)
- Create detailed design and development guidelines for key areas recommended for form-based zoning districts (guidelines should include location of buildings, setback, height, size, color, landscaping, and parking requirements) (R28)
- Extend Ruffner Walk south to provide a pedestrian connection between the neighborhood and the commercial corridor (C17)
- Formalize a program to inventory and prioritize rehabilitation of viable blighted structures and if not suitable for rehab, demolition (P1); Survey buildings, first in CURA districts, and identify key opportunities and priorities (P1a); Enact a vacant and abandoned building registration (P1b); Streamline the decision-making process for blighted and foreclosed properties to promote conversion to reuse or hold as green space until an appropriate use is found in the future (P1c)
- Explore temporary uses for vacant residential property such as infill development, community gardens, neighborhood open space, and use of the land bank for parcels where redevelopment is more likely long-term (P2); Explore the creation of a land bank by inventorying available land,

matching parcels with potential buyers and future developers, and identifying additional strategies to incentivize and publicize the program (P2a)

- For neighborhood streets where traffic speeds are more than 5 mph over posted speeds, evaluate traffic calming measures (like speed tables, striping to distinguish parking from travel lanes, curb bumpouts at intersections, etc. (P9)
- City engineering and police identify a key staff person to work with neighborhood organizations to develop a traffic calming neighborhood involvement program (P9a)
- When neighborhoods identify a traffic problem, the formula would be used for city staff and neighborhoods to collect data and agree upon appropriate response and funding (P9b)
- Encourage conversion of retail to other appropriate uses such as residential or office in areas where retail use is no longer viable (P20)
- Develop a commercial business owner’s Reuse Guide that focuses cost effective ideas, techniques and guidelines for renovation and reuse of historic commercial assets. (P21)
- Encourage local services and retail within neighborhood walking distance (P24)
- Develop an adaptive reuse program that offers development guidance, streamlined processes, reduced timeframes, and cost savings to developers looking to adapt older buildings for new uses (P27); Adopt Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (P27a); Support a demonstration project to promote successful adaptive reuse (P27b); Alternative building codes should be followed for adaptive reuse within existing structures (P27c)
- Continue to promote low-cost incubator space for student/professor entrepreneurs in older vacant industrial buildings, especially in the Warehouse District or along West Washington (P34)

### Site Design

- Provide additional opportunities for sustainable landscaping and hardscaping (R6)
- Upgrade landscaping requirements along MacCorkle (R7)
- Support use of renewable energy technologies on single-family homes, businesses and institutions such as solar panels and small wind energy units (R135)
- Supplement existing wayfinding sign system to identify key gateways to help direct travelers to and around neighborhood commercial districts

(C6)

- Work with West Virginia Department of Highways to add smaller, more decorative lighting along MacCorkle and Kanawha (C12)
- Formalize a program to inventory and prioritize rehabilitation of viable blighted structures and if not suitable for rehab, demolition (P2); Survey buildings, first in CURA districts, and identify key opportunities and priorities (P2a), Enact a vacant and abandoned building registration (P2b); Streamline the decision-making process for blighted and foreclosed properties to promote conversion to reuse or hold as green space until an appropriate use is found in the future (P2c)

Chapter 3

# TRANSPORTATION + INFRASTRUCTURE



INTRODUCTION

NEIGHBORHOODS

TRANSPORTATION

QUALITY OF LIFE

DOWNTOWN

ACTION PLAN



# A. Introduction

Streets are among the most important public infrastructure and place-making elements of the city because they can define how a visitor, resident, or worker perceives a neighborhood, downtown, or the city as a whole. While it is important that streets foster safe and convenient access and travel for all modes of transportation and are easy to navigate, they should also be attractive, well maintained, to help create a favorable impression of the city and districts. A well-designed system of interconnected sidewalks, bike routes, and transit routes gives travel options that decrease the number of automobile trips.

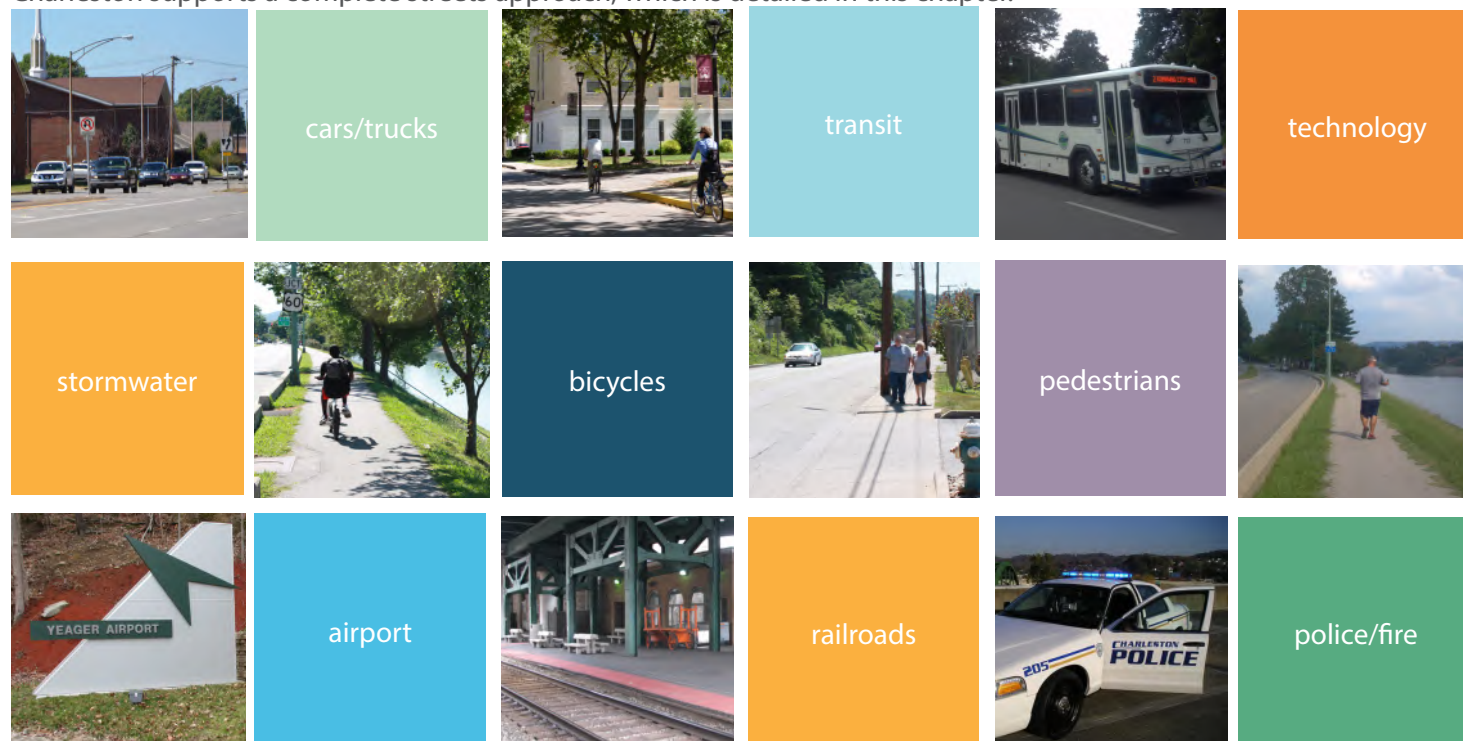
Similarly, a quality municipal infrastructure system supports activities in the city. While not as visible as transportation or most other municipal functions, they are no less important. Like many mature cities, Charleston has challenges associated with aging infrastructure. The topography and rivers that add to the city's unique charm also create issues with managing stormwater, utilities, and flood events.

- Infrastructure includes:**
- Public water system
  - Sanitary sewer system
  - Stormwater—rainwater runoff and flood control
  - Technology
  - Solid waste disposal and recycling

## Complete Streets Approach

For the next 20 years, improvements to the transportation system will be as much about complementing the desired character of the surroundings and moving all types of users as they will be about moving autos. Recommendations in this plan build upon the city's recent efforts to reconstruct streets to fit the context of the adjacent land uses – safe for motorists, but including streetscape and design details catering to the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists.

Nationally, this approach is often referred to as “complete streets”, harmonizing streets with their surroundings while interlacing transportation networks to meet the mobility needs of all users — motorists, goods movement, pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users and emergency service vehicles. In 2013, the West Virginia legislature passed, and the governor signed, a Complete Streets Act that requires consideration by the Commissioner of Highways consider complete streets policies for all facilities under his jurisdiction. Charleston supports a complete streets approach, which is detailed in this chapter.



Provide a safe and convenient transportation system that provides travel choices and balances the needs of all users and provide quality infrastructure, gradually upgrading the system to reduce negative impacts on the environment and public health

## Transportation and Infrastructure Goals

- Improve wayfinding for visitors and ease of circulation downtown
- Enhance safety and flow for vehicles and trucks
- Improve and promote public transit as a more viable alternative to driving
- Provide a network of bike trails and routes to make it comfortable and easy for people of all ages and abilities to walk or bicycle throughout the city and link with neighboring communities
- Provide a comfortable and well-maintained sidewalk and trail system, where physically practical, especially to access downtown, institutions, and schools
- Improve safety through adequate street lighting that complements the character of the street
- Continue efforts to reduce the severity of flooding impacts
- Gradually upgrade sewer system to separate sanitary from stormwater, as funding permits, to increase capacity and reduce negative environmental impacts
- Be a regional leader in technology promoting citywide WiFi and a centralized GIS database
- Further development and improvement of new and existing EV Infrastructure



Complete Streets

## B. Opportunities and Challenges

### Transportation

- Topography poses challenges for accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists
- Increasing number of aging and transit-dependent residents
- Young professionalize desire a multi-model transportation system that incorporates micromobility and active transportation options
- Increasing senior population will change transportation needs, such as types of transit, design of facilities and sign font size
- One-way streets considered confusing by some and typically have higher auto speeds than two-way streets
- Rivers are an impediment to connecting distinct city districts, opportunity for a pedestrian bridge across the river
- Grid streets provide good connectivity and alternative routing
- Support to improve non-motorized travel from several well-organized groups
- Federal funding is available for active transportation
- Bicyclist advocates are very interested in adding bike lanes and facilities; but others are opposed to any perceived loss of traffic mobility to accommodate bicycles
- Good expressway access
- Some of the key streets in the city are under jurisdiction of the West Virginia Division of Highways (WVDOH)
- Make transit a more convenient alternative to driving and parking
- Improve the downtown transit center (see Downtown Plan)

### Infrastructure

- Topography poses challenges for construction and maintenance of infrastructure
- Periodic flooding in parts of the city including several repetitive “flood loss areas” (e.g. Luna Park and Grant St. area, Garrison, Lower Donnelly, Rebecca St. Park)
- The City recently started taking part in the Community Rating System, a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed minimum National Flood Insurance Program requirements
- Frequent sewer backups in basements
- The city’s sanitary sewer and storm system is combined. Federal EPA regulations mandate separate

systems, but that is a very expensive undertaking

- A stormwater management manual has been prepared outlining a program and regulations to use what are called “Low Impact Development,” or LID, stormwater design
- Creating an extensive recycling system has been encumbered by a lack of markets for materials, which is needed for an economically viable program
- City lacks WiFi service in much of the city
- Unstable electrical service in South Hills

### New Trends and Updates

- The electric vehicle landscape is rapidly changing as both technology and interest evolve. The coming years will see many more EVs take to the roads, seas, and skies. In the US, electric vehicles sales have climbed by more than 40 percent a year since 2016. It is estimated that by 2035, the largest automotive markets will be fully electric. The City of Charleston can play a key role in encouraging the adoption of EVs by hosting and/or operating publicly available charging stations at municipally owned locations, such as parks or facilities.
- In addition to EVs, micromobility is growing in popularity, including sharable and rental programs. These products offer users flexible options that can either accommodate full trips or be combined with public transport to function as first or last-mile alternatives. If electric scooter usage increases, cities will need to adopt roads, paths, and public spaces to accommodate them and other micromobile options.
- West Virginia International Yeager Airport (CRW) is working on an Environmental Impact Statement for two phases to expand the facility. To address safety and requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Phase 1 proposes to extend the runway to 7,000 feet. The plan also seeks to construct a new terminal complex to address inefficiencies in an aging and poorly configured terminal. To address long-term capacity needs, Phase 2 further extends the runway to 8,000 feet. This will require additional justification, development and design that will be conducted at a later date. The expansion of the runway will extend into Coonskin Park and will require 25.6 million cubic yards of fill. The loss of recreation space in the park will need to be mitigated as part of the process.



### Taxi

Charleston’s taxi service contributes to meeting its transportation goals, providing safe late-night rides home, an affordable alternative to owning a second car, and promoting tourism.



### River Travel

The Kanawha River is a working river with daily barge traffic carrying coal, rock, gasoline, cement, and chemicals.



### Airport

Yeager Airport, which opened in 1947 as Kanawha Airport, is located just outside the city limits of Charleston and is operated by the Central West Virginia Airport Authority. As an important gateway to the city and state, the Greenbrier entrance serving the airport through the city can be improved to put Charleston’s best foot forward to visitors. One recommendation also noted in the RIC Transportation Plan is to widen Greenbrier to 3 lanes (i.e. add a center turn lane).



### Rail

Charleston is served by Amtrak’s Cardinal service, which runs between Chicago and New York three times a week. Total passenger ons/offers totaled 9,799 for the 2012 fiscal year. The train station, situated on the south side of the Kanawha River, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984. Since the Greyhound station is located in a city parking ramp, the various transportation services throughout the city would be better served by an intermodal station located



## Regional Transportation Plan

The Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC) is responsible for coordination of transportation planning for the Charleston Region, including the city. Major transportation projects in the city that intend to use federal or state funds, typically first need to be shown in the RIC Long Range Transportation Plan its program for funding. The Long Range Plan is typically updated every four years.

Major transportation projects in the city, particularly those along state roads and that intend to use federal or state funding, may need to be specifically listed in the RIC Plan. In addition, as part of the overall effort to improve air quality, a project that may reduce capacity, such as a reduction in the number of travel lanes to add bike lanes or a conversion of a one-way street to two-way, may need to first be modeled by the RIC for air quality impacts before the project will be eligible for funding.

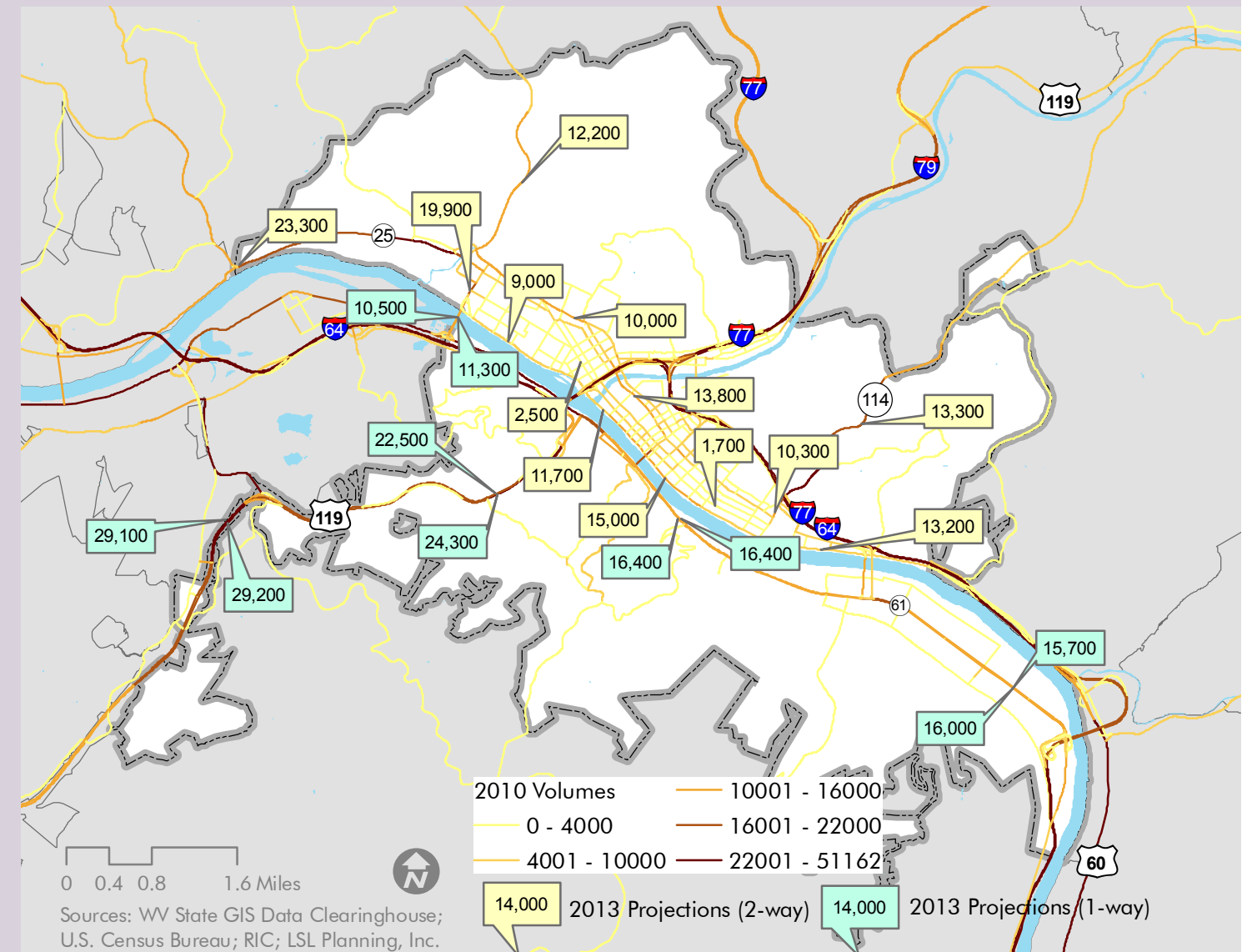
The Metropolitan Transport Plan (MTP) was adopted by the Policy Board of the Regional Intergovernmental Council on September 9, 2021.

Key components of the RIC Plan that influence Charleston include the following:

- Using a computer model of the street network (called a travel demand model), future traffic volumes were modeled based on growth rates for the year 2040 2050 to identify any current or future capacity deficiencies. The only significant capacity problem is the north end of Corridor G.
- Several projects in the region were tested. Most of the projects are outside the city limits but some more directly would impact Charleston
  - US 119/ Oakwood Area, improvements between MacCorkle Avenue and Emerald Drive include intersection upgrades to improve corridor safety and reduce delay along the corridor. The newly constructed RCUT designs helped solve several financially constrained projects dealing with expensive flyover designs along US 119.
  - I-64 at MacCorkle Ave and Oakwood, a Resurface (Full Depth Reconstruction)
  - US 60, Washington St E, Resurfacing (1.5")
  - I-64 Carter BR - Brooks St I/C (AC Payback), Bridge Rehabilitation

- Charleston Washington St W Streetscape 2012, Construct Sidewalks
- Patrick Street to 4th Ave, intersection modifications
- The MacCorkle corridor through Kanawha City is listed as a special study area. (see page 34)
- The plan includes a regional non-motorized plan and transit plan which are intended to link with and complement the non-motorized recommendations in the city's plan.

### Average Daily Traffic Volumes and Projections



### General 24-hour Street Capacities

# Lanes	Volumes for Acceptable Level of Service
2	8,000-12,000
3	12,000-18,000
4	18,000-25,000
5	25,000-40,000

Level of Service is determined at peak hour at intersections, but this is a general "rule of thumb"

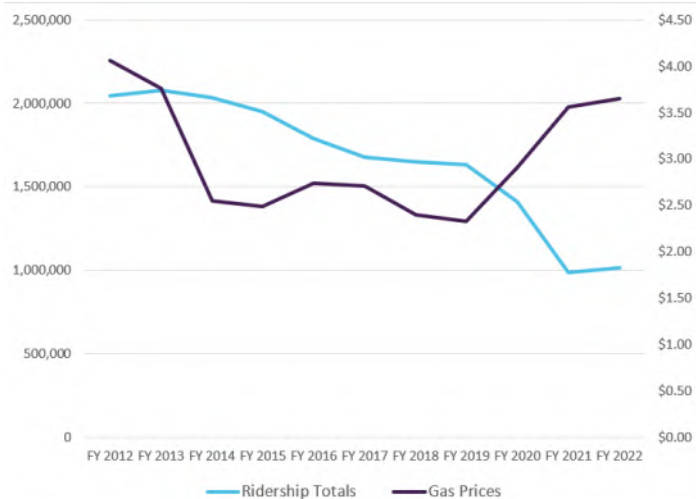
# C. Transportation Best Practices Tool Kit

## Transit

Transit is an important ingredient for any mid-sized city. Transit in Charleston and the surrounding area is operated by the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KRT) with 21 fixed routes. KRT was created in 1971 by Kanawha County and the City of Charleston and is governed by a 13-member board. As shown on the map at right, the vast majority of the city is within walking distance (1/4 mile) of a transit route. Transit ridership in the city/county peaked at about 2 million riders which was strongly influenced by the price of gasoline (see figure below). The correlation to higher gas prices and increased ridership is skewed by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public transportation ridership totals.



### Transit Ridership vs. Gas Prices

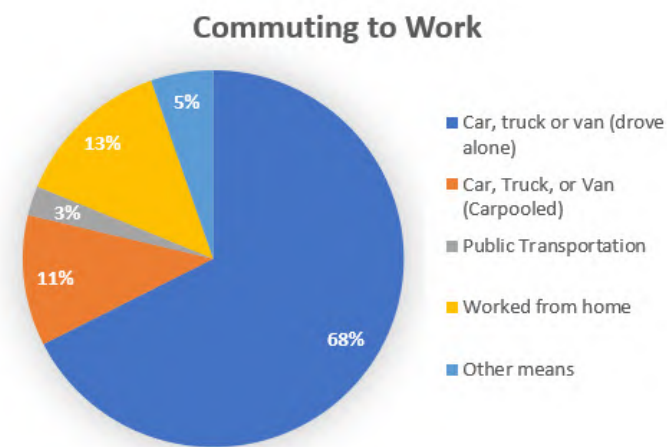


Source: Baker/RIC

Based on comments during the plan process, many non-transit users in Charleston view the typical user as someone who cannot afford a car. Transit offers a way for the many people that do not drive to get to school, work, runs errands and other travel. In particular, transit helps meet the needs of those who cannot drive due to age, disability or cost of a car. But more and more people are choosing to use transit even if they can afford a car. Those potential riders may choose transit to avoid the costs of a second family car or for environmental reasons. The millennial generation may prefer using transit so they can spend their travel time using social media. Greater use of transit frees up more land for buildings and greenspace instead of parking.

KRT is in the process of completing a Comprehensive Operational Analysis of their public transportation system to see what improvements should be considered to increase Efficiency and embrace new "transit technologies". While that will focus on the short range, the City should work with KRT to help integrate the

## Commuting to Work



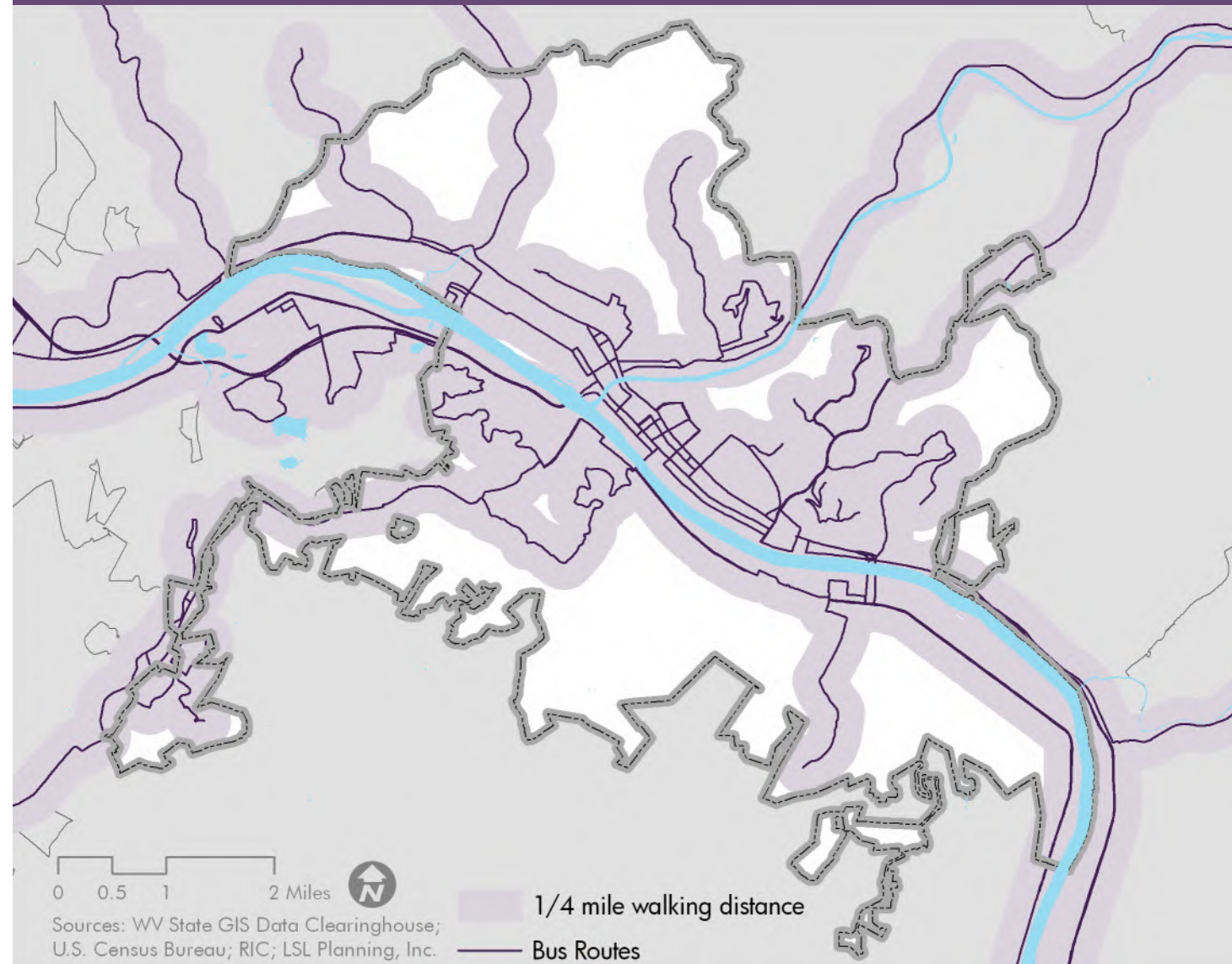
Source: ACS 2021 1-Year Supplemental Estimate

future development and redevelopment pattern in a way to make transit a viable option in the future.

The following are recommendations to help improve transit use and service in the future:

- Clustering of higher density mixed uses can help create places that can be well served by transit, as shown on the future land use map and the example images throughout the Comprehensive Plan and Downtown Plan
- Some of the curb bump outs recommended in the Plan could be used as bus stops. Since the bump outs extend to the edge of the travel lane, they may reduce the time for people to get on and off the bus
- A potential circulator route between the University of Charleston and attractions on the other side of the river
- Provide sidewalk connections, where practical, to bus stops. Provide a paved platform for waiting at the bus stop. At key destinations, some type of identification could be used to acknowledge a business or institution that pays for the construction and maintenance of the stop amenities or shelter
- Better information on transit routing and frequency of service both on the website and through smart phone technology
- Improve the image of the transit system, particularly through changes to the downtown transit center as noted in the Downtown Plan. A promotional campaign can also help freshen the images and help even the residents that do not use the transit system to be aware of its benefits to the city
- Extend on-demand service of public transportation from paratransit passengers to all passengers with a micro-transit model.

## Proximity to Bus Routes



## Active Transportation

Expanding active connections is a high priority for residents and city leaders. Their goal is a safe and attractive active network for walking and bicycling for people of all ages and physical abilities. While the hilly terrain and narrow rights-of-way make having bicycle and pedestrian facilities on many streets challenging, Charleston is making significant strides to accommodate active users where practical.



### Benefits of a Non-Motorized System

- Provides connections between homes, schools, parks, public transportation, offices, and retail destinations.
- Improves pedestrian and cyclist safety by reducing potential crashes between motorized and active users.
- Encourages walking and bicycling that improves health and fitness
- Provides options to make fewer driving trips, saving money
- Research demonstrates pedestrian and bike-friendly cities have more economic vitality.

Charleston's current network of non-motorized facilities includes the streets, pathways, sidewalks, and other facilities for pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-motorized travel.

This goal to serve different user needs makes implementation more complicated. Generally in-road bike lanes or designated bike paths are safer than separate pathways because motorists are more aware of riders at intersections. But the more casual user usually prefers riding on local neighborhood streets with low traffic volumes. The active transportation approach in this plan acknowledges the needs of the different types of users (see sidebar).

Since having special bike facilities on every street is not practical, one focus is to provide connections between key destinations like schools, parks, cultural institutions, and existing active transportation facilities inside the city to trails and linkages outside the city. The city already has an established sidewalk system and some designated bike routes. The next steps are to expand the system, especially for bicyclists. Key recommendations include

1. A more specific designation of Quarrier and Virginia as major bike routes to and from the downtown (see below),
2. A separate two-way bikeway along Kanawha

Boulevard that links with a bikeway along MacCorkle to complete a bike loop around the river,

3. Focus on providing/improving sidewalks with 1/4 to 1/2 mile of schools, parks, and bus stops, and

4. Continue to explore the feasibility of utilizing the rail trestle as a non-motorized connection over the Kanawha River. Additionally explore the possibility of a pedestrian river crossing near Greenbrier Street on the East End or water taxi.

Construction of non-motorized facilities should be coordinated with other projects to save time and resources whenever possible. Areas for bike parking should be provided on site plans, in parking lots, and at prime parking structure locations. The bike racks could have a distinct, Charleston-related design.

To improve safety for pedestrians in hilly areas, the city should continue to look at improvements such as signs to remind motorists to stay alert for pedestrians. Where construction of sidewalks is not practical, wider shoulders or a pedestrian refuges near blind corners can improve safety.

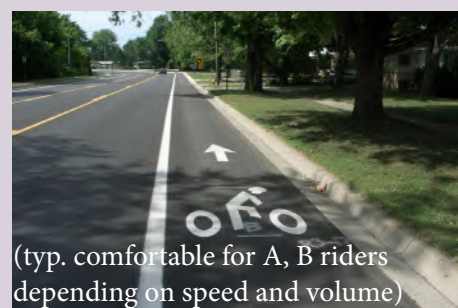
### Different Classes of Bicyclists

The non-motorized system in Charleston needs to be designed for a variety of bicyclists:

- A - "Advanced" riders include the more experienced or commuter bicyclists who often travel where those with less confidence or experience will not travel, such as streets with higher vehicle volumes and speeds.
- B - "Basic" bicyclists comprise the highest percentage of bicyclists or potential bicyclists. This group may choose to use a bicycle if there is a convenient and comfortable route available, but generally avoid bad weather and perceived unsafe conditions.
- C - "Children and families" and the least confident bicyclists that typically use sidewalks but may travel in the street where volumes and speeds are low.

A number of organizations and agencies are involved in development of the region's non-motorized network, including the NeighborWoods subcommittee of the Charleston Land Trust and KEYS 4 HealthyKids.

## Types of Bicycle Facilities



(typ. comfortable for A, B riders depending on speed and volume)  
bike lane: a separate lane for bicyclists



(typ. comfortable for all riders)  
separated bike path



(typ. comfortable for A riders)  
sharrow: remind motorists bikes are permitted to "share the road"



(typ. comfortable for B/C riders)  
bike trail: pathways that are "off-road"

## Subarea Example: Virginia/Quarrier Bikeways

- Bicycle Boulevard
- Shared Lane Markings
- Shoulder Bikeway; Bike Lane
- Buffered Bike Lane
- Cycle Track
- Sidepath; Shared-Use Path; Greenway Trail

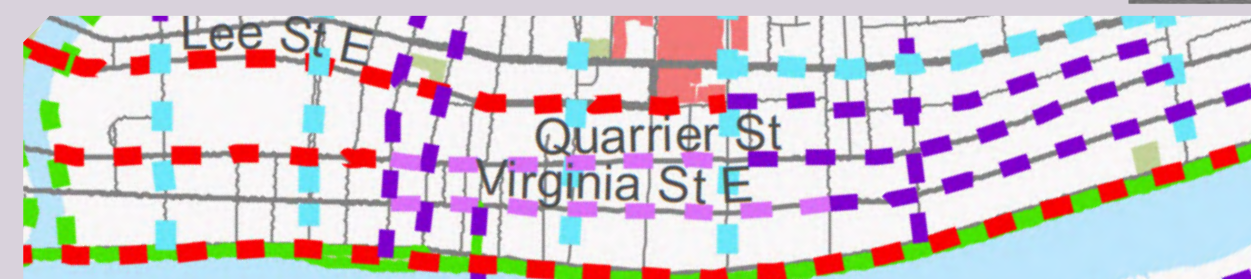
### Quarrier and Virginia

These one-way streets have highly used parking along both sides of the street. Alternatives considered conversion to two-way, but that would require removal of parking and separate 5-foot bike lanes. But as shown, the available street width would not meet the preferred design dimensions to ensure door swings do not conflict with micromobility. Therefore, the recommendation is sharrows.

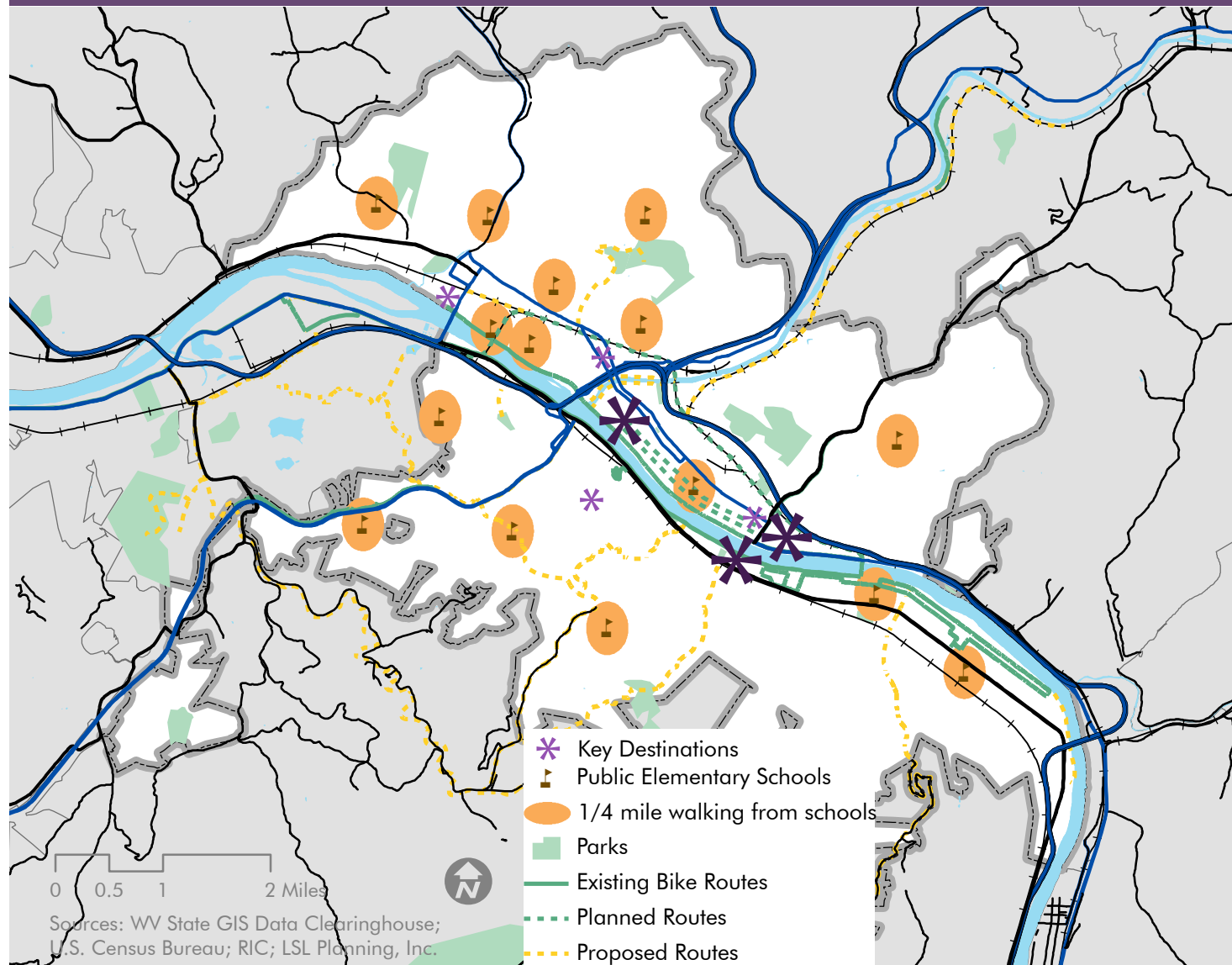


sub-standard space for door swing  
8' parking lane

Recommendation Sharrows, "share the road" markings and convert one lane of Summers to a bike lane for loop end



### Sidewalk Priority Areas



### Context-Sensitive Design

Street design should consider the compatibility with the surrounding area using an approach called "Context Sensitive Design". This means streets that serve the same traffic function (i.e. arterial, collector, or local street) may have a different design depending upon where they are located in the city. Factors that should be considered as part of the reconstruction or even repaving of a street should include the following:

- Lane widths - 11 foot wide lanes can be used instead of a wider dimension where there is a goal to reduce traffic speeds or make a district more walkable.
- Curb bumpouts, mid-block crossings, or raised crosswalks should be considered where there is a goal to make it easier

to cross the street.

- Streetscape elements like street trees, benches, and similar amenities should be included as part of a project design, especially in the business districts. Wider sidewalks could be used in those areas and for major routes to and around schools and parks.
- Pavement texture or colors can be used to help visually distinguish the street area designated for bicyclists (e.g. green pavement) or use of a green dash where major bike routes cross signalized intersections.
- As discussed elsewhere in this plan, improvements like median islands for pedestrian refuge, high visibility crosswalks and pavement markings can all improve the environment for non-motorized users.

### Subarea Application: MacCorkle Avenue Improvements

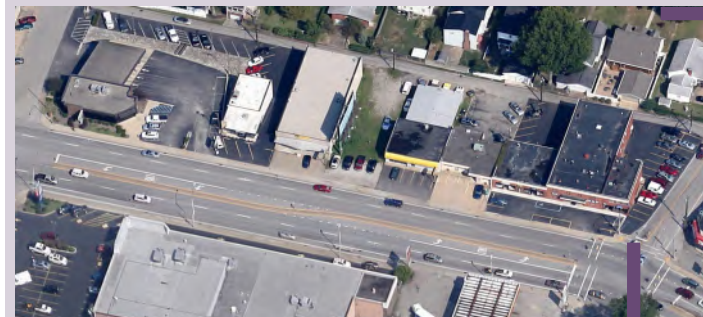
The City and Kanawha City Community Association created a study to continue improvements to make the MacCorkle more "livable" including changes to access control, traffic calming, more pedestrian-oriented design changes and an overall greening of the corridor. Concepts to help achieve those objectives are shown in Figure A below.

Access management can be applied to retain access to businesses while improving the overall safety and visual quality. This retrofit provides a landscape buffer separating the parking from the street, with driveways clearly designated at key locations. A long-term solution (B), currently under development in a Kanawha City Corridor Plan, is the conversion to parallel parking. Please refer to that plan for more specifics.

To complete the non-motorized loop of the Kanawha River shown on page xx, bike lanes could be added in the segments outside Kanawha City (C).



C. Bike lanes could be added to MacCorkle in Charleston similar to how they were added near South Charleston



B. Long-Term Redevelopment (as proposed in the Corridor Plan by GAI)



A. Short-Term Retrofit

## Intersection Improvements

Generally, most intersections in Charleston work fairly well - for a city its size, there is little congestion and few locations with a high crash rate. Still, some changes would help improve operations and safety, especially for pedestrians.

When intersection improvements are made, the focus should be on improving the level of service for all users (i.e. pedestrians and bicyclists, not just cars and trucks) or reducing vehicle-vehicle and vehicle-pedestrian/bicyclist crashes. The following are key considerations in designing a new or reconfigured intersection:

- Need for additional vehicle lanes
- Sight distance limitations
- Provision for bicycles
- Signal coordination and spacing
- Pedestrian crossings and related curb radii

In some cases, there may be a desire for a pedestrian crossing but at an unsignalized intersection. Pedestrian-activated traffic signals at pedestrian crossings allow a pedestrian to activate a traffic signal in mid-block locations. Pedestrian volume thresholds in design manuals can be used to identify locations where pedestrian volumes support such signal installations.

## Traffic Calming

One of the biggest fears of a pedestrian or bicyclist is being hit by an automobile. Studies show that the speed of the vehicle is one of the biggest factors in whether the result of such a collision is a few scrapes, a serious injury or a fatality. Research shows that a pedestrian or bicyclist hit by a vehicle traveling 20 mph or less has a 95% chance of survival while only about 55% survive as collision with a vehicle traveling 30 mph (and only 15% if 40 mph or greater). So there is a big difference if cars traveling through residential streets, where pedestrians and bicyclists are most frequent, are traveling at 20, 25 or 30 mph.

Those types of statistics led to a package of design techniques called "traffic calming." Different design elements can be used to help reduce speeds, such as along residential streets, in parking lots or near schools and parks. Traffic calming can include things narrowing the lane widths, special pavement for pedestrian crossings, or raised features in the road (speed humps or tables, not to be confused with speed bumps often found in parking lots). Traffic calming at intersections can also include use of narrower curb radii and curb bump outs to reduce the width that pedestrians must cross. This can actually benefit vehicular traffic too, since shorter crossing paths require less time for pedestrian time leaving more time for vehicular traffic. Another option for lower volume intersections is a mini-roundabout.

These types of design techniques should be considered especially for streets and intersections where there are relatively high volumes of pedestrians or bicyclists and where typical traffic speeds are notably higher than the target or posted speed limit.

## Pavement Striping

Pavement markings are an often overlooked, but important, component of the transportation system. Much like signs, pavement markings can help inform motorists, pedestrians and bicycles on the "rules of the road" and influence how they travel along streets. Pavement markings are a relatively easy way to change driver behavior too, such as adding painted crosswalks or defining a lane width and parking spaces with striping. Throughout Charleston, there are some wide streets that are intended for two travel lanes and parallel parking along both sides. Usually the on-street parking spaces are signed but not striped. In most cases this is sufficient. Along certain streets, especially where the on-street parking spaces are infrequently used, the impression is that the street is very wide which gives the perception that speeds can be increased.

Using striping in those locations, especially when near a school or along major pedestrian/bicycle routes, may help lower speeds (i.e. "calm" traffic). Striping could include markings for on-street spaces, striped crosswalks and stop bars. There are a variety of painted warnings and crosswalks that can be used. In cases where the pedestrian needs to cross very wide pavement, curb bump-outs can be used to shorten this distance in an aesthetic way.

At major pedestrian crossings where there are two travel lanes in each direction, staggered stop bars could be used so the inner vehicle is farther from the crossing than the vehicle in the outer lane. This provides more protection to the pedestrian by improving awareness of the motorist in the inner lane of the pedestrian. It has an added benefit of avoiding the "good Samaritan" situation where the vehicle in the outer lane stops to let a pedestrian or bicyclist cross, but the motorist in the inner lane is not aware of that intent.

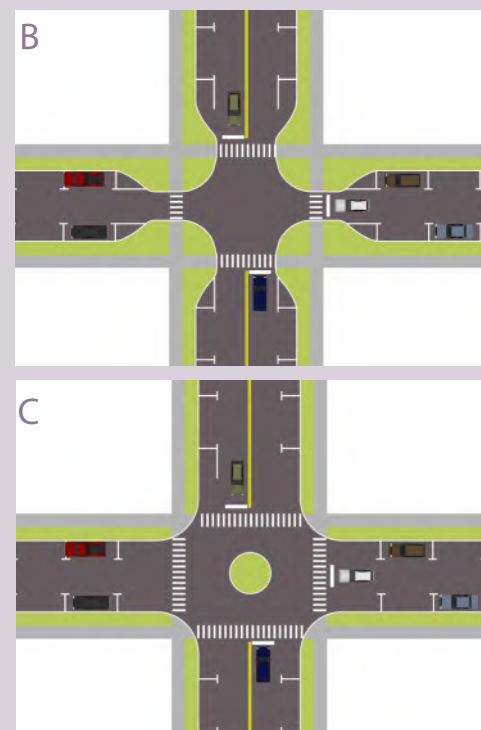
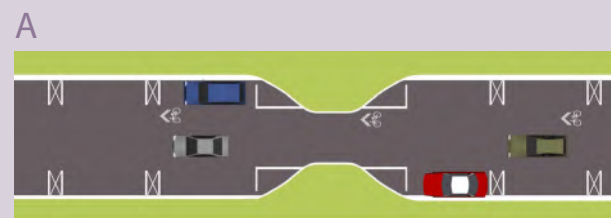
Given the past history of granting motor vehicles the majority of consideration, it will be helpful to provide public information and education on what certain pavement striping means. This will be particularly important for bicycle lanes, which to date have been non-existent or very limited in scope within the city.

## Access Management

Numerous studies nationwide have shown that a proliferation of driveways or an uncontrolled driveway environment can increase the number or severity of crashes, reduce capacity of the street, and may create a need for more costly improvements in the future. Excessive access points also make streets less safe and inviting for pedestrians and bicyclists. Access

## Subarea Example: Virginia/Quarrier Traffic Calming

One objective is to make Quarrier and Virginia Streets more bike friendly. In addition to adding sharrows, (see box page x) different types of traffic calming measures can help ensure traffic volumes and speeds remain low to make sharing the street more comfortable for bicyclists. These traffic calming measures could include bumpouts to replace a few parking spaces with a landscaped area at a mid-block location such as in front of Carroll Terrace (A). Bumpouts (B) or a mini traffic circle (C) could also be used at intersections like Ruffner. These types of intersection changes will also make crossing the street easier for pedestrians.



## Traffic Calming Examples



Neighborhood Traffic Circle



Speed table (3" high)



Curb bumpout on W. Washington



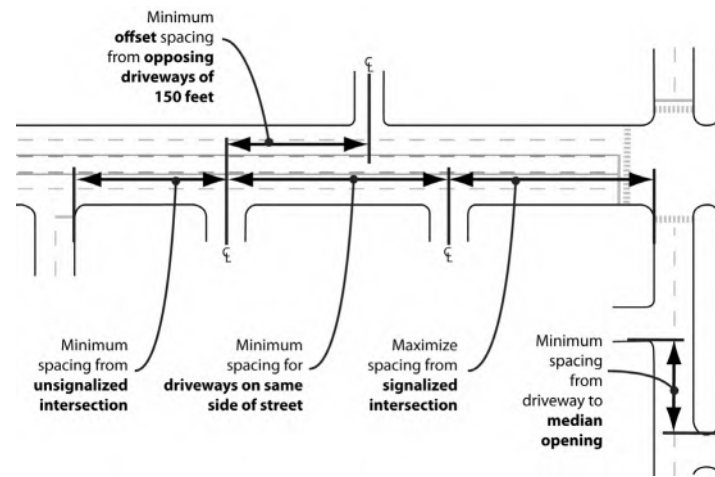
Mid-block crossing

management is a program to reduce the number of crashes and improve traffic flow for vehicles, pedestrians and bicyclists. This is accomplished through control over the number and placement of access points, particularly along major streets.

Driveway spacing influences the amount of information a driver must process and improves driver reactions. Adequate spacing reduces confusion resulting from the drivers' need to watch for ingress and egress traffic at several points simultaneously while controlling their vehicle and monitoring other traffic ahead and behind them.



A staggered stop bar in Vancouver



Driveway, access points, intersection spacing and offsets

Charleston has several streets where the number and location of access points have a noticeable influence on traffic flow, such as along segments of MacCorkle Avenue, Patrick Street, and Kanawha Boulevard. While access management techniques should be applied along all major streets, it is particularly important on the street segments identified as Access Management focus areas on the Transportation Map on page x.

The WVDOH currently requires an encroachment permit for all new accesses or significant alteration to existing locations where they fall within WVDOH right-of-way. City regulations will need to work with current WVDOH requirements on state-owned right-of-way within the city.

Access management is implemented in a variety of ways:

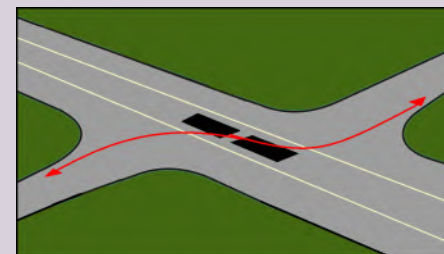
- Locate driveways as far from intersections as practical, especially signalized intersections.
- Consolidate and eliminate driveways wherever feasible to increase driveway spacing.
- Establish shared access connections wherever feasible to promote cross-access and reduce individual access points.
- Relocate or eliminate driveways with poor offset spacing from driveways on the opposite side of the street.
- Design driveways to meet the needs of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Access management improvements can be implemented in two ways: as part of street reconstruction and improvement projects or as sites are developed and redeveloped. Most often, access management is implemented as private development applications are submitted for review. Because not all sites will develop or redevelop immediately, gradual compliance with the access standards is more likely to occur over time as sites change use, businesses expand or significant site improvements are made.

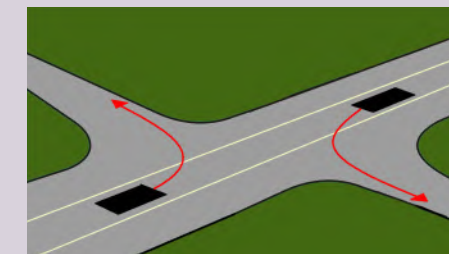
Required access changes should be relative to the extent of the proposed private application or investment. Examples of the type of changes that could be required for various applications are shown below.

### Keys to Access Management in Charleston

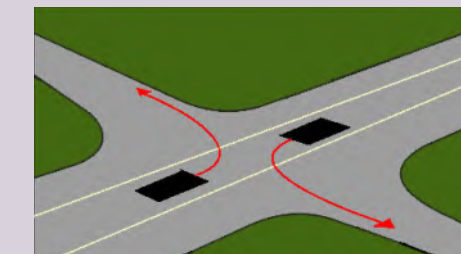
1. Keep driveways as far from signalized intersections as possible
2. Avoid poorly spaced offsets that can cause congestion and collisions
3. Design driveway geometrics in consideration of pedestrian crossings, truck turning radii needed, and to minimize conflicts with parking maneuvers
4. Space driveways on the same side of the street as far apart as practical



worst



better



best

### Applying Access Management to developed sites may be done in stages



#### Change of Use:

- No major increase in traffic
- Require cross-access easement
- Close unsafe driveways



#### Building Expansion:

- Require cross-access
- Close most problematic driveways
- Redesign driveway(s)



#### Full Redevelopment or Street Reconstruction:

- Comply with DOT standards
- Provide cross-access

**Parking**

Off-Street parking (parking lots) are an important part of a businesses success. Customers are more likely to frequent a business where parking is viewed as safe and convenient. In some cases, however, the amount of parking provided is excessive. A large parking lot with many empty spaces does not say “shop here” it says “nobody shops here.”The Plan recommends that in cases where there is excess parking, that space be used instead for new buildings or more green space (which could be a holding zone until a future use is identified). Conversion of some parking spaces to parking islands can also help improve circulation, aesthetics and make it more inviting for customers to walk rather than drive to individual businesses. Those types of changes can also reduce the amount and pace of stormwater runoff, as recommended in the city’s draft Stormwater Manual. One example is the redevelopment plan shown for the Patrick Street regional commercial along the river.

In addition, the amount of parking needed for different uses has changed in recent years. The city’s zoning ordinance was recently amended with more modern standards. There still may be cases where the mixture of uses results in different peak use periods. In those cases, an additional reduction in the parking required may be allowed. For example, in Kanawha City, the potential to add on-street parking and promote shared use of off-street parking lots may allow a notable reduction in the number of parking spaces that would otherwise be required for each individual use.

On-street parking is prevalent on many of Charleston’s residential and business streets. This parking not only provides a convenience to residents and access for customers, it also helps to calm traffic speeds and making walking along the sidewalks more comfortable. There are



On-street parking can be made more efficient with striping of X’s every two spaces to ease maneuvering, and, where the lanes are wide, a door swing zone to help protect door use and slow vehicles

some changes though that can improve the effectiveness of parking:

- Much of the on-street parking is not striped, making its use inefficient. Striping parking spaces can help organize the parking to pick up additional spaces. Striping can also help reduce speed of traffic when the spaces are not occupied.
- In many places, use of curb-bump outs (as shown at right) can help distinguish the parking lane from the travel lane while also slowing down traffic and shortening the paved distance a pedestrian must cross.
- Many streets in Charleston are used by through traffic, parkers and bicyclists. One conflict created by on-street parking is when a door opens and the bicyclists either hits the door or swerves into the adjacent travel lane. Many cities that promote bicycling or have bike lanes have used “buffer zones” a cross hatched area next to the drivers side of the parking lane, to help position bicyclists to the left of this conflict zone (see the example for Quarrier Street )

Parking for bicyclists can also help support the goal of a more bikeable city. Select on-street parking spaces can be converted to bike parking. Similarly, one space on the first floor of parking structures should be converted to bike parking, with a couple of pilot projects used to help identify the demand. In addition, the zoning ordinance could promote the replacement of one required off-street parking space with a place for bicycles. As noted on page 51, the bike parking racks could have a dual purpose as public art.

Downtown Parking is addressed in the Downtown Plan including the design of on-street spaces, access to surface lots, re-purposing some surface lots to buildings, and design guidelines for parking structures in the future. Technology to help motorists locate available spaces is also mentioned.

The City should ensure that adequate accessible parking spaces are available in parking ramps, on-street parking, and in new private developments, in accordance with ADA standards to accommodate those with disabilities.

**On-Street Parking**



When on-street parking is not striped, the travel lane seems wide, causing higher speeds



Curb bump outs and striping help better define the parking lane from the travel lane

**Park and Ride**

One way to reduce congestion and the demand for parking, especially downtown, the capitol complex, and at institutions would be to implement a park and ride system. Key employers could map the locations of their employee’s residences to see if there are patterns where a park and ride service could capture those riders. Sometimes large retailers with excess parking are willing to advertise their lots as carpool or park and ride locations.

**Parking Lot Examples**



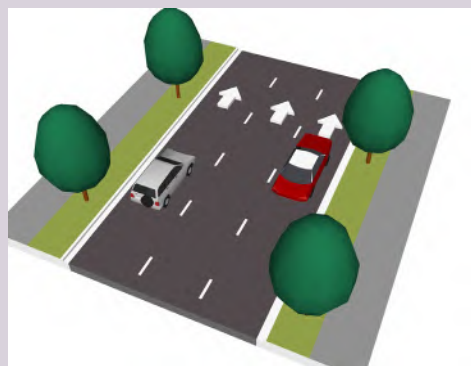
This underutilized lot could benefit from landscaping and fewer spaces



Landscaping islands greatly enhance parking lots

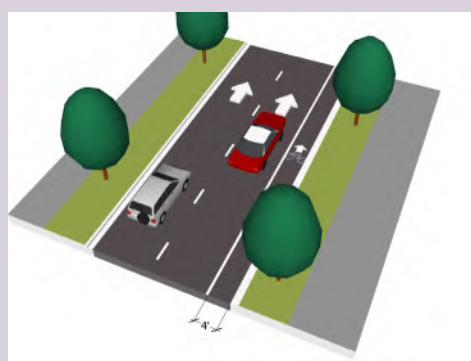
### One-way Alternatives

Existing: One-



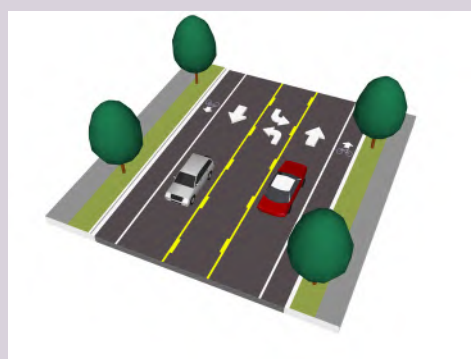
- Processes highest traffic volumes

One-way Road Diet



- "Diet" frees up space for a bike lane, wider sidewalks or on-street parking
- Easier pedestrian crossing

Two-way Conversion



- Eases wayfinding
- Slows traffic
- Improved business recruitment, access, and visibility

### Changing Road Design

#### One-way/two-way

One frequent comment heard at many committee and public meetings dealt with one-way streets. A number of people voiced that the one-way streets make wayfinding complicated, increase traffic speeds and generally do not support the walkable environment that is desired in Charleston.

Having this conversation is not unique to Charleston. Nationally, many cities have conducted evaluations of converting one-way streets to two-way for the same reasons. There are a lot of factors that need to be considered:

- Capacity – one-way systems have significantly higher capacities, which is often the reason they were installed. But that extra capacity may not be all that critical in Charleston since there is not significant congestion.
- Safety – one way streets tend to have fewer collisions because there are fewer conflict points. But traffic along one-way streets tends to travel faster, which makes the street less inviting to walk along or cross.
- Wayfinding – The one-way streets in Charleston are difficult for visitors to navigate. The one-way streets also reduce the volume of traffic that views businesses. Most research shows two-way streets are better for retail and service uses but do not really impact offices and destination businesses.
- Pedestrian crossings – one-way streets may be easier to cross because the pedestrian can focus looking in one direction; also a one-way street may be allow narrowing at the intersection to shorten the crossing distance.
- Parking – on-street parking can often be provided on one or both sides of a one-way street but that parking may be lost to accommodate two-way traffic.
- Air quality – since two-way streets may have more congestion, air quality may be impacted.
- Cost – since conversion to two-ways requires changing all the traffic signals, and typically can not easily be phased.

So, taking those types of factors into consideration, several of the one-way streets were reviewed at a general level, to identify any candidates to convert to two-way.

Virginia and Quarrier Streets – those one-way pairs have parking along both sides that is heavily used. Rather than a conversion to two-way, the recommendation is to use traffic calming techniques (see page 35) to help lower speeds and make the street more inviting for pedestrians. In additions, signs and sharrow pavement markings to make the street more bicycle friendly.

Patrick Street – Between 5th and 7th Streets, Patrick Street changes from a two-way street to a one-way, with three lanes directing traffic to routes Rte 21, Rte 25 and US 60. The traffic volumes are well below the capacity of a three lane street section. As a result, speeds are high, which while friendly to those driving through or out of town, does not support the planned business district along the street. The one-way circulation loop of Iowa, 7th and Patrick Street essentially creates an island of blocks that is cut off from the rest of the West Side. A conversion to change one lane back to southbound should be conducted.

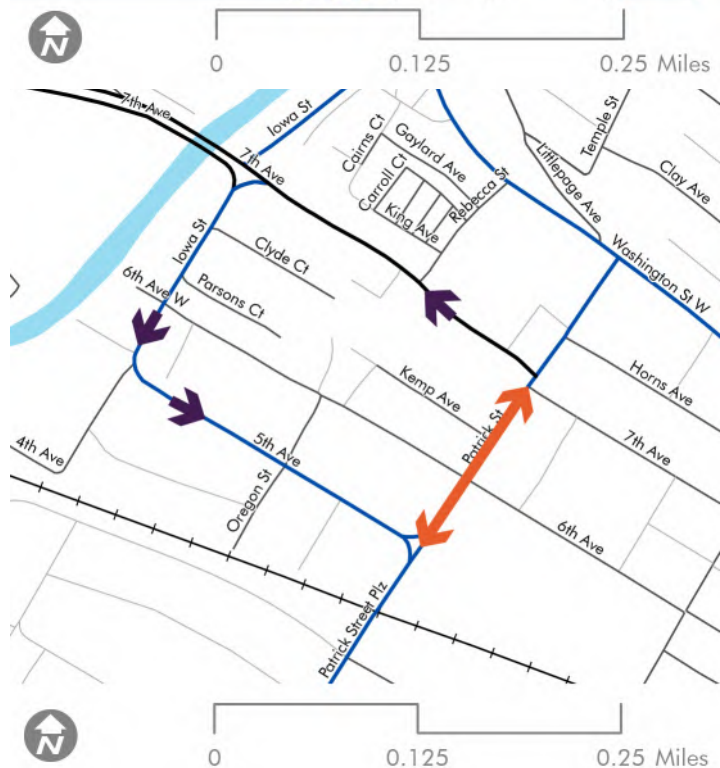
Randolph and Virginia on the West Side – the segments of this one-way pair on the West Side does not appear to be warranted for traffic flow reasons. Traffic volumes are modest and there are a number of parallel routes. A conversion to two-way would help support the city's Vision to revitalize the West Side.

Downtown – Converting one-way streets to two-way may be an option in the downtown as well. A special study would be needed that considers factors such as those listed earlier in this section. In some cases, retaining the one-way but adding traffic calming and pedestrian amenities may be offer many benefits without a need to convert back to two-way. In other cases, especially where volumes are low and/or traffic speed higher than desired, two-way may be the best option



Patrick Street should be converted to two-way for its entirety

### West Side One-way Conversions





## D. Infrastructure

Infrastructure is a vital component of any comprehensive redevelopment plan, supporting the existing structure of the community, but attentive to future development and ready to support sustainable growth for the future. Utilities are a major element within the comprehensive plan and will have to support all future growth within the Charleston city limits. Utilities are largely unseen elements within the built environment, but are a necessity with regard to revitalization and future growth. Utilities need to be available and have adequate capacity to support future development as it comes on line.

Infrastructure includes Storm Water, Sanitary, Utilities, Transportation, Green Infrastructure and Low Impact development. Current infrastructure conditions have already undergone a fair amount of analysis. A summary of that analysis and recommendations relevant to the comprehensive plan is given below.

**Low Impact Development/Stormwater Management**  
Impervious paved and concrete surfaces increase the amounts of storm water runoff during rain events. Increased runoff erodes streambanks, causes water quality violations, prevents groundwater recharge, and can contribute to flooding problems. Charleston is uniquely situated in the corners of three major watersheds: the Elk Watershed and the Upper and Lower Kanawha Watersheds. Those surface waters are an extremely valuable natural resource. The City is currently operating under an existing permit (MS4) mandated by the EPA. That permit requires the city to move forward with a program to reduce surface water pollution through public education/outreach, detection/elimination, construction site/long term runoff control, and elimination of municipal operations runoff control.

A critical component of the stormwater reduction program is implementation of Low Impact Development (LID). LID is an approach to development aimed at conserving natural resources and protecting the environment by strategically managing rainfall close to its source, minimizing impervious coverage, using native plant species, and conserving and restoring natural areas during site development or redevelopment. Design techniques are focused on the use of applications that are modeled after nature, rather than building costly infrastructure and water quality restoration systems. For example, where proposed building additions will require additional detention that cannot be accommodated on the site, sometimes use of the techniques below can provide the same function at less cost to the developer. Allowing such expansions helps maintain a healthy economy and tax base for the community, especially since otherwise, that business would be likely to relocate or close due to limited expansion alternatives.

The site plan review process should provide a mechanism for a stormwater management plan review when significant site

modifications are proposed. Incorporating green infrastructure into private site design and public road projects provides numerous benefits to property owners, regulatory agencies and the general public:

- Reduces municipal infrastructure and utility maintenance costs (e.g., streets, curbs, gutters, storm sewers).
- Reduces stormwater runoff volume and improves stormwater quality.
- Increases energy and cost savings for heating, cooling, irrigation.
- Protects community character/aesthetics.
- Reduces salt usage and snow removal on paved surfaces.
- Protects/restores the water quality of rivers and streams.
- Improves urban wildlife and habitat opportunities.
- Provides additional stormwater capacity for nonconforming sites without modern detention facilities.

While low impact design is encouraged wherever it can be applied, it is specifically warranted in areas where vegetation may be installed in lieu of impervious surfaces (i.e. pavement). It can be applied to open spaces, rooftops, streetscapes, parking lots, sidewalks, and medians. In many cases, these beneficial design alternatives offer a significant long-term cost savings, even when factoring in some additional maintenance costs. Design options to consider include use of rain gardens, native plant species, street trees (i.e. Planter Boxes, Tree Pits), bioswales and pervious pavement. The Charleston Stormwater Manual addresses multiple best management techniques for use in the city. A few select items are discussed below:

- **Bioretention (Rain Gardens) & Bioswales** should be considered in areas between the new or existing sidewalk where driveways are removed and in areas where the road median is relocated or enlarged. Larger drainage areas may require a combination of facilities and overflow areas should be provided for larger rain events. Plant species should be salt tolerant, provide aesthetic benefits and be low maintenance. Sidewalks should be designed to direct runoff into these areas, and maintenance agreements



Porous pavement and a rain garden in Columbus, OH

should be included as part of any approval.

- **Native Street Tree Planters** are recommended where earth is disturbed due to the removal or relocation of a driveway or median crossover. Maximizing exposed soil around the tree will facilitate water infiltration; however, tree grates and planter options can be applied in more urban or high pedestrian traffic areas. Street tree species should be varied to minimize the potential of invasive threats.
- **Pervious pavement** may be considered instead of previous applications (i.e. asphalt or concrete) in parking areas or the road gutter. To function properly, pervious pavement requires adequate subsurface soil conditions, overflow connection to a storm sewer or other final discharge location and routine vacuum maintenance. Pervious pavement should not be installed in areas where there is a potential for soil contamination. Pervious pavement is most suited for certain flat portions of the city and should not be used on clayey or rocky soils commonly found on the hillsides and ridgetops within the city.

Sound thinking needs to be applied when installing bioretention areas or promoting infiltration within city limits. Areas with aged or cut stone foundations are susceptible to leaks. Furthermore, areas with adjacent basements should be avoided when promoting infiltration as stormwater has a tendency to find those areas.

### Sanitary Sewers

The Sanitary Board of the City of Charleston, West Virginia, a Municipal Utility (CSB), is a Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTW) that owns, operates and maintains the sanitary and combined sewer treatment infrastructure within and in some parts outside the City Limits of Charleston. The CSB operates the POTW in accordance with its NPDES permit, as regulated through the WVDEP. As part of the initiative to eliminate storm water pollution, CSB has mandated that future development projects comply with all regulations of the West Virginia Public Service Commission (PSC), State Health Department, and the Kanawha-Charleston Health Department. This regulation supports the continued effort of separation of the City's storm water and combined sewer discharge as part of the MS4 permit.



Bioswales treat runoff in Indianapolis

### Drinking water

West Virginia American Water serves more than 90,000 customers water within the city limits of Charleston as well as many outlying areas located. The source of the water supply is the Elk River via an intake approximately one mile upstream from the confluence with the Kanawha River. The Kanawha Valley Water Treatment Plant (KVVTP) is the sole water treatment facility for the Kanawha Valley Service Area. The facility is located within Charleston city limits at the corner of Court and Dryden Streets. The facility was constructed in 1973 with a 40 million gallon per day capability. Modifications increased capacity to 50 million gallons per day. WVAV has projected that maximum day demand will be 40.36 million gallons per day by 2025. One problem, similar to other older systems, is that the age of many lines causes leaks and breaks in the mains. In response, the WVAV repaired thousands of main leaks and breaks in 2010. WVAV plans to replace several thousand feet of service mains, within the city. These service main replacements are proposed to take place from 2013 – 2015 and range in size from 2 inch - 8 inch service lines with the majority of replacements being 2 inch. Through its maintenance and replacement program, the plant continues to consistently meet federal and state regulations including the AWWA/EPA Safe Drinking Water Partnership goals.

\*Source: Comprehensive Planning Study performed by West Virginia American Water through the year 2025.

### Natural Gas

Mountaineer Gas is the current gas supplier within the city. Since, gas can be stored and withdrawn based on market demand, it does not require the same level of planning as is needed for water and sanitary sewer systems. There currently are no plans to expand the system except where a proposed development has a particular need for gas.

### Communications

Optimum is currently the largest supplier of cable, internet, phone, and other services within the Charleston city limits and the state of West Virginia. There are no current needs or plans for additional coverage areas to be added as it relates to the comprehensive plan.

### Electric

American Electric Power (AEP) is the current supplier of power in the city. AEP has created a 10-year strategic plan in its power generation mix with actual and proposed changes intended to minimize generation costs and stabilize prices. In addition to the strategic plan AEP has also instituted energy saving programs, such as the Home SMART Energy Assessment, to its business and residential customers. Based on the company's sustainable approach, it is a utility that is working to remain a reliable source of power for future growth in the city of Charleston.

## Green Charleston Initiatives

Green development practices involve the design and operation of infrastructure, buildings, and uses of land that are more environmentally friendly and sustainable. This approach is a relatively new concept within West Virginia and the Charleston area. There is a small yet promising collection of green design projects installed to date within the city limits that show a commitment to Charleston's sustainable future.

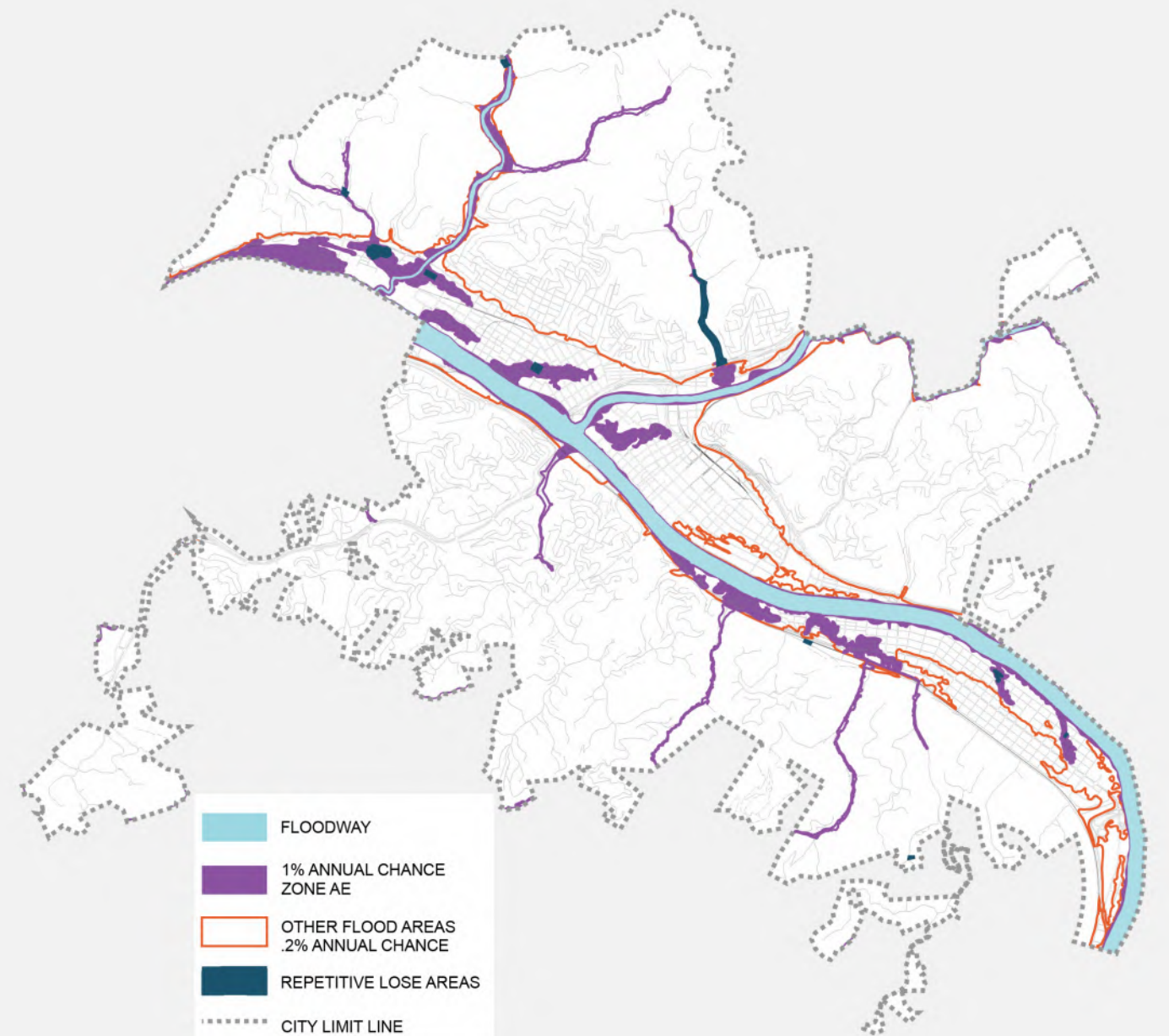
The largest current installation of green design was established with the construction of the WVDEP headquarters building in Kanawha City. The building attained a Silver rating upon completion of the project in 2004. The most recent structure, that is currently under construction, that will be implementing green strategies is the new Edgewood Elementary School located off Edgewood Road in Charleston.

The city has also made a commitment to sustainable site development and focusing on rehabilitating storm water. Treating and /or infiltrating on-site storm water is mandated by the current stormwater manual and adopted by the City of Charleston and the West Virginia

Department of Environmental Protection for all new development within the city limits. The requirement is for all new development sites with greater than 2,000 square feet of impervious area. The intent is to promote a more comprehensive and sensitive approach to design that will include reviews by the city early in design development. Some current examples of this type of infrastructure include rain gardens at the WVDEP Headquarters, Bio-retention area associated with the new Edgewood Elementary and underground cistern for building drainage, and proposed Bio-retention facilities for the future East End Park.

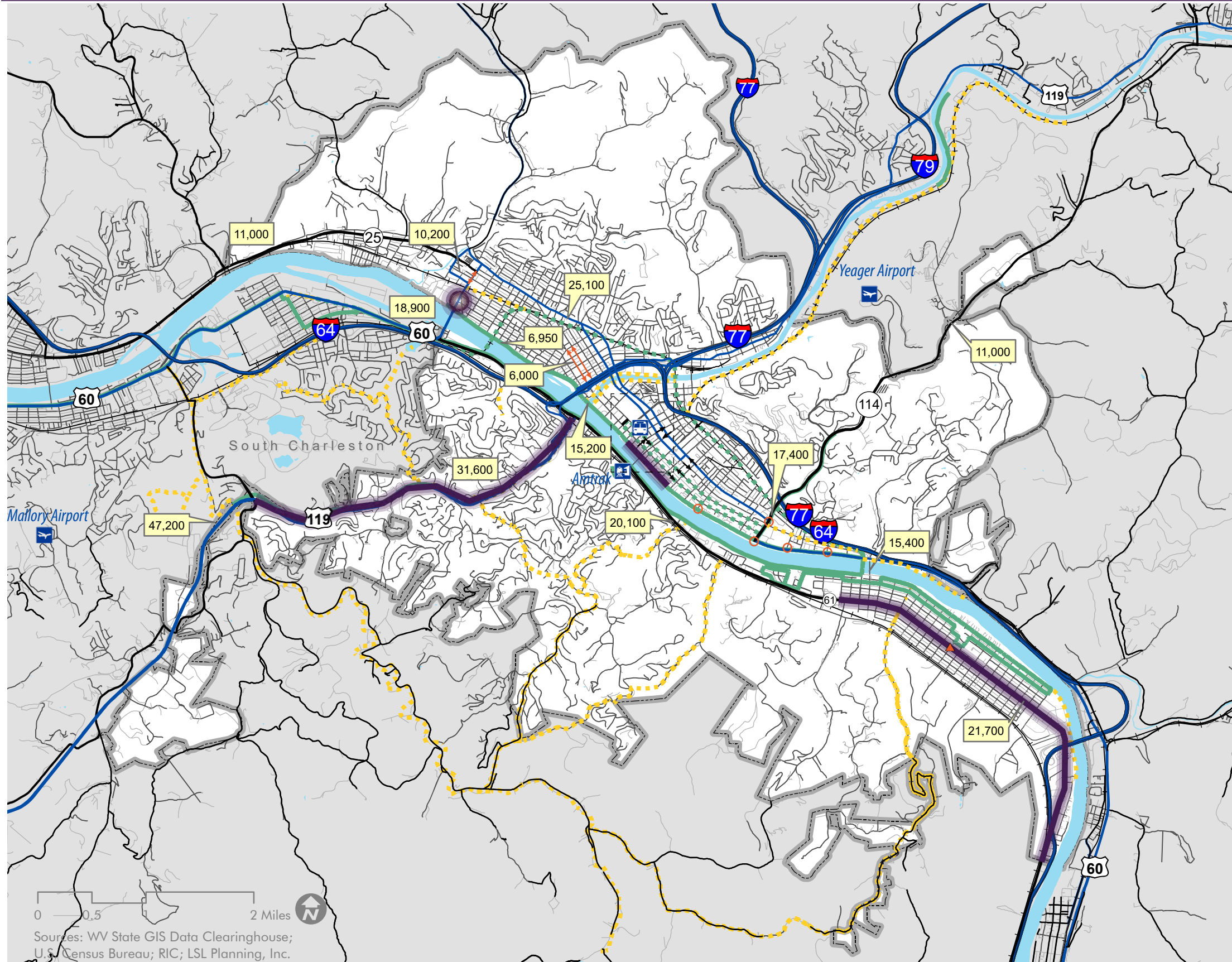
In addition to the aforementioned improvements, some existing sites have chosen to retrofit with Bio-infiltration areas such as John Adams Middle School and Habitat for Humanity Restore to treat parking lot and building drainage. Charleston has realized its responsibilities to the community and is implementing strategies that will allow sustainability to be an integral part of future growth.

## Floodways



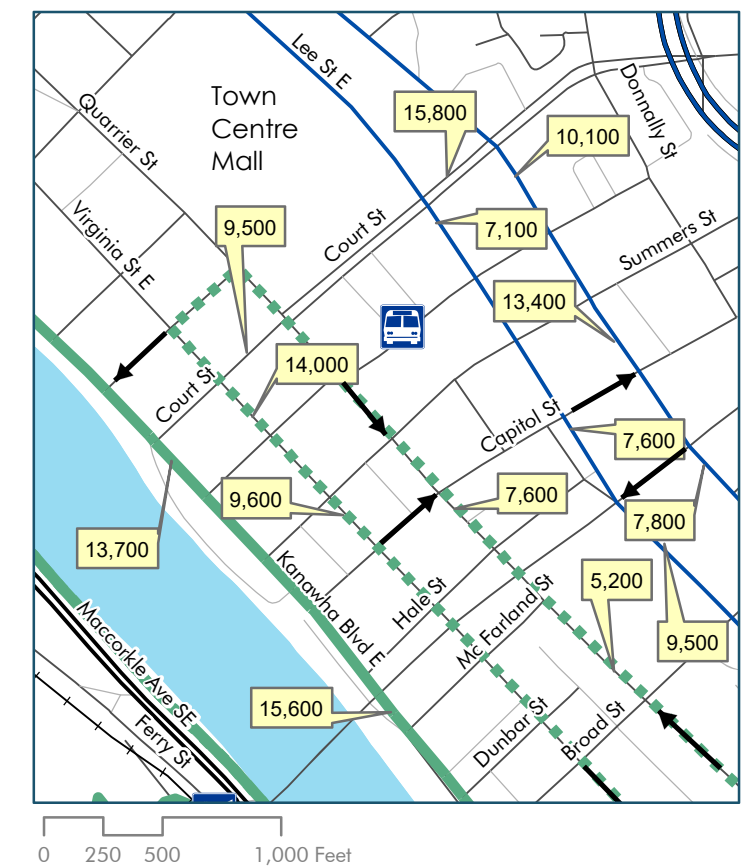
- The floodway is the area of rapid moving water during a flood event. Construction is not permitted in the floodway.
- Any structure with a bank mortgage within the 1% annual chance of rain zone (100 year flood zone) is required to have flood insurance. The structures must be built to flood zone standards.
- The Repetitive Lose Plan encourages removal of structures in the Repetitive Lose areas or to elevate them above the base flood elevation.

Transportation Conditions



- Interstate
- US Highway
- State Road
- County Road
- + Railroad
- Existing Bike Routes
- - - Planned Bike Routes
- - - Proposed Bike Routes
- 14,000 2007 Average Daily Traffic Counts
- One-way street
- ↔ Recommended conversion from One-way to Two-Way
- ▲ Proposed Bike Route Connection
- Key Locations for Access Management (see Toolkit)
- Improve Crossings

Sources: WV State GIS Data Clearinghouse; U.S. Census Bureau; RIC; LSL Planning, Inc.

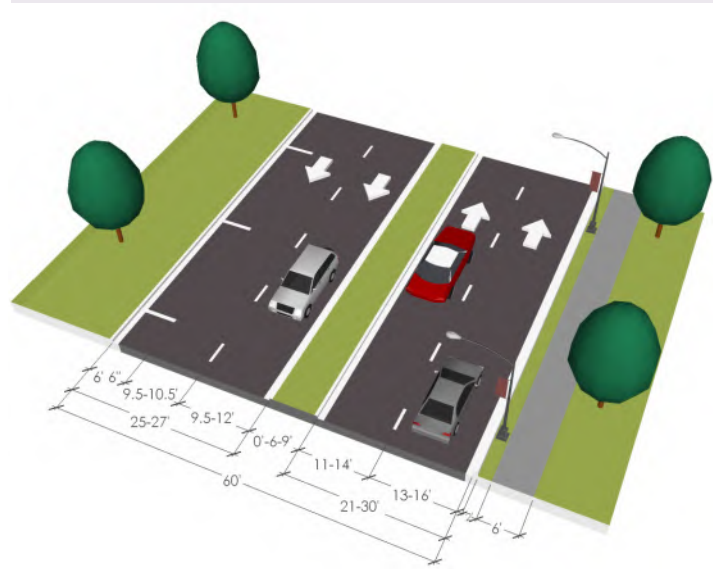


# Subarea Application: Kanawha Boulevard

## Objectives

- Encourage more walking and biking, especially those who do not currently bike
- Allow a transition to existing street cross-section and future extensions of bicycle facilities
- Ensure safety for all users (vehicles, buses, pedestrians, bikes, all ages)
- Design for people of all ages and bicycling skill levels
- Separate bicycles from pedestrians (for safety)
- Retain smooth traffic flow
- Retain on-street parking where practical
- Improve access to riverfront

## Existing Roadway



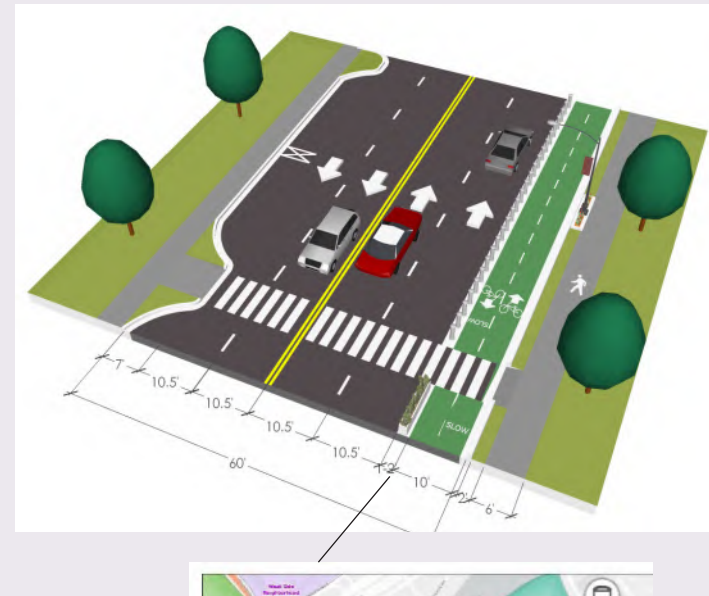
- Difficult pedestrian crossings
- Bikes and pedestrians compete along narrow riverside pathway
- Speeds higher than posted limits
- On-street parking highly used where it exists, especially west of the Elk River
- Cross-section varies

## First Segment

The segment from the Patrick Street Bridge to Magic Island is proposed for an improved bikeway. This project would "re-prioritize" a grant to provide bikeways across the trestle. [Engineering analysis determined the cost to make the trestle bridge was higher than the grant amount]

### Alternatives Considered

- Reduce number of travel lanes - eliminated due to perceived impacts on traffic flow
- Remove on-street parking - not preferred since on-street parking is well used, and alternative parking is limited
- 5 foot wide bike lanes along both sides - conflicts with on-street parking (door swings, etc.) and would not encourage as many "casual" bicyclists
- Mixing bikes with pedestrians along riverside - less safe than separating pedestrians and bicyclists
- Separated 2-way Bikeway - Preferred



## Preferred Alternatives

### Trestle Rail to Trail Project

As part of the City's grant to improve bike trail connections near the rail trestle, a segment of Kanawha Boulevard (shown in purple below) will be retrofitted to accommodate bicyclists.

The alternative pictured at left best meets the objectives for this segment of the Kanawha River "loop". This alternative includes a two-way bikeway along the riverside separated with a curb or decorative barrier from the travel lanes.

An alternative to provide more room for wider separation is to move the curb. This alternative would relocate existing lamps and add pedestrian scale lighting. These details are being evaluated as part of the grant process.

The trestle itself is still part of the non-motorized big picture, however due to funding is not the priority.



Indianapolis Cultural Trail



Source: NACTO



Source: NACTO



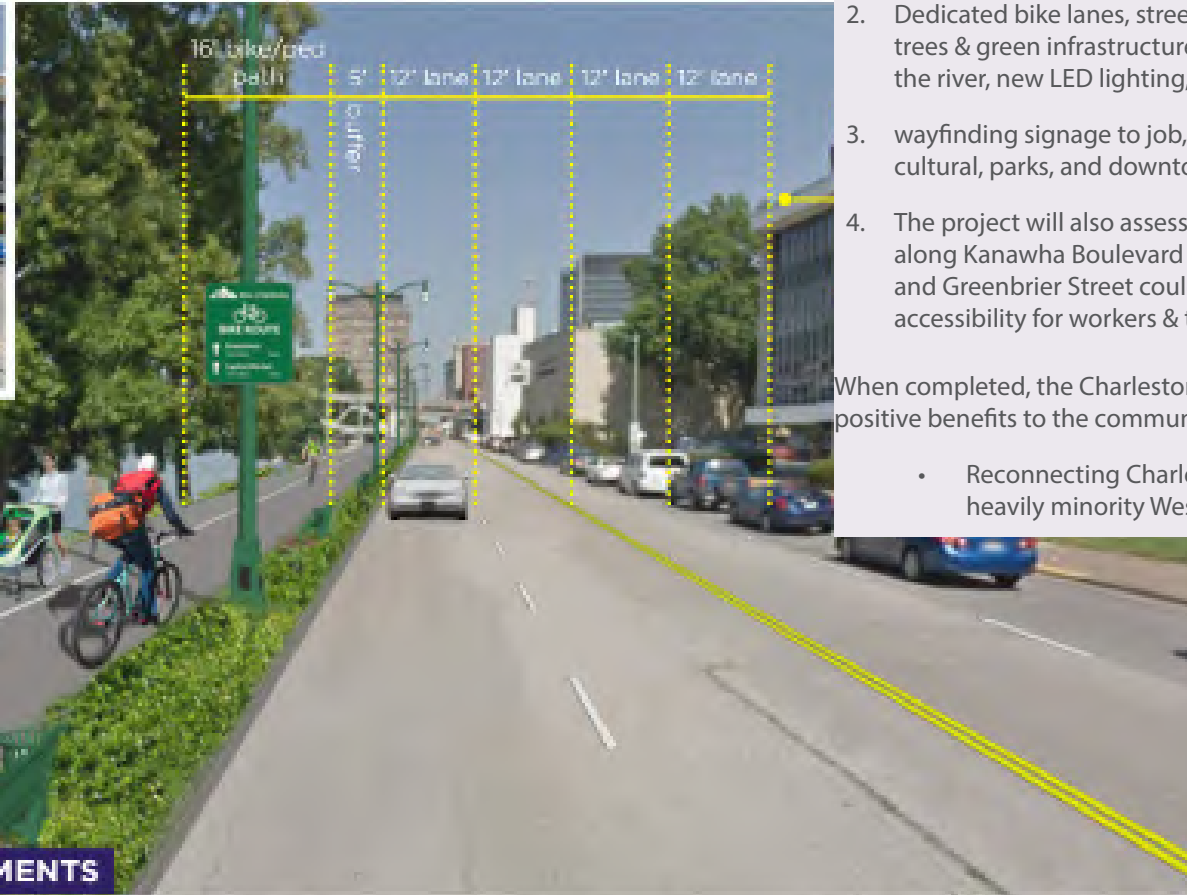
Source: NACTO



Future Development: The Charleston Capital Connector Project



EXISTING



KANAWHA BOULEVARD IMPROVEMENTS

2. Dedicated bike lanes, streetscaping & street furniture, street trees & green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff into the river, new LED lighting, and
3. wayfinding signage to job, educational, civic, social service, arts, cultural, parks, and downtown economic hubs
4. The project will also assess feasibility of a surface streetcar along Kanawha Boulevard between Charleston's West Side and Greenbrier Street could provide better transit options and accessibility for workers & tourist traveling downtown.

When completed, the Charleston Capital Connector will bring major positive benefits to the community and region including:

- Reconnecting Charleston's economically distressed and heavily minority West Side citizens and workers to job

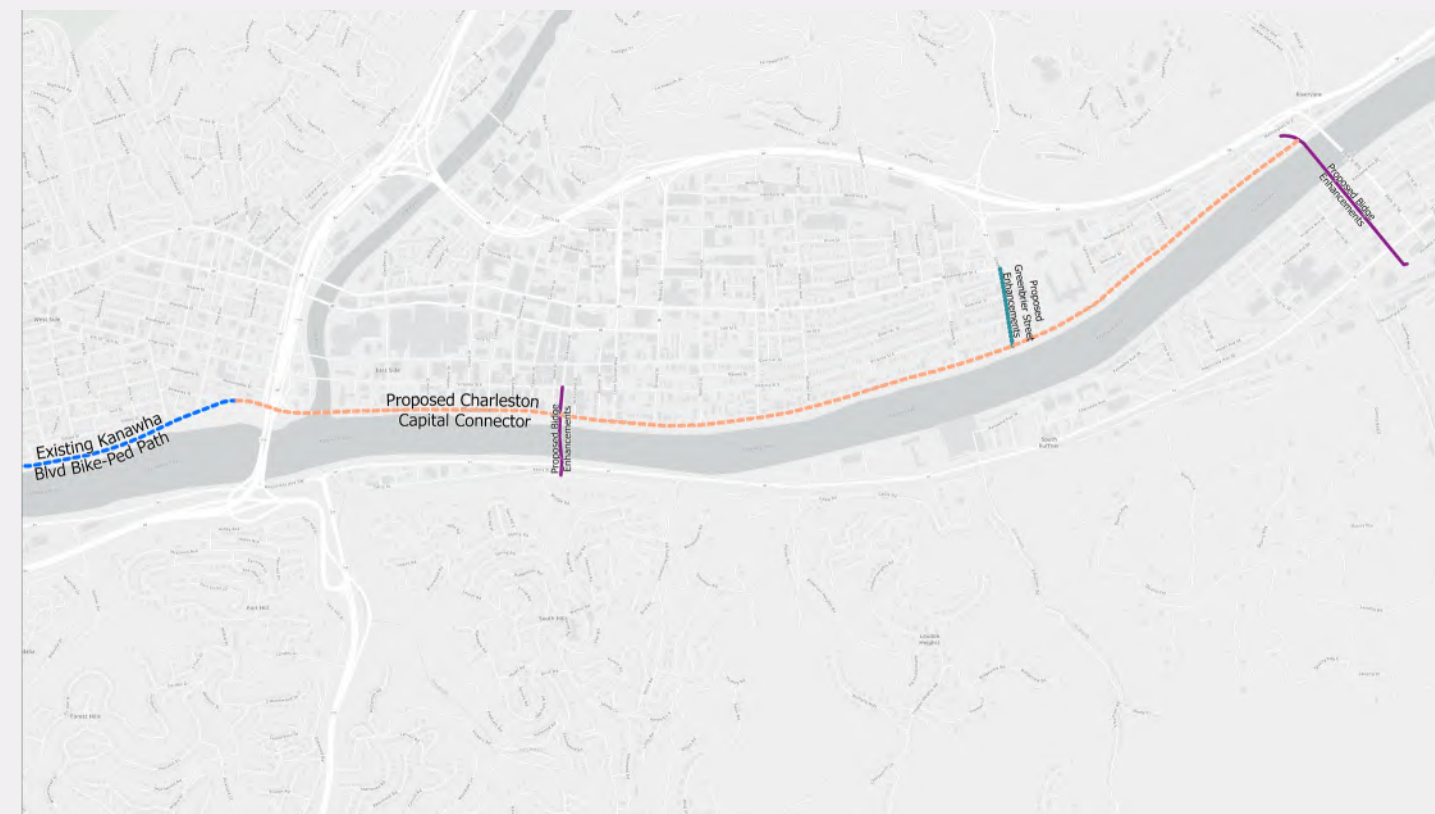
opportunities and key civic, social service, health & recreational centers with better transit, walking, and bicycling access;

- Boosting access and economic vitality in downtown Charleston and its civic, cultural, artistic, educational, and commercial hubs, as well as boosting connectivity to the University of Charleston, the Charleston Area Medical Center Hospital, and other core community assets;
- Connecting tourists to top attractions and destinations including downtown Charleston, Magic Island, Haddad Park, the Clay Center for Performing Arts, the West Virginia State Museum, and the West Virginia capital complex;
- Boosting safety on corridors which are not accommodating to pedestrians and cyclists, or for connecting to the urban riverfront; ;
- Supporting sustainable, low-emissions transportation accessibility by helping shift modes to walking, biking, bus and potentially streetcar mobility; and
- Creating gateway and riverfront transportation corridors which are beautiful and befitting of a Capital City, rather than maintaining the wide, fast, highway-like roadway that marks these corridors now.

The City was awarded a \$1.75 million RAISE (Rebuilding America's Infrastructure for Sustainability and Equity) Grant for professional design services for the Charleston Capital Connector Project.

The project will enhance safety, pedestrian and bicyclist accessibility, transportation efficiency, and streetscapes along 3.75 miles of Kanawha Boulevard East from Magic Island and Charleston's West Side neighborhoods, past downtown and key civic hubs including the West Virginia Capital complex, to the 35th Street Bridge, as well as along Greenbrier Street from the Kanawha Boulevard/River, to Washington Street in front of the capital's entrance. The project will transform these overly wide, high-speed, unsafe Kanawha Boulevard & Greenbrier Street roadways into complete streets which are highly efficient for vehicle travel, but also safe and effective for all modes of travel including pedestrians, cyclists and public transit. This project builds off the successful, recent transformation of Kanawha Boulevard West into a safer complete street. This complete street/road diet project will include:

1. Expansion and addition of sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming, & pedestrian safety facilities



The City is currently engaged with design professionals to start the process of creating shovel ready documents. The City is hopeful that with the U.S. Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act that we will be able to fund the construction of the project in the near future.

## E. Mobility and Infrastructure Actions

### Streets

- Ease pedestrian crossings and reduce traffic speeds at key crossings with design elements like wide crosswalks, “yield to pedestrian” signs and curb bump outs (R20)
- Enact regulations on the location of access points with minimum standards for spacing from signalized intersections, adequate sight distance near hills/curves, minimum offsets from access points across the street and spacing from other driveways. This should include provisions to gradually reduce/reconfigure commercial driveways that have the most potential to impact intersection operations and safety (R21)
- Supplement existing wayfinding sign system to identify key gateways to help direct travelers to and around neighborhood commercial districts (C6)
- Evaluate changes to select one-way streets where the volumes could be accommodated within the existing curb width to make traffic speeds more compatible with the desired, walkable neighborhood character (C7); City engineer to select an initial one-way pair for further study, data collection, and recommendations (e.g. Randolph and Virginia) (C7a); RIC to lead an analysis of alternatives of Patrick Street/Iowa one-way loop (C7b)
- Parking should be identified with the comprehensive signage and wayfinding system including directions to parking structures as well as technology to give motorists more information on available parking. (C8)
- Increase lighting for cars and pedestrians along city streets including maintenance and repair of existing lights and installation of new lights along streets and in public areas currently below light level guidelines (C19)
- Explore the feasibility of 2-way conversion of select 1-way pairs within Downtown for better and faster connections as well as incentives for first floor commercial spaces or to make those streets more pedestrian and bicycle friendly (C19)

- Improve the gateway to and from the airport with better wayfinding signs, lighting and other distinguishing streetscape elements. (C21)
- Create gateway treatments at key entrance points into the city (C22)
- Solicit designs for public art, enhanced streetscape treatments, signage, and greenspace (C22a)
- Incorporate streetscape and street tree planting as part of street and underground construction projects (C23)
- Bury overhead powerlines when roads are reconstructed (C30)
- For neighborhood streets where traffic speeds for most cars are documented to be more than 5 mph over posted speeds, evaluate traffic calming measures (like speed tables, striping to distinguish on-street parking from travel lanes, curb bumpouts and crosswalks at intersections, etc., see page XXX) (P6)
- City engineering and police to each identify a key staff person to work together to develop a neighborhood traffic calming program, including a process to respond to neighborhoods, collect data, etc. (P6a)
- When city staff or neighborhoods identify a potential problem, the traffic calming process would be initiated for the city’s team to work with representatives of the neighborhood to collect data and agree upon appropriate response and funding (P6b)

### Active Transportation and Micromobility



- Require bike racks for certain new, non-single family developments such as uses that may attract bicyclists like restaurants, shopping centers and promote installation of bike racks at key locations. (R18)
- Increase pedestrian connectivity standards for private development to ensure safe and pedestrian routes and walks are provided for new construction and expansion efforts. (R19)

- Enhance pedestrian convenience and safety with more significant pedestrian crosswalks (curb bumpouts to reduce crossing distance, wider crosswalk markings, “yield to pedestrian, min fine” signs) where crossing is difficult (e.g. Kanawha City hospital, Magic Island)(C1)
- Convert Virginia and Quarrier streets into “Bikeways” to improve safety and attractiveness for bicyclists (share the road signs, sharrow pavement markings and traffic calming measures - see page X) (C2)
- Begin to add on-street bicycle parking to replace select on-street parking spaces in the downtown and convert at least one first floor parking space in each parking deck to a well signed bike rack zone (C5)
- Upgrade intersections so pedestrian crossings meet ADA standards and replace pedestrian signals with countdown system at higher volume locations (C14); Adopt as standard practice for intersection design projects (C14a); Identify two to three key locations each year; begin with downtown but also include some intersections on the West Side, East End, and Kanawha City on a rotating basis (C14b)
- Designate a percentage of street funds for pedestrians/bicycles (C15)
- Extend Ruffner Walk south to provide a pedestrian connection between the neighborhood and the commercial corridor (C16)
- Improve bike and pedestrian connections through acquisition of property (off road connections) and along streets throughout the city particularly to connect open spaces, activity centers (schools, places of public assembly, parks, etc.) (C33)
- Establish an annual sidewalk maintenance and priority installation program, with initial focus on main routes to elementary schools (C34)
- Inventory sidewalks for gaps and conditions (C34a)
- Each year identify a priority sidewalk project (C34c)

- Improve connections between the University of Charleston, downtown, and Laidley Field (C29), Evaluate non-motorized options across existing bridges (C29a)
- Implement car-sharing and bike-sharing programs as needs arise (P8)
- Encourage businesses to be creative with conveniently located bike parking that could relate directly to the type of business or contribute as piece of functional public art (P28); Once a bike improvement project has been initiated, meet with businesses along the corridor to inform them of the bike facility improvement and benefits to including bike parking available by the time the project is complete; Show examples at the meeting, provide contacts for previous designers/manufacturers, and pair them at the meeting (P28a)

### Infrastructure

- Enact application of the city’s Stormwater Manual with Low Impact Development (LID) guidelines for both private development and public infrastructure projects that minimize impacts on soil and water resources, sensitive ecological features, and wildlife (R17)
- Improve Kanawha Boulevard with two-way separated bikeway, aesthetic amenities, and mid-block pedestrian crossings along both sides of the downtown, with “share the road” sharrows in the downtown area (see subarea plan) (C3); Install two-way separated bikeway from Patrick Street to Magic Island as part of rail to trail grant (C3a); Improve pedestrian crossings and bike sharrows along Kanawha Boulevard near downtown (C3b); Evaluate bicycle options east of downtown (C3c)
- Provide key connections and traffic calming measures (as shown on Map x) such as Greenbrier to Washington Street, across Bridge Road at the commercial district at the top of the hill (C4)

- Continue to expand the recycling system to provide separate recycling receptacles alongside trash receptacles in public places and along streets (C30) 
- Implement the recommendations of the Sanitary Board to gradually separate the sanitary and storm sewers per EPA requirements (C31)
- Continue to enhance the recycling program so it is competitive with programs from other capital cities and cities of Charleston’s size (P9); Meet annually with industry representatives on the “best practices” and how to refine the recycling system (P9a) 

Technology

- Convert city’s code of ordinances and application forms to be web-friendly and interactive, linked with city’s GIS system (R19)
- Replicate East End’s Wi-Fi program elsewhere in city as technology and funding permits (C9)
- Continue upgrades to a consistent GIS system (C10), Gather existing data and maps from each department (C10a), Work with the County on the creation of a parcel shapefile (C10b), Convert existing CAD files to GIS shapefiles (C10c)
- Rehabilitate aged water lines downtown (C32)
- Provide priority parking for alternative (natural gas) vehicles (P8); Pilot project on select highly visible on-street block providing free metered spaces during business hours for qualified vehicles (such as natural gas or electric) (P8a), Monitor frequency of use, if successful, then expand program to additional locations (P8b)

Transit

- Ensure sidewalk connections or at least a paved pad at bus stops (C11)
- City to work with KRT, employers, and non-profits that have shuttle systems to increase transit ridership and service to those that most depend upon it (P7)

Chapter 4

# QUALITY OF LIFE







# A. Introduction

Quality of life can be described as how satisfied an individual is with their community, and how well it fits their “happiness needs.” Several national publications annually review and rate the best (and worst) places to live. Rankings include a range of factors, such as access to a clean and healthy environment, quality education, financial security, ample and accessible employment opportunities, a diversity of entertainment, cultural, and recreational amenities, and availability of quality health care. Cities perceived to have a good quality of life are typically safe, have available jobs and good schools, plenty of access to parks, a clean environment, and abundant cultural and entertainment opportunities.

Those types of quality of life indicators are important to the future and stability of Charleston. A high quality of life in Charleston will help attract businesses and potential residents to sustain the vitality and diversity of its economy. People living or growing up in a Charleston that they see as being a great place to live are more likely to stay in the city throughout their lives and give back to the community, further enriching it. Throughout the planning process, residents consistently commented on how much they like living in Charleston for its small-town yet big-city charm, close proximity to nature, and quick commute times around the city.



Charleston appeals to a wide range of people to live, visit, do business, learn and have fun because of its offerings in culture, education, tourism, recreation, and public/ private/ institutional collaboration as the region’s anchor.

## Quality of Life Goals

- Promote partnership development, community engagement, localized assessments, and strategic planning for policy and environmental changes that increase access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities at the neighborhood level
- Promote and develop systems that support local food access through community gardening, farmers markets and urban agriculture
- Ensure adequacy and a high quality of municipal services
- Continue to build a strong partnership of public and private entities and citizens to support greenway plan development and implementation
- Promote active lifestyles by maintaining outstanding parks and recreation facilities that offer a variety of recreation assets and programs in a safe, accessible environment
- Proactively market the city’s assets through unified efforts by public/ private/ institutions with every resident acting as an ambassador for the city
- Promote “K through Gray” education and lifelong learning for personal fulfillment and a highly skilled workforce
- Reinforce Charleston’s position as the region’s entertainment and cultural destination

## Cultural Developments Through Charleston’s History

- 1788 - First settlers arrive, led by Clendenin, and build Fort Lee on the Kanawha River
- 1794 - Charleston is declared a town by the Virginia Assembly
- 1872 - The Kanawha Chronicle, now the Charleston Gazette, is formed
- 1909 - The Charleston Public Library opens with 1,200 volumes
- 1932 - The Cass Gilbert-design Capitol building opens
- 1935 - Morris Harvey College (now University of Charleston) relocates to Charleston
- 1939 - Municipal Auditorium opens as Charleston’s home for the arts and theater
- 1939 - The Charleston Civic Orchestra, now the West Virginia Symphony, forms
- 1947 - Charleston-Kanawha Airport, now Yeager International Airport, opens
- 1959 - The Charleston Civic Center is completed
- 1961 - Sunrise Museum opens in the former home of Gov. MacCorkle
- 1983 - Town Center Mall opened as a part of a plan to keep retail inside city limits
- 1995 - Haddad Riverfront Park opens with outdoor amphitheater
- 1998 - The Robert C. Byrd Federal Courthouse is completed
- 2003 - The Clay Center opens, combining performance space with the art and science museum aspects formerly housed at Sunrise Museum
- 2005 - FestivALL opens as an annual festival celebrating the visual and musical arts
- 2005 - Appalachian Power Park opens
- 2010 - Shoenbaum stage erected along the riverfront
- 2015 - \$100 million renovation and expansion of the Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center
- 2022 - Return of the Sternwheel Regatta to the City



# B. Opportunities and Challenges

- Capitalize on state capitol complex/position as "Gateway to West Virginia"
- Improve access to fresh, local food
- Improve access to and utilization of the riverfront
- Build partnerships between Charleston, educational institutions, and the health institutions
- Coordinate with school district on things like pedestrian and street improvements around schools and future decisions on school buildings
- Build upon Neighborhood Watch and community policing programs
- KEYS 4 HealthyKids are working with local communities to improve access to healthy local food and to increase play and physical activity opportunities to combat the high rates of childhood obesity
- Some residents complain they cannot find certain goods or fashions in the city and must go elsewhere
- Build upon Clay Center, Go-Mart Park, and future library as a Cultural District
- The city lacks adequate park space
- As the regional health care hub, the city can build upon that industry, seeking out affiliated education and research opportunities



## Fire Department Study Summary

A July 2011 study evaluated the Fire Department's efficiency, coverage, station locations, and fire risk based on population density. The following conclusions relate to how station locations may affect future decisionmaking:

- The current configuration of fire stations provides good coverage, but stations are not necessarily optimally placed. Because several stations are located rather close to the jurisdiction boundary, it is likely that the same level of coverage can be achieved with fewer stations.
- Charleston does not appear to have any major coverage gaps. There is a coverage gap in the southeast corner of the city. Because that area is relatively rural, it is not a huge concern.
- All other parts of the city have a fire station with six minutes drive time and most of the city is within four minutes of a fire station. There are other coverage gaps seen along some of the outer perimeters of the city, but these are the result of areas that do not have roads.
- The area of highest risk and demand is located right around Station 2 on the West Side.

## Crime Analysis Summary and Recommendations

**Findings**  
Charleston crime statistics report an overall downward trend in crime based on data from six years with violent crime decreasing and property crime decreasing. The preliminary report for 2011 shows mixed results, with some categories such as murder and burglary remaining basically unchanged while other categories such as property crime increasing significantly and motor vehicle thefts decreasing.

The city violent crime rate for Charleston in 2009 was higher than the national violent crime rate average by 149.28%, and the city property crime rate in Charleston was higher than the national property crime rate average by 74.06%.

**Data Source: FBI Uniform Crime Rate Database**  
**Recommendations**  
Since the Police Department and Abatement Units are separate city divisions, the city must work to enable and empower Code Enforcement and Abatement personnel to work together to aggressively combat crime and disorder in neighborhoods. Work with the Building Commissioner to enforce code compliance and expedite the abatement process. Review current city ordinances to allow officers to enforce some code violations and modify the cumbersome abatement process.

The city in cooperation with CPD should partner with area financial and real estate companies to develop a comprehensive foreclosure and abandoned building policy. This policy and its enforcement actions should target distressed properties before they become a problem. In Las Vegas, Metro PD works with local and national lenders to ensure that properties stay maintained throughout the foreclosure and sale process as an effort to ward off neighborhood blight.

One successful methodology to connect with citizens in the community and ensure community identity is to host neighborhood-based Community Engagement meetings. These meetings reaffirm community and neighborhood identity by working on concerns identified by citizens in the community and empowering them to be proactive in solving those issues with the guidance and assistance of the CPD.

CPD should continue to build upon its successful community policing and Neighborhood Watch programs by providing specialized training, revitalizing old groups, forming new groups and enhancing the programs outreach to citizens throughout the city.

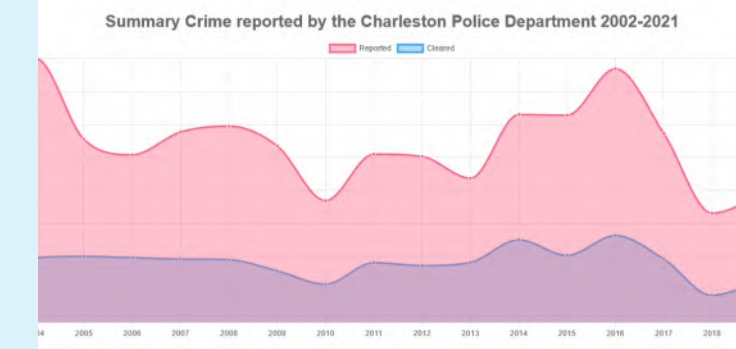
The Police Department can improve its communications with and connectivity to the citizens of the community by employing a variety of communications technology and

the use of social media. Today social media is used to:

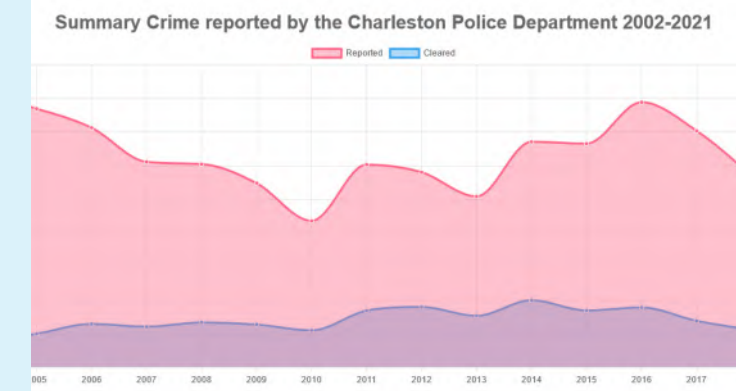
- Communicate - Interact with the public in an effort to stay in touch electronically
- Connect - In an effort to mobilize and empower citizens
- Promote - Positive accomplishments through stories, pictures and videos
- Inform - On breaking news events, traffic accidents and crimes
- Educate - On issues and instruct on topics from crime prevention to personal safety
- Request - Information on offences by posting surveillance pictures or video
- Notify - Make real-time emergency notifications i.e. weather emergencies, missing persons

For the complete Crime Analysis and Recommendations, please see the appendix

### Violent Crime



### Property Crime



## New Challenges and Opportunities

### Opioid Overdose Epidemic

The number of drug overdose deaths increased by nearly 30% from 2019 to 2020 and has quintupled since 1999. Nearly 75% of the 91,799 drug overdose deaths in 2020 involved an opioid. From 2019 to 2020, there were significant changes in opioid-involved death rates. Appalachia has been disproportionately impacted where in 2018 overdose mortality rates for people ages 25–54 was 43 percent higher in the Region than the rest of the country.

To address this issue, the City created the Coordinated Addiction Response Effort (CARE) Office in 2019 to coordinate, enhance, and expand efforts – through a data driven approach – to address the impact of substance use disorder (SUD) on individuals, families, and our community.

The Quick Response Team (QRT) was added shortly thereafter to the CARE Office to address mental health and homelessness. The team includes a Homeless Outreach Coordinator and a Mental Health Coordinator.

{List other actionable items that have been implemented}

Recommendations for reducing opioid misuse and overdose disparities include the following:

1. Prevent opioid misuse.
2. Increase access to treatment for opioid use disorder.
3. Implement harm reduction strategies to reduce the consequences of opioid use disorder.
4. Support long-term recovery of opioid use disorder.
5. Implement community-based solutions to effect change.

(Recommendations obtained from [this ARC report.](#))

### COVID Pandemic

COVID-19 is an ongoing global pandemic of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern on January 30, 2020, and a pandemic on March 11, 2020. As of October 17, 2022, the pandemic had caused more than 625 million cases and 6.56 million confirmed deaths, making it one of the deadliest in history.

The pandemic triggered severe social and economic disruption around the world, including the largest global recession since the Great Depression. Widespread supply shortages, including food shortages, were caused by supply chain disruption. Educational institutions and public areas were partially or fully closed in many jurisdictions, and many events were cancelled or postponed.

The need for social distancing profoundly changed the way we lived, worked, and recreated. To promote social distancing and the spread of the virus, many employees started working from home. In person meetings were largely replaced with the Zoom meetings or conference calls. What started out as temporary health precaution turned into a long-term business solution for many companies that realized the benefits of downsizing from the overhead of brick and mortar establish for cheaper telecommuting. This trend has led to a glut of office space, especially in the central business district.

During the height of the pandemic, public gatherings were largely canceled or discouraged. Many people looked to outdoor activities for their recreational needs. To address this, the City would close Kanawha Boulevard on the weekends to promote safe bicycling and walking opportunities. The City also worked with restaurants to offer expanded outdoor dining options to promote social distancing. Capitol and Hale Streets were closed to vehicle

traffic on weekends to better accommodate even more outdoor dining in a socially responsible way.

### Build Back Better Plan

The Build Back Better Plan is a legislative framework that seeks to make the largest nationwide public investments in social, infrastructural, and environmental programs since the 1930s Great Depression-era policies of The New Deal. The plan is divided into three parts, the first of which is the American Rescue Plan (ARP), a COVID-19 relief bill. The other two parts are the American Jobs Plan (AJP), a proposal to address long-neglected infrastructure needs and reduce America’s contributions to climate change’s destructive effects, and the American Families Plan (AFP), a proposal to fund a variety of social policy initiatives.

#### The American Rescue Plan (ARP)

On March 11, 2021, President Joe Biden signed the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), a federal stimulus bill to aid public health and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The funding provided under ARPA provides a unique opportunity for state and local governments to make strategic investments in long-lived assets, rebuild reserves to enhance financial stability, and cover temporary operating shortfalls until economic conditions and operations normalize.

Cities can use ARPA funds to support public health expenditures, address the negative economic impacts caused by the public health emergency, replace lost public sector revenue, provide premium pay for essential workers, and invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

The City of Charleston allocated \$37 Million in funding in the following categories:

- Investing in Our City’s Future
  - Infrastructure/ Broadband Upgrades, approximately \$7.5 Million for broadband upgrades; State & County partnerships;

citywide streetlight upgrades; City owned bridge maintenance; citywide paving; ADA accessibility; Clay Center Corridor Lighting Project; Capital Connector Project; 5 corners crosswalk; MacCorkle Ave. streetscaping; and the South Hills Trail Connector Project

- Sidewalk Improvement Project Fund, \$500,000
- Athletic Field Turfing & Facility Upgrades, \$6 Million with \$1 Million matching from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to turf the Upper Bigley Field (Matching Funds); Lower Bigley Field (Matching Funds); North Charleston Little League Field (Matching Funds); Kanawha City Little League Field (Matching Funds); Kanawha City Softball Field; Martin Luther King Center Complex; Cato Park Treister Upper Soccer Field; Cato Park Treister Lower Soccer Field; Suppa Little League Field; and Appalachian Power Park.
- Federal & State Grant Matching, \$1.25 Million towards Build Back Better Grants, National Endowment for the Arts Grants, Economic Development Administration Grants, Safer Street Grants, Law Enforcement Grants, and FEMA Grants.

- Healthy & Safe Communities

- Public Safety Building Study, \$1 Million to determine the best location, the need, the design, and the Budget to create a shovel ready project for future federal grant dollars
- Youth Job Opportunities, \$250,000 to continue and expand the summer youth program.
- City Response Expenses, \$815,000 for COVID response payroll costs, vaccination clinics (\$464K), employee vaccine incentives, and Personal Protective Equipment.

- Economic Recovery
  - Charleston Land Reuse Agency (CLRA), \$1.5 Million for staffing/support, coordinate with Planning/Building Departments for vacant structure registry, strategic property acquisitions, community property redevelopment, and property maintenance and promotion.
  - Sternwheel Regatta, \$500,000 to re-establish the Regatta Commission and to provide initial seed funding for travel, tourism, and entertainment.
- Future Community Project Needs
  - Future Identifiable Projects, \$5 Million to respond to future COVID related needs, additional community lead initiatives, and a potential second round of community applications.
- Project Applications
  - The following entities submitted project applications: Charleston Area Alliance, Salvation Army, FestivALL, Girls Scout, Fiesta West - Street Fest (Mi Cocina), Fund for the Arts, Hope Community Development, Kanawha Hospice Care, Alzheimers Association, WV Health Right, Kanawha Charleston Health Department, The Library Foundation of Kanawha County, Charleston Convention and Visitors Bureau, Charleston Auto, Black Women Business Owners of West Virginia, Partnership of African American Churches, The Religious Coalition for Community Renewal- Low Barrier Shelter, ED LLC, Capitol Market, The Religious Coalition for Community Renewal - RCCR Bream, Coalfield Development, Manna Meal, The Folded Leaf, Charleston Community and Family Development Corp- Covid Response, Charleston Community and Family Development Corp, Charleston Kanawha Housing Authority, West Virginia

Symphony Orchestra, Charleston Economic and Community Development Corp, She vs Her Beauty Supply Boutique, IMPACT ME, Kanawha Hospice Care - Payoff of Hubbard Hospice House Charleston Building Commission Lease Revenue Bonds, Manna Meal- Food Truck, The Healing House Inc, Pollen LLC, YWCA of Charleston, Charmco Lofts Limited Partnership, Midian Leadership Project, Grape Juice Ventures, Kanawha Valley Collective, Hope for Appalachia, Hearts United Sister Talk, West Virginia Child Advocacy Network, West Virginia Food and Farm Coalition, Wright Group LLC, East End Resource Center(EERC), The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation, SMP, Bright Future, Andrews Floor and Wall Covering Company, YWCA Sojourner's Shelter for Homeless Women and Families, and the West Virginia Music Hall of Fame.

#### EDA American Rescue Plan Programs

The \$1 billion Build Back Better Regional Challenge is the marquee of EDA's American Rescue Plan programs that aims to boost economic recovery from the pandemic and rebuild American communities, including those grappling with decades of disinvestment.

- The Appalachian Climate Technologies Coalition (ACT Now Coalition) of West Virginia was chosen for an EDA grant totaling \$62.8M. Led by Coalfield Development Corporation, the grant will spur job growth in 21 economically distressed and coal-impacted counties in southern West Virginia by creating a hub of clean energy and green economy jobs. The funding will support the transition from coal to solar power; implement sustainable reuse projects on abandoned mine sites; rejuvenate brownfield sites with new facilities equipped to train a diversified, skilled workforce and provide advanced manufacturing capacity; and develop entrepreneurial programs to

support employment in environmental sustainability.

- For Charleston, the grant will transform the historic Kanawha Manufacturing plant into the "Learning, Innovation, Food & Technology (LIFT) Center". The Charleston Area Alliance and the City of Charleston, Marshall University, Coalfield Development Corporation, the regional economic development organization Advantage Valley, and private sector companies will transform the 9-acre, 110,000 sq. ft. Kanawha Manufacturing plant into the LIFT Center. LIFT will include the new "Marshall Green Battery Institute" to provide research & development on electric batteries for clean vehicles, zero-emissions airplanes, and renewable energy storage; a Coalfield Development job training center; a food hub run by Refresh Appalachia; and private investment by innovative companies including Parthian Battery Solutions (electric battery repurposing), BETA Air (zero-emissions, electric vertical takeoff and landing airplanes, which will start using Yeager International Airport), Dickinson Renewables (launched by WV's oldest company), and Edelen Renewables (an Appalachian innovator in solar projects).

#### Congressionally Directed Spending

The City is currently working with Senators Joe Manchin and Shelly Moore Capito who both sit on the United States Senate Committee on Appropriations for the following federal earmark requests:

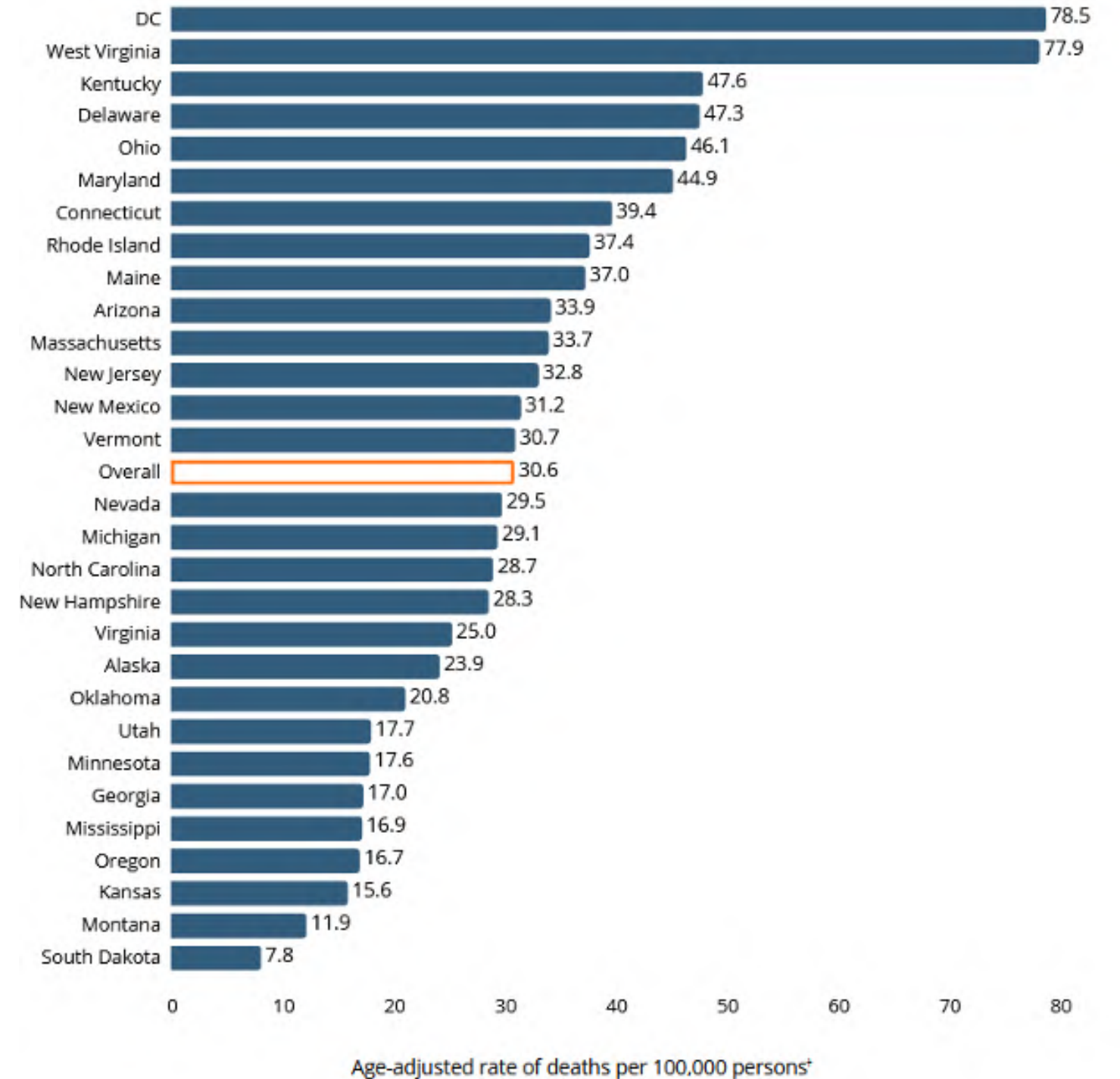
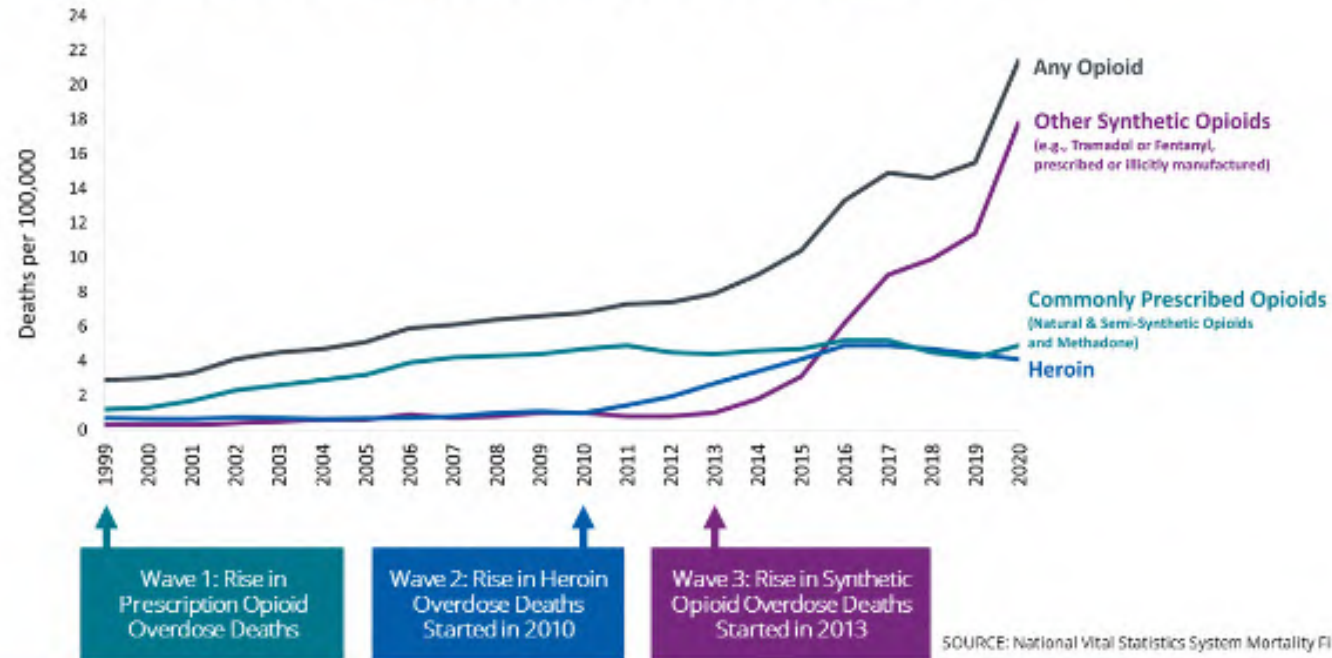
- US Army Corps of Engineers - \$2.5M to complete streambank stabilization on the Kanawha River from Haddad to Elk River (Pending Earmark 35% match)
- Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development (THUD) Appropriations, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Economic Development Administration account, City of Charleston, WV; (Housing Solutions) sponsors Senator Capito and Manchin - \$1 M

- Commerce, Justice, and Science (CJS) Appropriations, Cops Law Enforcement Technologies account, City of Charleston, WV; Eyes & Ears Law Enforcement Safety Project, sponsors Senator Manchin and Capito - \$750K
- CJS Appropriations, Office of Justice Programs Byrne; City of Charleston, WV; Charleston Drug Market Intervention Initiative(C-CORE), sponsors Senator Capito and Manchin - \$300K
- CJS Appropriations, Office of Justice Programs Byrne; City of Charleston, WV; Crisis Intervention Team, sponsor Senator Capito - \$1M
- Labor-Health and Human Services (HHS)- Education, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration account, City of Charleston, WV, for mental health and substance use prevention and treatment services, including outreach and wraparound services, sponsor Senator Capito - \$300K
- Labor-Health and Human Services (HHS) - Education Appropriations, Employment and Training Administration account, City of Charleston, West Virginia, for Hope Center workforce development initiative, including equipment and curriculum development, sponsors Senator Manchin and Capito - \$500K

Opioid Data

### Three Waves of Opioid Overdose Deaths



## RISE IN OPIOID OVERDOSE DEATHS IN AMERICA

MORE THAN  
**564,000**  
PEOPLE DIED FROM AN  
OPIOID OVERDOSE  
(1999-2020)

### A Multi-Layered Problem in Three Distinct Waves

<p><b>1990s</b> mark a rise in prescription opioid overdose deaths</p> <p><b>Rx OPIOIDS</b> Includes natural, semi-synthetic, and methadone and can be prescribed by doctors</p>	<p><b>2010</b> marks a rise in heroin overdose deaths</p> <p><b>HEROIN</b> An illegal opioid</p>	<p><b>2013</b> marks a rise in synthetic opioid overdose deaths</p> <p><b>SYNTHETIC OPIOIDS</b> Includes illicitly made fentanyl</p>
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[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

Learn more about the evolving opioid overdose crisis: [www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose](http://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose)

## C. Quality of Life Best Practices Toolkit

### Fresh and Local Food

Communities across the country are rediscovering the health, financial, and environmental benefits of local food production and consumption. Consumers want to know where their food comes from and how it was produced. "Local food" includes food grown in community gardens, sold at farmers markets, or grown in close proximity to the community, as well as animal sources such as meat, dairy, and honey production. Charleston's two farmer's markets and a number of community gardens are helping meet that objective.

There is an interest among residents to continue expanding opportunities for local food production. This includes removing barriers to food production such as ordinance restrictions and improving the City's process to identify potential sites for new community gardens and supporting their development.

Increased coordination and cooperation between local food advocacy organizations, the City, and other non-profit groups is one option. This could start with a task force or non-profit organization to address and support the range of local food issues including production, transportation, labor, land use policies, distribution, education and marketing. This group could also help promote and support community gardening and coordinate activities at the farmer's markets.

### Community Gardening

Community gardening is a growing initiative nationwide that brings residents together to produce food in or near their neighborhoods. Community gardening helps connect people to the land and to the source of their food. They can help "green" neighborhoods by growing vegetation and enhancing neighborhood aesthetics.

While community gardening efforts are sprouting up around Charleston, access is limited. A system is needed to identify vacant properties, particularly in residential areas, that are most appropriate for a garden. This could



Carroll Terrace Community Garden

include areas near senior housing, neighborhoods with smaller lots, and where interest is strongly demonstrated. The Urban Agriculture Ordinance has helped formalize the City's approach to community gardening, composting, and keeping of personal farm animals.

### Existing Community Gardens

- Rebecca Street Community Gardens
- Carroll Terrace
- Orchard Manor
- Roosevelt Community Center
- East End Community Garden (1500 Block of Wash Street E)
- West Side Community Garden
- Emanuel Baptist Church

### Farmer's Markets

Charleston's farmer's markets provide a focal point for local food activities, allowing growers from the region to sell their produce and other goods. Farmer's markets should be readily accessible to residents. Additional farmer's markets should be considered for places that improve access in under-served areas to strengthen the "market share" of local farmer's markets overall. Existing farmer's markets can look for indoor spaces in vacant commercial buildings to set up year-round opportunities for fresh and local food.

### Existing Farmer's Markets

Capitol Market – For 15 years the Capitol Market has provided daily, year-round opportunities for fresh, local food for residents.

West Side Farmers Market – Established in 2011, it now has a semi-permanent location provided by CURA.

Keep Your Faith Corporation - KYFC is in the process of revitalizing the former Abraham's Grocery building at 739 Central Avenue as Miss Ruby's Corner Market. The 501(C)3 will provide fresh groceries for the West Side residents and deliver healthy food to residents in the three nearby senior living high-rises. KYFC operates an urban garden that is transitioning to an urban farm that will provide a significant portion of the produce needed for the store.

### Green Development Practices

Green development practices contribute towards sustainability by ensuring that site and building projects minimize environmental impacts, resource consumption, and energy use, while simultaneously providing healthier living and working environments for people. Healthier environments not only attract residents and businesses, but have been shown to increase worker productivity, encourage healthy lifestyles that reduce medical costs, and build community stewardship. Charleston can promote a green philosophy through education and incentive programs to encourage their use across the city:

- Recycling/composting to reduce waste
- Air quality, reducing emissions
- Water conservation and reuse
- LEED principles or other green building practices
- Historic preservation and adaptive reuse (see page xx)
- Low-Impact Development (see page xx)
- Greenway connections (see page xx)
- Accessory wind or solar energy units
- Native species used in landscaping

### Charleston's Green Team

The Green Team was established in late 2020, with the first Green Team named on February 16, 2021. A volunteer body, the Green Team is a citizen advisory body that helps inform the public and suggests ideas to the City of Charleston to improve sustainability.

The mission is to provide information and recommendations to the Mayor's office as well as City Council and its committees on topics of energy efficiency, land use, greenspaces, water resources, transportation, litter and waste management, and recycling along with public education and communication on those and other sustainability topics and initiatives.

Green Team responsibilities are to:

- Periodically, or at the request of the Mayor or the Chair of the Environment & Recycling Committee, provide advice on the development of regulations or policies that benefit or pertain to sustainability;
- Investigate appropriate and cost-effective opportunities for implementing energy efficiency measures in all aspects of Charleston's public buildings, including benchmarking, operational changes and changes in maintenance or capital improvements;



Capitol Market provides daily fresh food options

- Facilitate Charleston residents reducing environmental impacts through recycling, energy use, and other appropriate measures;
- Research and facilitate the use of clean, renewable energy within the City;
- Identify appropriate federal and state incentive and grant programs that provide opportunities for sustainability; and
- Engage in community outreach and education on sustainability initiatives and events.

### "Town and Gown"

This term helps to illuminate the relationship between institutions of higher learning and the towns or cities in which they are located. This is one of the many attributes to make an area a good place for living and doing business through educational and social support systems. In most places this relationship is developed by leveraging the value of the institutions (learning environment, professors/instructors, students, staff, etc.) and the value of the place. Institutions of higher learning demand and create a physical and ideological environment to attract best talents. In a broader sense of place, it demands amenities that the city/community can provide such as housing, food, education, lifestyle, entertainment and recreation opportunities. It is a symbiotic relationship that helps to raise the standard of a place and creates a brand identity that not only helps the city/community but also the higher learning institutions to find its niche as a town-gown community in a regional marketplace.

#### What is Town and Gown?

City, educational and health institutions working together for each other's mutual benefit through public-private partnerships

Charleston is a vibrant community that is home to University of Charleston. Other institutions of higher learning such as the West Virginia State University, West Virginia University Institute of Technology, Marshall University etc. are also located in close proximity to Charleston. All of these exceptional institutions attract distinguished scholars and students to the City bringing diversity and number of research opportunities drawing in the outside world to Charleston. Leveraging this opportunity to create a collaborative environment with the City would be beneficial through the following:

- Addressing the impacts of the institutions of higher learning on the community and how the community responds
- Promoting new programs
- Work on public and private capital development projects
- City and universities work together to attract top graduates of the programs to retain intellectual capital
- Supporting the investment both U of C and WV State are making in Charleston's Downtown

## Green Infrastructure



Parks and natural systems, such as river corridors, forests, and wetlands, play a vital role in defining the city's quality of life. Public parks and other open spaces provide access to the outdoors for passive or active recreation. These recreational amenities encourage healthy lifestyles and help retain and attract residents. High quality and healthy natural systems also help protect public health with clean water, uncontaminated soils, and diverse wildlife and plant communities.

### What is Green Infrastructure?

Connecting natural resources and linking them to human activity zones, increasing property values, recreation opportunities, and improving air and water quality

Developing the city's green infrastructure is a way to have interconnected green space throughout the city. During the public input process, residents described there were not enough parks and green spaces to both actively and passively engage with nature. As part of the Charleston Land Trust, the NeighborWoods subcommittee has sought to acquire land for future park development. This effort can be more closely tied to the city-owned parks to ensure that green spaces are appropriately coordinated and connected.

## Parks Analysis

An analysis was done to inventory existing recreational opportunities in the Charleston area and to compare those resources to national guidelines for types and number of parks. A brief summary of that analysis and table summarizing the calculations are outlined below. A complete analysis is included in the appendix.



Carriage Trail

- Additional Mini and Neighborhood Parks are needed to serve residents
- The amount of facilities (i.e. ballfields and play courts) are not sufficient to meet current needs
- Of the facilities inventoried, playgrounds are most needed to meet national guidelines
- Additional ballfields and multi-use facilities would help address some of the recreation deficiencies
- Look for opportunities for replacing old, unused commercial property with parks

## Pocket parks

Where redevelopment potential is low, vacant lots can be reused as recreational and natural resource amenities, often referred to as "pocket parks." Pocket parks can incorporate stormwater management, habitat features,

or off-road trail connections. Especially since flat land is at a premium in Charleston, these pocket parks are a way to increase the city's parkland while removing blighted vacant lots. Pocket parks can attract undesirable activities and should be designed with appropriate lighting and landscaping to promote safety.

## 2023 Park Space Resolution

In 2023, during the 10-year update of this plan, the City Council adopted a resolution that attempts to expand the City's future goals for the green infrastructure of the city. The city will strive to meet a goal of 5% of the its total land becoming Public Parks with 3% of the City's total land being preserved as natural landscape.

In addition, the City resolved to meet the following goals, as they relate to parks, as the opportunities presented themselves:

- 75% of residents will be within a 10-minute (or half mile) walk to a city park facility
- Utilize native plant species in park plantings
- Utilize bird-safe buildings
- Locate more monarch butterfly waystations and otherwise protect more wildlife habitats for endangered species

## Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED is an approach to preventing crime through physical development considerations. Multi-disciplinary programs are most effective because they join law enforcement, community awareness and personal protection efforts so public safety officials, local leaders and neighborhood groups are all working toward the same goal. CPTED policies generally promote the following three key principles and a variety of design

Analysis of parks is based on guidelines from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). These guidelines were developed to provide an understanding of typical recreation needs, based on local population. Typically, NRPA suggests parks be categorized as Mini Parks that serve adjacent neighborhoods, Neighborhood Parks that serve residents within a half mile, Community Parks that serve the entire community and Regional Parks that serve residents in the study community as well as others.

recommendations, which are described below.

- **Natural Surveillance:** Natural surveillance increases the threat of apprehension by taking steps to increase the perception that people can be seen. Natural surveillance occurs by designing the placement of physical features, activities and people in such a way as to maximize visibility and foster positive social interaction among legitimate users of private and public space. Potential offenders feel increased scrutiny and limitations on their escape routes. Natural surveillance measures can be complemented by mechanical and organizational measures. For example, closed-circuit cameras can be added in areas where window surveillance is unavailable.
- **Natural Access Control:** Natural access control limits the opportunity for crime by taking steps to clearly differentiate between public space and private space. By selectively placing entrances and exits, fencing, lighting and landscape to limit access or control flow, natural access control occurs.
- **Natural Territorial Reinforcement:** Territorial reinforcement promotes social control through increased definition of space and improved proprietary concern. An environment designed to clearly delineate private space does two things. First, it creates a sense of ownership. Owners have a vested interest and are more likely to challenge intruders or report them to the police. Second, the sense of owned space creates an environment where "strangers" or "intruders" stand out and are more easily identified. By using buildings, fences, pavement, signs, lighting and landscape to express ownership and define public, semi-public and private space, natural territorial reinforcement occurs. Additionally, these objectives can be achieved by assignment of space to designated users in previously unassigned locations. Territorial reinforcement measures make the normal user feel safe and make the potential offender aware of a substantial risk of apprehension or scrutiny.

## Streetscape Improvements

To help strengthen neighborhood and commercial character, the city can build upon existing streetscape improvement efforts executed by the West Side and East End Main Street associations and Kanawha City Neighborhood Organization.



Parks Analysis					
Facility Classifications	Population Per Facility (Compared to Jurisdictions with 20,000 - 49,999 population)			Analysis	
	National Median (acres)	Charleston	Facilities Provided	#	% of Guideline
Playgrounds	3,028	2,327	21		+130%
Swimming Pools	25,191	16,288	3		+155%
Miles of Trails	8	19.75	8		+246%
Community Center	26,696	12,216	4		+218%
Dog Parks	28,000	24,323	2		+115%





Capitol Building



Clay Center



Power Park

This can be an extension of the city's wayfinding program to create distinct "brands" for each neighborhood.

- Streetscape treatment should be used to signify an entrance and contribute to a sense of place.
- Community amenities such as patio/seating areas, water features, art work or sculpture, clock towers, pedestrian plazas with park benches or other features located adjacent to the primary entrance to the building(s) are highly encouraged and may be calculated as part of the landscaping requirement.
- Include amenities for bicyclists, pedestrians and transit riders, including wider sidewalks, bike storage facilities, bus shelters, lighting and landscaping in the standards for site plan review.

### Cultural Amenities

Culture and entertainment is an important part of a community's quality of life. Cultural amenities include museums, historic resources, a wealth of ethnic influences, and access to the arts. Cultural resources shape the character of the city, and a shared understanding of the past and future reinforces a sense of community. Entertainment resources, like performance venues, restaurants, night-life, and other attractions help bring people together, contribute to vibrant and successful city districts, and attract outside visitors and investment. Cultural and entertainment resources also attract a diverse population to the city.

Residents desire additional venues for arts, entertainment, and events. Expansion of cultural and entertainment resources will help attract a broader demographic of new residents and businesses to Charleston.

New venues that draw from a citywide or regional market should be directed downtown; smaller venues that draw primarily from the nearby neighborhoods should be directed to commercial nodes and park spaces within walking distance. Locations in or adjacent to parks create a focal point for community or neighborhood gatherings.

The proposed Cultural District would build on the existing strengths of the Clay Center, Power Park, the African-American Historic District, and the future library. Branding this area as an arts and culture district will help provide an identity for the transitional area between Downtown and the East

End. The industrial buildings can be transformed into warehouse-style lofts to provide opportunities for artists' live-work studios.

[For more information on the Cultural District, see the Subarea Application on page 55.](#)

### Public art

Public Art plays an important role in a city's vitality through uplifting social, cultural, and economic value. It has a unique ability to change space while giving a community a voice and uniqueness.

The reflection of the community encourages engagement and collective pride for our city.

Public Art promotes the sense of place identity. It gives citizens and visitors alike a place to feel the vibrant reflection of the environment we can create through strong imagery and visual memory.

Public Art can play a role in nearly facet of planning and a city's creative concepts. It can play a powerful role in bring a community together. Engaging artists in civic design is an integral part of retaining a city's cultural and historical traditions.

### The Office of Public Art

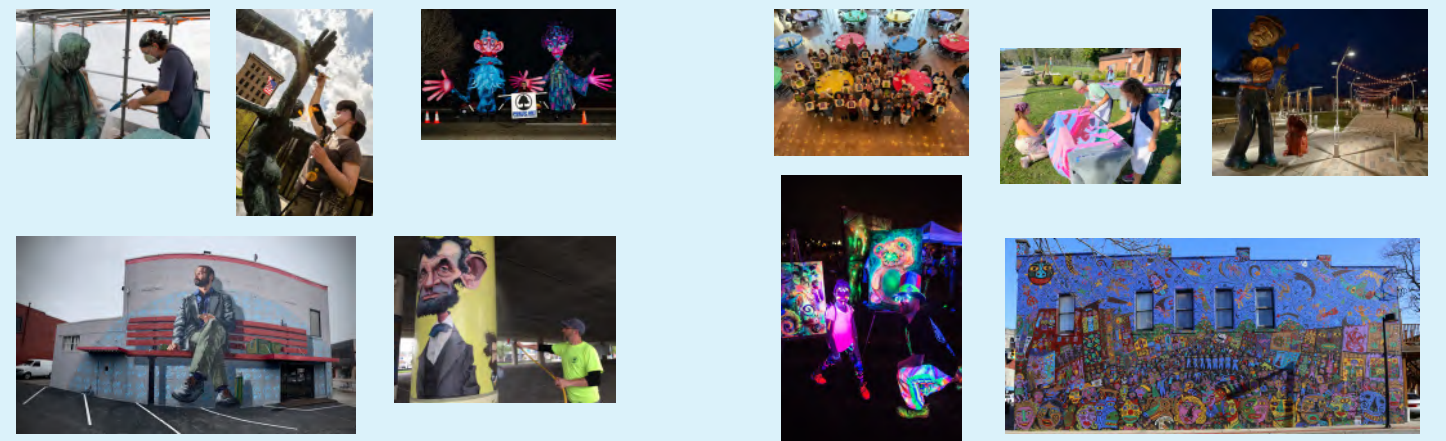
In 2017 the Office of Public Art was established as a result of a 2011 Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Office of Public Art's mission role is to serve as a resource for the creation, education, and conservation of Public Art in Charleston, West Virginia.

Since its creation, the Office of Public Art has conducted over 120 projects that has put nearly 100 artists to work and has leveraged over one million dollars in contribution to Public Art in Charleston.

In addition to providing support for the creation of the Office of Public Art, the grant funded (in part) a public art guide and a rough Public Art Plan. The plan called for the creation of a Public Art Commission that would serve as a advocacy and governance committee for Public Art in Charleston. The Office of Public art/Public Art Commission is currently drafting a new Arts Plan.

[The Public Art Plan is included as an appendix to this plan.](#)

### Innovative Public Art Examples



**Building on Capital Identity, Regional Anchor, Heritage**

Historic preservation connects people to the city’s local history and protects important landmarks, culturally historic, and exceptional built features. Historic preservation in Charleston improves property values and enhances the experience of living and working in the city.

In addition to continuing to protect historic assets, increased efforts should be made to raise the public’s awareness of historic resources and encourage potential tourist opportunities.

Already known in the region as a lively, unique, and interesting destination, increased organization, coordination, and promotion of current and expanded cultural, entertainment and heritage opportunities will further strengthen Charleston’s position as a destination for visitors, residents, and businesses.

**Heritage Tourism**

It has long been understood that people travel to see history. Everyone knows that Civil War buffs visit Harper’s Ferry, Antietam, and Gettysburg, and that the interest in colonial America draws millions to Williamsburg. The term “heritage tourism,” however, is a fairly recent coining. The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines heritage tourism as “travelling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past.” More and more, the travelling public is interested not only in the Mt. Vernons and Monticellos of America, but also in the downtowns, neighborhoods, and local landmarks which define what a community is.

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has undertaken intensive study on the economic impact of historic preservation in American communities. With respect to heritage tourism alone, the Trust found that

- 78% of U. S. leisure travelers (118 million adults) participate in heritage/cultural activities when traveling
- Heritage tourists spend, on average, \$994.00 per trip compared to \$611.00 per trip for all U. S. travelers
- Cultural/heritage tourists took an average of 5 trips in 2008-2009 as compared to fewer than 4 trips for non-cultural/heritage tourists

Much of the success of heritage tourism depends on marketing. Charleston can market its historic resources which are identified in the Action Plan.

**Historic Preservation**

Charleston has myriad properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, ranging from individual homes to governmental buildings, churches, and educational buildings, along with the following historic districts:

- East End Historic District: Roughly bounded by the Kanawha River, Bradford, Quarrier and Greenbrier Streets; and Kanawha Blvd from California to East Ave (listed 1978)
- Edgewood Historic District: Roughly bounded by Edgewood Drive, Highland, Beech, Chester, and Lower Chester (listed 1989)

- Grosscup Historic District: Grosscup, Rosecommon, Roller and Bridge Road (listed 1984)
- Downtown Charleston Historic District: roughly bounded by Washington Street East, Leon Sullivan Way, Kanawha Boulevard, and Summers Street (2006)
- Elk City Historic District: portions of Bigley Avenue, Jarrett Court, Lee Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, Tennessee Avenue, and West Washington Street (listed 2008)
- Luna Park Historic District: roughly bounded by Main St., Glenwood Ave., Delaware Ave., and Kanawha Blvd. West (2012)
- East End Historic District North: roughly bounded by Lee Street, Greenbrier Street, railroad right-of-way, and Shelton Avenue (2014)
- Five Corners Historic District: including properties fronting Central Avenue and Virginia Street West between Elm Street and Maryland Avenue (2022)



The East End Historic District (EEHD) is both a National Register district and the City’s only local ordinance district. As such, the preservation oversight is on a building-by-building basis, triggered by the application for a building permit. No other areas of the city are covered by this ordinance, so preservation is something of a scatter-shot process.

The City created the Charleston Historic Landmarks Commission to undertake historic preservation activities throughout the community. The Commission is charged with encouraging the preservation of the community’s significant historic properties and in protecting properties which bear local historic designation under the City Code.

Charleston should continue the identification and encouragement of the preservation of historic properties and historic districts through the process of historic resource surveys and National Register designations for individual properties and historic districts. Properties which reach 50 years of age become eligible each year. Funding to support such activity is available annually through the West Virginia Division of Culture and History.

**Adaptive Reuse**

The adaptive reuse of existing buildings preserves history, contributes to economic vitality, promotes building effort, and creates more vibrant neighborhoods. Many of Charleston’s former industrial or commercial buildings no longer meet the needs for which they were first designed and stand vacant and unused. There is great potential to convert these historic and under-utilized structures into new housing units, especially in the Warehouse District and Downtown Transition character areas. Likewise, many older homes along commercial corridors such as Kanawha Boulevard have successfully been reused as offices but maintain the residential character of the adjacent neighborhood.

Charleston may elect to develop an adaptive reuse program that offers development guidance, streamlined processes, reduced timeframes, and cost savings to developers looking to adapt older buildings for new uses. Such an expedited approval process would ensure that older

and historic buildings are not subjected to the same zoning and code requirements that apply to new construction, providing an incentive for a type of redevelopment that helps preserve Charleston’s existing urban fabric.

**Neighborhood Design Guidelines**

Each local neighborhood should develop design guidelines that meet the needs of its members. While there will not always be unanimity, it is important that neighborhood-specific guidelines be developed by consensus. Unfortunately, in many cases, neighborhoods and community leaders do not become proactive until some cataclysmic loss has occurred—the demolition of a key historic building or a highly visible incompatible remodeling. It is too late when a building or demolition permit has been applied for. The time to protect the neighborhood by developing workable neighborhood rehab guidelines is before such unfortunate and irreversible activities take place.



**Recent Landmarks Commission Initiatives**

- Luna Park Historic District: Completed survey and nomination to become the City’s 7th National Historic District.
- Awarded a state grant to host a Preservation Training Seminar by the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (NAPC), which was attended by preservation commissioners from around the state.
- Continued design review on renovation projects within the East End Historic District.
- Furthered outreach via a Facebook page/site and a new, standalone, website.
- Reached out to local college students for project collaboration (West Virginia State University, University of Charleston, University of Tennessee, West Virginia University).
- Awarded a state grant to do a historic survey of what could be our 8th Historic District, Jackson Addition.
- Continued efforts for future projects: Survey/Expansion of the East End HD; Survey/Expansion of the Edgewood HD; working with WVSU students on a “Civil War In Charleston” project; working with community to establish a new park at Fort Scammons (Civil War site).
- Championed a bill in 2013 permitting the adaptive reuse of nonresidential structures with historic, architectural, or economic value in residential districts as a conditional use. The ordinance requires renovations in keeping with the historic integrity of the building.
- Championed a bill in 2014 delaying the demolition of any contributing structure in any historic district by 90 days unless the Commission finds that public safety is compromised, the building is not capable of rehabilitation, or public’s interest in demolition clearly outweighs its preservation.
- Commissioned a geophysical survey of Ruffner Park confirming its storied history as a family cemetery, a public cemetery, and a public park. More than 200 extant graves and 40 buried gravestones were identified in the 2020 survey.
- Adopted guidelines for the design review process tailored to the unique characteristics of the architecture and site features within the East End Historic District in 2021.
- Worked with residents in the Luna Park Historic District to incorporate public art and signage identifying the district and celebrating its unique history as the site of a former amusement park. Street sign toppers and gateway markers were installed in 2022.
- Continued efforts to interpret historic sites with appropriate signage, focusing first on 4 interpretive panels telling the story of the Luna Park Historic District, including its development post-amusement park and the design and construction of 5 homes by John C. Norman, WV’s 7th registered architect and likely the first architect of color in the state. The development of an additional 2 interpretive panels is underway for Ruffner Park.
- Continued efforts to stabilize and preserve Fort Scammon.
- Continued participation in the Civil War Trails program.

## Safe Routes to School (SRTS)



SRTS promotes physical improvements and programs aimed at increasing students' use of the non-motorized system as a travel means to school. It begins with preparation of an action plan describing the physical network, or lack thereof, of sidewalks and pathways that connect students to local schools. The program aims to eliminate accessibility and connectivity barriers to safe pedestrian movement, through proper maintenance and upgrades to the system. This can include anything from clearance of vegetation that inhibits free movement, to construction of sidewalk extensions, to installation of new traffic signals.

### Why is SRTS Important?

Safe Routes to School seeks to improve the environment for students walking and biking to school in hopes they will choose these options. If successful, SRTS programs can provide many community benefits, including but not limited to:

- Improved community health results from increased physical activity, which will lessen the likelihood of child and adult obesity, reduce the number of coronary heart disease deaths, lower blood pressure, reduced occurrence of diabetes and cancer, and lower health care costs.
- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions results from fewer and shorter car trips. Each mile of vehicle travel emits roughly one pound of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.
- Improved social justice results from higher quality non-motorized networks created through the SRTS process. At least one-third

To create a safe route for every child, there should be ample room to walk and bike, preferably separated from traffic. Every major road crossing needs a safe and visible crosswalk and sometimes traffic controls and crossing guards. One can address these issues by creating a Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Improvement Plan using the three Es:

- Education programs teach motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists about their responsibilities and about traffic rules, while promoting activities that

encourage walking and biking. Teach bicycle and pedestrian safety to students as part of their classroom curriculum. Develop a safety campaign that promotes safe driving through the use of banners, posters, promotions, and direct appeals to the community.

- Enforcement enlists the help of local police departments to focus enforcement efforts in problem areas and increase community awareness of school safety issues. Beefing up enforcement around schools helps keep drivers on their best behavior. A consistent but random presence of law enforcement will encourage motorists to drive with care.
- Engineering tools include a variety of street design techniques that can reduce traffic volumes, decrease speed, and improve safety. Some engineering solutions, moreover, don't require large expenditures, such as posting signs, re-timing lights, or re-painting crosswalks and bike lanes. Long-term engineering solutions will require a funding plan, which should be included in the SRTS Improvement plan developed by your SRTS Task Force.

SRTS programs are typically recommended for schools where improvements are likely to increase walking and biking activity. However, the principles of safe routes can be applied on a broader basis, and should generally be considered where the community wishes to encourage

Piedmont Elementary successfully developed and implemented a SRTS program that can serve as a local model for other schools to reference.

walking and biking activity, or where it could occur, but usually doesn't because of physical factors.

KEYS 4 HealthyKids, a county partnership comprised of over 22 business, educational, governmental, social service and health organizations, organized two SRTS Walkability Audits. Results of these audits are summarized at right.

### Tools to improve walking/biking

- Traffic Calming including speed bumps/humps/tables, traffic diverters, medians, islands, and other barriers
- Marked crossings at main intersections and mid-block locations where crossing activity is noted.
- Signals including advanced pedestrian signals, count-downs, and audible beacons can all facilitate safer road crossings. Pedestrian bridges can be used where vehicle traffic volumes dictate a grade separated crosswalk.
- Sidewalks that are connected, well-maintained, wide, flat, and separated from traffic are the most welcoming.
- Bicycles can be accommodated through installation of bike lanes, multiple-use pathways, paved and/or wider road



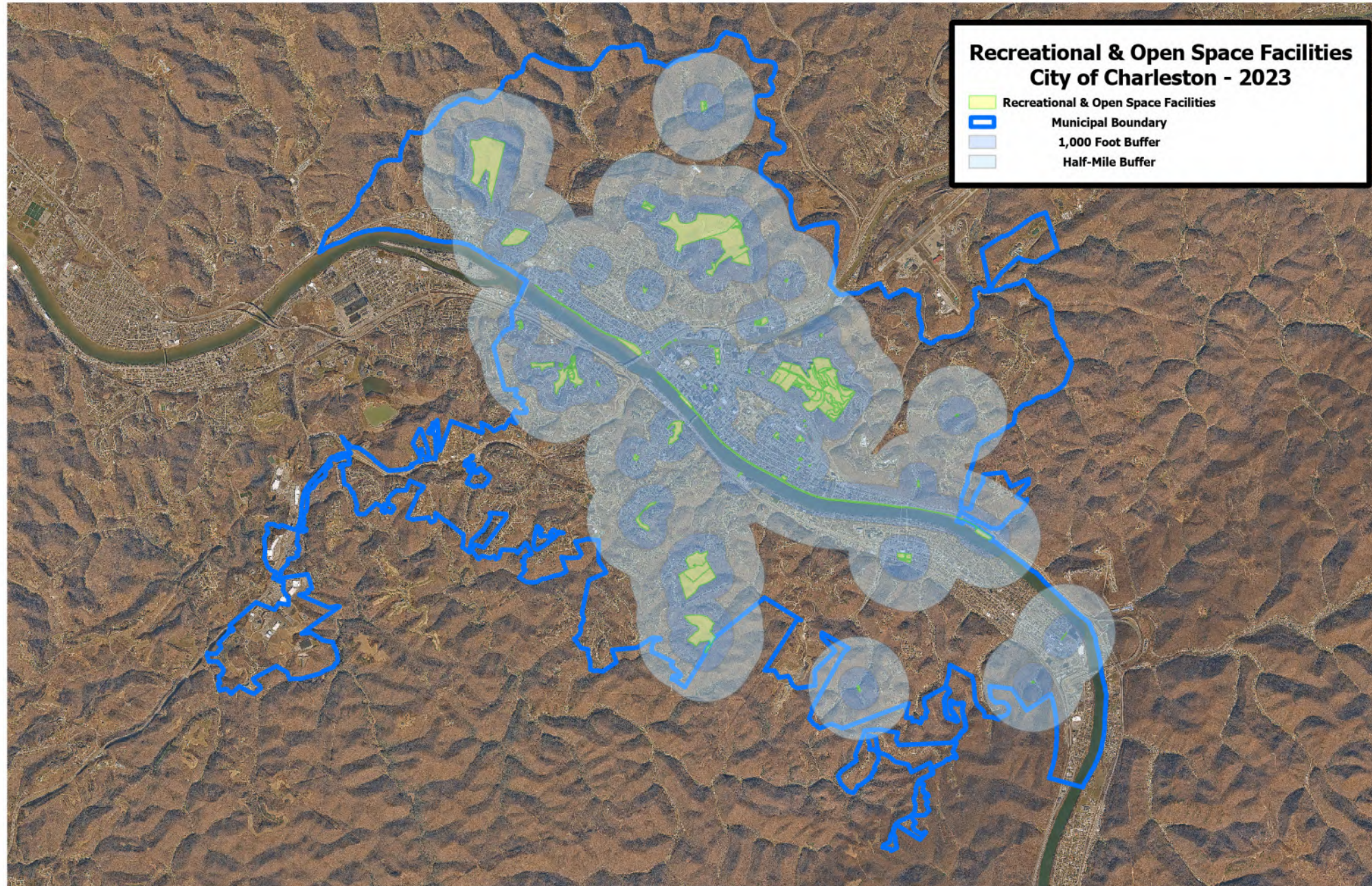
For more information on non-motorized transportation principles, see the [Mobility chapter](#)

### KEYS 4 HealthyKids Walkability Audits

Location	Date	Walk Score <sup>1</sup>	Walkability Assessment	Key Observations
Kanawha Boulevard ...at McFarland Street, Leon Sullivan Way, Brooks Street, and Morris Street		32 = Car	Awful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Missing sidewalk entrance</li> <li>■ No crosswalks</li> <li>■ Sidewalks blocked with poles and vegetation</li> <li>■ Narrow sidewalks</li> <li>■ Lack of trash receptacles</li> <li>■ Fast moving traffic</li> </ul>
West Side Elementary School		62 = Somewhat Walkable	Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Broken, cracked sidewalks</li> <li>■ Sidewalks blocked with poles, vegetation, train trestles</li> <li>■ Unmaintained sidewalks</li> <li>■ Narrow sidewalks</li> <li>■ Missing curb ramps</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Walk score was that reported by [www.walkscore.com](http://www.walkscore.com)

Park Facility Access



The City of Charleston has made significant investments in the creation and enhancement of public recreation and open space in the past five years. New facilities established since 2019 include a skate park facility along Pennsylvania Avenue on the West Side, the Beatrice Street Park including basketball courts and playground equipment, and the Jones Woodland nearby Holz Elementary including 3.5 miles of human-powered multiuse trails. Existing community recreation assets that have been enhanced are located in every corner of the City, including the Bigley Avenue Baseball complex, Kanawha City Recreation Center, North Charleston Community Center, among others. A further turfing project is slated for another field at the North Charleston Community Center in the next year.

Not all public open spaces are sports oriented. The total renovation of City Center at Slack Plaza has given the downtown district a wonderful gathering place for vibrant community activities and arts. With the dedication of the Mary Price Ratrie Arboretum, the Spring Hill Cemetery Park is now home to the largest arboretum in West Virginia with dedicated staff and programming to foster education and the enjoyment of this meticulously well-kept natural space.

Planning and design is underway for the Charleston Capitol Connector, a multimodal approach to enhancement of Charleston’s riverfront along Kanawha Boulevard. This project seeks to implement similar amenities as was completed on Kanawha Boulevard, West; divided multiuse path and bike lanes, sustainable design, and beautification to enhance the recreation opportunities along the Kanawha River. The project will result in a riverfront worthy of the Capitol City extending 4.5 miles from Patrick Street to the West Virginia Capitol Complex on to the 35th Street bridge.

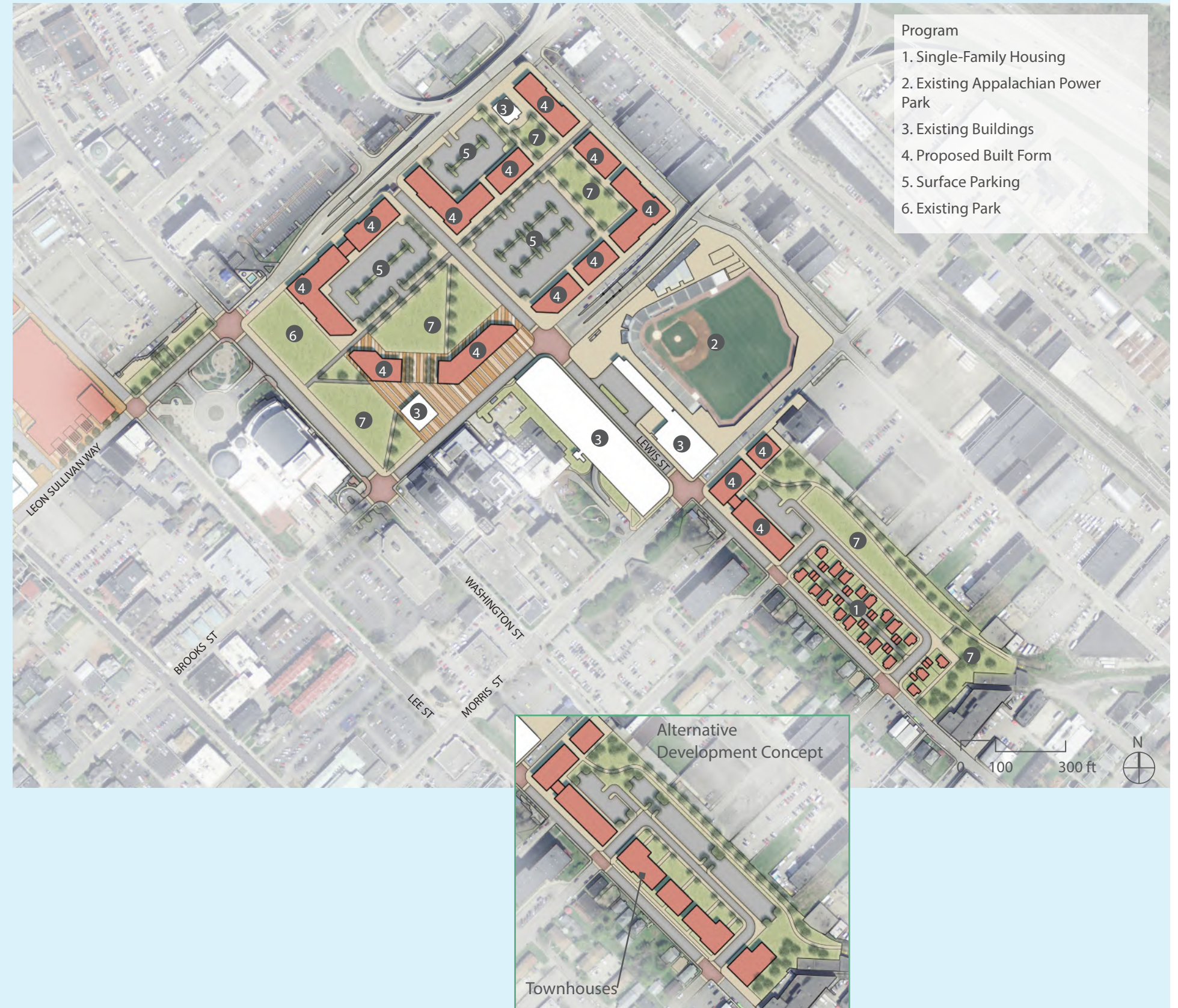
Future projects to enhance the recreational amenities of Charleston are well under way. The Charleston Land Reuse Agency is working collaboratively with the Kanawha Valley Trail Alliance and Brad & Alys Smith Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative at West Virginia University to enhance and expand human-powered trail networks in Charleston. Through the CLRA’s efforts to acquire and recycle unutilized land in the city, Cato Park and Danner Meadow Park have been enlarged to support expanded trail networks.

While access and amenities for parks and open space is growing significantly in Charleston, according to the Trust for Public Land, about half of the residents of the City of Charleston are within a ten-minute walk of a park - just below the national average is 55%. The City of Charleston currently has approximately 550 of its 20,890 acres available as public parkland, equal to approximately 3%. We know that people’s mental and physical health benefit from access to recreational and natural open spaces. The City should continue to acquire and conserve open space. For parks with a significant area of the public lands being preserved as natural landscapes. Access to open space is also a key metric for vitality for residents. The City should increase the proportion of residents that have a public park within a ten-minute walk of their homes.

Objectives

- Bolster the warehouse district for the transition around Power Park, through streetscape, signage, wayfinding, architectural character and quality
- Leverage existing Clay Center, new library location, CURA-owned property, African-American Heritage District, CAMC, and Power Park into a new, well-defined district
- Provide a transition from more intense uses and building heights downtown to lower intensity East End
- Provide more “urban living” housing options close to downtown
- Promote connections to nearby Warehouse District, which can be an eclectic mix of reuse buildings, lofts, and live/work units
- Integrate new library into urban fabric
- Incorporate more green space
- Improve Leon Sullivan Gateway
- Provide infill standards to promote redevelopment that fits with the character of proposed district
- Celebrate the historic home near the intersection of Leon Sullivan and Smith
- Identify growth opportunities for medical uses ancillary to CAMC
- Extension of existing Mary Place Ratire park at the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Leon Sullivan and Washington - creating a green edge along Washington
- Visual/functional connection between Clay Center and Power Park to integrate the ballpark with rest of downtown
- Retrofit Plaza East - strip commercial center - for higher and better use - with commercial buildings facing Morris Street and integrating residential development south on Lewis
- Improve post office site streetscape to provide green edge echoing the Clay Center Plaza

Potential Development Concept



**Program**

1. Single-Family Housing
2. Existing Appalachian Power Park
3. Existing Buildings
4. Proposed Built Form
5. Surface Parking
6. Existing Park

Alternative Development Concept

Townhouses

Subarea Application: Capital Sports Center

**Description**

In May of 2022, the CCVB commissioned a Sports Tourism Strategic Plan. The study found that the sports tourism sector is responsible for more than \$39.0 billion in direct spending as of the end of 2021 as compared to \$15.0 billion in 2019. This direct spending generated a total economic impact of \$91.8 billion in the local economy, driving over 635,000 jobs and \$12.9 billion in taxes as such, the Youth sports tourism is a booming industry.

The study identified facility enhancement/development as an opportunity to grow sports tourism in Charleston. More specifically, it noted the importance of having “anchor” and “tournament friendly” facilities to attract “top tier participant focused championships and their related tourism dollars.”

“The proposed Capital Sports Center, which is being jointly developed by the City of Charleston and the Kanawha County Commission, is a proposed redevelopment and adaptive reuse of the former Macy’s Building and parking structure adjacent to the Charleston Town Center Mall. The 254,524 SF 3-story project includes a natatorium, fitness center, climbing wall, 6 basketball courts/12 volleyball courts, 8 pickleball courts, a wrestling room, an indoor turfed soccer area, an indoor track, and several other amenities. The project serves the dual purpose of providing a venue for travel sporting events while also serving to improve the quality of life for residents of the Kanawha Valley. The project will commence with the demolition of the parking deck that spans Lee Street, the demolition of the upper three (3) levels of the parking structure located adjacent to the former Macy’s store, as well as the demolition of one half (the west side) of the Macy’s building across from the Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center. The footprint of the for Macy’s department store will house a 50-meter Olympic sized swimming pool, both the main exterior and mall entrance, as well as the climbing structure and fitness center. The remaining levels of the parking structure will serve as a pedestal for the sports courts and indoor turfed area.

The pedestal will remain connected to the Macy’s structure with an existing pedestrian bridge, while a new pedestrian bridge will connect it to the parking structure located across Lee Street. The upper level of the center will contain the pickleball courts and an indoor track. The exterior of the facility will compliment the recently constructed Charleston Coliseum and Convention Center. The two structures will help define a recreational and entertainment district located at a key gateway to Charleston’s downtown.”



# D. Quality of Life Actions

## Greenspace



- Expand existing conservation guidelines to further manage the development of sensitive or important environmental areas (floodplains, steep slopes, woodlands etc) (R23)
- To preserve the vistas and views both to and from the hills, revise development requirements for building height, siting and grading to preserve the natural slopes and woods to the greatest degree practical (R24)
- Require provision of green space as part of any major development - whether it is provided within the building setback area along the streets, interior courtyards, green parking spaces, etc - this will help in green connections of the existing parks and public gathering spaces (R25)
- Redevelop Davis Park to open views and provide additional amenities (C21)
- Create more accessible and usable park space along the Kanawha River (C31); on the south bank (C31a), near Patrick Street (C31b); Create mini parks and public viewing opportunities along Kanawha and Elk riverfronts that will help coalesce the riverfront greenway (C31d); Overlooks proposed in the Riverfront Plan (C31e)
- Streetscape and green connection along major north south corridors from Downtown will terminate in public viewing areas and vistas on the banks that will help create a pleasant visual and physical connection from Downtown to riverfront. (C37c)
- Develop an overall park plan with recommendations for improvements and replacement of facilities etc with a timeframe and priorities (including a capital improvement budget) (P13)
- Coordinate between Land Trust, CURA, and Parks/Rec department to create a greenway plan to achieve a complete, thorough network of accessible greenways throughout the city (P14); Inventory existing resources and future opportunities (P14A); Identify and create connections (P14b); Establish a phasing plan for improvements and a dedicated funding source, which could start with a grant (P14c)
- Pursue the acquisition or protection of sensitive environmental areas through a range of techniques, such as conservation easements, deed restrictions, transfer of development rights, land conservancy donations, acquisition by foundations or public bodies, or developer

incentives (P45); Start with identifying key parcels or general areas to preserve (P45a)

- Increase programming of outdoor spaces to promote civic life and to support the health of nearby services and businesses (P47)

## Safety

- Implement the recommendations of the recent fire dept evaluation including relocation of fire stations to provide more consistent response times throughout the city (C17)
- Employ CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles (P41)
- Maintain clean parks and green spaces and trails, immediately removing litter, graffiti and undesirable conditions. Citizens can be trained and assigned specific roles on committees or clean-up teams to ensure compliance with principles. (P41a)
- Modify the built environment to help reduce crime and improve the perception of safety - examples include trimmed trees and shrubs, clearly defined walkways, proper fencing, and adequate lighting (P41b)
- Encourage neighborhoods to develop their own safety and security priorities which can and should be addressed by citizens and officers alike (P42)
- Proactively engage communities in the fight against crime through both traditional means such as Neighborhood Watch and non-traditional means such as the increased use of technology and social media to inform and educate the public about the roles and responsibilities. (P43)

## Art/Culture

- Explore opportunities to beautify bridges above the Kanawha and Elk rivers with lighting, artwork, cultural plaques, and other potential aesthetic treatments to create gateways to and from Downtown (C20)
- Conduct a citywide cultural resources survey to assess unmet demand of cultural and entertainment activities (P16)
- Build public awareness of the city's historic resources (P25) Conduct educational forums for property owners, financial institutions, real estate professionals, and developers explaining the benefits available for the rehabilitation of historic properties, commercial and homeowner-occupied (P25a)

- Development of programs to call attention to specific historic properties and neighborhoods, including published self-guided walking tours, interpretive plaques, welcome signs at neighborhood/historic district entryways, street signs indicating the existence of a historic district or specific neighborhood (P25b)
- Partner with art students to create public art projects throughout the city (P29)
- Support the recommendations of the new Public Art Plan (P30)
- Actively promote Charleston as an arts and culture destination (P31)
- Actively seek out additional cultural institutions, galleries, workshops, etc to locate in the newly-branded Cultural District (P32)
- Promote Charleston as a city that offers a range of lifestyle choices (P33)

## Site Design

- Increase lighting for cars and pedestrians along city streets including maintenance and repair of existing lights and installation of new lights along streets and in public areas currently below light level guidelines (C18)
- Create gateway treatments at key entrance points into the city (C22); Solicit designs for public art, enhanced streetscape treatments, signage, and greenspace (C22a)
- Bury overhead powerlines when roads are reconstructed (C30)



## Sustainability

- Explore lighting technologies, such as induction and LED lighting (new and retrofits), and timing systems for municipal energy, cost and labor savings (C32)
- Strive for city building and renovation projects to meet green buildings standards (such as LEED) that provide long term payback on investment (C33)
- Explore and pursue opportunities for using alternative fuels and hybrid or electric vehicles in city fleets (C34)
- Create informational and incentive programs to encourage green buildings (i.e. LEED) (P4)
- Provide priority parking for alternative (natural gas) vehicles (P8); Pilot project on select highly visible on-street block providing free metered spaces for qualified vehicles (such as natural

gas or electric) (P8a), If successful, then expand program (P8b)

- Create an Environmental Interpretive Signage Program with public/private partners to showcase the city's progress and to raise community awareness of environmental cleanup, low-impact design, and green infrastructure (P17)
- Develop, adopt, and maintain a sustainability action plan that tracks progress toward objectives (P18)
- Develop, adopt, and maintain an energy conservation program with reduction targets and progress monitoring, using public buildings and facilities (rehab projects or new construction) as a model for energy reduction practices (P19)
- Promote use of energy efficient lighting (P44)
- Promote educational awareness regarding the environmental, financial and social benefits of implementing green practices; utilize local green initiative successes such as the WVDEP building and the New Edgewood Elementary School (P48)

## Education

- Formalize a city/university Joint Task Force (Town & Gown) to develop and implement shared initiatives, coordinate event planning and help facilitate joint ventures between the city and the area's academic and cultural institutions (P10)
- Establish a regular communication channel between the City, the Kanawha County School District and private schools to coordinate initiatives and leverage resources (such as use outside of school hours for public events, recreational opportunities) (P11)
- Encourage youth volunteer programs to assist seniors with home exterior and yard maintenance (P36)
- Encourage programs to partner seniors with school-age children for mentoring (P37)
- Encourage higher education institutions to develop connections to high schools to provide mentoring programs, scholarships to low-income students in the city (P38)
- Promote a program where business school students can offer assistance to local businesses on their finances, developing business plans, etc. and architecture students provide design services (P39)
- Coordinate school expansions and improvements

with city zoning and infrastructure improvements (P40)

**Health**

- Offer guidance on ways to improve residents’ access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities through the provision of a toolkit with resources on developing partnerships, engaging community members, assessing local policies and environments, advocacy, and strategic planning (P12)
- Improve access to fresh food (P46); Promote using food from local sources in schools and other institutions (P46a); Support community gardening, additional smaller scale farmers markets that could rotate to different locations, use of vacant commercial buildings on the Westside for food vendors, and convenient grocery stores (P46b); Mandate and implement nutrition standards and healthy vending policies for food and beverages available, including drinking water, at City-sponsored events and City buildings, parks, and recreation centers (P46c); Offer incentives such as endorsement or recognition for restaurants, pharmacies, and convenience stores near schools and parks that offer healthy snacks, foods, and beverages.
- Allow mobile farmers markets or fresh food vendor carts to locate in underserved areas or food deserts

**Historic Preservation**

- Consider design review/zoning overlay zones for each Historic District in the city (R11)
- Consider a Delay Demolition Ordinance to protect historic structures from being destroyed by absentee and/or speculative property owners (R12)
- Build public awareness of the city’s historic resources (P25)
- Conduct educational forums for property owners, financial institutions, real estate professionals, and developers explaining the benefits available for the rehabilitation of historic properties, commercial and homeowner-occupied (P25a)
- Development of programs to call attention to specific historic properties and neighborhoods, including published self-guided walking tours, interpretive plaques, welcome signs at neighborhood/historic district entryways, street signs indicating the existence of a historic district or specific neighborhood (P25b)



Chapter 5

# DOWNTOWN PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The complete Downtown Plan is published separately



# Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

NEIGHBORHOODS

TRANSPORTATION

QUALITY OF LIFE

DOWNTOWN

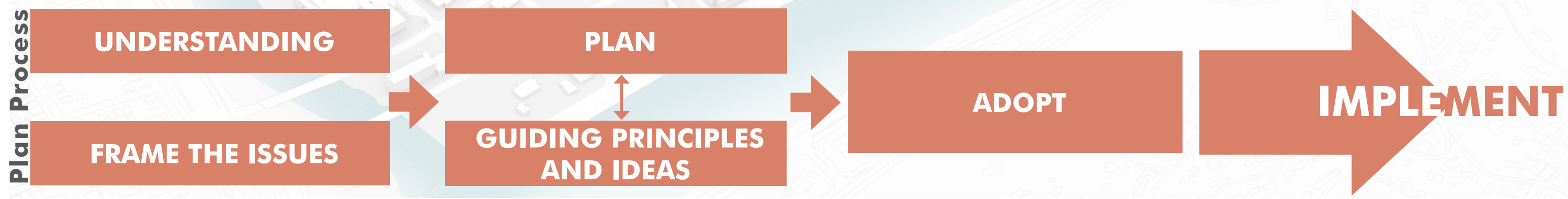
ACTION PLAN

The **2013 Downtown Charleston Redevelopment Plan**, as part of a broader Comprehensive Plan for the City, provides a vision toward a sustainable future and creates a dynamic framework for realizing that vision. The development of this framework was guided by extensive public participation and the committed leadership of the City of Charleston, the Charleston Urban Renewal Authority (CURA) and Charleston Area Alliance (CAA). Citizen participation informed the evaluation of needs and provided a clear set of recommendations for improving the Downtown, including specific target areas and consensus on some implementation strategies. The result is a plan that provides detailed analysis of the physical framework of the Downtown and recommends strategies that, along with relevant public policy, will help guide growth and development in the City of Charleston. It is long range in its vision, yet it leverages current and upcoming opportunities that will help to achieve the vision. This Downtown Redevelopment Plan also builds on prior initiatives and takes into account ongoing and future planned developments to create a unified vision for the Downtown area.

Based on **10 Sustainable Guiding Principles** and **6 Big Ideas**, the plan will shape all future developments in Downtown Charleston and create an environment that will allow Charleston to **continue to emerge as the cultural, recreational and business center of the Appalachian region.**

stimulate economic growth & extend vibrancy of activity areas

connect activity areas and catalytic projects



# Downtown Vision & Goals

## DOWNTOWN BUSINESS (DB)

### VISION

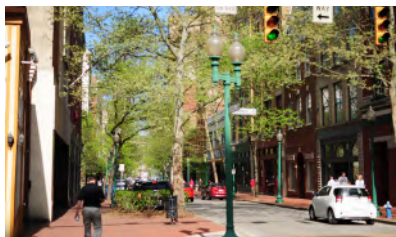
Bring a progressive business culture to Downtown Charleston through strategic real estate development, public/private partnerships, professional management, business retention and targeted business recruitment



**DB1 ACCESS (AUTO)**  
Enhance parking within Downtown to provide better accessibility to existing and potential businesses



**DB2 MARKET/ MANAGEMENT**  
Coordinate efforts for the marketing and management of Downtown



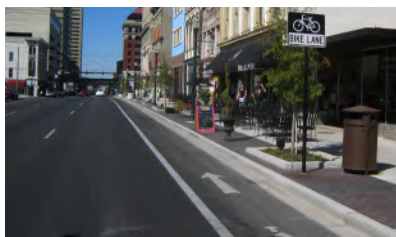
**DB3 PRESERVATION**  
Preserve the character and historic assets within Downtown



**DB4 DISTRICTS**  
Establish different districts according to existing market niches within Downtown



**DB5 ACCESS (PEDESTRIAN/ BICYCLE)**  
Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between Downtown activity centers and adjacent neighborhoods

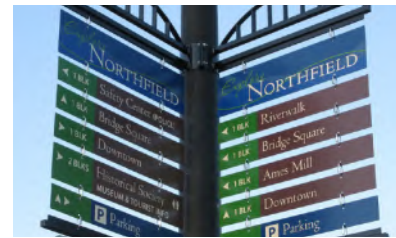


**DB6 ALTERNATIVE TRANSIT**  
Enhance roadways to promote better business environment and to accommodate alternative transportation

## DOWNTOWN LIVABILITY (DL)

### VISION

Create an exceptional living environment in the urban core of Charleston through significant improvement to the quality of public spaces and the perception of safety while incentivizing investment toward renovated and new housing development



**DL1 PUBLIC RELATIONS**  
Establish and implement a public relations campaign that lets people know that Downtown is livable, improves the public's perception of Downtown, and shows that the Downtown is a safe environment



**DL2 MIXED-USE INCENTIVES**  
Explore opportunities and alternatives for developers, tenants and lending institutions to benefit Downtown housing and encourage mixed use development



**DL3 PUBLIC SPACE**  
Enhance all public spaces Downtown by augmenting parks and greenspaces, improving lighting, employing traffic calming measures and improving the safety and attractiveness for bicycling and walking



**DL4 RIVERFRONT**  
Encourage mixed use riverfront development including living, shopping, dining, entertainment and recreation opportunities that connect to the river

# Big Ideas - To Guide and Shape Downtown Charleston

The big ideas numbering presented here does not exhibit any hierarchy of implementation. Downtown goals (DB or DL) from Introduction section (page 12) and sustainable guiding principles' icons are represented for cross-referencing purposes.

INTRODUCTION  
NEIGHBORHOODS  
TRANSPORTATION  
QUALITY OF LIFE  
DOWNTOWN  
ACTION PLAN

## 1 COMMIT LOCAL RESOURCES FOR A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



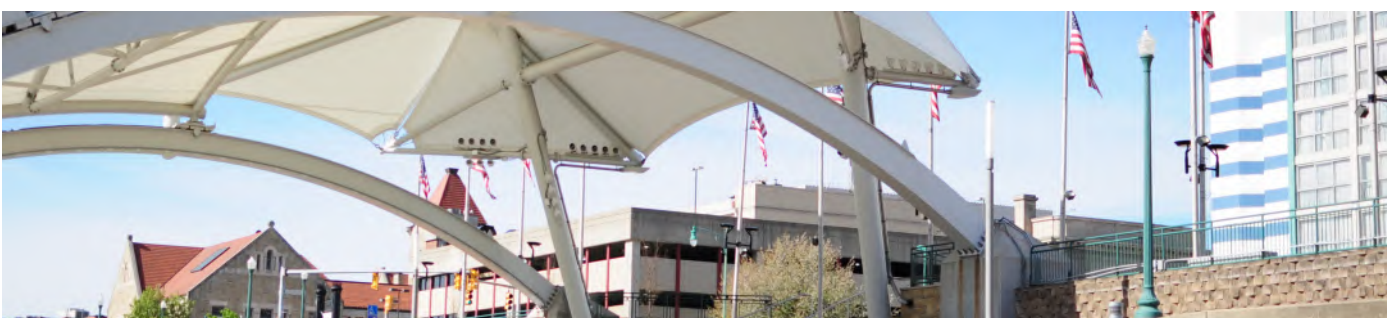
DB1 DL2

## 2 RESHAPE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF DOWNTOWN CHARLESTON



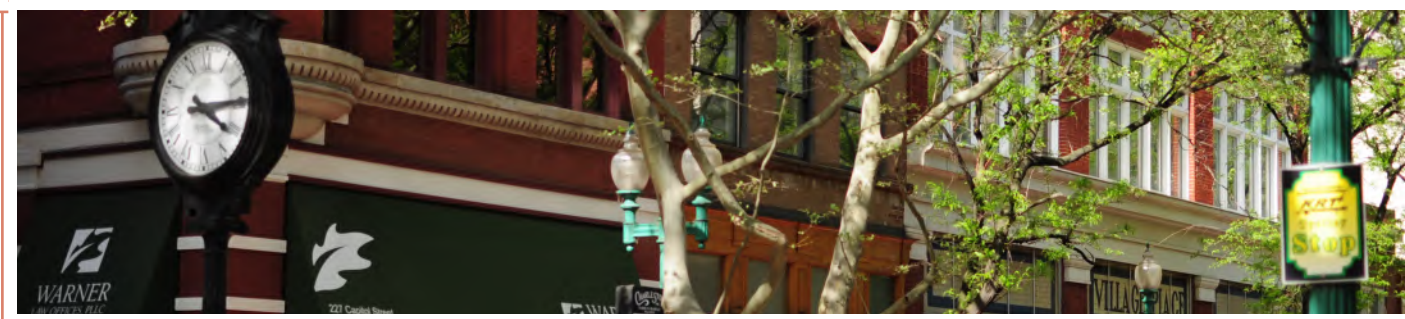
DB1 DB3 DB4 DB5 DL2

## 3 UTILIZE CHARLESTON'S IMPRESSIVE HISTORY AND RIVER CITY LOCATION TO LEVERAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



DB2 DB3 DL4

## 4 DEVELOP A DISTRICT IDENTITY SYSTEM FOR THE DOWNTOWN AND CONTIGUOUS RETAIL & ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS



DB2 DB4

## 5 TREAT THE URBAN CORE AS AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT CHARLESTON NEIGHBORHOOD



DB2 DB4 DL1 DL3

## 6 ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL URBAN CORE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY



DB2 DB4 DL1 DL3

# 1 COMMIT LOCAL RESOURCES FOR A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

- Identify public-private partnering opportunities, collaboration with quasi-public organizations and explore creative implementation vehicles
- Engage local financial institutions, community foundations and institutions of higher learning and liturgical institutions as partners
- Establish an effective relationship with the State of West Virginia for mutual real state

## SIX TARGET AREAS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### TARGET AREAS

- A. Appalachian Power Park Area
- B. Library & Quarrier Housing
- C. Capitol Street
- D. Slack Plaza & Brawley Walkway
- E. Civic District
- F. Kanawha Boulevard



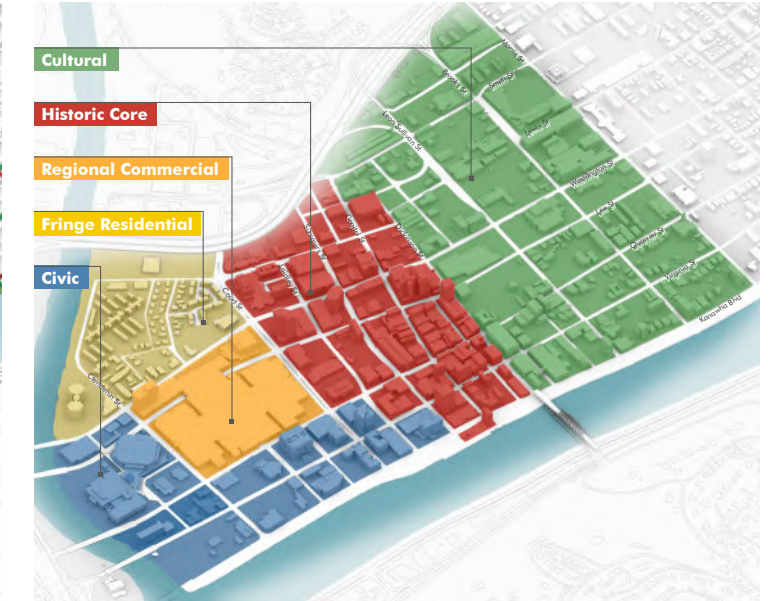
# 2 RESHAPE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF DOWNTOWN CHARLESTON

- Create niche districts (Civic, Regional Commercial, Historic Core, Cultural) within Downtown to drive the redevelopment of the built environment
- Create context-sensitive urban design standards to shape future development
- Elevate the architectural character of new buildings through high quality design standards that embrace urban design qualities and principles
- Adopt the "complete streets" approach to enhancing the street network and supports pedestrian zones and activity areas

## CONNECT ACTIVITY AREAS



## CREATE FIVE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERS OF DOWNTOWN BUSINESS DISTRICT



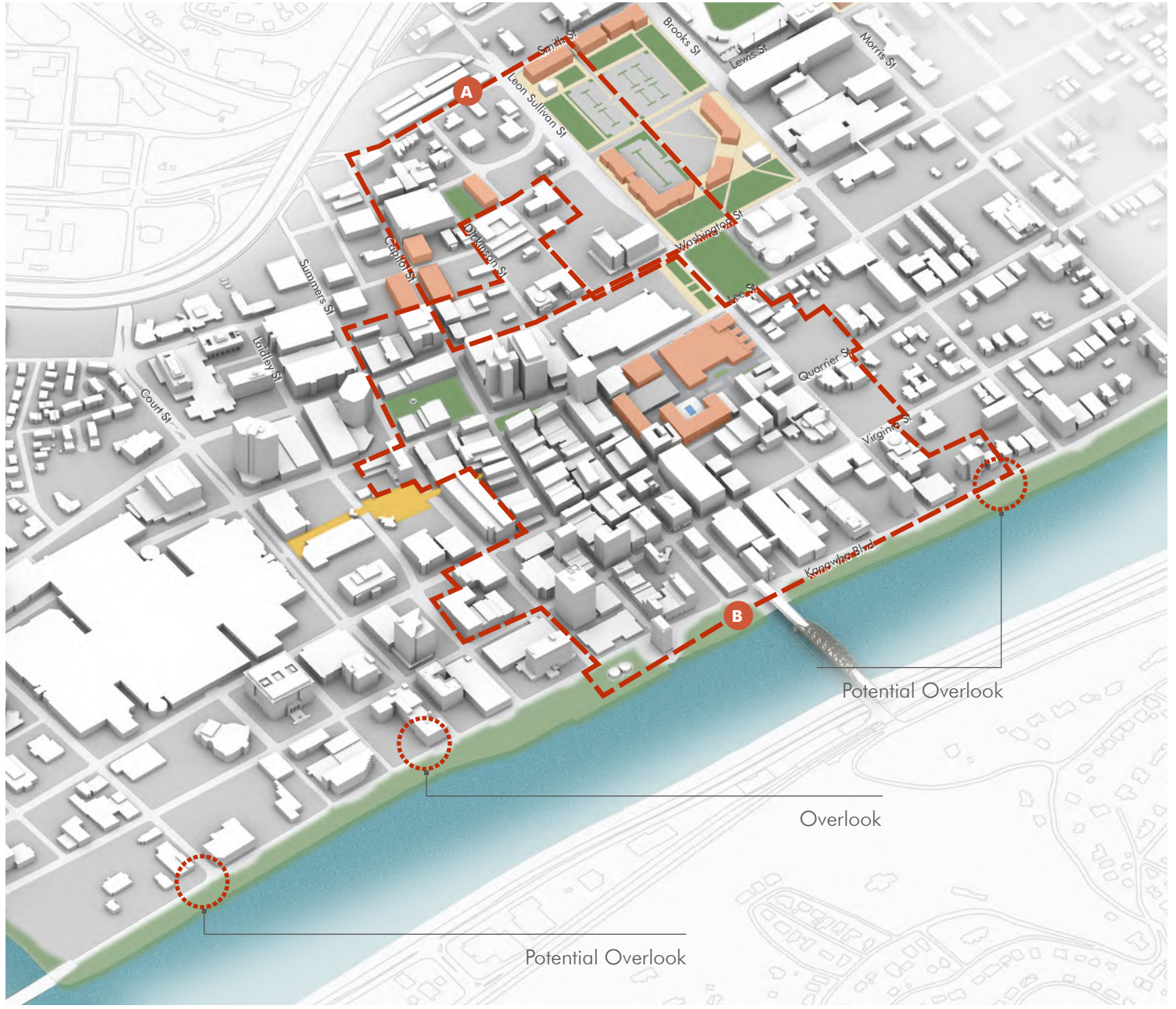
## VISION FOR CAPITOL STREET



### 3 UTILIZE CHARLESTON'S IMPRESSIVE HISTORY AND RIVER CITY LOCATION TO LEVERAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Embrace historic preservation as an important economic development tool and value history as an important asset to enhance the urban environment and marketability of the urban core.
- Re-engage the Kanawha and Elk rivers for public access, pedestrian activity and high quality mixed use development.
- Promote sustainable development practices that encourage environmental stewardship, social interaction and financial benefit

#### HISTORIC DISTRICTS



**A** African American Local Historic District

**B** Downtown Historic District

### 4 EMBRACE A DISTRICT IDENTITY SYSTEM FOR THE DOWNTOWN AND CONTIGUOUS RETAIL & ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS

- Develop a district identity program that begins to link major destinations such as the Town Center, Slack Plaza, Capitol Street, Capitol Market, Hale/Quarrier/Dickinson Streets, The Clay Center and the Warehouse District. The system should will delineate key pedestrian / alternative transportation corridors and support potential mixed use development opportunities.

#### VISION FOR SLACK PLAZA & BRAWLEY WALKWAY



## 5 TREAT THE URBAN CORE AS AN IMPORTANT CHARLESTON NEIGHBORHOOD ALSO

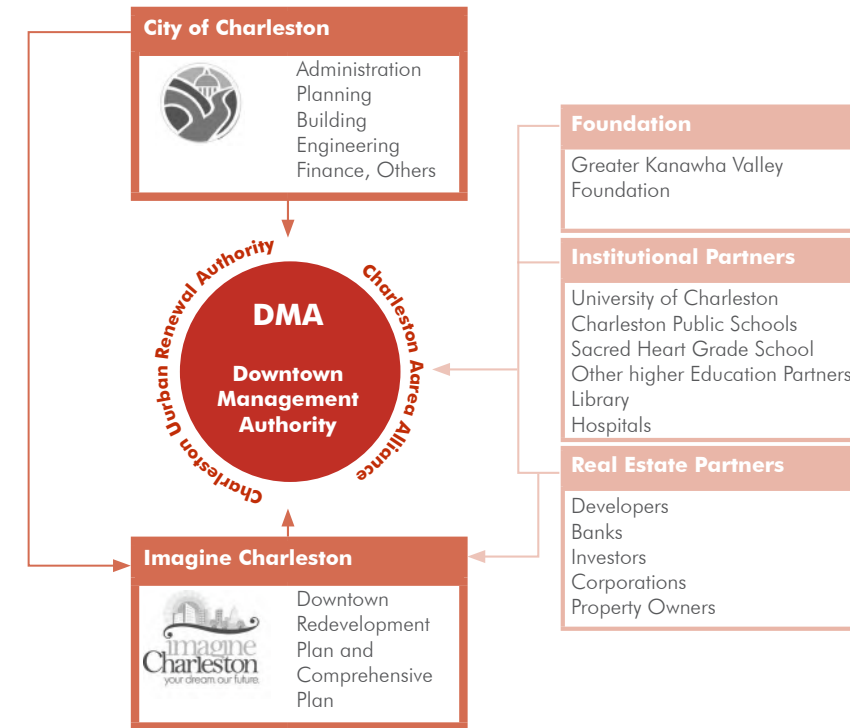
- Establish and implement a public relations campaign that promotes Downtown’s livability, improves public’s perception of Downtown, and represents Downtown as a safe environment [refer to BID below].
- Explore opportunities and alternatives for developers, tenants and lending institutions to promote Downtown housing and encourage mixed use development.

### VISION FOR KANAWHA COUNTY MAIN LIBRARY & QUARRIER STREET

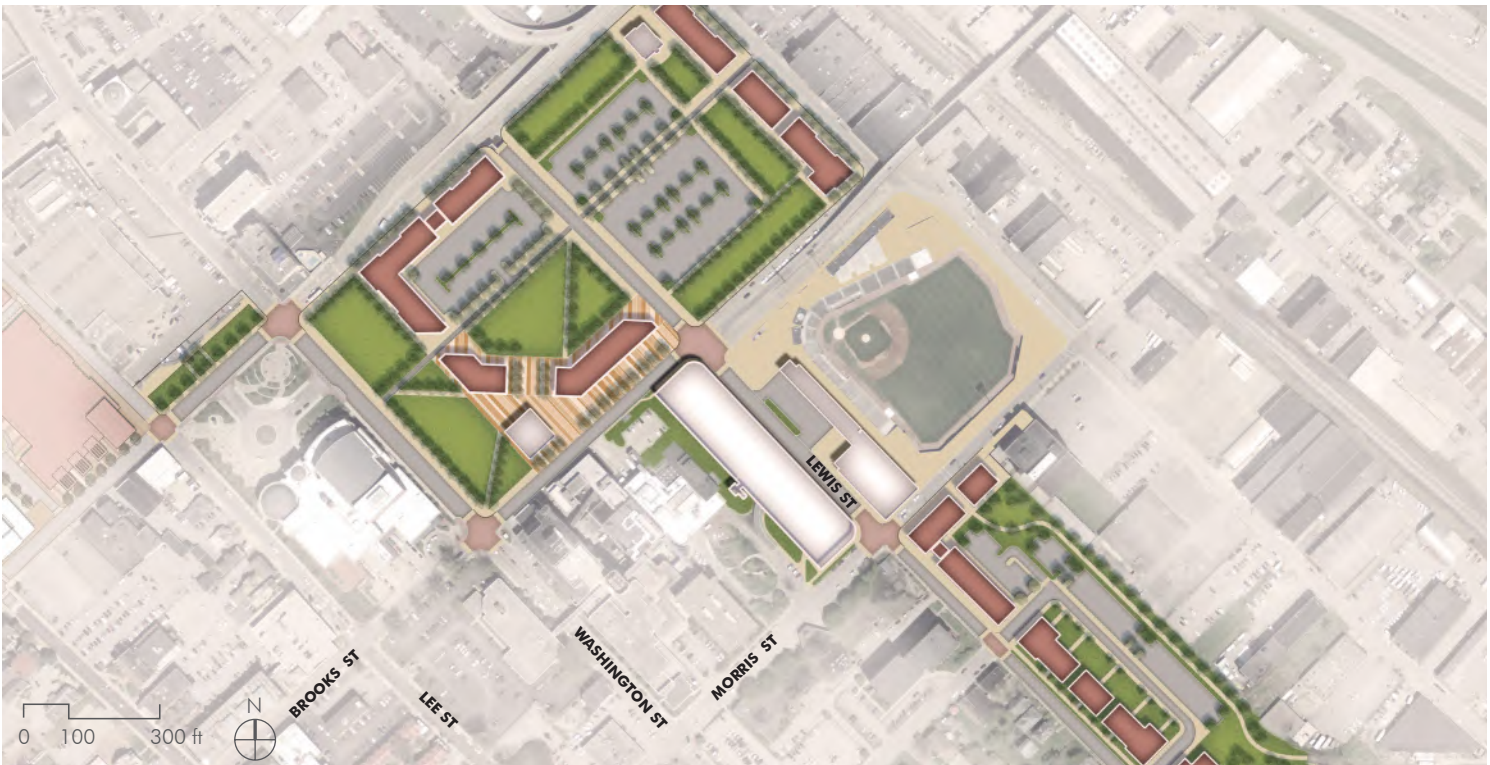


## 6 ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL URBAN CORE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

- Establish a Downtown Management Authority (DMA)
- Develop a Business Improvement District [BID] to garner commitment and financial support from property owners to provide professional targeted management efforts in the urban core








### VISION FOR APPALACHIAN POWER PARK AREA



# Action Plan

 **Medium Term**  
(3-5 Years)

 **Long Term**  
(5+ Years)

BIG IDEAS		STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP	TIMEFRAME
1	<b>COMMIT LOCAL RESOURCES FOR A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify public-private partnering opportunities, collaboration with quasi-public organizations and explore creative implementation vehicles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City / CAA</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage local financial institutions, community foundations and institutions of higher learning and liturgical institutions as partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CURA / CAA / Foundation</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish an effective relationship with the State of West Virginia for mutual real estate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State / City / CURA / CAA / CVB</li> </ul>	
2	<b>SUPPORT PRIVATE INVESTMENT BY RESHAPING THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT OF DOWNTOWN CHARLESTON THROUGH PUBLIC POLICY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create niche districts (Civic, Regional Commercial, Historic Core, Cultural) within Downtown to drive the redevelopment of the built environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City / CVB / CAA</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create context-sensitive urban design standards to shape future development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City (Planning) / CURA</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elevate the architectural character of new buildings through high quality design standards that embrace urban design qualities and principles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City (Planning) / HLC</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt the “complete streets” approach to enhancing the street network and supports pedestrian zones and activity areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City (Engineer, Planning, Traffic Engineer) / County Engineer / Land Trust</li> </ul>	
3	<b>UTILIZE CHARLESTON’S IMPRESSIVE HISTORY AND RIVER CITY LOCATION TO LEVERAGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embrace historic preservation as an important economic development tool and the value of history as an important asset to enhance the urban environment and marketability of the urban core.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City / HLC / CVB / Kanawha Valley Historical &amp; Preservation Society</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Re-engage the Kanawha and Elk rivers for public access, pedestrian activity areas as well as high quality mixed use development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City (Planning, Engineer) / Land Trust / Private Land Owners</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote sustainable development practices that will help environmental stewardship, social interactions and financial benefits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City (Planning, Engineer, Parks &amp; Recreation, Traffic Engineer) CURA / CAA</li> </ul>	

- CAA - Charleston Area Alliance
- Foundation - Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation
- CVB - Convention and Visitor’s Bureau
- HLC - Historic Landmarks Commission
- CURA - Charleston Urban Redevelopment Authority
- DMA - Downtown Management Authority



BIG IDEAS		STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP	TIMEFRAME
4	<b>DEVELOP A DISTRICT IDENTITY SYSTEM FOR THE DOWNTOWN AND CONTIGUOUS RETAIL &amp; ENTERTAINMENT DESTINATIONS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a district identity program that begins to link major destinations such as the Town Center, Slack Plaza, Capitol Street, Capitol Market, Hale/Quarrier/Dickinson Streets, The Clay Center and the Warehouse District. The system should will delineate key pedestrian / alternative transportation corridors and support potential mixed use development opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City / CURA / CAA / Main Street Wayfinding Commission, CVB, Major Property Owners</li> </ul>	
5	<b>TREAT THE URBAN CORE AS AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT CHARLESTON NEIGHBORHOOD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and implement a public relations campaign that promotes Downtown’s livability, improves public’s perception of Downtown, and represents Downtown as a safe environment [refer to BID below].</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CURA / CAA / CVB / DMA</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities and alternatives for developers, tenants and lending institutions to promote Downtown housing and encourage mixed use development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City (Building, Planning) / CURA / CAA</li> </ul>	
6	<b>ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL URBAN CORE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a Downtown Management Authority (DMA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City / CURA / CAA</li> </ul>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a Business Improvement District [BID] to garner commitment and financial support from property owners to provide professional targeted management efforts in the urban core</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DMA / CURA / CAA, City</li> </ul>	

INTRODUCTION

NEIGHBORHOODS

TRANSPORTATION

QUALITY OF LIFE

DOWNTOWN

ACTION PLAN



Chapter 6

# ACTION PLAN



You've imagined it, now let's make it happen!



# A. Tenets of Successful Implementation

Charleston's Comprehensive Plan was developed through a highly interactive process that engaged the community in defining a preferred future. Through this collaborative effort, the City, community leaders, and the public have contributed both resources and personal time to formulate a useful, exciting, and visionary blueprint for the future. This level and breadth of participation signals Charleston's commitment as a community to seek creative solutions to its many challenges. The plan will position Charleston to manage future development, redevelopment, capital improvements, collaborative partnerships, and programs on a solid foundation of fiscal, social, and environmental sustainability.



This plan is intended to be a policy guide for moving Charleston forward, guiding decisions about future physical and economic development. But the plan is more than just a policy guide for City officials and staff. With the commitment of resources to this planning effort comes the high expectations that the recommendations will be implemented, some soon, or others over the next five to ten years.

This plan includes a lot of ideas that need to be translated into action. What should the city do to ensure the vitality in the future--what comes next? The Action Plan details those next steps and priorities.

Charleston is fortunate to have many organizations, business leaders, and individuals committed to a better future for the city. There is often overlap in what organizations or city departments are doing. Sometimes the well-intended efforts and activities are not as well coordinated as they might be. Much effort was expended to gather input and unify the forces.

Transforming the plan's lofty goals into reality will require a long-term commitment and political consensus. The plan is designed to be a road map for action, incorporating strategies, specific projects, and programs that will achieve the desired results. This chapter synthesizes the many plan recommendations and identifies the actions and timing needed to transform the plan's vision into reality.

## Commitment

While the input received through the Comprehensive Plan process provided a foundation to help achieve the city's vision, community support, and involvement must continue. Successful plan implementation will be directly related to a committed city leadership. While elected and appointed officials - the Mayor, City Council, and Planning Commission - will have a strong leadership role, many others - city department directors, staff, and leaders from the community's many institutions and organizations - will also be instrumental in supporting the plan.

However, commitment reaches beyond just these individuals and includes the array of individuals with an interest and stake in the future. Citizens, landowners, developers, and business owners who will be impacted by how Charleston changes must unite toward the plan's common vision. Momentum and enthusiasm from the large constituency engaged in the planning process must be sustained to guarantee the plan will remain the important action-oriented document it is intended to be.

## Integrate with Capital Improvements

City officials and departments must embrace the plan, applying its recommendations to help shape annual budgets, work programs, and the design of capital improvements. For example, the City's engineering division can support implementation through infrastructure improvements, streets, and storm systems designed consistent with plan policies and recommendations, or the planning and building department through site plan review. Each department, staff person, and elected official should find it a benefit, if not an obligation, to reference the plan when making decisions and setting priorities.

In and of itself, the plan is capable of accomplishing very little. Rather, community leaders, businesses, organizations, and citizens must assume ownership of the plan to see that it is successfully implemented.

## Foundation for Future Efforts

Any future planning efforts must be consistent with the overall vision and basic framework of this plan. For example, neighborhood plans should be consistent with this plan as the framework for more in-depth analysis and recommendations for a particular area.

## Continued Community Involvement

Citizen involvement was the cornerstone of this planning process, and continued involvement by the public is even more essential to ensure the plan's success. Adoption of the plan marks the end of the initial phase of the process, but only the beginning of the evolutionary process of implementing the plan. A continued effort to focus attention on the plan's vision and recommendations and to further promote community participation in making the plan a reality will be essential activities.

One tactic for sustained public involvement is continued extensive use of electronic media. Successful use of the web page, social networks, and e-mail blasts can be continued to regularly distribute information on hot topics, publicity for upcoming events, identify where input is desired and where volunteers are needed. Regular progress reports on master plan implementation could be featured, and online surveys could help confirm or adjust priorities. Partnerships with the university may provide a technology resource so the City is a leader in electronic communication.

## Guidance for Development Decisions

This plan is designed for routine use and should be consistently employed during any process affecting the community's future. Private investment decisions by developers, corporations, and land owners should consider the plan's direction. Other planning efforts for neighborhoods, corridors, and community facilities should be in harmony with the comprehensive plan. Finally, the plan should be used when reviewing development proposals and referenced in related reports and studies.

## Partnerships

While the City is in a position to coordinate many of the plan's implementation tasks, responsibility should not solely rest on the government. Instead, the vast array of stakeholders having key roles in either the city or region must all participate. Ideally, this plan will be endorsed by the many organizations in the city as a "shared vision," the foundation of future efforts.

Entities such as CAA, CURA, neighborhood associations, KRT, Kanawha County, Kanawha County Schools, WVDOT, and many others should have something to contribute relative to their role in Charleston's

future. Partnerships with the public and private sector, including the University of Charleston, the hospitals, major employers, and business will also lead to success implementing the plan's initiatives.

Partnerships may range from sharing information to funding and shared promotions or services. While Charleston has a strong history of civic involvement, given the challenges noted in this plan, the spirit of cooperation must be refreshed with a renewed commitment by each organization so that alliances and partnerships can be formed and sustained to benefit everyone in the region.

City government cannot and should not do it all. Only through public/private collaboration can the plan's vision be realized. What can these partnerships do that the City cannot do alone?

- **Solve Larger Issues.** Many issues are beyond the control of individual jurisdictions and require cooperation, including major infrastructure improvements, non-motorized and other transit options, economic development, and social issues, such as homelessness.
- **Improve the Vitality of Each Entity** Working together, community leaders can become more acquainted with Charleston's vision and the role each has to offer, working toward more cooperative, rather than competitive, relationships. A vibrant urban core and unified, attractive corridors will benefit not only Charleston, but its suburbs and the region as a whole.
- **Meeting Expectations for Public Services.** Economic conditions make it more difficult for individual communities to meet residents' needs and expectations. More sharing of resources and eliminating duplicated efforts may result in more cost effective ways of providing essential community services.
- **Maximize Investments.** The City, its many organizations and academic institutions have all made significant investments in Charleston. Ongoing relationships can help ensure those contributions continue to attain a high rate of return in terms of financial and social capital.

### Evaluation and Monitoring

This plan has been developed with a degree of flexibility, allowing nimble responses to emerging conditions, challenges, and opportunities. To help ensure the plan stays fresh and useful, periodic reviews and amendments are required. This will ensure plan goals, objectives, and recommendations reflect changing community needs, expectations, and financial realities.

Any more detailed subarea plans should be adopted as comprehensive plan amendments. The plan should be reviewed at least every five years. Updates should reflect changing conditions, unanticipated opportunities,

and acknowledge the implementation to date. Yearly workplans should be prepared to assess what has been accomplished in the action plan and what should be achieved in the coming year. The Advisory Committee should stay in tact and meet yearly to review the status of the plan's implementation, discuss funding opportunities, refine priorities, involve new implementors and participants to ensure all organizations and key players remain committed.

### Roles of the Mayor and City Council

The Mayor and City Council must be solidly engaged in the process to implement the plan. Their responsibilities

will be to prioritize various action items and establish timeframes by which each action must be initiated and completed. They must also consider and weigh the funding commitments necessary to realize the city's vision, whether involving capital improvements, facility design, municipal services, targeted studies, or changes to development regulations, such as municipal codes, the zoning ordinance and procedures.

### Planning Commission as Facilitators

The Planning Commission is charged with overseeing plan implementation and is empowered to make ongoing land use decisions. As such, it has a great influence on

how sustainable Charleston will be. Therefore, several tasks in the Action Plan are the responsibility of the Planning Commission and its staff.

As an example, the Planning Commission is charged with preparing studies, ordinances, and certain programmatic initiatives before they are submitted to the City Council. In other instances, the Planning Commission plays a strong role as a "Plan Facilitator" overseeing the process and monitoring its progress and results. Together, City staff and the Planning Commission must be held accountable, ensuring the city's Comprehensive Plan impacts daily decisions and actions by its many stakeholders.

## B. Zoning Recommendations

Zoning is a key mechanism for achieving the desired land use pattern and quality of development advocated in the plan. This section provides a useful guide relative to the inconsistencies between current zoning patterns and proposed future land use designations. In addition, the Regulatory section of the Action Table identifies elements in the current regulations that could be refined to more strongly support Comprehensive Plan recommendations.

Because the Future Land Use Plan is a long range vision of how land uses should evolve over time, it should not be confused with the City's zoning map, which is a current (short term) mechanism for regulating development. Therefore not all properties should be immediately rezoned to correspond with the plan. The Future Land Use Plan is intended to serve as a guide for land use decisions over a longer period of time (5 to 15 years).

Review of the Existing Land Use map in comparison to the Future Land Use and Character map reveals a gradual transition to the planned land use pattern. Achievement of this goal will be gradual particularly where established businesses and homes are located in areas intended for other types of uses in the long term.

In addition, the Future Land Use map (Map x) is generalized. More detailed evaluation would be required as part of any rezoning consideration. In particular, the Future Land Use map does not specifically call out

schools or parks. If those sites are considered for a new use in the future, the use should be compatible with the adjacent land areas and their overall character.

The plan categories correspond to zoning districts, but there is some generalization. The following table provides a zoning plan indicating how the future land use categories in this Comprehensive Plan relate to the zoning districts in the zoning ordinance. In certain instances, more than one zoning district may be applicable to a future land use category. Notes are provided to guide the Planning Commission in determining the appropriate zoning district based upon the context of the surrounding area.

Zoning changes in accordance with the plan should be made gradually so that change can be managed. The Future Land Use map as well as the plan's goals and recommendations should be consulted to judge the merits of a rezoning request. In review of rezoning and development proposals, the City should consider the following sequencing standards:

- Any rezoning or development proposal must be compatible with the Comprehensive Plan as a whole and be able to stand and function on its own without harm to the quality of surrounding land uses.
- There must be sufficient public infrastructure to accommodate any proposed development or the types of uses that would be allowed under the

requested zoning change. This must include sufficient sewer and water capacity, a transportation system to support impacts, and a stormwater system designed to limit impacts.

- For sites near the rivers and sensitive hillsides, the environmental conditions of the site should be capable of accommodating the types of development or potential uses allowed with a zoning change. The impact to natural features should be minimized to the maximum extent practical.

### Review Zoning Districts and Map

Review current zoning districts to ensure they project the desired character. Table A shows the suggested future land use categories and the current zoning districts to show how they can provide direction for future zoning decisions. Generally speaking, changes to the zoning district regulations should be consistent with the recommendations for the corresponding future land use category.

#### Short Term Recommendations:

- Replace the DVD District with a form-based district since the CURA design review expired. Similarly, create form-based districts for those areas currently under CURA design review for the West Side and East End "Main Street" districts. The C-8 Village Commercial District (currently applied to the East End "Main Street") could be strengthened with more

form-based elements and applied to the West Side "Main Street." The remainder of the Washington corridors on both the West Side and East End (shown as "Mixed-Use Corridor" on the future land use/character map) currently designated as CVD should similarly be zoned to a new form-based corridor district. This new corridor district may or may not be applicable to MacCorkle Avenue, which may need its own form-based district (currently being evaluated in the Kanawha City corridor plan).

- Consider developing a Planned Institutional/Office Park District that might contain some of the known developments that are currently zoned C-10. For example, the Charleston Job Corps Center and the Northgate Office Park developments are nestled within a larger residential context, but contain important employment uses that can co-exist if properly regulated.
- Consider converting the PUD District from a rezoning application to a conditional use that could be an overlay in any of the underlying residential districts. This maintains the integrity of the underlying zoning, and provides direction in cases where the PUD is not actually constructed. This allows the City to automatically revert the zoning to its original designation rather than having to reverse the rezoning action.

**Long Term Recommendations:**

- A new rural district that helps preserve the rural characteristics that make these areas appealing choices for some residents. The regulations would be a bit less restrictive and may allow certain uses intermixed with residential uses that may not be appropriate in other residential districts such as
  - Duplexes
  - Keeping of livestock and animals
  - Fewer restrictions on home-based businesses
  - Large accessory buildings and uses
  - Roadside stands
  - Small commercial uses like restaurants, gas stations, kennels, farm equipment, consumer industrial, shops at certain locations like corners and along major streets when buffered from residential
  - Setbacks could be more variable or performance-based based on topography, shape of the frontage along roads and consistency with the massing and established setbacks of adjacent homes
  - Minimum lot size could be 5000-6000 square feet, similar to the current R-4 and R-6 districts.

**Review Permitted Uses**

Review permitted uses in each zoning district to ensure they promote the purpose of the district. Like many urban zoning ordinances, Charleston’s zoning has elements of what is called “pyramid” zoning. That old style zoning allows in intense zoning districts all the uses allowed in less intense zoning districts. For example, single-family

would be allowed in all districts, even in more intense commercial districts where it might not be appropriate. Charleston’s C-10 and C-12 districts state their purposes are to accommodate a broad range of high traffic office and retail uses, but these districts also allow residential. While mixing residential with commercial is a solid strategy in mixed-use districts such as C-4 and C-8 (Neighborhood and Village Commercial), single-family residential uses should not be permitted in the higher intensity commercial districts.

**Recommendations:**

- Re-evaluate the uses in the table below, which may not promote the desired development in the district it is located.

**Develop Form-Based Regulations:**

- Form-based codes place a primary emphasis on building type, dimensions, parking location and façade features, and less emphasis on uses. They stress the appearance of the streetscape, or public realm, over long lists of different use types. Form based codes are appropriate in districts where the purpose is to preserve or create a specific character, or where the use of land is more flexible than the desired building form and development context.

**Recommendations:**

- Rather than designate zero setback requirements for the CBD, Central Business District, consider designating a “build-to” line that ensures all buildings along a block will maintain a consistent building line and streetscape.

- In addition to the downtown, a form-based code may be appropriate in the R-10 District, where maintaining the residential character is desired, but where residential uses may not be the highest and best use. Here, office uses are allowed to occupy residential structures, and a form-based code could be used to ensure redevelopment or building additions will not be out of context with the neighborhood feel. The City’s Neighborhood Conservation Overlay District attempts to achieve similar results, but is less effective because it requires the developer to initiate rezoning, and there are locations where adherence to the form-based standards should not be optional.
- Consider a Form-Based Code in the Warehouse District area, MacCorkle and Main Street Districts, where pedestrian-oriented environments are planned. While some restrictions on use can still be included, a form-based approach focuses first on the feeling and environment created by development rather than the use it might contain.

**Planned Unit Development**

As noted above, it is recommended that the PUD district be changed from a rezoning to a conditional use in any district. The following additional recommendations are suggested to further strengthen the PUD regulations and incorporate incentives to encourage its use:

**Recommendations:**

- Establish a list of “Recognized Benefits” that promote the types of things envisioned in the Plan. The following benefits could be listed as desired elements that are incorporated as required elements, review criteria, or as the basis for rewarding density bonuses, streamlined application review processes, or other incentives developed by the City.
  - Mixed-use development with residential, and non-residential uses or a variety of housing types;
  - Redevelopment of brownfield or greyfield sites;
  - Pedestrian/transit-oriented design with buildings oriented to the sidewalk and parking to the side or rear of the site;
  - High quality architectural design beyond the site plan requirements of this chapter;
  - Extensive landscaping beyond the site plan requirements of this chapter;
  - Preservation, enhancement or restoration of natural

**Recommended Form-based Districts:**

- East End and West Side Main Streets (currently C-8 and UCD)
- East End and West Side Washington corridors (currently CVD)
- MacCorkle Avenue in Kanawha City (currently C-8, R-O, and R-10)
- Capitol Street (formerly DVD)
- Downtown Transition areas (especially Cultural/Warehouse District)
- Patrick Street Power Center (could be a PUD as well)
- R-10 Mixed Use Neighborhood

resources (trees, slopes, non-regulated wetland areas, views to the river);

- Preservation or restoration of historic resources;
- Provision of open space or public plazas or features;
- Efficient consolidation of poorly dimensioned parcels or property with difficult site conditions (e.g. Topography, shape etc.);
- Effective transition between higher and lower density uses, and/or between non-residential and residential uses; or allow incompatible adjacent land uses to be developed in a manner that is not possible using a conventional approach;
- Shared vehicular access between properties or uses;
- Mitigation to offset impacts on public facilities (such as road improvements); or
- Significant use of sustainable building and site design features such as: water use reduction, water efficient landscaping, innovative wastewater technologies, low impact stormwater management, optimize energy performance, on-site renewable energy, passive solar heating, reuse/recycled/renewable materials, indoor air quality or other elements identified as sustainable by established groups such as the US Green Building Council (LEED) or ANSI National Green Building Standards.

**Parking and Access:**

In many ways, parking, access, and pedestrian access can affect the character of development.

Use	District							
	C-8		C-10		C-12		CBD	
	Current	Change To	Current	Change To	Current	Change To	Current	Change To
Automobile, Motorcycle and Boat Sales, Rental and Repair uses	P	N/A						
Contractor’s Establishments	P							
Crematorium	P	C						
Drive-Thru Facility	P	C or N/A						
Dwelling, Single Family	P	N/A	P	N/A	P	N/A	P	N/A
Gasoline Service Stations and Mini-Marts	P	N/A						
Shopping Centers	P	C						

**Recommendations:**

- The Plan and the RIC Plan both promote Access Management, which regulates the location and design of access points (i.e. driveways and side streets) to help maintain safe and efficient traffic conditions. To implement this element of the Plan, the following provisions should be added to Section 22-050-03:
  - Minimum driveway spacing from intersections – greater spacing from signalized intersections should be required
  - Maximum number of driveways – should be specified, typically one driveway is sufficient
  - Promote shared driveways – and cross access between parking lots to prevent vehicles from having to re-enter traffic to visit adjoining sites
  - Minimum spacing from other driveways – both on the same side and from opposing driveways
  - Minimum spacing from other items – interchanges, median crossovers, railroad crossings
  - Where the desired standards cannot be met,

include performance measures that can be used to evaluate where flexibility in the above standards might be appropriate

- Allow Deferred Parking for sites where immediate demand does not exist, but where it may in the future.
- The Plan encourages pedestrian environments, especially in the, Downtown Transition, Downtown and both Mixed-Use Corridor designations (which relate to the CBD, C-8, and R-10 Zoning Districts). To implement this this element of the Plan, the following should be required in Article 22:
  - Require five-foot concrete sidewalks along the frontage of non-residential sites (subdivision regulations should require sidewalks along at least one side of residential streets)
  - Bike racks should be required – one vehicular space could be replaced by 2 bike spaces
  - Connections between the sidewalk and building entrances should be required, especially in pedestrian-oriented districts like the Downtown and Main Street Mixed Use Corridor future land use areas

**Other**

General Provisions of the ordinance all work together to promote the vision in the Plan. To strengthen the quality of future development, the following additional concepts should be considered.

**Recommendations:**

- Setback averaging is included in Section 21-020, but should specify a distance from the subject site that should be considered in the calculations
- Landscaping standards could be strengthened through addition of the following:
  - List specific planting requirements for greenbelts and buffers – number of trees and shrubs per linear foot
  - Allow for consideration of different buffer applications, including walls, setbacks, landscaping, etc. that could be required in a variety to settings – even those where adequate “bufferyards” cannot be provided.
  - Minimum planting sizes - minimum caliper for

deciduous and minimum height for evergreen

- Include standards for Nonconforming Sites to identify when certain site improvements, such as lighting, landscaping and parking, should be required, or when they should not prevent re-occupancy of a non-conforming building or use
- Consider more specific outdoor lighting restrictions. The current ordinance could be strengthened through the following:
  - Maximum parking lot light pole height – shorter poles should be required within proximity to residential districts
  - Minimum and maximum illumination requirements to provide safe levels of lighting that do not cause glare on adjacent sites – lower lighting levels should be required at property lines that abut residential districts
- Address alternative energy such as wind by including regulations for residential and commercial applications

## C. Signature Implementation Opportunities

The following projects are identified as potential momentum builders that can inspire catalytic change:

**123 West Washington Street - Staats Hospital**

A vacant contributing structure in the Elk City Historic District. This four story classical revival style building is on the Preservation Alliance of West Virginia's list of endangered buildings. Built in 1922, Staats Hospital was designed by John C. Norman, Sr., a prominent Charleston resident and West Virginia's first registered African American architect. The building is the largest structure in the historic district and is prominently positioned at the terminus of Bigley Ave at West Washington Street. The building has been in bankruptcy and been significantly neglected. Some form of subsidy will be required for the building to be renovated for reuse.

**800 Lee Street - Stone and Thomas Building**

A vacant contributing structure in the Downtown Charleston Historic District containing over 130,000 sq.ft. of office and retail space. The building's sheer size and prominent location at the intersection of Lee Street and Dickinson Street make this building an important part of the downtown urban fabric.

**107 Hale Street – Masonic Temple**

A vacant contributing structure in the Downtown Charleston Historic District. This five story, three bays Gothic Revival style building has a prominent location and at the intersection of Virginia Street and Hale Street. This building is an important part of the downtown urban fabric.

**300 Charleston Town Center - Charleston Town Center Mall-**

At one time, the CTC was one of the largest urban malls in the country. However, changes in shopping trends, including the proliferation of on-line shopping, has led to a steep decline in the number of tenants. This was further exacerbated by the social effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The mall needs to reinvent itself to achieve a new highest and best use. The property has ample parking and is uniquely situated along a pedestrian spline that connects the Charleston Coliseum and Convention, the City Center at Slack, and the downtown historic district.

**23 Brooks Street - Brooks Manor**

This five story 57 unit building, built and used since 1969, for low-income senior housing, helps fill important affordable housing demand in the city. Significant upgrades are needed to modernize the facility and bring it in line with today's codes and standards of living. The major upgrades include electrical and ventilation upgrades, a second elevator, more living space, more accessible kitchens and bathrooms and some green space

**230 Costello Street - Watts Elementary**

Slated for closure once the new West Side Elementary School is constructed, this three story building should be adaptively reused for a use that is compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhood. Compatible uses include various forms of housing or professional offices that have a low traffic count.

**1423 Lee Street, East - St. Paul Lutheran Church**

Built in 1915-1916 this historic church is located at the corner of Lee Street, East and Beauregard Street. Like many churches in the region, the congregation is dwindling and their stewardship of the building is no longer possible, thus the building has been listed for sale.

The historic architecture should be preserved and a new use identified that is both compatible with and reflective of the neighborhood.

**300 Florida Street - Tiskelwah School**

The City's oldest intact school building from 1910, The Tiskelwah School is a prime candidate for redevelopment. Having been repurposed in the past, the site is already primed for a new use. One viable use for the building would be to convert the main building into a senior living facility. This would allow for the preservation of the exterior architecture while also allowing for long-term, stable usage of the building.



## D. Action Table

The Action Plan table summarizes the recommendations from throughout the plan into specific categories, outlining individual tasks to be accomplished within the 20-year planning period. This format serves as a useful checklist to track accomplishments and reassign priorities. It also serves as a checklist to facilitate annual reviews of the plan. The Long-term/Ongoing recommendations should be evaluated annually for progress with the actions set to “expire” that year.

Priorities are established based on the following timeframes:

Immediate	1-2 years	▶
Short-term	by 2018	▶▶
Mid-term	by 2025	▶▶▶
Long-term/ Ongoing	by 2033	▶→→

### Regulatory:

Recommendations are provided for amending city ordinances to better support plan proposals. Most of these actions could be implemented as part of an update to the zoning ordinance and other city regulations related to land use, streets, and infrastructure and the City is the primary responsible party.

### Capital Improvements:

Streets, trails, utilities, parks, and municipal buildings are the integral framework that supports quality development. Two key objectives are that 1) design must complement the context of the surrounding area and 2) sustainable materials and practices should be employed to the degree practical.

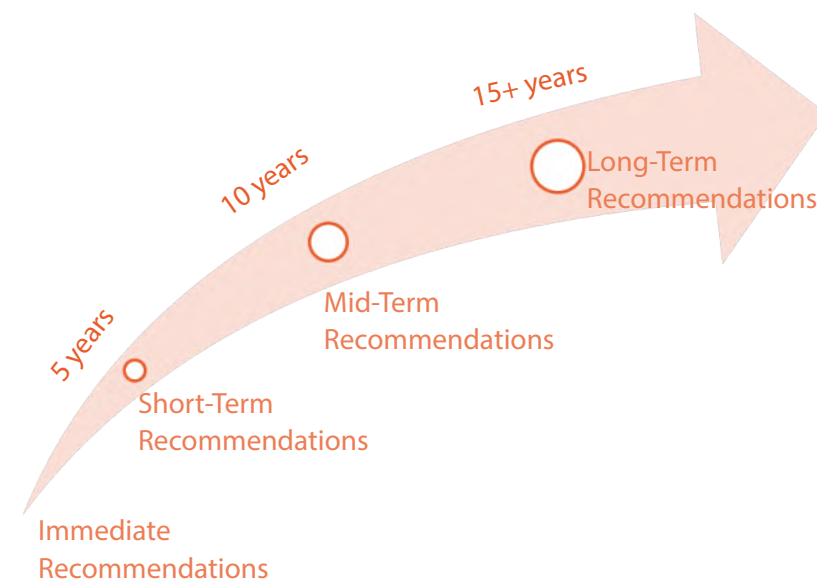
### Partnerships:

Intergovernmental cooperation has become more important as each jurisdiction struggles with increased service demands and limited resources. Shared concerns cut across jurisdictional boundaries and affect many communities and the metro area overall. Frequently, the actions, or inactions, of one jurisdiction can have a tremendous impact on others. Increasingly, the public and local officials are becoming more aware of the widespread, rather than localized, ramifications of individual community decisions on finances, service delivery, and quality of life. Watersheds and ecosystems,

economic development efforts, housing, infrastructure, and transportation improvements all cross community borders, impacting not only Charleston, but the county and surrounding region. Charleston’s economic health and that of its metropolitan area are also inherently connected, meaning the success of one is largely dependent on, and responsible for, the success of all.

### Promotion/Programmatic:

- **Economic Incentives.** Based on the plan, economic development initiatives can be developed or refined to achieve specific implementation goals. For example, incentives could encourage employers or businesses to locate on targeted redevelopment sites. Preferred infill and redevelopment sites should include areas that can be most efficiently served by existing infrastructure and have the greatest potential to stimulate investment on nearby properties.
- **Funding.** Plan implementation will require adequate funding from current revenue sources, a new dedicated funding source, state and federal grants, or public/private sector partnerships. Annual appropriations and capital improvement funds should use plan recommendations as a factor in setting priorities.



Regulatory Actions - Immediate Implementation			Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action				
R1	Housing	Develop infill guidelines (brochure with sample sketches and photographs) and ordinance standards to promote new houses that complement the design of homes in that neighborhood (i.e. new homes with modern amenities but that look like they are part of the neighborhood)	✓			
R2	Housing	Continue to use property maintenance inspections so rental units are safe and well maintained but consider a more aggressive system of inspections and awards/publicity for the "highest level" buildings or landlords (to use in marketing and potentially at a higher rental rate)	✓			
R3	Land Use	Gradually adjust (reduce) the amount of commercially zoned land based on location, character, market demand and other factors				
R3a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow non-commercial uses in select commercially zoned areas (such as multiple-family residential), have CURA target acquisition of outdated commercial properties and then rezone them for a more appropriate non-commercial use</li> </ul>	✓			
R3b		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the zoning ordinance to promote a transition of non-conforming uses within buildings that are worth saving into uses that are more compatible with the surrounding area and would preserve the integrity of the historic building</li> </ul>				
R4	Land Use	Create new form-based districts for areas formerly and currently under CURA design review (Main Streets and Downtown) and MacCorkle Avenue in Kanawha City (see Zoning Recommendations in this chapter)	✓			
R5	Land Use	Create a new rural residential district (see Zoning Recommendations in this chapter)	✓			
R6	Health	Allow mobile farmers markets or fresh food vendor carts to locate in underserved areas or food deserts				
R7	Site design	Add incentives for sustainable landscaping and hardscaping (native plants, LID, pervious pavers where practical)	✓			
R8	Site design	Upgrade landscaping requirements along MacCorkle	✓	✓		
R9	Site design	Refresh sign regulations for sign types and design that complement the character of particular parts of the city	✓			
R10	Housing	Modify the Rental Registration Ordinance inspection selection so that problem areas are targeted more frequently for random inspections	✓			
R11	Historic Preservation	Consider design review/zoning overlay zones for each Historic District in the city	✓		✓	
R12	Historic Preservation	Consider a Delay Demolition Ordinance to protect historic structures from being destroyed by absentee and/or speculative property owners			✓	
R13	Land Use	Prepare a subarea study for the Bigley/Pennsylvania area sandwiched between the Elk River and I-77 to resolve land use and zoning conflicts	✓			
R14	Land Use	Update zoning map with a comprehensive rezoning to implement land use recommendations of plan where future land use is different than current zoning	✓			
R15	Economic	Review, assess, and adjust city ordinances to support live/work units (flexible mixture of uses) and business incubators (flexible short-term commercial space)	✓			
R16	Green	Support use of renewable energy technologies on single-family homes, businesses and institutions such as solar panels and small wind energy units	✓			
R17	Infrastructure	Apply the city's Stormwater Manual with Low Impact Development (LID) guidelines design of for both private development and public infrastructure projects		✓		
R18	Non-motorized	Require bike racks for certain new, non-single family developments that may attract bicyclists like restaurants, shopping centers		✓		
R19	Non-motorized	Add standards to ensure safe pedestrian routes and walks are provided on sites including parking lots and connections from building entrances to sidewalks for new construction and major expansions		✓		
R20	Streets	Ease pedestrian crossings and reduce traffic speeds at key crossings with design elements like wide crosswalks, "yield to pedestrian" signs and curb bump outs by integrating these as standard design practice for city street projects where pedestrians are present	✓	✓		
R21	Streets	Enact regulations through site plan review for the location of access points with minimum standards for spacing from signalized intersections, adequate sight distance near hills/curves, minimum offsets from access points across the street and spacing from other driveways (i.e. Access Management). This should include provisions to gradually reduce/reconfigure existing commercial driveways that are not well spaced and therefore have the most potential to impact intersection operations and safety		✓		
R22	Technology	Convert city's code of ordinances and application forms to be web-friendly and interactive, coordinated with city's new web-integrated GIS system		✓		
R23	Greenspace	Expand existing conservation guidelines to further manage the development of sensitive or important environmental areas (floodplains, steep slopes, woodlands etc).			✓	
R24	Greenspace	To preserve the vistas and views both to and from the hills, revise development requirements for building height, siting and grading in key locations to preserve the natural slopes and woods to the greatest degree practical (this could involve placement of posts that identify the corners and height of buildings to better visualize their impact on views)			✓	
R25	Greenspace	Require provision of green space or a plaza area with amenities as part of any major development - whether it is provided within the building setback area along the streets, interior courtyards, green parking spaces			✓	✓
R26	Site Design	Parking lots should be well illuminated, signed and nicely landscaped with green parking aisles with opportunities for stormwater management.			✓	✓

Capital Improvement Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
<b>Immediate Actions to be Accomplished by 2015</b>								
C1	Non-motorized	Enhance pedestrian convenience and safety with more significant pedestrian crosswalks (curb bumpouts to reduce crossing distance, wider crosswalk markings, "yield to pedestrian, min fine" signs) where crossing is difficult (e.g. Kanawha City hospital, Magic Island)	▶	Kanawha County, IS Department, City Departments		✓		
C2	Non-motorized	Convert Virginia and Quarrier streets into "Bikeways" to improve safety and attractiveness for bicyclists (share the road signs, sharrow pavement markings and traffic calming measures - see page X)	▶	Land Trust, Traffic Engin		✓		✓
C3	Non-motorized	Improve Kanawha Boulevard with two-way separated bikeway, aesthetic amenities, and mid-block pedestrian crossings along both sides of the downtown, with "share the road" sharrows in the downtown area (see subarea plan)		Dept. of Highways, City Engin, Traffic Engin, Planning Depart				
C3a		• Install two-way separated bikeway from Patrick Street to Magic Island as part of rail to trail grant	▶			✓		✓
C3b		• Improve pedestrian crossings and bike sharrows along Kanawha Boulevard near downtown	▶▶					
C3c		• Evaluate bicycle options east of downtown	▶▶▶					
<b>Short-Term Actions to be Accomplished by 2018</b>								
C4	Non-motorized	Provide key connections and traffic calming measures (as shown on Map x) such as Greenbrier to Washington Street, across Bridge Road at the commercial district at the top of the hill	▶▶	CHLC, Taffic Engin, So Hills Neighborhood Assoc		✓		
C5	Non-motorized	Begin to add on-street bicycle parking to replace select on-street parking spaces in the downtown and convert at least one first floor parking space in each parking deck to a well signed bike rack zone	▶▶	Parking Authority		✓		✓
C6	Streets	Supplement existing wayfinding sign system to identify key gateways to help direct travelers to and around neighborhood commercial districts, especially as redevelopment projects are implemented as described in this plan	▶▶	Wayfinding Commission, Neighborhood/ Business Organizations	✓	✓		
C7	Streets	Evaluate changes to select one-way streets where the volumes could be accommodated within the existing curb width to make traffic speeds more compatible with the desired, walkable neighborhood character	▶▶	Traffic Engin, Planning Dept., RIC		✓		
C7a		• City engineer to select an initial one-way pair for further study, data collection, and recommendations (e.g. Randolph and Virginia)						
C7b		• RIC to lead an analysis of alternatives of Patrick Street/Iowa one-way loop						
C8	Streets	Parking should be identified with the comprehensive signage and wayfinding system including directions to parking structures as well as technology to give motorists more information on available parking.	▶▶	Wayfinding Commission, parking lot/ garage owners		✓		✓
C9	Technology	Replicate East End's Wi-Fi program elsewhere in city as technology and funding permits	▶▶	City, DMA, West Side Main Street		✓		
C10	Technology	Continue upgrades to a consistent GIS system	▶▶	City IS, each dept., Kanawha County		✓		
C10a		• Gather existing data and maps from each department						
C10b		• Work with the County on the creation of a parcel shapefile						
C10c		• Convert existing CAD files to GIS shapefiles						
C11	Transit	Ensure sidewalk connections to, and a paved pad, at bus stops	▶▶	City, KRTA		✓		
C11a		• Use GIS system to map bus stops and compare to sidewalks						
C11b		• Identify highest board/alighting stops with out sidewalks						
C11c		• Gradually improve stops						

Capital Improvement Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
<b>Mid-Term Actions to be Accomplished by 2025</b>								
C12	Site design	Work with West Virginia Department of Highways to add smaller, more decorative lighting along MacCorkle and Kanawha	▶▶▶	KCCA, WVDOH	✓			
C13	Technology	Install Intelligent Sign Systems for incidents, events, parking availability	▶▶▶	Dept. of Highways		✓		✓
C14	Non-motorized	Upgrade intersections so pedestrian crossings meet ADA standards and replace pedestrian signals with countdown system at higher volume locations	▶▶▶	Public Works, City Engin				
C14a		• Adopt as standard practice for intersection design projects				✓		
C14b		• Identify two to three key locations each year; begin with downtown but also include some intersections on the West Side, East End, and Kanawha City on a rotating basis						
C15	Non-motorized	Designate a percentage of street funds for pedestrians/bicycles	▶▶▶	City Engineering		✓		
C16	Non-motorized	Extend Ruffner Walk south to provide a pedestrian connection between the neighborhood and the commercial corridor	▶▶▶	City Engin, Planning Dept	✓	✓		
C17	Safety	Implement the recommendations of the recent fire dept evaluation including relocation of fire stations to provide more consistent response times throughout the city, promote potential insurance savings	▶▶▶	Fire Department			✓	
C18	Site Design	Increase lighting for cars and pedestrians along city streets including maintenance and repair of existing lights and installation of new lights along streets and in public areas currently below light level guidelines	▶▶▶	Traffic Engin		✓	✓	
C19	Streets	Explore the feasibility of 2-way conversion of select 1-way pairs within Downtown for better and faster connections as well as incentives for first floor commercial spaces or to make those streets more pedestrian and bicycle friendly	▶▶▶	Planning Dept., City Engin, Traffic Engin		✓		✓
C20	Public Improvements	Promote design solutions that creatively mask the facades of the parking garages - screens, architectural features, etc.	▶▶▶	Planning Depart				✓

Capital Improvement Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
<b>Long-term/Ongoing Actions to be Evaluated Annually</b>								
C21	Streets	Improve the gateway to and from the airport with better wayfinding signs, lighting and other distinguishing streetscape elements.	▶→→	Wayfinding Commission, Traffic Engin		✓		
C22	Streets	Create gateway treatments at key entrance points into the city	▶→→	Wayfinding Commission		✓	✓	
C22a		• Solicit designs for public art, enhanced streetscape treatments, signage, and greenspace						
C23	Streets	Incorporate streetscape and street tree planting as part of street and underground construction projects	▶→→	Public Works		✓		
C24	Community Services	Continue to expand the recycling system to provide separate recycling receptacles alongside trash receptacles in public places and along streets	▶→→	Sanitary Board, Main St. Assns.	✓	✓		
C25	Infrastructure	Implement the recommendations of the Sanitary Board to gradually separate the sanitary and storm sewers per EPA requirements	▶→→	CSB		✓		
C26	Infrastructure	Rehabilitate aged water lines downtown	▶→→	WV American Water		✓		✓
C27	Non-motorized	Improve bike and pedestrian connections though acquisition of property (off road connections) and along streets throughout the city particularly to connect open spaces, activity centers (schools, places of public assembly, parks, etc.)	▶→→	Land Trust, Keys 4 Healthy Kids, City, State Safe Routes to School program		✓		
C27a		• Identify key connections working with schools etc.						
C27b		• Audit the key routes and identify improvements						
C27c		• Securing funding source						
C28	Non-motorized	Establish an annual sidewalk maintenance and priority installation program, with initial focus on main routes to elementary schools		Public Works, City Engin		✓		
C28a		• Inventory sidewalks for gaps and conditions						
C28b		• Funding? Educate property owners on their responsibilities?						
C28c		• Each year identify a priority project						
C29	Non-motorized	Improve connections between the University of Charleston, downtown, and Laidley Field	▶→→	Univ Chas, City, State		✓		
C29a		• Evaluate non-motorized options across existing bridges	▶▶					
C30	Site Design	Bury overhead powerlines when roads are reconstructed where practical	▶→→	City Engin, Public Works		✓	✓	
C31	Parks/Rec	Create more accessible and usable park space along the Kanawha River	▶→→	Riverfront Commit, City Engin				
C31a		• on the south bank	▶▶					
C31b		• Near Patrick Street	▶▶▶					
C31c		• Streetscape and green connection along major north south corridors from Downtown will terminate in public viewing areas and vistas on the banks that will help create a pleasant visual and physical connection from Downtown to riverfront. The canopies adjacent to Haddad Park are great examples and some form of the same overlook treatments should be replicated in other viewing areas to create an unifying theme along the riverfront	▶▶▶				✓	✓
C31d		• Create mini parks and public viewing opportunities along Kanawha and Elk riverfronts that will help coalesce the riverfront greenway	▶▶▶					
C31e		• Overlooks proposed in the Riverfront Plan	▶→→					
C32	Sustainability	Explore lighting technologies, such as induction and LED lighting (new and retrofits), and timing systems for municipal energy, cost and labor savings	▶→→	Traffic Engin			✓	
C33	Sustainability	Strive for city building and renovation projects to meet green buildings standards (such as LEED) that provide long term payback on investment	▶→→	City Manager			✓	
C34	Sustainability	Explore and pursue opportunities for using alternative fuels and hybrid or electric vehicles in city fleets	▶→→	Public Works, Fleet Maintenance		✓	✓	

Programmatic/Policy/Partnership/Procedure Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
<b>Immediate Actions to be Accomplished by 2015</b>								
P1	Land Use	Formalize a program to inventory and prioritize rehabilitation of viable blighted structures and if not suitable for rehab, demolition		CURA				
P1a		• Survey buildings, first in CURA districts, and identify key opportunities and priorities		CURA				
P1b		• Enact a vacant and abandoned building registration		City	✓			
P1c		• Streamline the decision-making process for blighted and foreclosed properties to promote conversion to reuse or hold as green space until an appropriate use is found in the future		CURA				
<b>Short-Term Actions to be Accomplished by 2018</b>								
P2	Land Use	Explore temporary uses for vacant property such as infill development, community gardens, neighborhood open space, and use of the land bank for parcels where redevelopment is more likely long-term	▶▶	CURA	✓			
P2a		• Explore the creation of a land bank by inventorying available land, matching parcels with potential buyers and future developers, and identifying additional strategies to incentivize and publicize the program		CURA	✓			
P3	Housing	Promote the development of a variety of new rental housing units to appeal to young adults and empty nesters near the downtown and East End and West Side Main Street districts.	▶▶	City, CURA, CAA	✓			✓
P3a		• Coordinate with developers to create demonstration projects for attached and detached residential units on targeted urban blocks						
P4	Sustainability	Create informational and incentive programs to encourage green buildings (i.e. LEED)	▶▶	City			✓	
P5	Green	Provide priority parking for alternative (natural gas) vehicles in city parking structures, lots, and on-street	▶▶	Parking, Public Works		✓	✓	
P5a		• Pilot project on select highly visible on-street block providing free metered spaces during business hours for qualified vehicles (such as natural gas or electric with charging station)		Parking				
P5b		• Monitor frequency of use, if successful, then expand program to additional locations						
P6	Streets	For neighborhood streets where traffic speeds for most cars are documented to be more than 5 mph over posted speeds, evaluate traffic calming measures (like speed tables, striping to distinguish on-street parking from travel lanes, curb bumpouts and crosswalks at intersections, etc., see page XXX)	▶▶	Public Works, Traffic Engin				
P6a		• City engineering and police to each identify a key staff person to work together to develop a neighborhood traffic calming program, including a process to respond to neighborhoods, collect data, etc.		Traffic Engin, Police Dept	✓	✓		
P6b		• When city staff or neighborhoods identify a potential problem, the traffic calming process would be initiated for the city's team to work with representatives of the neighborhood to collect data and agree upon appropriate response and funding	▶→→	Traffic Engin, Police Dept				
P7	Transit	City to work with transit agency, employers, and non-profits that have shuttle systems to increase transit ridership and service to those that most depend upon it (seniors, etc)	▶▶	KVTA		✓		
P8	Transportation	Implement car-sharing and bike-sharing programs as needs arise	▶▶	City		✓		✓
P9	Community Services	Continue to enhance the recycling program so it is competitive with programs from other capital cities and cities of Charleston's size	▶▶	Refuse Depart, Kan Solid Waste Authority		✓		
P9a		• Meet annually with industry representatives on the "best practices" and how to refine the recycling system	▶					
P10	Education	Formalize a city/university Joint Task Force (Town & Gown) to develop and implement shared initiatives, coordinate event planning and help facilitate joint ventures between the city and the area's academic and cultural institutions	▶▶	City, Univ Charleston			✓	
P11	Education	Establish a regular communication channel between the City, the Kanawha County School District and private schools to coordinate initiatives and leverage resources (such as use outside of school hours for public events, recreational opportunities)	▶▶	School District			✓	
P12	Health	Offer guidance on ways to improve residents' access to healthy foods and physical activity opportunities through the provision of a toolkit with resources on developing partnerships, engaging community members, assessing local policies and environments, advocacy, and strategic planning	▶▶	Keys 4 Healthy Kids			✓	
P13	Parks/Rec	Develop an overall park plan with recommendations for improvements and replacement of facilities etc with a timeframe and priorities (including a capital improvement budget)	▶▶	Parks/Rec, Land Trust			✓	

Programmatic/Policy/Partnership/Procedure Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
P14	Greenspace	Coordinate between Land Trust, CURA, and Parks/Rec department to create a greenway plan to achieve a complete, thorough network of accessible greenways throughout the city	▶▶	Land Trust, Parks/Rec, Beautification Commission, CURA			✓	
P14a		• Inventory existing resources and future opportunities						
P14b		• Identify and create connections						
P14c		• Establish a phasing plan for improvements and a dedicated funding source, which could start with a grant						
<b>Mid-Term Actions to be Accomplished by 2025</b>								
P15	Housing	Work with the institutions which can provide resources/grants/funding to faculty members to purchase homes in neighborhoods near the institutions – whether it is in an adjacent neighborhood or within Downtown Charleston	▶▶▶	University, CAMC		✓		
P15a		• Develop incentives						
P15b		• Promotional materials						
P15c		• Select realtors to match faculty/students to targeted areas						
P16	Art/Culture	Conduct a citywide cultural resources survey to assess unmet demand of cultural and entertainment activities	▶▶▶	Clay Center			✓	
P17	Sustainability	Create an Environmental Interpretive Signage Program with public/private partners to showcase the city's progress and to raise community awareness of environmental cleanup, low-impact design, and green infrastructure	▶▶▶	Land Trust, Wayfinding Commission			✓	
P18	Sustainability	Develop, adopt, and maintain a sustainability action plan that tracks progress toward objectives	▶▶▶	City			✓	
P19	Sustainability	Develop, adopt, and maintain an energy conservation program with reduction targets and progress monitoring, using public buildings and facilities (rehab projects or new construction) as a model for energy reduction practices	▶▶▶	City			✓	

Programmatic/Policy/Partnership/Procedure Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
<b>Long-term/Ongoing Actions to be Evaluated Annually</b>								
P20	Land Use	Encourage conversion of vacant retail space (which has an over-supply) to other appropriate uses such as residential or office in areas where retail use is no longer viable	▶→→	Main Street associations	✓			
P21	Land Use	Develop a commercial business owner's Reuse Guide that focuses cost effective ideas, techniques and guidelines for renovation and reuse of historic commercial assets.	▶▶	CHLC	✓			
P22	Housing	Continue programs that encourage responsible homeownership while providing affordable, but quality, rental options	▶→→	MOEDC				
P22a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and partner with non-profits to strengthen and expand current programs that provide hands-on education and training for home maintenance and repairs</li> </ul>	▶▶	Habitat, RCCR, Hope Development Corp	✓			
P23	Housing	Ensure a mix of housing types across neighborhoods to accommodate various income levels so residents can remain in the city or their neighborhood as needs change	▶→→	Planning Depart, MOECD	✓			
P24	Land Use	Encourage local services and retail within neighborhood walking distance	▶→→	City	✓			
P25	Historic Preservation	Build public awareness of the city's historic resources	▶→→	CHLC				
P25a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct educational forums for property owners, financial institutions, real estate professionals, and developers explaining the benefits available for the rehabilitation of historic properties, commercial and homeowner-occupied</li> </ul>					✓	
P25b		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of programs to call attention to specific historic properties and neighborhoods, including published self-guided walking tours, interpretive plaques, welcome signs at neighborhood/historic district entryways, street signs indicating the existence of a historic district or specific neighborhood</li> </ul>						
P26	Historic Preservation	Continue the identification and encouragement of the preservation of historic properties and historic districts through the process of historic resource surveys and National Register designations for individual properties and historic districts	▶→→	CHLC, CURA, CAA	✓		✓	
P27	Historic Preservation	Develop an adaptive reuse program that offers development guidance, streamlined processes, reduced timeframes, and cost savings to developers looking to adapt older buildings for new uses	▶→→	City, CURA				
P27a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt Adaptive Reuse Ordinance</li> </ul>	▶	City	✓		✓	✓
P27b		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support a demonstration project to promote successful adaptive reuse</li> </ul>	▶▶	City, CAA				
P27c		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alternative building codes should be followed for adaptive reuse within existing structures</li> </ul>		Building Dept				
P28	Non-motorized	Encourage businesses to be creative with conveniently located bike parking that could relate directly to the type of business or contribute as piece of functional public art	▶→→	CAA, Public Arts Commission, Clay Center and patrons				
P28a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once a bike improvement project has been initiated, meet with businesses along the corridor to inform them of the bike facility improvement and benefits to including bike parking available by the time the project is complete; Show examples at the meeting, provide contacts for previous designers/manufacturers, and pair them at the meeting</li> </ul>		CAA, Mainstreet Associations		✓		
P29	Art/Culture	Partner with art students to create public art projects throughout the city	▶→→	colleges/ university			✓	
P30	Art/Culture	Support the recommendations of the new Public Art Plan	▶→→	City			✓	
P31	Art/Culture	Actively promote Charleston as an arts and culture destination	▶→→	City, CVB, CAA			✓	
P32	Art/Culture	Actively seek out additional cultural institutions, galleries, workshops, etc to locate in the newly-branded Cultural District	▶→→	Clay Center, East End Main Street			✓	
P33	Economic	Promote Charleston as a city that offers a range of lifestyle choices	▶→→	City	✓		✓	
P34	Economic	Continue to promote low-cost incubator space for student/professor entrepreneurs in older vacant industrial buildings, especially in the Warehouse District or along West Washington	▶→→	CAA	✓			✓
P35	Education	Promote the university's service learning program to neighborhood associations and non-profits to engage young adult volunteers	▶→→	University	✓			



Programmatic/Policy/Partnership/Procedure Actions			Priority Term	Key Players	Neighborhoods and Land use	Mobility and Infrastructure	Quality of Life	Downtown
#	Topic	Action						
P36	Education	Encourage youth volunteer programs to assist seniors with home exterior and yard maintenance	▶→→	KVSS, East End Family Resource Center, Shoenbaum			✓	
P37	Education	Encourage programs to partner seniors with school-age children for mentoring	▶→→	KVSS, East End Family Resource Center, Shoenbaum			✓	
P38	Education	Encourage higher education institutions to develop connections to high schools to provide mentoring programs, scholarships to low-income students in the city	▶→→	School District, university, colleges			✓	
P39	Education	Promote a program where business school students can offer assistance to local businesses on their finances, developing business plans, etc. and architecture students provide design services	▶→→	nonprofits, university			✓	
P40	Education	Coordinate school expansions and improvements with city zoning and infrastructure improvements	▶→→	School District			✓	
P41	Safety	Employ CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles	▶→→	City				
P41a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain clean parks and green spaces and trails, immediately removing litter, graffiti and undesirable conditions. Citizens can be trained and assigned specific roles on committees or clean-up teams to ensure compliance with principles.</li> </ul>					✓	
P41b		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Modify the built environment to help reduce crime and improve the perception of safety - examples include trimmed trees and shrubs, clearly defined walkways, proper fencing, and adequate lighting</li> </ul>						
P42	Safety	Encourage neighborhoods to develop their own safety and security priorities which can and should be addressed by citizens and officers alike	▶→→	Neighborhood Organizations, Police	✓		✓	
P43	Safety	Proactively engage communities in the fight against crime through both traditional means such as Neighborhood Watch and non-traditional means such as the increased use of technology and social media to inform and educate the public about the roles and responsibilities.	▶→→	Neighborhood Organizations, Police	✓		✓	
P44	Sustainability	Promote use of energy efficient lighting	▶→→	CAA, Public Works			✓	
P45	Greenspace	Pursue the acquisition or protection of sensitive environmental areas through a range of techniques, such as conservation easements, deed restrictions, transfer of development rights, land conservancy donations, acquisition by foundations or public bodies, or developer incentives	▶→→	Land Trust			✓	
P45a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start with identifying key parcels or general areas to preserve</li> </ul>						
P46	Health	Improve access to fresh food	▶→→	City, CAA				
P46a		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote using food from local sources in schools and other institutions</li> </ul>		Kanawha Co Board of Ed			✓	
P46b		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support community gardening, additional smaller scale farmer's markets that could rotate to different locations, use of vacant commercial buildings on the Westside for food vendors, and convenient grocery stores</li> </ul>		City, CAA, Main Street Programs				
P46c		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mandate and implement nutrition standards and healthy vending policies for food and beverages available, including drinking water, at City-sponsored events and City buildings, parks, and recreation centers</li> </ul>						
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer incentives such as endorsement or recognition for restaurants, pharmacies, and convenience stores near schools and parks that offer healthy snacks, foods, and beverages.</li> </ul>		City, Kanawha Co Board of Ed, CAA, Main Street Programs				
P47	Parks/Rec	Increase programming of outdoor spaces to promote civic life and to support the health of nearby services and businesses	▶→→	City			✓	
P48	Sustainability	Promote educational awareness regarding the environmental, financial and social benefits of implementing green practices; utilize local green initiative successes such as the WVDEP building and the new Edgewood Elementary School	▶→→	City			✓	✓

