Neighborhood Revitalization

5.0 NEIGHBORHOOD

Figure 5.1a Sibley Mill and King Mill with the Confederate powder works stack.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Investment in the Harrisburg neighborhood by new businesses and new homeowners has been deterred by the neighborhood's high crime rates, poor housing conditions and inaccessibility to the nearby urban amenities of downtown Augusta. This chapter provides recommendations for the Harrisburg neighborhood that could lead to reinvestment and, ultimately, revitalization.

Two main strategies are the focus of recommendations within this chapter. First are catalytic redevelopment projects. These are projects that must be addressed immediately, as they are vital to neighborhood revitalization efforts: the area surrounding the John Milledge Elementary School on Eve Street, the area around Chafee Avenue and the Kroger grocery store, and the properties along Walton Way, especially across from the historic Tubman Jr. High School. These are complex projects that need to be started now, although completion may take several years.

Second are lot-by-lot and block-by-block strategies. These are small scale projects that can be undertaken by individuals, neighbors, neighborhood organizations, the City and many other partners. They should begin immediately and show progress quickly at a lot-by-lot and block-by-block scale.

5.1.1 NEIGHBORHOOD STRENGTHS

Harrisburg has four key assets that provide advantages for future residents and businesses. These assets include a rich history, a good neighborhood framework of blocks and streets, a wide range of housing types attractive to a diverse population, and extraordinary neighborhood

Harrisburg, Augusta
300'x630' - 330'x1000'

Asheville, North Carolina
230'x260' - 360'x660'

Savannah, Georgia
330'x100'

Chattanooga, Tennessee
300'x450'

Charleston, South Carolina
390'x500' - 520'x1000'

Atlanta, Georgia
200'x200' - 420'x400'

Figure 5.1b Block Structure Comparison

amenities, including the Georgia Health Sciences University, the Augusta Canal and Olmstead Park.

RICH HISTORY

Harrisburg is a 200 year old historic mill village. The neighborhood grew as mill workers occupied land near the Sibley and King Mills in the mid-1800s through the early 1900s. During the Civil War the Confederate army utilized the mill sites to produce gun powder. The Confederate powder works stack remains at the site of the Sibley Mill (refer to Figure 5.1a). These two textile mills closed in the early 2000s but remain as grand relics reminding viewers of Harrisburg's history. The Augusta Canal Authority, who currnetly owns the mills, has future plans to redevelop the mills into mixed-use developments. The Sibley Mill is awaiting environmental remediation before any redevelopment plans can be made and the King Mill has been leased to Ohio-based Standard Textile and remains in operation. The Augusta Canal, which was originally built to power the mills, has become an urban park, with a range of recreational activities on canal-side trails and on the water itself

FRAMEWORK OF STREETS AND BLOCKS

Harrisburg's street network dates to its original development in the mid-1800s and early 1900s. When the street framework was originally laid out, walking was the primary means of transportation and only later were the streets utilized by the automobile. Harrisburg's historic street network remains walkable and well connected, allowing pedestrians, automobiles, and cyclists to easily access all parts of the community. Figure 5.1b compares the Harrisburg neighborhood block structure with some of the most livable cities in the southeast. Clearly, Harrisburg's street network is an important asset and must be protected and enhanced.

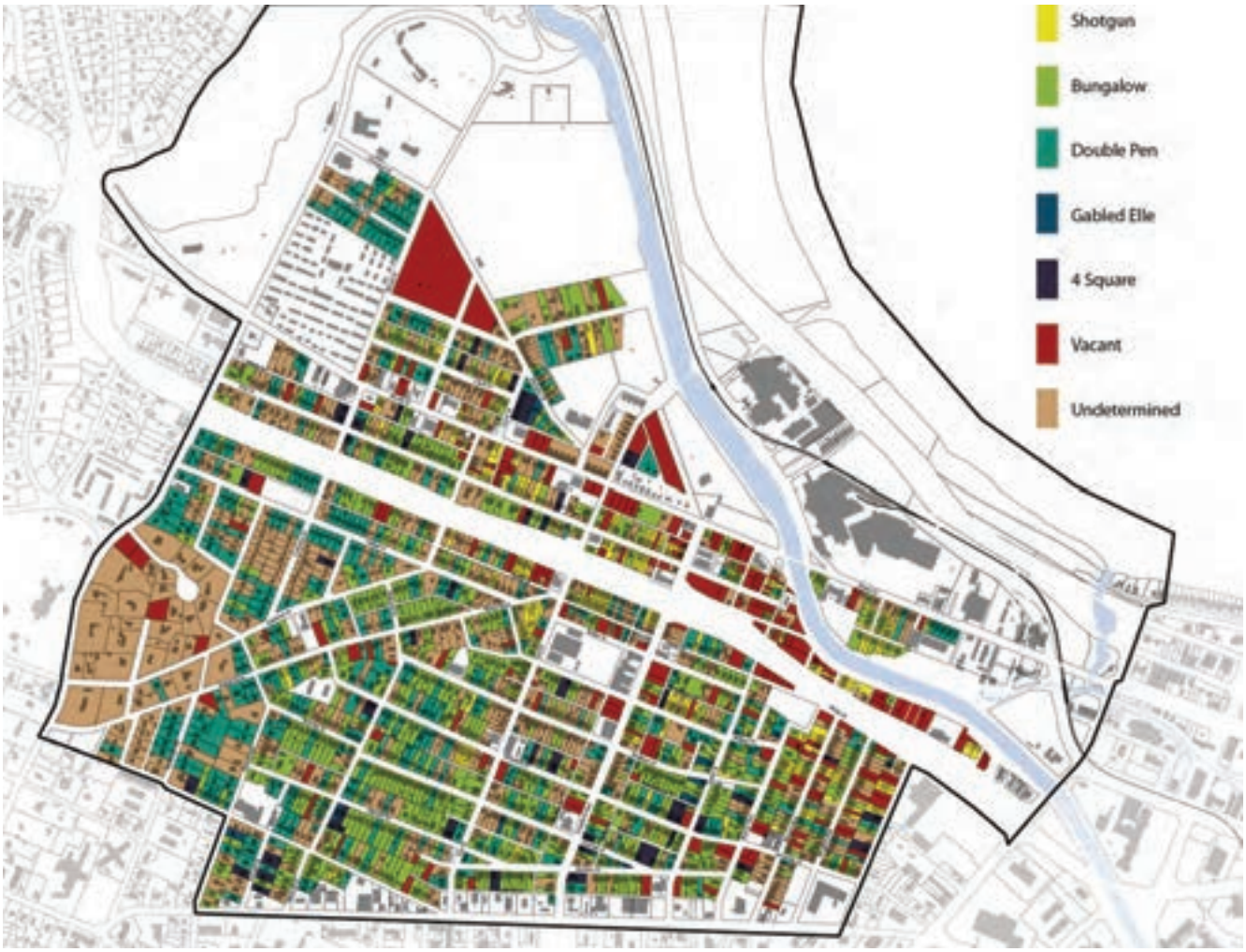


Figure 5.1c Diversity of Housing Types

Shotgun

Bungalow

Figure 5.1d Neighborhood Amenities

DIVERSE HOUSING TYPES

Housing diversity is an important part of Harrisburg's identity and character. Figure 5.1c reveals the great diversity of housing types that make up Harrisburg. There are two primary housing types: the Shotgun and the Bungalow Additionally, the Double Pen and Gabled El housing types can be seen throughout Harrisburg. Not only do these differing housing types provide a unique character for the community but they also allow residents of different backgrounds and financial means to live lot-by-lot and block-by-block throughout the neighborhood. Recognizing that this housing diversity should be joined with the preservation of these housing types can help maintain the historic character of Harrisburg and provide housing options for a diverse population.

NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES

Harrisburg currently has access to many different neighborhood assets. Most are located within 1/2 mile of the neighborhood residents. Figure 5.1d identifies these assets. Of particular importance are public parks, the Kroc Center, the Augusta Boys and Girls Club, John Milledge Elementary School, West View Cemetery, King Mill and Sibley Mill. This is in addition to the neighborhood's close

Low Property Values

Poor Housing Conditions

High Renter Occupancy Rates

Crime

Figure 5.1e: Neighborhood Challenges

proximity to downtown, the Georgia Health Sciences University, the Augusta Canal, and the Savannah River.

5.1.2 NEIGHBORHOOD CHALLENGES

Figure 5.1f: Neighborhood Condition Synthesis is a summary of the challenges identified within the Harrisburg neighborhood. These challenges, as discussed in Chapter 3, include low property values, poor housing conditions, high renter occupancy rates, and high crime (refer to Figure 5.1e). These four challenges plus parcel vacancy information were combined to create the Neighborhood Condition Synthesis map (refer to Figure 5.1f). Five categories were created from the overlay of challenges to understand the different levels of need for each parcel. The categories and their criteria include the following:

Figure 5.1f: Neighborhood Condition Synthesis

1. Undeveloped Parcels:

Parcels that have either never been developed or contained a building that was recently demolished. These properties may already be assets to the neighborhood, cared for by neighbors or owners, or they may be overgrown and in need of attention.

2. Most Challenged Properties:

This is a combination of very poor housing conditions, including vacant and boarded properties; renter-occupied homes; and lower than median property values. These properties present severe problems to the neighborhood.

3. Good Property Sites:

This is a combination of middle range housing condition, owner occupancy, and higher than median property values. These properties need major maintenance and minor rehabilitation. The key challenge is to keep them from declining further.

4. Best Property Sites:

This is a combination of the best housing condition rating, owner occupancy, and higher than median property values. These properties are prime assets for the neighborhood and create stability and value for surrounding properties.

5. Owner-Occupied Properties in Need of Major Rehabilitation:

This is a combination of owner-occupied and the lowest category of housing condition. These are the most critical properties in Harrisburg because if the owners leave, they will probably not remain in the neighborhood, their houses will not be rehabilitated, and they almost certainly will be converted to rental.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ANALYSIS

In summary, the western portion of the neighborhood is in better condition than the east. There are three areas of major concern: First, the properties and streets around the new elementary school; second, the eastern boundary of the neighborhood along Chafee Avenue and the rear of the Kroger grocery store; third, the area along the Calhoun Expressway and the Augusta Canal, between Crawford Street and 15th Street.

These lot-by-lot neighborhood conditions were then summarized into a block-by-block analysis where strategies for improvements of entire blocks are needed. Figure 5.1g shows three tiers of block frontages using the same criteria as the lot-by-lot analysis.

Tier 1 Blocks: Tier 1 Blocks face the most challenges and need coordinated actions including several partners, acting with the participation of the neighborhood. Two areas are of special concern: the blocks around the new John Milledge Elementary School and the blocks immediately around the Kroger grocery store. Also of critical concern are areas near the Augusta Canal and Calhoun Expressway and the blocks near Olmstead Homes, the West View Cemetery and the GreenJackets baseball stadium.

Tier 2 Blocks: Tier 2 Blocks are moderate challenges. The most appropriate actions will be taken by individual property owners and renters along a block face working together, as well as initiatives undertaken by the neighborhood as a whole. Whereas Tier 1 Blocks require coordinated outside action, Tier 2 Blocks will have a focus on actions undertaken by the neighborhood and neighborhood residents.

Tier 3 Blocks: Tier 3 Blocks are in good condition and need to be maintained and protected through the initiatives of the block residents, both owners and renters.

5.2 STRATEGIES

Two categories of neighborhood strategies are recommended: 1. Lot-by-Lot and Block-by-Block Strategies and 2. Catalytic Redevelopment Projects.

Lot-by-Lot and Block-by-Block Strategies are important to the future of Harrisburg because they require participation of the neighborhood residents. These are the kinds of improvements that can only be accomplished

Figure 5.1g: Block Conditions Map

by individual property owners and residents.

Catalytic Redevelopment Projects will require more partner involvement, cost more, and require more time to complete. However, they are also critical to the future of the neighborhood. The combination of Catalytic Redevelopment and smaller scale Lot-by-Lot and Block-by-Block Strategies present the best chance for reclaiming Harrisburg. The critical challenges must be met by both individual residents, the neighborhood acting in its own interest, and partnerships with other organizations and individuals.

Figure 5.3a: Most Challenged Lots

5.3 LOT-BY-LOT AND BLOCK-BY-BLOCK STRATEGIES

The set of revitalization strategies presented in this section are smaller-scale interventions which could be applied anywhere in Harrisburg, using relatively little capital, by individuals or small groups of neighborhood residents. As funding, political will, and neighborhood interest allows, these strategies can be put into action to create change at a lot-by-lot or block-by-block scale.

5.3.1 LOT-BY-LOT STRATEGIES

Lot-by-lot strategies focus on the basic unit of a neighborhood - the lot. Similar to a weak link in a chain, a neighborhood block is only as strong as its weakest lot. An abandoned lot can have a negative influence on an entire block and lead to the slow and gradual deterioration of the perceived quality, character, and safety of a block, making it vital to focus revitalization on each individual lot as needed. Figure 5.3a identifies the most challenged lots (Tier 1) and undeveloped lots.

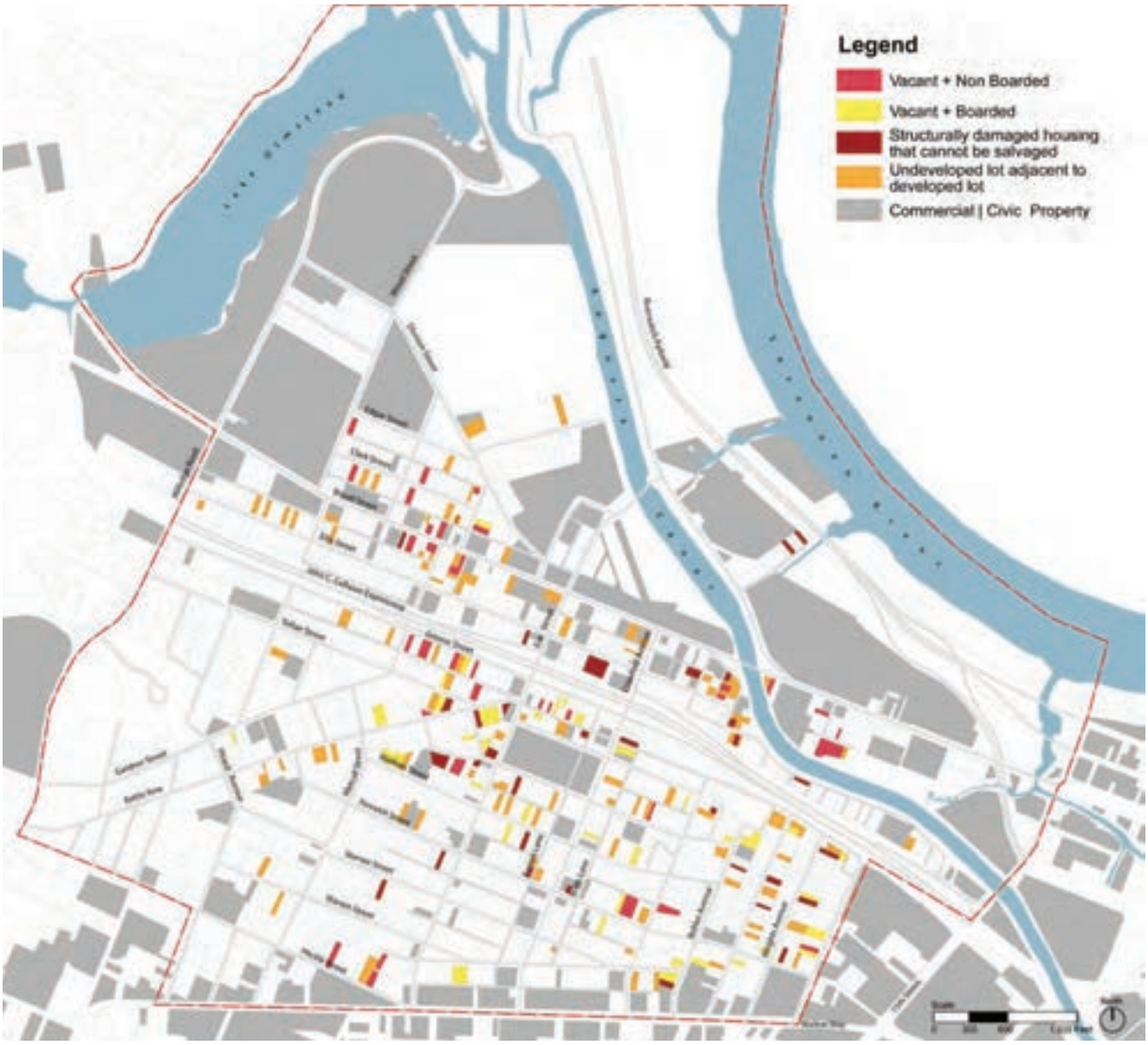


Figure 5.3b: Lots Ideal for Lot-by-Lot Rehabilitation Strategies

Figure 5.3b further identifies the current condition at each Tier 1/undeveloped lot. These lots will need more immediate attention as they are negatively influencing entire blocks.

This section provides several approaches to revitalization at the lot scale. Harrisburg residents can work together with Augusta-Richmond County, the Augusta-Richmond County Land Bank Authority and other partner organizations to address these blighted lots. Lot-by-lot approaches include:

1: Demolish dilapidated vacant homes and clean and maintain undeveloped lots

2: Combine an undeveloped lot with an adjacent lot

3: Split an undeveloped lot with an adjacent lots

4: Plant undeveloped lots

5: Create a community garden

6: Create a block park

7: Infill

Clean and maintain undeveloped lots

ACTION 1: DEMOLISH DILAPIDATED VACANT HOMES AND CLEAN/MAINTAIN UNDEVELOPED LOTS

Vacant, dilapidated homes and undeveloped lots can become eye sores along a block if they are not demolished and the lots maintained. By simply demolishing a dilapidated, vacant home and mowing the grass on a regular basis, residents can make a substantial impact on the perceived character, safety, and value of the lot. In order to accomplish this, certain neighborhood blocks have organized themselves and scheduled biweekly lot cleaning days where they collectively mow and maintain undeveloped lots. Others have established mowing schedules where responsibilities are distributed between all the block residents and alternated in a biweekly or monthly time frame.

Combine an undeveloped lot with an adjacent lot

ACTION 2: COMBINE AN UNDEVELOPED LOT WITH AN ADJACENT LOT

Adjacent property owners can be given the option to purchase an adjacent home that is structurally damaged and cannot be salvaged, or a vacant boarded home, or an undeveloped lot and combine this undeveloped lot with their own lot. Preference should be given to owner-occupied property owners.

Split undeveloped lot with adjacent lots

ACTION 3: SPLIT UNDEVELOPED LOT WITH ADJACENT LOTS

If a structurally damaged home that cannot be salvaged, or a vacant boarded home, or an undeveloped lot is located between two developed lots, the lot could be split and each half purchased by the owners of the adjoining developed lots. Preference should be given to owner-occupied property owners.

Figure 5.3c: Lot-by-Lot Rehabilitation Actions

Plant undeveloped lot

ACTION 4: PLANT UNDEVELOPED LOT

Structurally damaged homes that cannot be salvaged, vacant boarded homes, and undeveloped lots can be transformed into an aesthetically pleasing, ornamental garden until another use is found or proposed for the site. Sunflowers, wildflowers, or other flowers could be planted on the lot to enhance its aesthetic appeal.

Create a block garden

ACTION 5: CREATE A COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community gardens have become extremely popular in communities throughout the United States and even the world. Certain municipalities have year long waiting lists for residents desiring to use portions of publicly owned land as community gardens. In some cases, the municipalities even charge a nominal fee per year for the use of portions of publicly owned land as community gardens.

Structurally damaged homes that cannot be salvaged, vacant boarded homes, and undeveloped lots can be transformed into community gardens where residents in the block are given plots to grow herbs, vegetables, fruits, flowers, etc.

Create a block park

ACTION 6: CREATE A BLOCK PARK

Structurally damaged homes that cannot be salvaged, vacant boarded homes, or undeveloped lots can be transformed into block parks. In blocks where a large neighborhood park is several blocks away, these block parks have the potential to provide recreation and social opportunities where children can safely play within close proximity to parents or guardians and block residents can gather.

The same way neighborhood parks become the recreation and social center of neighborhoods, these block parks can become the social and recreational center of neighborhood blocks.

Figure 5.3d: Lot-by-Lot Rehabilitation Actions

ACTION 7: LOT-BY-LOT INFILL HOUSING

The existing housing stock in the Harrisburg neighborhood includes a variety of detached single-family housing types with varying architectural styles. Many of these homes however, are in disrepair. As presented previously in the report, 55% of the housing stock requires maintenance; 18% of which fall into the Housing Condition 2 category which are homes that are considered to be salvageable but have moderate to severe damage.

This section proposes various in-fill strategies that can be implemented throughout the Harrisburg neighborhood and are important to the revitalization of the neighborhood. Two of these strategies incentivize property owners to invest in their properties while also allowing them the opportunity to obtain a return on their investment. Specifically, the three in-fill strategies proposed are:

- In-fill Strategy 1: Rehab and Reconstruction
- In-fill Strategy 2: For Detached Single-Family Homes
- In-fill Strategy 3: For Owners with Multiple Contiguous Properties

All infill options should respect the architectural character of the neighborhood, including housing types and architectural details. Common housing types include the Shotgun/Charleston and the Bungalow (refer to Figures 5.3e and 5.3f) Commonly observed architectural details include full-width front porches, detailed trim, and pitched roofs.

IN-FILL STRATEGY 1: REHAB AND RECONSTRUCTION

Many property owners in the Harrisburg neighborhood have already begun to rehab and reconstruct their homes. Continued emphasis should be placed on encouraging homeowners to rehab or reconstruct their homes in a manner that is consistent with the historic character of the neighborhood.

IN-FILL STRATEGY 2: FOR DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES

Typical lot depths in the Harrisburg neighborhood are relatively deep in comparison to typical residential neighborhoods. Where the average residential lot depth ranges from 80' to 120' , Harrisburg lot depths range from 150' to 175'. Homeowners can take advantage of this extra depth to add livable residential square footage to their properties. This can be done by constructing carriage homes in the rear of single-family home lots. The carriage homes can be built above garages, therefore, doubling as vehicular garages and rental units. This simple strategy has the potential to incentivize residents to invest in their home, increase the long term return potential of their properties, and stimulate development activity within the neighborhood. Additionally, carriage homes that face alleyways tend to make them more secure places as they

Figure 5.3e: Harrisburg Bungalow

Figure 5.3f: Harrisburg Shotgun

provide eyes and activity on the alley.

Figure 5.3g shows the form and location of typical residential lots and detached single-family residential homes in the Harrisburg neighborhood. As mentioned previously, most lots range in depth between 150' and 175' while the homes are typically only 40' to 50' deep. That leaves roughly 100' of excess space that can be used to introduce carriage homes.

Figure 5.3g - Existing Detached Single-Family Home Lots

Two types of residential blocks exist in the Harrisburg neighborhood that will influence the manner by which carriage homes are accessed:

- Front loaded blocks
- Alley loaded blocks

Figure 5.3h illustrates how carriage homes can be introduced into front loaded blocks while Figure 5.3j illustrates how carriage homes can be introduced to alley loaded blocks. The following pages provide guidelines for the use of carriage homes in these two block conditions.

Figure 5.3h- Proposed Carriage Homes on Front Loaded Single-Family Lots - Plan and Image

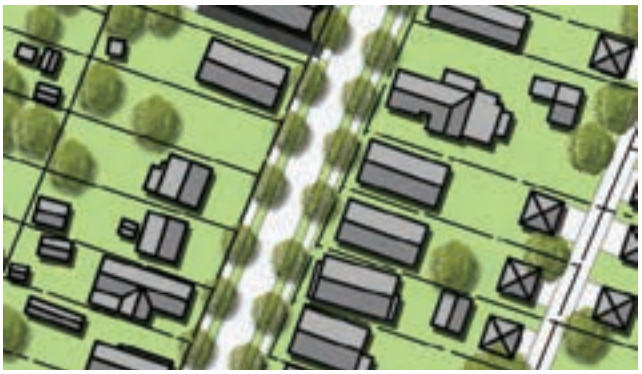


Figure 5.3j - Proposed Carriage Homes on Alley Loaded Single-Family Lots - Plan and Image

FRONT LOADED CARRIAGE HOME GUIDELINES

Various blocks in the Harrisburg neighborhood do not have alleys. Depending on individual lot widths, these particular blocks present unique opportunities for neighbors to collaborate in developing carriage homes. Following are guidelines for three different ranges of typical lot widths found in the Harrisburg neighborhood (refer to Figures 5.3k and 5.3m.

- Drive aisle to access carriage homes should be a minimum 8'-0" wide, including clearance, and should be split down the middle of lot boundary lines whenever possible.
- If the side setbacks between homes do not allow for a 8' drive aisle, neighbors can collaborate to obtain an access easement from the closest side setback that is of sufficient width for the drive aisle and create drive aisle to the respective carriage homes.
- Sufficient side and rear setbacks should be provided for carriage homes so as to not visually impact adjacent properties.

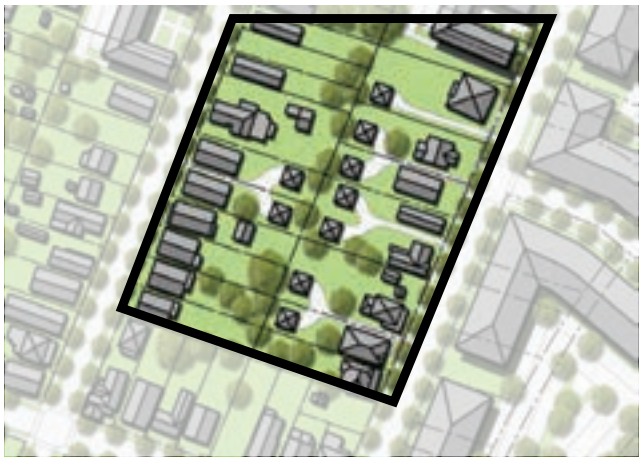


Figure 5.3k: Front Loaded Carriage Home

- Architectural style and detailing should be consistent with the character of the Harrisburg neighborhood
- Consistent with the character of the neighborhood, carriage homes should not be taller than two stories.

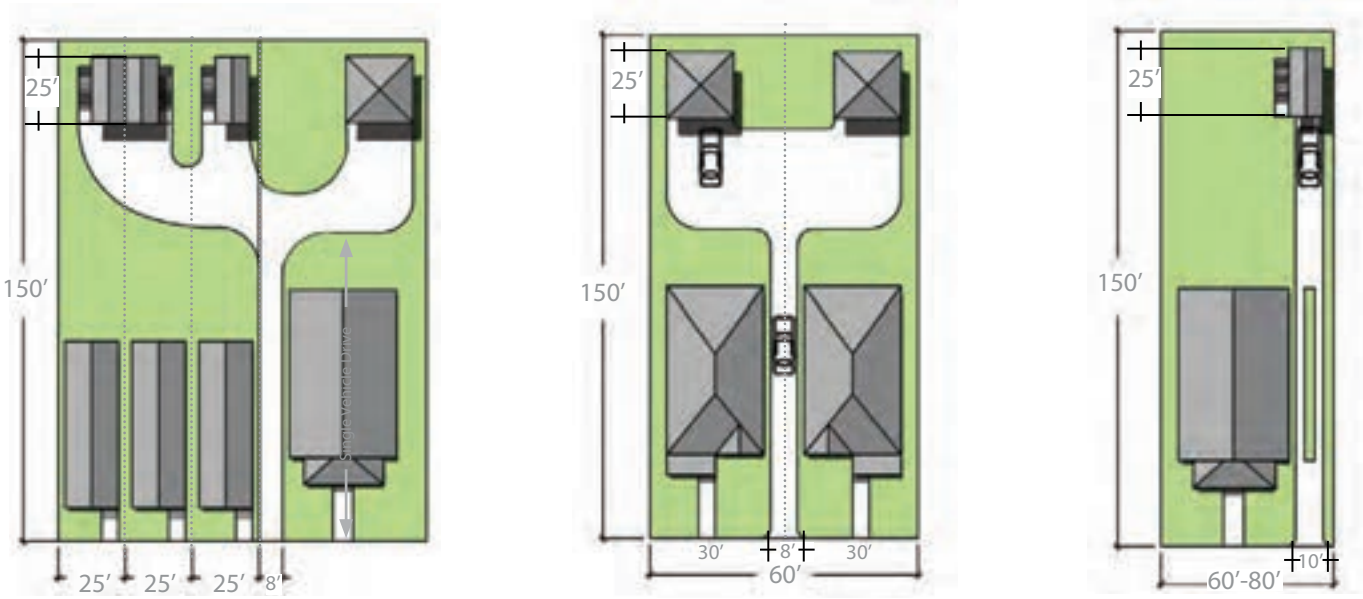


Figure 5.3m: Front Loaded Carriage Home Plan

ALLEY LOADED CARRIAGE HOME GUIDELINES

Many of the blocks in the Harrisburg neighborhood contain alleys which are ideal for accessing carriage homes. Following are guidelines for typical lot widths found in the Harrisburg neighborhood with alleys (refer to Figures 5.3n and 5.3p).

- Drive aisle to access carriage homes from the alley should be a minimum of 10' deep so as to allow a vehicle to park on the driveway without impeding flow through the alley.
- Sufficient side and rear setbacks should be provided for carriage homes so as to not visually impact adjacent properties.
- Architectural style and detailing should be consistent with the character of the Harrisburg neighborhood
- Consistent with the character of the neighborhood, carriage homes should not be taller than two stories.

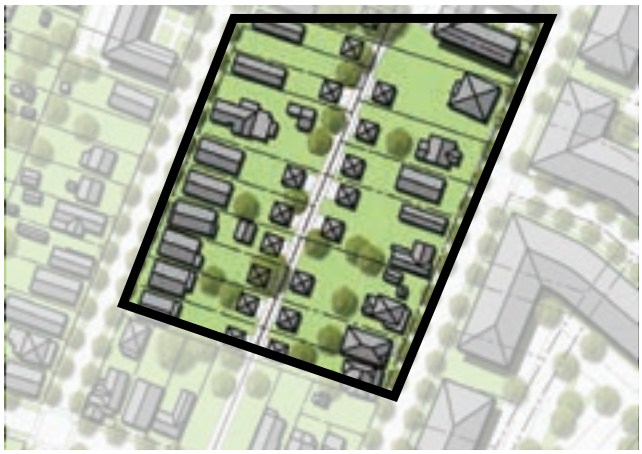


Figure 5.3n: Alley Loaded Carriage Home

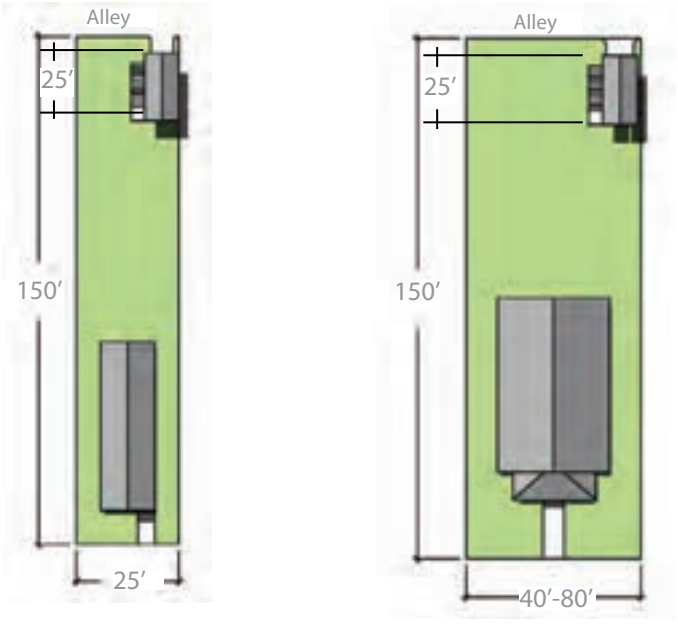


Figure 5.3p: Alley Loaded Carriage Home Plan

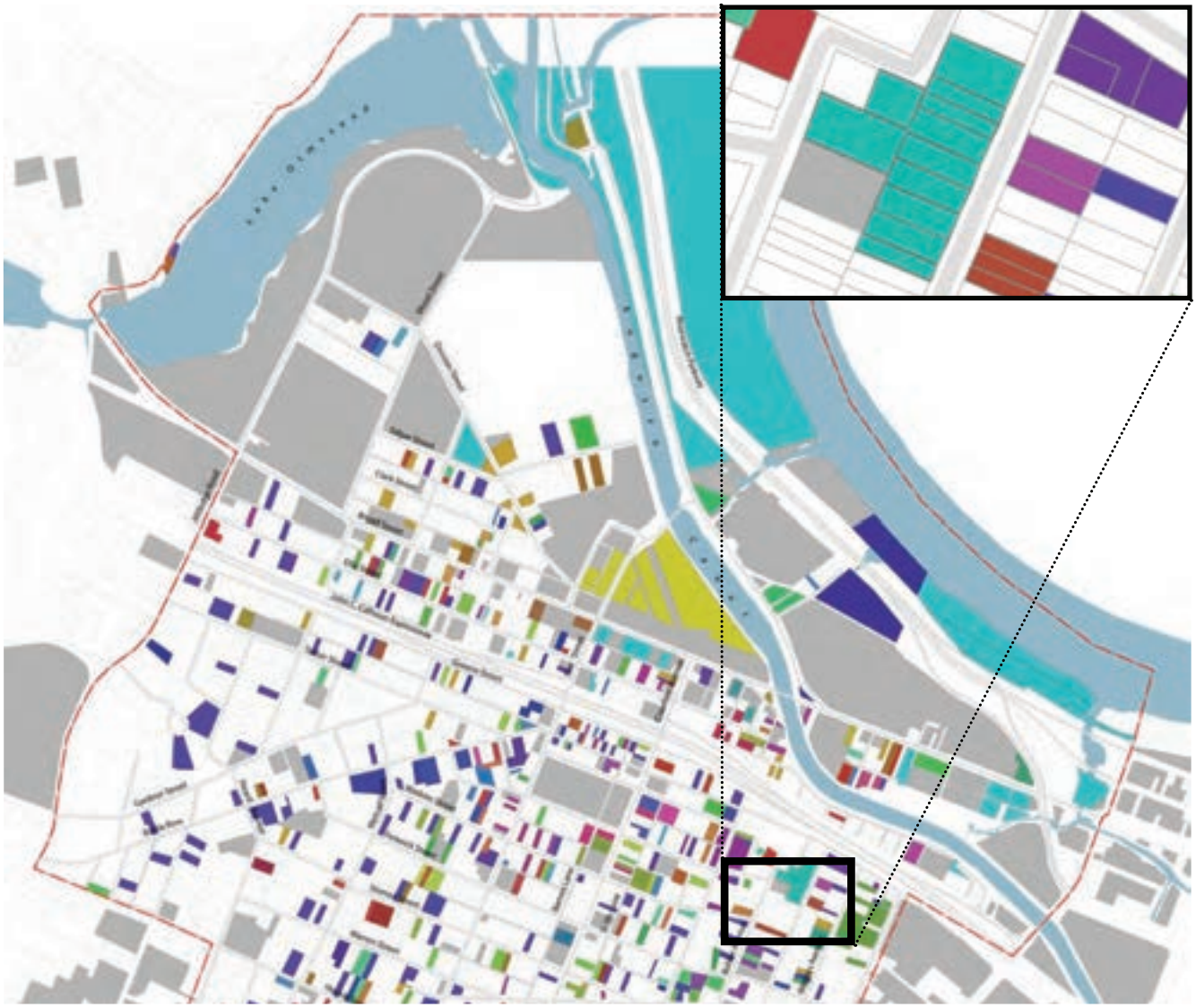


Figure 5.3q: Owners with Multiple Properties

IN-FILL STRATEGY 3: FOR OWNERS WITH MULTIPLE CONTIGUOUS PROPERTIES

Owners with multiple contiguous properties have the unique potential to increase the long term return of their properties while also stimulating development activity within the neighborhood. If implemented correctly and leveraged with other strategies that enhance the perceived safety and quality of life in the neighborhood, this type of investment may act as a catalyst to revitalize blighted areas within the neighborhood.

Figure 5.3q identifies four or more properties within the Harrisburg neighborhood under single ownership. Each color in the map represents a different owner. Of particular interest are contiguous parcels under single ownership as they provide unique opportunities for in-fill development. The extracted area in Figure 5.3q presents a unique case study opportunity for such in-fill development. Like a select few areas in the neighborhood, this section exhibits multiple contiguous properties under single ownership near the edge of the neighborhood. Strategies for redevelopment of these lots are examined on the next few pages.

Figure 5.3r - Existing Urban Form

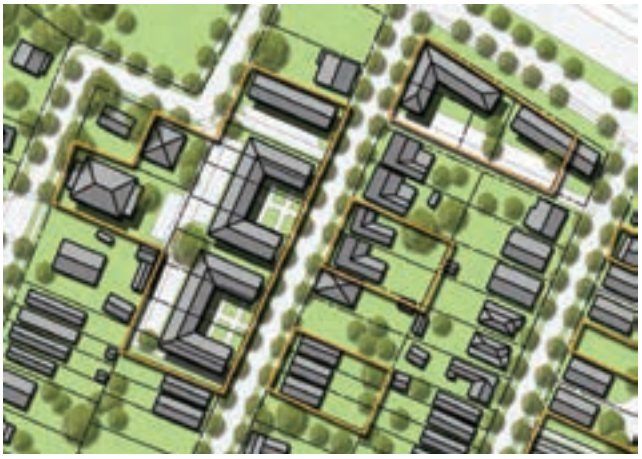


Figure 5.3s - Proposed Urban Form

Figure 5.3t - Courtyard Apartment Example
Courtesy of: http://achicagosojourn.blogspot.com

Figure 5.3r, illustrates the existing urban form of these properties in relation to existing lot sizes. The orange line in Figure 5.3r identifies those properties under single ownership. All are comprised of detached single family homes in lots that range in size from 25' x 150' to 75' x 150'.

In order to stimulate investment in the neighborhood and diversify the housing product, Figure 5.3s, illustrates how multi-family dwellings can become part of the neighborhood. As stated previously, if implemented correctly and leveraged with other strategies that enhance the perceived safety and quality of life in the neighborhood, this type of investment may act as a catalyst to revitalize blighted areas within the neighborhood. The multi-family housing product would have to be of high quality and designed to be sensitive to the scale and character of the neighborhood. Placing multi-family housing at the edges of the neighborhood not only provides a buffer between the commercial corridors and the neighborhood's single family housing, but it also increases the density near major corridors, providing clientele to businesses and enlivening the streets.

The following two examples of multi-family housing show types of apartment buildings that can fit into the Harrisburg context: the Courtyard Apartment (refer to Figure 5.3t) and the Shotgun Style Apartment.

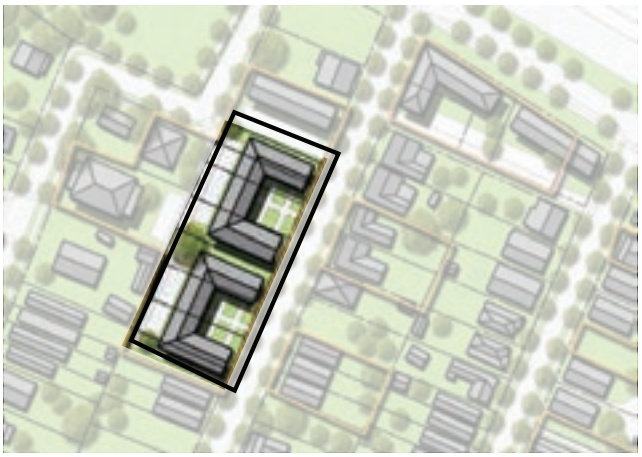


Figure 5.3u: Courtyard Apartments Plan and Image

COURTYARD APARTMENT GUIDELINES

Courtyard Apartments may be a compatible multi-family housing product for the Harrisburg neighborhood. The following are guidelines to consider for determining the appropriate location and character of Courtyard Apartments.

• Courtyard Apartments should be integrated along the edges of the neighborhood or along major neighborhood corridors; not in the center.

• A 120' wide parcel is suggested as the minimum width for the inclusion of a Courtyard Apartment.

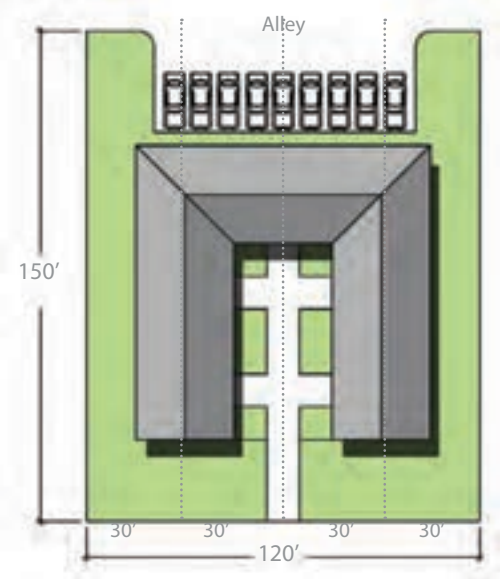
• Multiple lots may be combined to create one parcel large enough to fit a Courtyard Apartment as demonstrated in the examples below.

• Sufficient side and rear setbacks should be provided so as to not visually dwarf adjacent properties. Front setbacks should be consistent with the adjacent buildings.

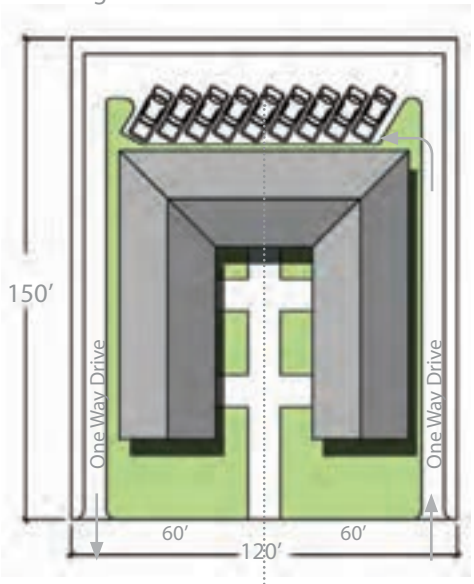
• Landscaping or vegetated masonry walls should be used to screen Courtyard Apartments from adjacent single family dwellings.

• Architectural style and detailing should be consistent with the character of the Harrisburg neighborhood.

• Consistent with the character of neighborhood buildings, Courtyard Apartments should be no taller than two or three stories depending on their location along the edges of the neighborhood.



Alley loaded Courtyard Apartment



Front Loaded Courtyard Apartment

Figure 5.3v: Courtyard Apartment Plans

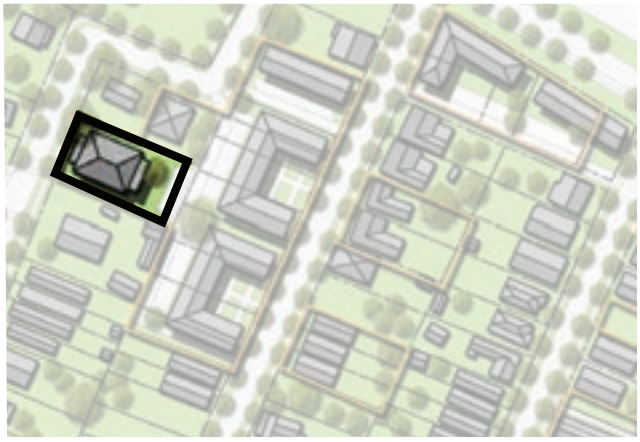
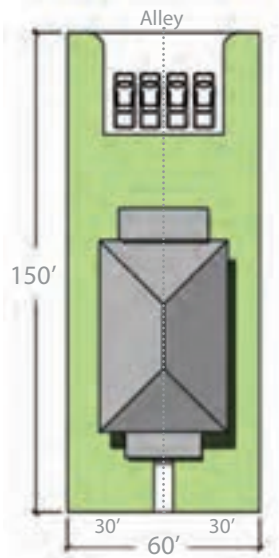


Figure 5.3w: Shotgun Style Apartments Plan and Image

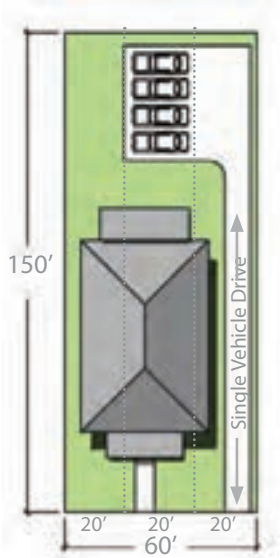
SHOTGUN STYLE APARTMENT GUIDELINES

Shotgun Style Apartments may be a compatible multi-family housing product for the Harrisburg neighborhood. Following are guidelines to consider for determining the appropriate location and character of Shotgun Style Apartments.

- Shotgun Style Apartments should be integrated along the edges of the neighborhood or along major neighborhood corridors; not in the center.
- A 60' wide parcel is suggested as the minimum width for the inclusion of a Shotgun Style Apartment.
- Multiple lots may be combined to create one parcel large enough to fit a Shotgun Style Apartment as demonstrated in the examples below.
- Sufficient side and rear setbacks should be provided so as to not visually dwarf adjacent properties. Front setback should be consistent with the adjacent buildings.
- Landscaping or vegetated masonry walls should be used to screen Shotgun Style Apartments from adjacent single family dwellings.
- Architectural style and detailing should be consistent with the character of the Harrisburg neighborhood.
- Consistent with the character of neighborhood buildings, Courtyard Apartment should be no taller than two stories depending on their location along the edges of the neighborhood.



Alley Loaded Shotgun Style Apartment



Front Loaded Shotgun Style Apartment

Figure 5.3x: Shotgun Style Apartment Plans

Figure 5.3y: Block Types Map

5.3.2 BLOCK-BY-BLOCK STRATEGIES

Block-by-block strategies extend revitalization efforts beyond individual lots to the entire block itself, which represents a small "community within a community," or micro-environments throughout the neighborhood. Block-by-block strategies focus on making blocks where people want to live.

EXISTING BLOCK CONDITIONS

As discussed previously in Section 5.1, a windshield survey was conducted to analyze the conditions of block faces throughout the neighborhood. This analysis highlights block faces that are in very good condition, with high home ownership, high home values, and the best physical condition, represented on Figure 5.3y in green (Tier 3). Other strong blocks are represented in orange, differentiated only in having slightly more homes with challenging physical conditions (Tier 2). Blocks that have homes which are predominantly renter-occupied, in poor physical condition, and have a majority of homes listed below the average market value for the area are shown in red (Tier 1). All blocks can benefit from the revitalization

Figure 5.3z: Potential Open Space Redevelopment Locations

strategies that follow. Different levels of intervention are presented depending on the scale of challenges that the blocks currently face.

ACTION 1: TARGETED OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT

Adding new and better parks and open space can help increase the amenity value in the neighborhood. Although the Harrisburg neighborhood has reasonably good access to open space, the quality of these spaces does not fit neighborhood needs. Existing parks often lack amenities and are in poor condition. As the National Housing Institute recognizes, the character, utility, appearance, and safety of open spaces are as important as simply having open space available. The first step in this open space strategy, therefore, should be to work with Augusta-Richmond County to help improve existing park conditions.

The creation of new open spaces should be the second step. To help increase Harrisburg's appeal to home buyers and make it more livable for existing residents, this strategy pinpoints locations for open space development.

Locations were selected to help decrease blight in the neighborhood while providing increased access to residents. To help formulate location suggestions, the housing conditions survey was used. The analysis shown in Figure 5.3a simplifies the housing conditions analysis by focusing on patterns to reveal areas where the strongest (in green) and most challenged (in orange) properties exist. The proposed development of open space responds to these conditions, as explained below.

Three types of open space opportunities were identified based on this analysis:

1. Community gardens
2. Existing property owners to lease or buy challenged parcels that are adjacent to their land
3. Large-scale neighborhood parks

These potential open space locations are shown in Figure 5.3z. Generally, locations adjacent to existing property owners with homes kept in good condition were targeted for possible open spaces to focus energy and investment around those who have already invested themselves in the neighborhood. The hope is that those who have maintained and cared for their properties would help care for an adjacent lot dedicated to community use. The impact of a "string" of properties in good condition, coupled with a well-used, well-maintained open space could help increase the attractiveness of the block, and eventually the neighborhood.

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Single vacant (undeveloped) lots were targeted for potential community garden development, in particular those located:

- Between two Tier 2/Tier 3 properties;
- Next to a Tier 2/Tier 3 property on a visible corridor; or
- Next to or owned by a church.

EXISTING PROPERTY OWNER EXPANSION

When two or more Tier 1/vacant lots are identified adjacent to each other, decline can begin to overtake a block. When this occurs adjacent to an owner of property in good condition (Tier 2 or Tier 3), however, an opportunity exists for a public/private partnership to develop green space. The City could buy and lease the challenged parcels to the property owner to tend to and care for as open space. In effect, the City would hold the challenged parcels until the property owner could buy them out-right for future development. In the meantime, the parcels could be cleaned, planted, and maintained as open space, increasing the value of the property owner's lots just adjacent. These patches could also serve as big "front lawns" for the neighborhood before being redeveloped into housing.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

There are several locations in Harrisburg where numerous vacant/Tier 1 properties exist side by side. Such a conglomeration of challenged lots may require a "big move" to help reinvigorate certain areas of the neighborhood. In these cases, whole or half-blocks were identified where demolition of homes may be appropriate in order to develop a major amenity and further help catalyze redevelopment. In these cases, significant resources would have to be contributed by the City to buy out existing property owners and ensure that development of the open space amenity positively contributes to the Harrisburg neighborhood.

OPEN SPACE DEVELOPMENT EXAMPLE

On Battle Row, opportunities for open space development exist. Refer to Figure 5.3aa and associated images.

ACTION 2: NEIGHBORHOOD STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Action 2 focuses on improving the appearance of the streetscape as a means to attract potential home buyers and business owners into the neighborhood. The streetscape, which is the public right-of-way, includes sidewalks, planting strips, and the actual street itself. Streetscape improvements can not only help clean-up the appearance of the neighborhood, but also help give the neighborhood an identity. A great street - one that's beautiful or unique and provides a safe, yet interesting, place to walk - can make people choose to frequent it, to go out of their way to see it, and ultimately lends to the desirability of the neighborhood.

It is important to note that all of these strategies for streetscape improvements (except for the first recommendation which ensures each street has a good sidewalk) can be done by residents themselves, regardless of City budgets or timetables. Streets can be improved resident-by-resident, block-by-block.

SIDEWALKS

When neighborhood streetscape improvements include adding lanes, medians, or other major works, they are typically undertaken by the City. While the right-of-way on most streets in Harrisburg (around 60 feet) will not

A

Potential property-owner expansion

B

Potential community garden location

C

Potential neighborhood park

Figure 5.3aa: Open Space Development Example

easily accommodate the addition of medians , it can - and should - accommodate the addition of sidewalks on every street. Walking should be encouraged in Harrisburg, not only to encourage healthy habits, but to increase activity on the street. A survey of existing sidewalk locations and conditions is needed to ascertain where new sidewalks should be constructed and existing sidewalks should be repaired. The condition of pedestrian crossings and intersections should also be part of this survey. Residents can then collaborate with the City to prioritize installation and improvements.

TREE LAWNS/PLANTING STRIPS

The space between the sidewalk and the curb of the street is called a tree lawn or a planting strip. At minimum, these should be two feet wide to allow for the planting of a small ornamental tree.

Block-by-block, residents can collectively decide on a strategy for planting within these strips. Although individual property owners have the freedom to do as they choose, an entire block face treating the planting strip in a similar way could have significant impact. Picture how interesting a landscape could be when house after house along a street approach the planting strip in the following ways:

- Planting similar flowering trees that blossom at the same time each year
- Planting the same plant consistently in a row - sunflowers, wildflowers, palm trees, cactuses, etc.
- Planting vegetable gardens in these areas - rows and rows of tomatoes, for example
- Planting an arboretum - a variety of different tree types with informational signage at their bases, noting genus and species

Figure 5.3bb: Fence Examples

On a block-by-block basis, memorable streets can begin to be created in these ways with little monetary investment.

FENCES AND HEDGES

"Fences make good neighbors" is a familiar adage, but fences can also help make wonderful streets. Many homes in Harrisburg have fenced front yards, usually chain link. But beyond their utilitarian purpose, fences can beautify and enliven the environment. Some towns have developed regulations around not only fence height, but how they look, as fences are recognized to contribute to the amenity value of neighborhoods. White picket fences have become iconic, symbolizing a traditional American landscape, but the addition of any kind of decorative fence could help make Harrisburg streets great. Hedges, too, could create welcoming walls of green. Even adding climbing, flowering plants to the base of the ubiquitous chain link fence could transform the functional into the fantastic.

5.4 CATALYTIC REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

This section focuses on three recommendations for catalytic redevelopment projects for Harrisburg.

1. Redevelopment of the area surrounding the new John Milledge Elementary School.

This project involves several actions ranging from crime prevention, improving sidewalks and intersections for pedestrians, housing rehabilitation surrounding the school, acquisition of part of a block to address needs for green space, on-street parking for Hicks Street, and housing rehabilitation/historic preservation of the shotgun houses on Hicks Street.

2. Future redevelopment of Chafee Avenue and the existing Kroger grocery store.

The Kroger grocery store has destroyed the housing values on Chafee Street because of poor site planning, which put loading docks and dumpsters next to Chafee Street. This project is to ensure that future redevelopment of the Kroger site corrects this problem. New development must front on Chafee Avenue and on 15th Street. Services and sanitation must be on the interior of the block on a new dedicated right-of-way for an alley. Once that is accomplished, several development alternatives are possible, from single-family housing to a mixed-use medical office complex.

3. Improvements to the Walton Way corridor.

Walton Way is a major traffic carrying street. That will not change in the near future. The problem facing Walton Way is how to improve the retail and service role of the street in serving both neighborhood residents and automobiles passing by. There are several suggested solutions from regulating curb cuts, to creating maximum parking ratios per business so that wasted land can be reclaimed for pedestrians, requiring alley access for business near street corners, and providing on-street parking. All of these are aimed toward making Walton Way more attractive for pedestrians.

These three projects are vital to the revitalization of the Harrisburg neighborhood. While lot-by-lot and block-by-block strategies are extremely important to improving livability in Harrisburg and bringing neighbors together in efforts to renew their community, the catalytic redevelopment projects will have the greatest impact on the community. In order to implement each of these projects, creative partnerships between the neighborhood and outside organizations is necessary, including the Kroc Center, the Downtown Development Authority, Augusta Tomorrow, Augusta-Richmond County, and many others. Additionally, partnerships with its neighbors - Georgia Health Sciences University, the medical district, and Augusta State University – all of which are essential economic development engines for Augusta-Richmond County, will be very important. The economic success of these institutions relies on the success of Harrisburg becoming a vibrant place to live and work, just as much as the success of Harrisburg relies on partnerships with these institutions.

Figure 5.4a: John Milledge Elementary School Area of Study

5.4.1 CATALYTIC REDEVELOPMENT: BLOCKS SURROUNDING JOHN MILLEDGE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

John Milledge Elementary School is located in the heart of Harrisburg, bounded by Eve Street, Telfair Street, Crawford Avenue, and Walker Street. It is situated just four blocks from the Kroc Center. The school's central location, its proximity to the Kroc Center and its potential role as a community gathering place, make it an important future focal point for Harrisburg.

The school is important to Harrisburg, but Harrisburg is also important to the school. Together, the school and the neighborhood can be a catalyst to sidewalk and intersection improvements for children and adults. A partnership can also be a stimulus for housing rehabilitation and maintenance. And, most important, a partnership can lead to improved public safety.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The blocks surrounding John Milledge Elementary School are in need of help. Many homes are in need of

Figure 5.4b: Existing Conditions

rehabilitation; many are vacant; the majority are renter-occupied; and crime is a major concern. Refer to Figures 5.4b to 5.4d.

STRATEGY

One strategy is to simply address the public sidewalks, public safety and housing conditions in the vicinity of the school. However, these incremental efforts are unlikely to change the perception of the immediate school area.

The recommendation that will serve as a catalyst for improving this area is illustrated on Figure 5.4e.

First, improvements should be made to sidewalks and street crossings at intersections along Crawford Ave. and Eve Street between the school and the Kroc Center as well as the streets surrounding the school.

Figure 5.4c: Existing Renter and Owner Occupied Conditions

Second should be the acquisition of most of the small block north of the school between Eve St. and Barnes Lane, along Telfair St. - for use as playground space for the school or even for a future small community building. Hicks Street can then be re-designed to have on-street parking for Hicks Street residents, reducing the current parking problem. This will make the historic row of shotgun houses visible to the school and to the public and will likely encourage preservation.

The houses on this small block are in poor condition, and only two houses are owner-occupied. Acquisition and demolition would help improve the public safety problems on the north side of the school.

Third should be an aggressive effort to rehabilitate or demolish houses on the other streets facing the school, in addition to acquisition of all vacant lots. Vacant lots could be held for neighborhood and school use such as community gardens, wildflower planting, and community/school clean-ups.

Houses that can be purchased for rehabilitation should be made available for home ownership as the highest

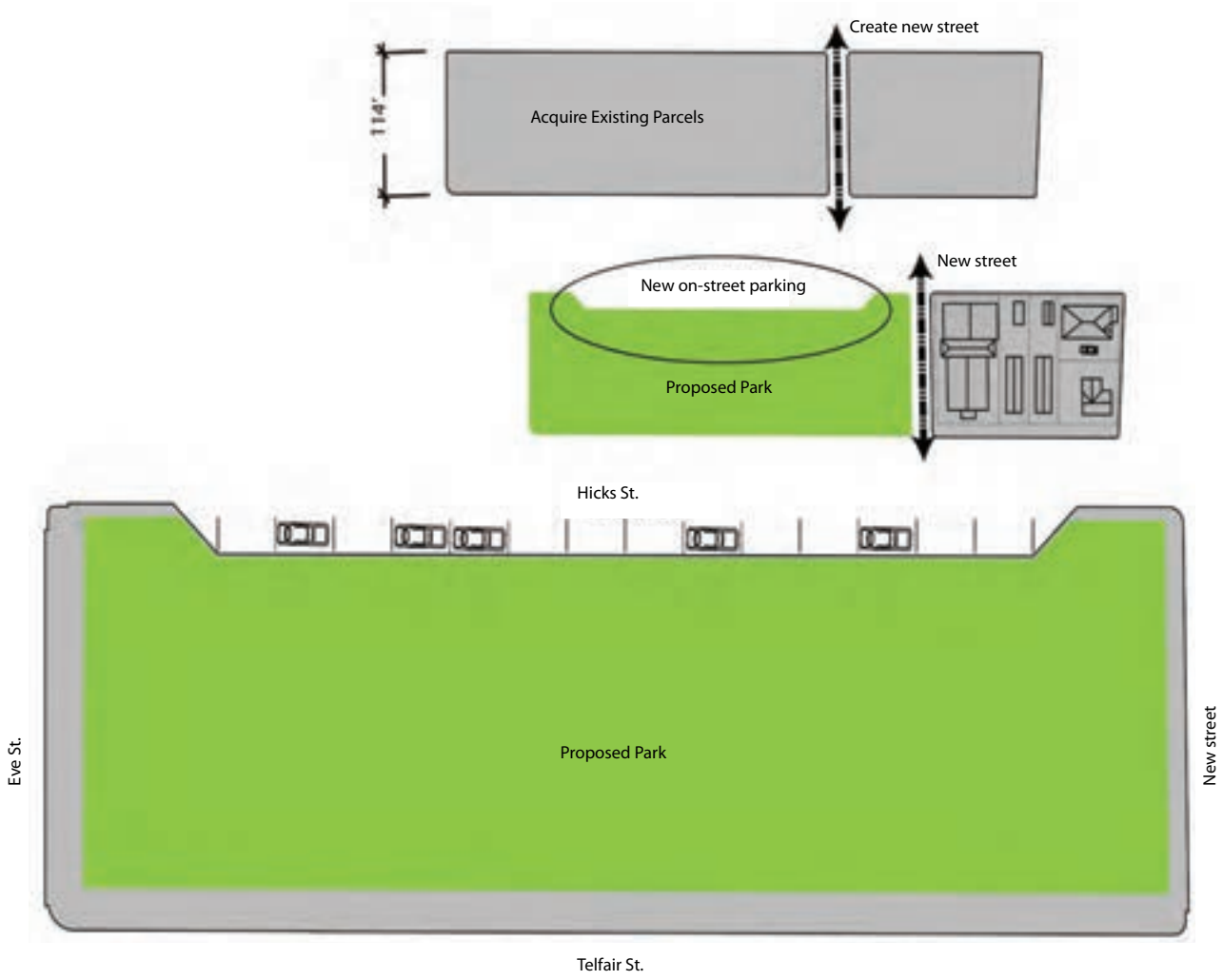
Figure 5.4d: Recent Crime Reports

priority for Harrisburg. Increasing home ownership should be a very high priority for this area.

This strategy is workable, given the participation of the Kroc Center, the Downtown Development Authority, the Harrisburg Neighborhood Association, Turn Back the Block, the Augusta-Richmond County School Board, the surrounding churches, and Augusta-Richmond County.

The John Milledge Elementary School, the surrounding neighborhood, and the Kroc Center are the nucleus for reclaiming Harrisburg. This must be an "A" project, gaining respect of the neighborhood, the school teachers and students, the Augusta-Richmond County government, and the current residents of Augusta who will be the future residents of a reclaimed Harrisburg.

Figure 5.4e: Elementary School Strategy


Create new street
114'
Acquire Existing Parcels
New street
New on-street parking
Proposed Park
Hicks St.
Eve St.
Proposed Park
New street
Telfair St.

ark
Telfair St.
School

Figure 5.4f: Chafee Avenue and Kroger Site - area of study

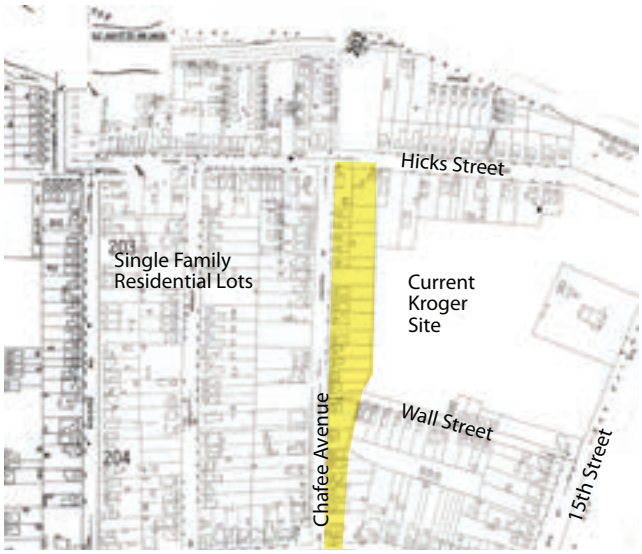


Figure 5.4g - 1923 Sanborn Map

5.4.2 CHAFEE AVENUE AND KROGER SITE REDEVELOPMENT

Chafee Avenue and the Kroger grocery store are located on the eastern edge of the Harrisburg neighborhood. This is the present boundary between the single-family residences of Harrisburg and commercial and institutional land uses along 15th Street and Downtown. This area is one of the most troubled areas of Harrisburg with serious public safety issues, vacant and dilapidated houses, vacant and poorly maintained land, and very low property values (refer to Figure 5.4h). With Kroger expected to close within five years and with ownership by Georgia Health Science University (GHSU) of the Kroger site, this troubled area has the opportunity to be converted into a neighborhood and Augusta asset, with particular benefit to the GHSU campus.

A 1923 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map (see Figure 5.4g) of the Chafee Avenue area shows standard Harrisburg building lots and single family houses on both sides of Chafee Street, with a large parcel of land fronting 15th Street. This meant that the backs of residential lots along Chafee Ave. joined the back of the larger parcel. This was a workable arrangement and is the best way to have residential uses and commercial uses meet. The zoning boundary would be located in the middle of the block.

At some point, the residential lots along Chafee Ave. were acquired, the houses demolished, and the land joined to make a single large parcel between Chafee Ave. and 15th Street. The design of the Kroger site then created the problems that are present today. The back side of Kroger - loading areas, dumpsters, services - faces the residential neighborhood across Chafee Ave. The result is predictable. No one has choosen to live across the street from the dumpsters of the Kroger grocery store. The housing in this area has deteriorated, homeowners have departed, houses have been demolished, and property has been acquired for either speculative or institutional use (refer to Figure 5.4j)

The Chafee Avenue area can become an asset to Harrisburg, GHSU, and Augusta by taking a few simple steps in the short term which will allow appropriate future development.

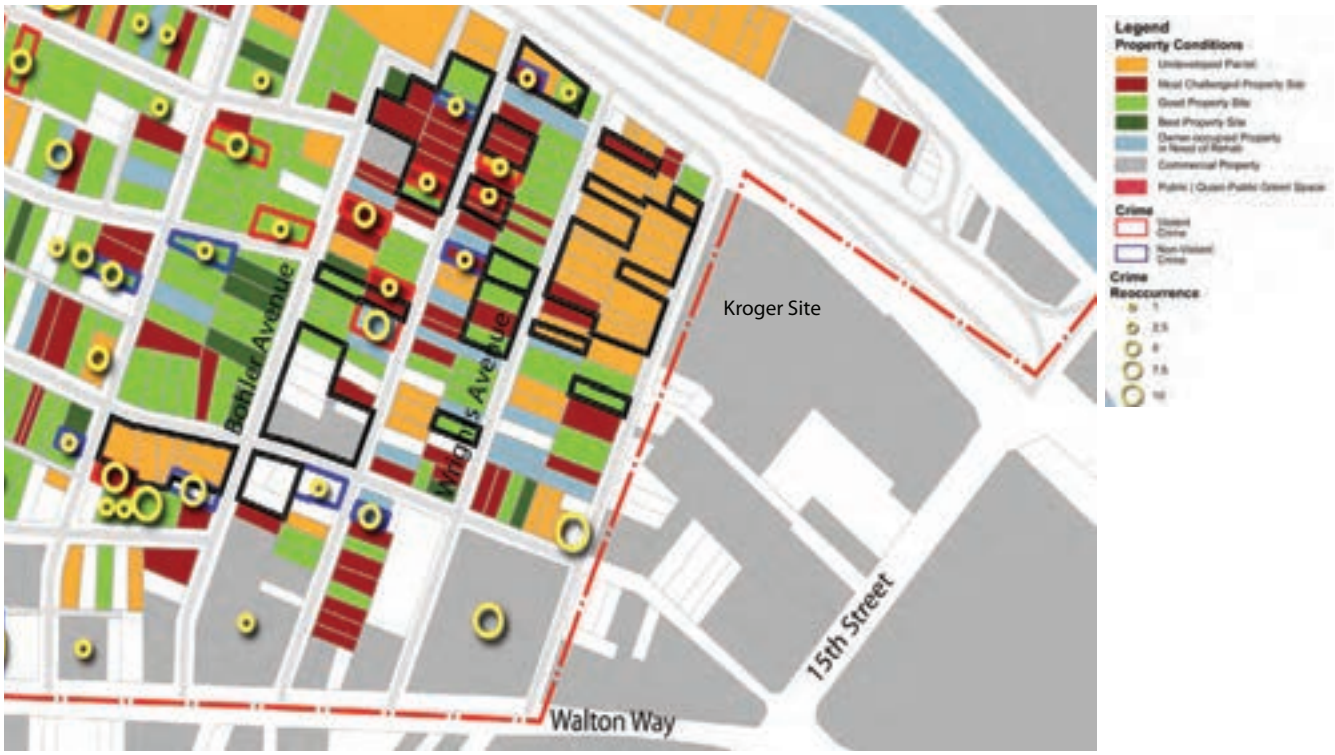


Figure 5.4h - Existing Property Conditions

Figure 5.4j - Existing Chafee Avenue and Kroger Area

Figure 5.4k - Good Edge Treatment along Chafee Avenue

Figure 5.4m: Alternative Block Treatment

OPTION 1: RE-ESTABLISH SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSES + A MEDICAL COMPLEX OR OTHER MIXED USE

Option I establishes a simple framework. First, a new public street is platted through the Kroger block and the adjacent block to the south. Second, a public alley is platted within the block between Chafee Avenue and the new street. The property on the east side of Chafee Avenue is platted for single family houses on lot width similar to lots throughout Harrisburg (e.g. 40-60 feet). (Refer to Figures 5.4k and 5.4m)

This will allow development of single family houses on Chafee Avenue and higher density housing, commercial, institutional or mixed-uses on the remainder of the blocks fronting the new street and fronting 15th Street.

This option will help to stabilize Chafee Avenue and encourage infill of single family housing or small multi-family housing. Chafee Avenue now has about 11 existing houses. This option could result in a total of almost 30 new and rehabilitated single family houses on Chafee. This would be sufficient to stabilize this part of the Harrisburg neighborhood.

Figure 5.4n: Re-Establishment of Single-Family Homes + Medical Complex

Figure 5.4p - Medical Mixed-Use Campus Redevelopment

OPTION 2: Establish Single-family or Multi-family Housing on the West Side of Chafee Avenue + Mixed Use Residential and a Medical Complex on the East Side.

Option 2 builds upon the same new block structure as Option 1. This includes the new street and the new alley to subdivide the Kroger property.

This simple framework allows a higher density development with a mixed commercial-residential building facing Chafee Avenue and a major medical complex facing 15th Street. The alley serves as access to parking lots or decks, as needed, as well as delivery services, sanitation, etc. This preserves the Chafee Avenue frontage as a residential street. (Refer to Figures 5.4n and 5.4p)

With increased density on the east side of Chafee Avenue, it would then be possible on the west side to mix small apartment buildings, especially those in a traditional courtyard form, with new and rehabilitated single-family housing.

Figure 5.4q: Before and After - Rehabilitated Chafee Avenue + New Neighborhood Park

Figure 5.4r: New Neighborhood Park + Mixed Use Medical Campus Redevelopment

OPTION 3: Establish a New Chafee Avenue District, with a Public Park, New Streets and Expanded Housing Opportunities.

Option 3 keeps the same basic framework as in Option 1 and Option 2, but extends the platting of new streets to create a set of small blocks and a new public park.

This new plat would connect Harrisburg to the new development along 15th Street and the Georgia Health Sciences University Campus. The new neighborhood park would increase land values on the surrounding blocks and make possible a variety of new housing developments, including single-family, multi-family courtyard apartments and larger three-story buildings that could house medical students and other residents. (Refer to Figures 5.4q and 5.4r)

Because this option would require land acquisition, its impact would be limited by current owner-occupied housing in Harrisburg. If current owners were displaced, however, there would be easy opportunities for relocation either nearby or across the street from the new park.

Figure 5.4s: Walton Way Study Area

5.4.3 WALTON WAY

Walton Way is a major thoroughfare into downtown Augusta, comprised of four traffic lanes and a center turning lane. Although the road serves as the southern boundary to historic Harrisburg, it lacks the walkability that characterizes the neighborhood's historic streets and is an inadequate gateway into the community. It is dominated by cars and strip commercial development common to many suburban places. Further, the street is plagued by crime. In Figure 5.4t, the yellow dots indicate where crimes took place in 2009; the bigger the dot, the more crimes were recorded at the location. The many vacant buildings indicate a state of general decline. (Refer to Figures 5.4u to 5.4w)

Because of the important traffic function of Walton Way, reducing traffic lanes or turning lanes is not an option. It must continue to serve as an important arterial street. However, it can be greatly improved to relate to the Harrisburg neighborhood, accommodate pedestrians, and expand retail and office business opportunities.

Several recommendations indicate how this can be achieved (refer to Figure 5.4y and 5.4z)

First, curb cuts for driveways should be limited to one per parcel and should have a maximum width of 24 feet. This will help to control left turning movements. Figure 5.4x identifies the numerous curb cuts along Walton Way.

Second, parking regulations should be revised to establish maximum instead of minimum parking ratios. It is feasible for most businesses to reduce parking rations to a maximum of 3 spaces per 1000 square feet.

Third, the eliminated curb cuts should be converted to on-street parallel parking. Providing on-street parking will

Figure 5.4t: Walton Way Crime

increase retail viability and will also help to control traffic speeds on Walton Way.

Fourth, the space gained by reducing parking should be converted to new sidewalks with tree lawns between the curb and the sidewalk and space for new business-oriented uses along the sidewalk. These new uses might include outdoor restaurant seating, space for car washing at gas stations, community gardens, space for retail vendors, etc.

Fifth, businesses at intersections should access their parking from the alleyways or from side streets, not from Walton Way.

Sixth, an important opportunity exists at the intersections of Walton Way and Crawford Street at the historic Tubman Jr. High School. Installation of a landscaped esplanade on Crawford just before the intersection would provide both a gateway to Harrisburg and an embellished entry to Tubman Jr. HighSchool. Additionally, mixed-use development should be encouraged along Walton Way through new regulations. (Refer to Figure 5.4y, 5.4z and 5.4aa)

These improvements can be implemented incrementally.

Figure 5.4u: Walton Way - Vacant Lot

Figure 5.4v: Walton Way

Figure 5.4w: Pedestrian Environment - Crossing Walton Way from Tubman Middle School into Harrisburg

Figure 5.4x: Existing Walton Way Curb Cuts (Highlighted in Orange)

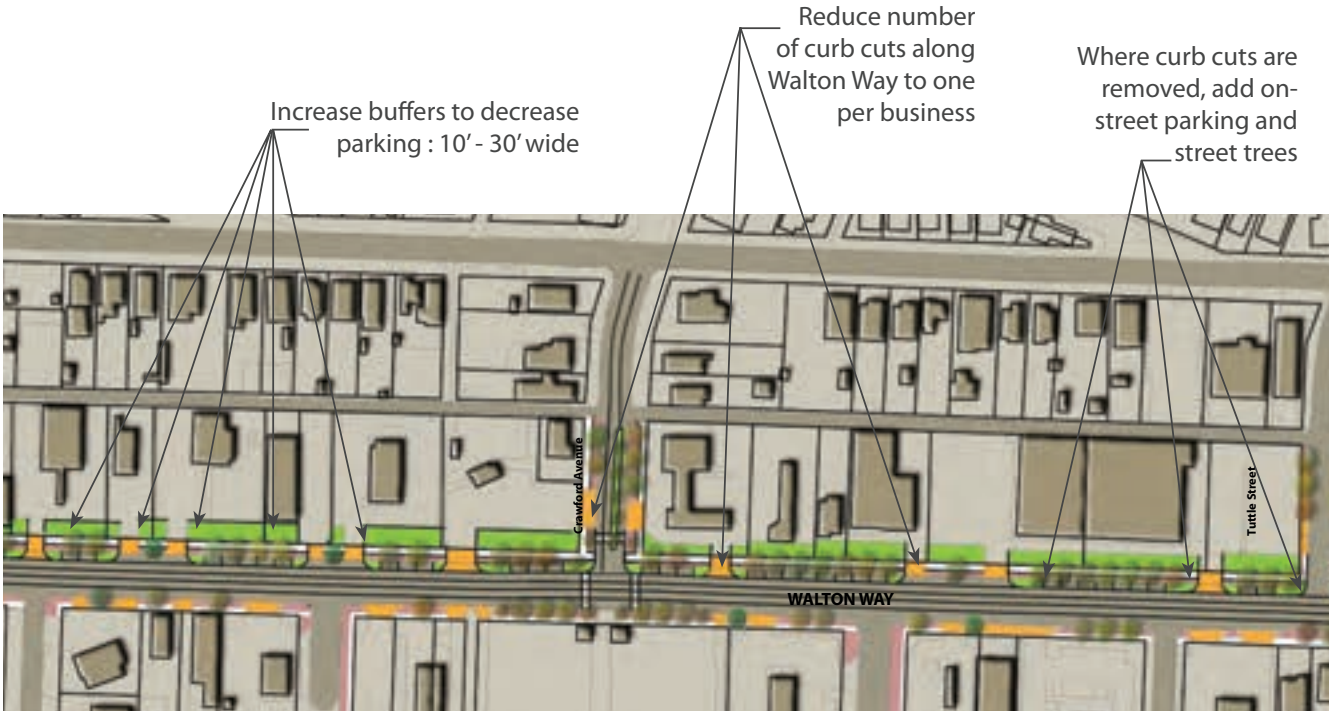


Figure 5.4y: Walton Way Redevelopment

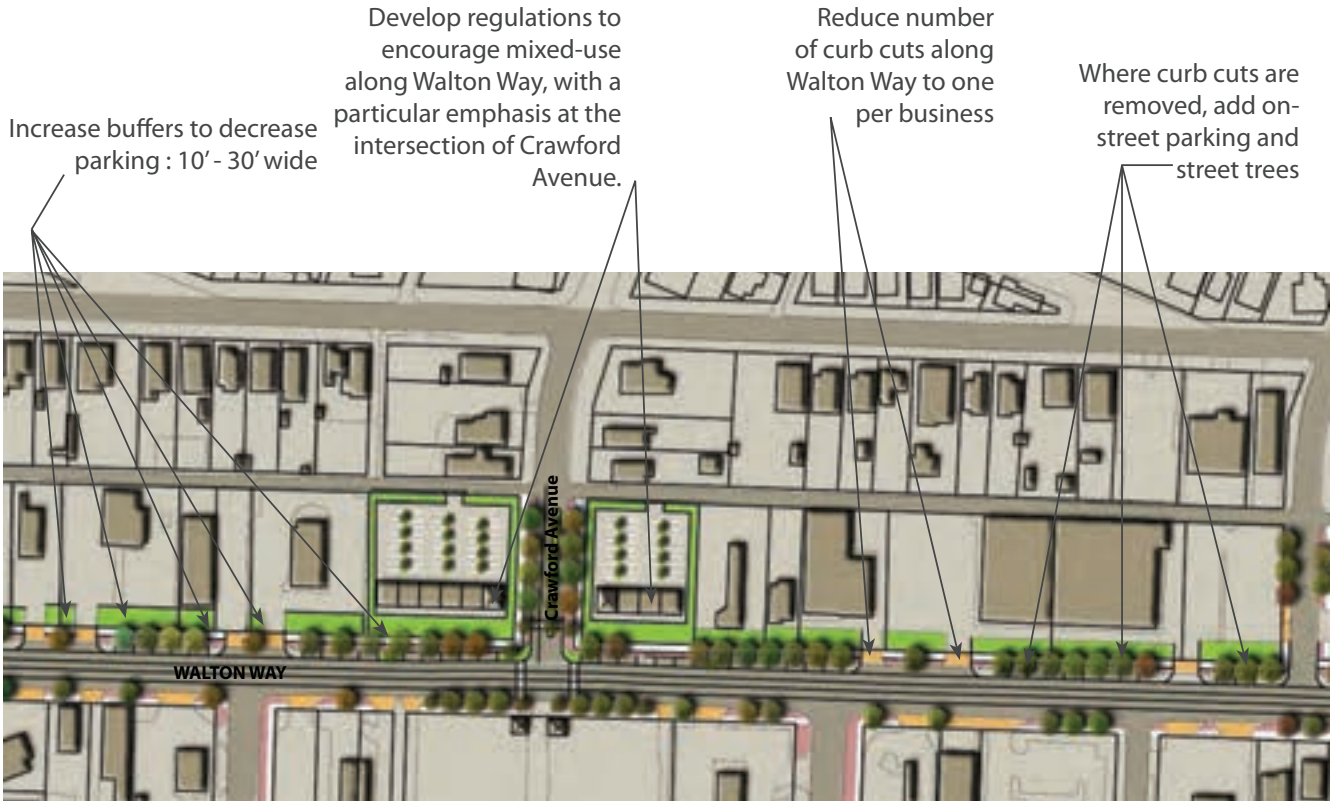


Figure 5.4z: Walton Way Redevelopment with Mixed-Use Development

Figure 5.4aa: Walton Way - "Before" and "After" Proposed Revitalization Efforts