



Garden City

**NEIGHBORHOOD
PLAN**

Adopted by Roanoke City Council
November 21, 2005

**ROANOKE
VIRGINIA**



vision 2001
2020

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**Planning Building &
Economic Development**

Acknowledgments

City Council

Mayor C. Nelson Harris
Vice Mayor Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
M. Rupert Cutler
Alfred T. Dowe, Jr.
Sherman P. Lea
Brenda L. McDaniel
Brian J. Wishneff

Planning Commission

Chairman Richard A. Rife
Vice Chairman Henry Scholz
Gilbert E. Butler, Jr.
D. Kent Chrisman
Robert B. Manetta
Paula Prince
Fredrick M. Williams

Planning Building & Economic Development

Brian Townsend, Director

Project Team

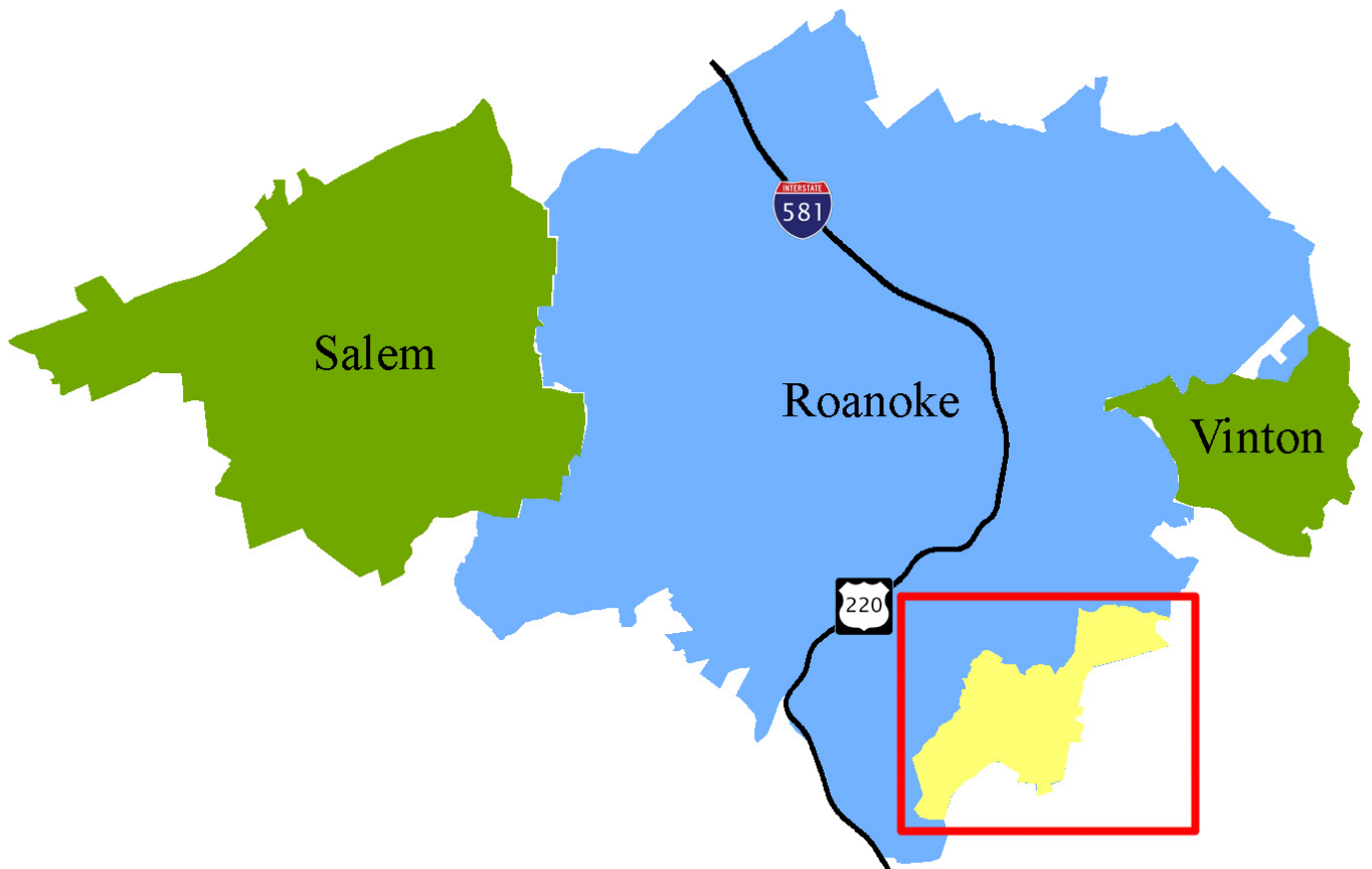
B.T. Fitzpatrick III, City Planner I
Frederick Gusler, AICP, City Planner II
Anne Beckett, City Planner II, *Early Development History*
Andrew Warren, City Planner II (*Initial Coordination*)

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Introduction

The Garden City neighborhood was annexed into the City in 1949. Its boundaries are Mill Mountain and Riverland Road to the north, Yellow Mountain Road and the Blue Ridge Parkway to the west, and Roanoke County to the south and east. It is a neighborhood geographically isolated from the rest of Roanoke as it lies in a valley between several mountains, and is shielded from the City behind Mill Mountain.

The layout of the streets and the development pattern of the housing is overwhelmingly suburban. Garden City is primarily a residential community with commercial and institutional uses that serve the surrounding neighborhoods. Rockydale Quarries is located at the southern edge of the neighborhood at the end of Welcome Valley Road. The former American Viscose Plant in the Roanoke Industrial Center lies across the Roanoke River. The plant spurred the neighborhood's growth and was the area's major employer until it closed in 1958. The neighborhood's setting provides residents with a peaceful quality of life largely undisturbed by the growth outside its borders.



The origin of the name Garden City is unclear. Ebenezer Howard, an English city planner, popularized the idea of the “garden city” in the early to mid-1900s. These planned cities emphasized open space, concentric street patterns, and common garden areas. The community’s name could have come from this idea indirectly, because there was a “Garden City Farm,” located at the intersection of Garden City Boulevard and Yellow Mountain Road.

The study area experienced rapid growth between 1990 and 2000. Population increased 24% and the number of households increased 34%. This stands in sharp contrast to the decrease of population and households for the City as a whole over the same time period. The dominant age group in the area remains the 35-64 year old population and the young population has become the second largest. The area is becoming more racially diverse. The African American population grew from zero to 143, while the white population also grew by over 17%. The population of other races and multiracial residents fell slightly by 5%.

Demographic Trends 1990-2000

Demographic	1990	2000	% Change
Population	2403	2981	24%
Households	987	1318	34%
<i>Race</i>			
White	2362	2782	18%
Black or African American alone	0	143	100%
Other race/ multi-racial	41	39	-5%
<i>Age Distribution</i>			
0-17 years old	476	742	56%
18-34 years old	718	677	-6%
35-64 years old	900	1211	35%
65 years old and over	309	351	14%

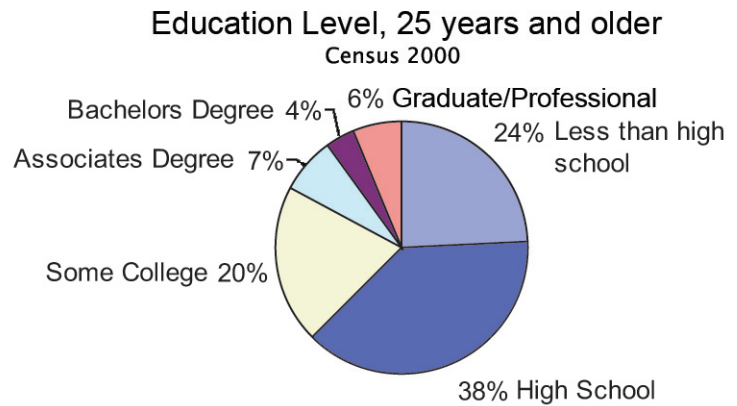
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 and 2000 Census

Generally, Garden City has higher household income levels. The area's median household income is \$37,559 compared to the City's \$30,719 median household income.

Income Bracket	Percent
0 - \$14,999	16%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	16%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	16%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	20%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	30%
\$100,000 +	2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 2000 Census

In contrast to incomes, higher education levels in the area are somewhat lower than the average of the City of Roanoke at 18% compared to the city-wide average of 25%. The population which has graduated from high school is equivalent to the City's at 76%.



Neighborhood Planning

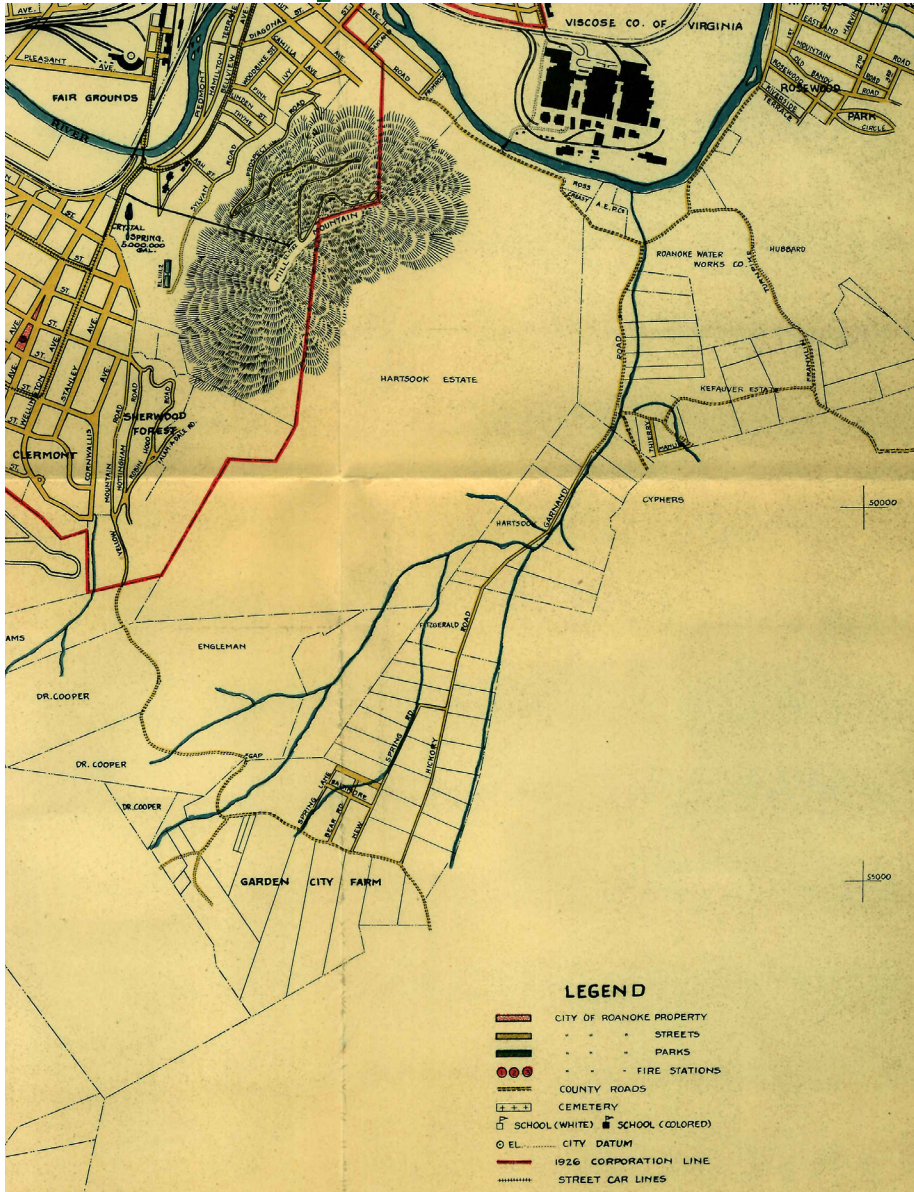
In 1985, *Roanoke Vision*, the City's comprehensive plan, called for the preservation and enhancement of existing neighborhoods and recommended that City policies and actions support neighborhood revitalization and preservation. The current comprehensive plan for the city, *Vision 2001-2020*, continues support for neighborhood-based planning for a livable and sustainable city. Roanoke must work to retain population and improve the livability of its neighborhoods.

Staff from the City of Roanoke's Department of Planning Building and Economic Development involved the community in the development of this plan. Planners worked with Garden City residents in 2004 through a series of two workshops to identify priorities and issues of concern. Community input was used to develop the policies and actions of this plan.

This plan recommends actions that can be carried out by citizens, the City, neighborhood organizations, as well as policies that are used to guide future decisions. Neighborhood and area plans are official documents that City Council adopts and they become part of the City's comprehensive plan. These initiatives are reflected in the policies and actions located in the Recommendations chapter.



History



1928 Map of Garden City area prior to annexation

Garden City began to develop when the American Viscose Plant (1917-1958) was built to the north on the bottomlands of the Roanoke River in the City of Roanoke. The plant was the largest rayon mill in the world and was one of the largest industries in the City, second only to the Norfolk & Western Railway. The plant employed 4,000 people at its peak and led to Garden City’s first wave of residential growth.

Still, up until the post-WWII years, the community remained mostly rural due to its geographic location south of Mill Mountain.

Early settlement occurred along Yellow Mountain Road and Hickory Road (later Garden City Boulevard) to the south, along apple orchards, streams, and woods. This area was known as Garden City Farm, a large tract of land at the base of Roanoke Mountain, from which Garden City most likely derived its name. Yellow Mountain Road traversed the property north to south and three branches intersected the road: Dry Branch, Gum Spring Branch, and Garnand Branch, the main branch that flowed north to the Roanoke River. This large farm was subdivided in 1928.

The northern half of Hickory Road was named Garnand Road, for William Dennis Garnand. This area also developed around 1928, particularly with Kefauver Estates and Roanoke Water Works Co., bordering the Roanoke River and the Franklin Turnpike (Virginia Route 116 today).

Large landowners at that time included Garnand and T.E.B. Hartsook. These two families were influential in the early development of Garden City. The house of William Dennis Garnand (1873-1925) still stands “in the forks of Garden City Boulevard, S.E. and Bandy Road, S.E.” Denoted in a historic

family photograph, the 1900, two-story frame house with full-width front porch remains the same. The tall, lanky William Garnand and his wife Mary Turner reared four sons.



Garnand House

T.E.B. Hartsook was a prominent real estate dealer of German and English descent who moved to Roanoke in 1891 and opened an office on Jefferson Street. By 1896, he had built the two-story brick Hartsook Building that overlooks Market Square at the southeast corner of Market Street and Campbell Avenue. The building served as his office and residence with his wife and daughter. The History of Roanoke County noted that Mr. Hartsook “purchased a farm of 526 acres, known as the Mill Mountain farm, within 30 minutes’ drive of the business center of the city, a portion of which he intends to plant to fruit.” Known as the Hartsook Estate, it covered nearly half of the community including some of the eastern slope of Mill Mountain. It is currently a housing development known as Mill Mountain Estates.

Most residential development also occurred after the City of Roanoke annexed Garden City in 1949. Coupled with the post WWII economic boom, there is a prominence of 1960s and 1970s Ranch-style houses in certain sections of the neighborhood. Early development patterns can be traced as the older houses such as farmhouses, Bungalows, and American Foursquares are found mainly along Garden City Boulevard and Yellow Mountain Road. Modern Ranch styles are located throughout the neighborhood as development branched out from these thoroughfares.

Most of the current institutional and commercial buildings have remained from the 1950s and the 1960s. The 1950 Garden City Elementary School (recently renovated) along Garden City Boulevard replaced the 1923 Garden City Elementary School that perched on Yellow Mountain Road overlooking Garden City. The former school building now serves as the Garden City Recreation Center. All of the commercial buildings are of small scale and tend to contain businesses that serve only the immediate neighborhood.

Regarding historical resources, there are no individual properties or any historic districts eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places in Garden City. However, Garden City and the immediate area of the Roanoke River contain numerous documented archaeological sites. The most important one is a permanent Native American village that may lie under the Viscose plant known as “Totera Town” that was visited by the Batts & Fallon Expedition in 1671. Professional archaeologists have thoroughly documented and recorded other sites along the bottomlands of the river. Three Native American camps (non-permanent sites) have also been recorded in Garden City.

High Priority Initiatives

The plan proposes five Priority Initiatives:

- Change zoning patterns to better reflect the residential density patterns of the neighborhood and provide for a series of village center nodes along Garden City Boulevard.
- Preserve Mill Mountain, Roanoke Mountain, and other natural resources in the neighborhood.
- Complete stormwater management projects:
 - o Capital Improvement Projects for the Garden City Flood Reduction Plan. This is the highest priority of this plan.
 - o Roanoke River Flood Reduction Project between 9th Street, SE and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Completion of this portion of the project should significantly reduce flooding along Garnard Branch and Gum Spring.
- Improve the design of Garden City Boulevard
 - o Complete curb, gutter and sidewalk with lighting where physically feasible
 - o Addition of bike lanes and/or a greenway route to connect the Mill Mountain Greenway to the Roanoke River Greenway
- Improve the intersection of Bennington Street and Riverland Road

Plan Elements

Discussion of this plan is organized into six major Plan Elements:

1. Community Design looks at physical design and land use patterns.
2. Residential Development addresses existing and new housing opportunities.
3. Economic Development deals with commercial and industrial development.
4. Infrastructure evaluates transportation systems and utility systems.
5. Public Services assesses the critical functions of the Fire/EMS, Police, and other City services.
6. Quality of Life addresses recreational opportunities, environmental issues, education, and community development.

Community Design

Physical Layout

The neighborhood is situated in a valley on the southern side of Mill Mountain. A majority of lots have at least a moderate grade. Garnand Branch and Gum Spring Branch are the two most prominent water features.

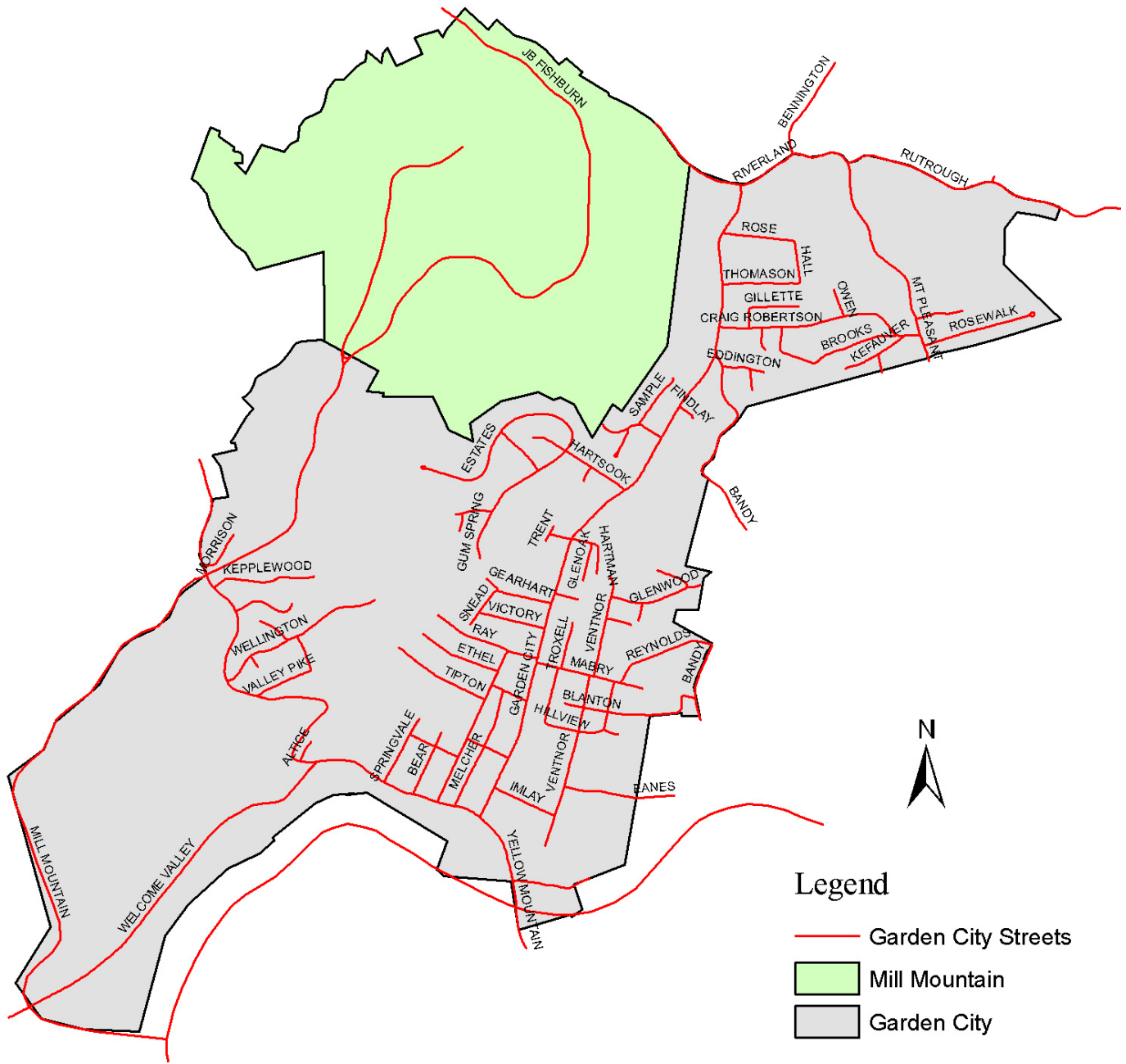
Like most neighborhoods that developed after World War II, the area has undergone a gradual transition from a rural to a suburban landscape. Suburban development is characterized by an orientation to the automobile, wide streets that enable higher traffic speeds, subdivisions of large single-family houses with large front, back, and side yards, and shopping centers and strip commercial establishments with large parking lots in front. While Garden City is not exemplary of all these characteristics, it functions today as a predominantly residential suburban neighborhood.

Development has increased since the area was annexed by the City, but the neighborhood has maintained its original character since the bulk of the growth has been residential development of compatible styles. By the time the area was annexed into the City, considerable land had already been developed or subdivided with single-family houses on large lots.

The undulating terrain of the neighborhood contributes to the rural character that many residents have cited as one of the greatest attributes of the area. The majority of the residential streets do not have a defined shoulder, curb, gutter or sidewalk. Drainage ditches are found on many streets as a means of channeling storm water. Several newer subdivisions, such as Mill Mountain Estates, have curb and gutter per the requirements of the subdivision ordinance.

As with most suburban areas, the street system is somewhat disconnected. Many streets terminate and are not connecting through streets. Most streets do not have curb, gutter, and sidewalk. There are several subdivisions in the neighborhood. The largest is Mill Mountain Estates. Developed in the mid-fifties, it consists of over 170 dwellings. The subdivision street pattern is a curvilinear pattern taking advantage of the topography of the hillside. The streets in the subdivision have a 50-foot right-of-way with approximately 35-foot of pavement width.

There are limited connections linking the neighborhood to the rest of the City. Most of the vehicular traffic uses Welcome Valley Road, Yellow Mountain Road, and Riverland Road to access the neighborhood. Welcome Valley Road is the most direct link for residents to U.S. Route 220. Yellow Mountain Road is a narrow road with several tight curves providing a connection to the South Roanoke neighborhood. The road was cited by residents as difficult to drive. Garden City Boulevard is the main arterial street in the neighborhood

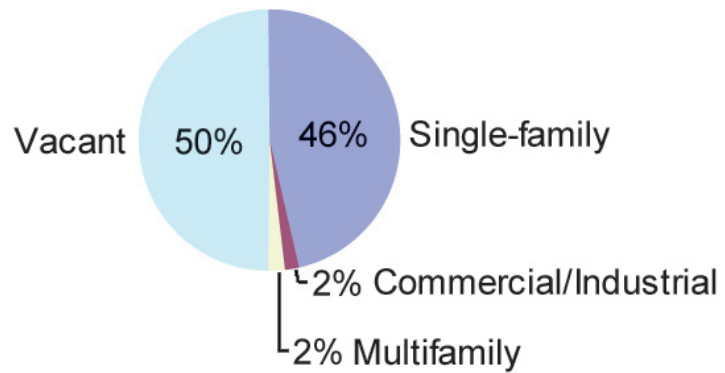


- Legend**
- Garden City Streets
 - Mill Mountain
 - Garden City

and most residential areas have a direct connection to this street. In addition, it has the neighborhood’s only commercial development. As it is a focal point of Garden City, it is a high priority of this plan. Future improvements to Garden City Boulevard should improve its pedestrian access and attractiveness, while not hindering its function as an arterial street.

Most of the older residential streets are narrow, between 20 – 25 feet, while more recently developed residential streets are between 30 – 35 feet. Most houses have driveways and parking areas accessible from the street. Otherwise, the street pattern is defined by curvilinear patterns contoured to the topography, with quite a few dead ends. Most of the alleys are ‘paper’ or unimproved.

Existing Garden City Land Use



Houses tend to be uniformly set back from the street, but distances vary widely from block to block. A vast majority of the houses in the area are modest and one-story. The most common architectural styles are *Ranch*, *Bungalow*, and *Minimal Traditional*.

Garnand Branch and Gum Spring Branch, both tributaries of the Roanoke River, have also had an impact on the layout of Garden City's built environment. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain is located in and around the two streams. In the neighborhood's formative years, development in the floodplain was not regulated. However, due to years of recurrent flooding, federal regulations were mandated by Congress to regulate development of any structures within the designated floodplain.

Zoning and Land Use

Most of the land in Garden City is used for single family dwellings, with scattered two-family and multifamily dwellings. Two-family dwellings are found on many streets, but are concentrated along Garden City Boulevard, Glen Oak Street, Yellow Mountain Road, and Gillette Avenue. There are numerous public and institutional uses in the neighborhood including two churches, an elementary school, a park, community center, and a medical clinic.

There are three nodes of neighborhood-oriented commercial along Garden City Boulevard. Most of the commercial development is concentrated in the village center along Garden City Boulevard. Churches, the school, and the community center are located in close proximity to the commercial pockets along Garden City Boulevard. The large park in the neighborhood is adjacent to the elementary school and commercial activity along Garden City Boulevard.

There are a number of vacant parcels in Garden City. Due to the area's residential character, rural streets, rolling topography and recurrent flooding, large-scale commercial and industrial development should generally not be undertaken in the neighborhood. Existing commercial properties should generally have neighborhood-commercial designations. New, small-scale neighborhood commercial areas may be appropriate in conjunction with residential development.

The majority of land is zoned RM-1, Residential Multifamily, Low Density. Commercially-zoned properties are located along Garden City Boulevard. Including Mill Mountain, park land accounts for nearly half of the neighborhood's land area, although it is zoned for residential use.

Zoning and land use in Garden City can be summarized in four general categories:



An example of multifamily housing in the neighborhood.



Various housing types within the neighborhood



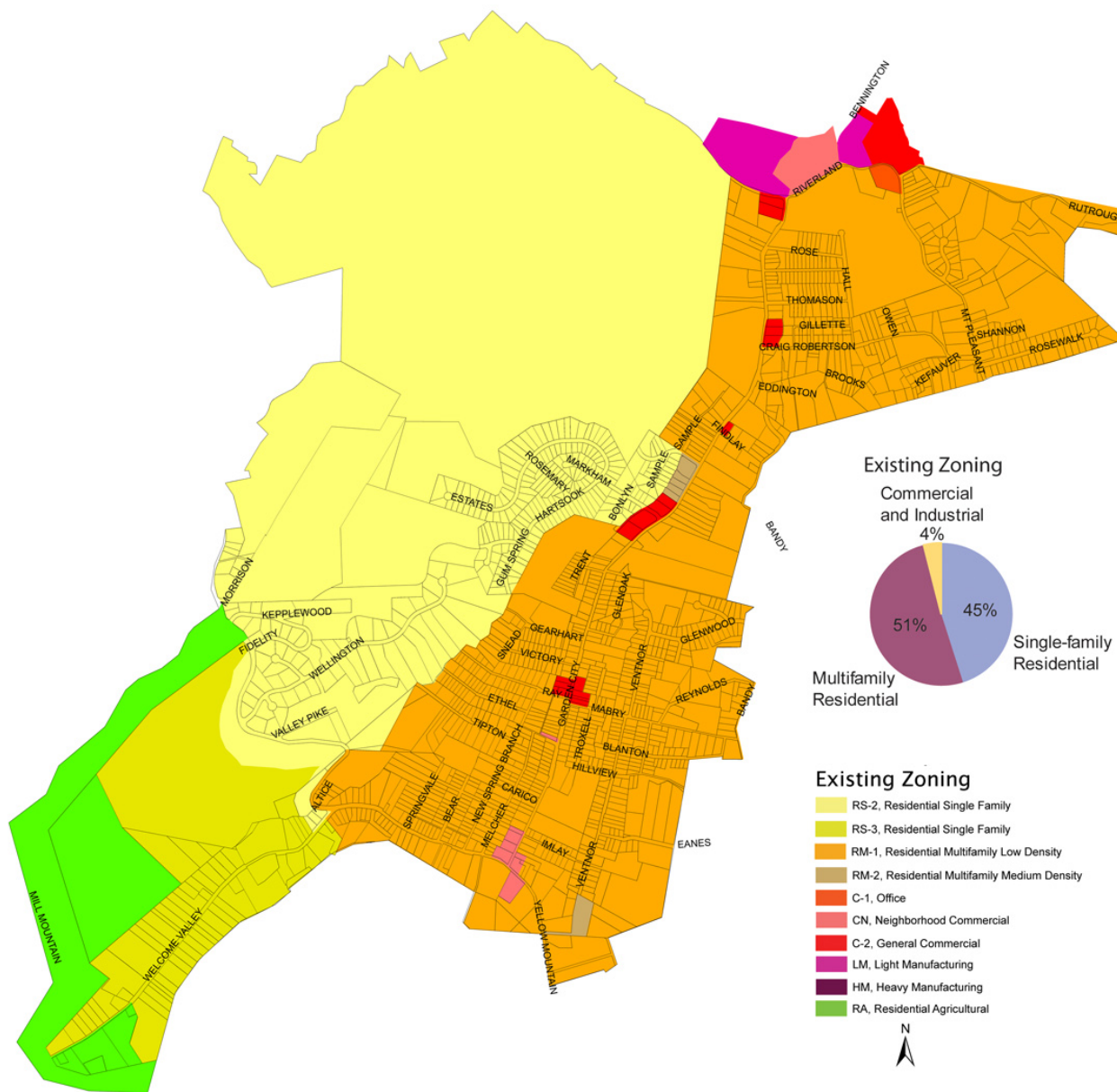
Neighborhood Village Center

1. Single-family residential: Garden City is a predominantly single-family neighborhood, though much of it is currently zoned RM-1, which permits single-family residential and allows duplexes by special exception.

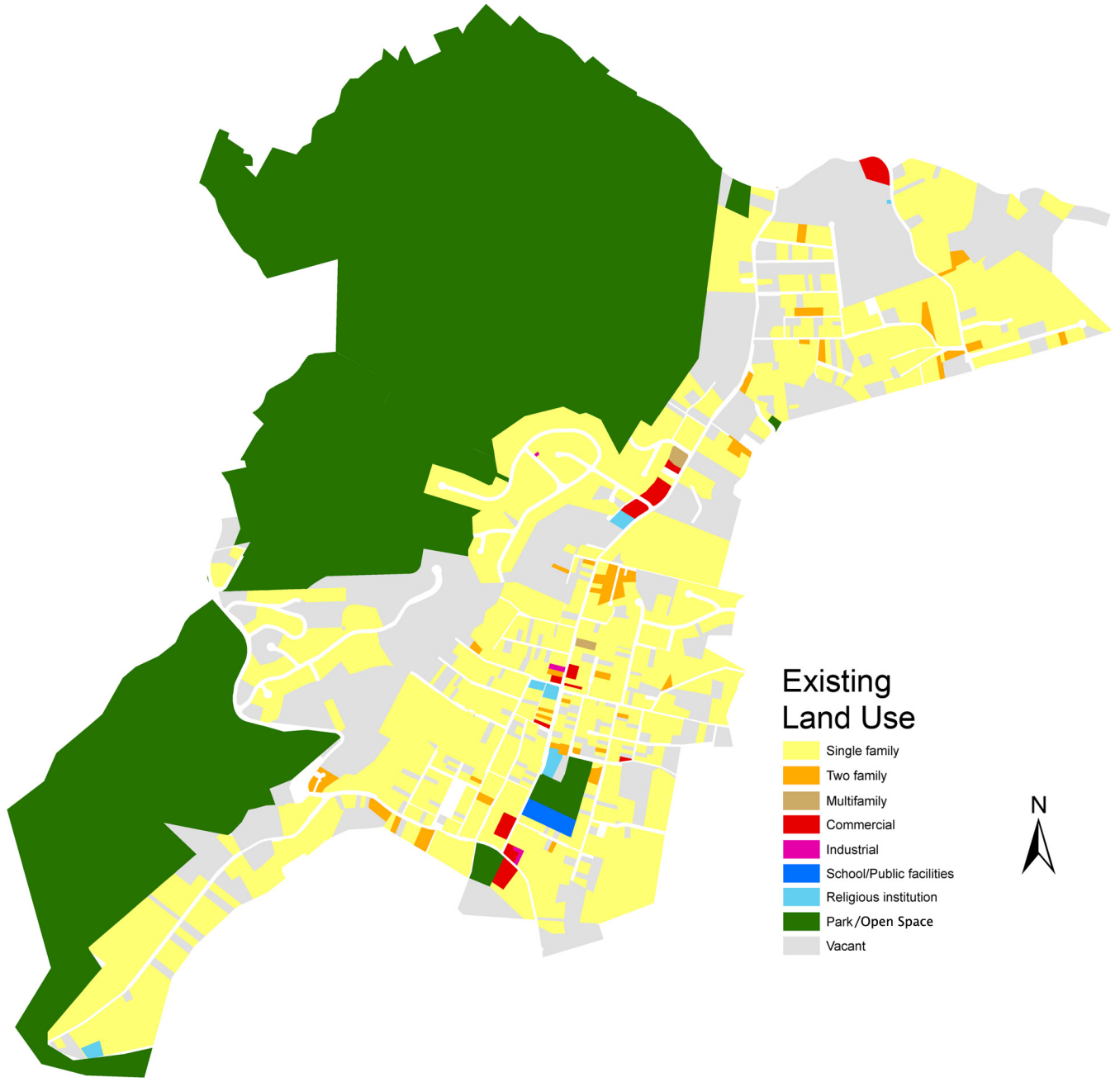
2. Mixed single and two-family residential: These areas are predominantly single-family, with two-family units in scattered locations. Very little multifamily development exists in Garden City. These areas are zoned RM-1, Residential Multifamily, Low Density District.

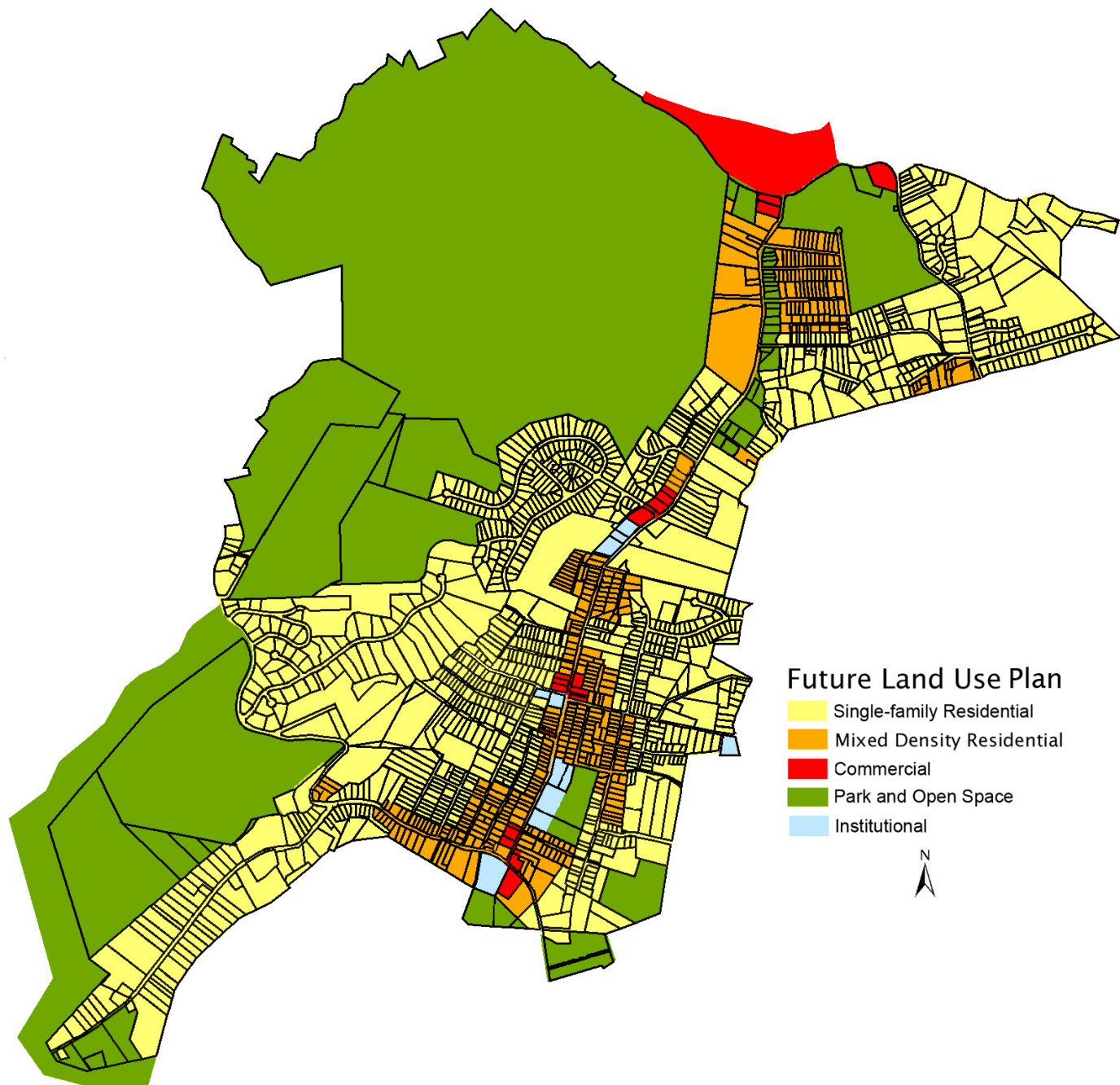
3. Village Centers: Most commercial development is located along Garden City Boulevard. Mitchell's Auto Repair Shop and Bible Baptist Church serve as a small village center at the entrance to Mill Mountain Estates. Abbott's, The Bookkeeper, and Citgo serve as the largest village center along Garden City Boulevard between Victory Road and Ray Road. Another village center is located at Garden City Boulevard and Yellow Mountain Road. A larger, local village center is located at Riverland Road and Garden City Boulevard.

4. Institutional: Garden City Elementary School, Bible Baptist Church, and Garden City Baptist Church are the only institutional uses in the neighborhood. Garden City Elementary School contains a playground and open field area in which students play. The school's location adjacent to Garden City Park makes the park ideal for student activities. Institutional uses are generally zoned the same as adjacent residential areas. They should be zoned Institutional or Recreation and Open Space, as appropriate.



The existing zoning does not support the existing land use patterns in the neighborhood. The neighborhood is comprised of predominately single-family dwellings. The future land use plan attempts to preserve intact single-family residential areas. Zoning changes are needed to encourage appropriate residential densities and appropriately scaled residential development.





One of the goals of the Future Land Use Map is to place higher density residential around the village centers. However, due to the need to evaluate relationships between land uses, changes to multifamily zoning should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis through the rezoning process.

Residential Development

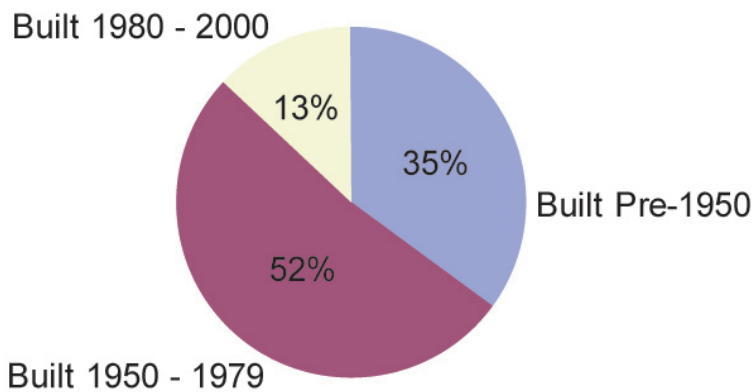


The Garden City neighborhood has a median 1950s housing stock with a strong mix of Cottage, Bungalow, and Ranch styles popular during the 1940s and 1950s. Figure 6 on the following page indicates that a majority of housing stock was constructed beginning in the 1940s and after World War II until the boom ended after the 1970s.

Growth has steadily risen since 1990 as shown in Figure 7 on the following page. Multifamily and renter occupied housing nearly doubled in the 1990s and housing units increased by 367 units.

Age of Housing Stock

Census 2000



Demographic Trends 1990 - 2000

Demographic	1990	2000	% Change
Population	2403	2981	24%
Households	987	1318	34%
Race			
White	2362	2782	18%
African American	0	143	100%
Other race	41	39	-5%
Age Distribution			
0-17 years old	476	742	56%
18-34 years old	718	677	-8%
35-64 years old	900	1211	35%
65 years old and over	309	351	14%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; 1990 and 2000 Census



Despite recent growth, Garden City has a fairly stable housing stock with a mix of old and new structures. Overall, there are few housing maintenance issues in the neighborhood, and homeownership is high among single-family homes.



Residence in Mill Mountain Estates

The history of housing construction in Garden City roughly resembles that of the City as a whole, though the neighborhood has a slightly newer housing stock overall. Many were subdivided early but were built out over a longer time span of a few decades. The majority of housing was constructed between World War II and 1980. Since then, development slowed due to less available land, yet maintained a steady pace.

The Wellington subdivision off of Yellow Mountain Road features some of the City's newest and highest-valued real estate. Housing construction began there in the late 1990s and is still underway. The development is situated in a wooded area on the side of Mill Mountain. Houses in Wellington average over twice the size of those in the rest of Garden City.

Aside from Wellington, one-story houses are the norm in Garden City. Despite differences in building styles through different eras, this trend has continued. Rosewalk Lane, off of Mount Pleasant Boulevard, features larger one and one and a half-story homes built over the last eight years, some of which have garages. Older subdivisions such as Garnand, Kefauver and Glenwood Estates, all are developed predominantly with one-story structures.

Residential Development Opportunities

There are several tracts of vacant land in the area that have development potential. In many cases lots remain vacant due to the topography and proximity to the 100 year floodplain. Many small lots have steep slopes. Some of these lots also pose geological challenges, such as rock near the surface. Proximity to the floodplain also limits development potential. Development in the floodplain is environmentally hazardous and can be more costly due to regulations that require structures to be elevated.

Several subdivisions still contain developable vacant land. Deerfield Court off of Mount Pleasant Road is a prime example. It features 16 lots, only one of which has been developed. Most of the lots are well over 10,000 square feet. Stratton Avenue, off of Garden City Boulevard, has 19 vacant parcels.



Typical one-story house

There are also a number of large parcels that could be further subdivided. Some of these appear not to have any major obstacles to limit their development. *Vision 2001-2020* encourages “housing clusters” on large sites. Housing clusters are market-rate developments that consist of a mixture of densities and housing types. With most of the City’s parcels already developed, vacant or underutilized land is at a premium. New developments need to maximize the use of the land while preserving the natural environment to the extent possible. Cluster development is ideal for large sites as it allows for greater densities while maintaining usable open space that benefits all residents.



A residence along Craig Robertson Road.

Design features of housing clusters include:

- Traditional neighborhood design: houses should be oriented close to the street (less than 20 feet) and to each other, and parking should be on-street, or to the rear or side of the house.
- Traditional neighborhood streets: pavement widths need only be between 22-30 feet, and lined with trees, curb, gutter and sidewalk. Pavement width should be 18-20 feet wide where parking is allowed on one side of the street and 26 feet wide where parking is allowed on both sides of the street.
- Green space: approximately 20% of the development should be preserved either as natural forest, a landscaped buffer, a common courtyard, or square.
- Stormwater management: retention or detention ponds should be incorporated into the development without detracting from the aesthetic quality of the natural environment.

Several sites could be potential housing cluster developments. The City should consider residential development on these sites, where there is a detailed plan that conforms to the design guidelines of *Vision 2001-2020*, the City’s comprehensive plan and the goals of the forthcoming Strategic Housing Plan. Such a plan would maximize the number of units, limit parking and impervious surfaces, and create usable open space.

Residential Development Issues

- Controlling residential densities with appropriate zoning patterns.
- Appropriate development of vacant land.

Economic Development



Existing Village Center at Ray Road and Victory Street

Commercial development is located along Garden City Boulevard. The area features neighborhood-oriented services such as a laundromat, gas station, and restaurant. There are shopping centers in close proximity, including two grocery stores on Riverland Road and Bennington Street.

Vision 2001-2020 promotes the village center concept—small commercial nodes with high-density residential elements—as a strategic initiative for development in City neighborhoods. *Vision 2001-2020* identifies one village center on the edge of Garden City, yet there are other pockets of commercial development that are essentially village centers as well. Streetscape improvements in and around the neighborhood’s village centers are needed to accommodate more pedestrian traffic.

Most village centers date back several decades, some even before the advent of zoning in Roanoke in 1928. The oldest commercial building in Garden City was built in 1927.

Nodes of commercial development along Garden City Boulevard have played an important role in the neighborhood's history and add to the area's small town quality. There are three concentrations of commercial development:

- Garden City Boulevard at Hartsook Boulevard has a gas station, a day care center, and a church.
- Garden City Boulevard between Ray and Victory Roads is the neighborhood's main village center, featuring a small shopping center with a gas station/convenience store, restaurants, a laundromat and a beauty salon. Infrastructure improvements should be targeted in this area, as it is centrally located and can provide residents with more services. The west side of Garden City Boulevard has curb, gutter and sidewalk in the village center and the blocks surrounding it, while the east side does not. Installation of curb, gutter and sidewalk and a painted crosswalk would help identify the area and improve pedestrian safety.
- Yellow Mountain Road and Garden City Boulevard is also a small village center. There are several small retail establishments, a used car garage, and a gas station/convenience store at this end of Garden City Boulevard. In addition, Garden City Elementary School and the Garden City Recreation Center are in this area.

Bennington and Riverland Road

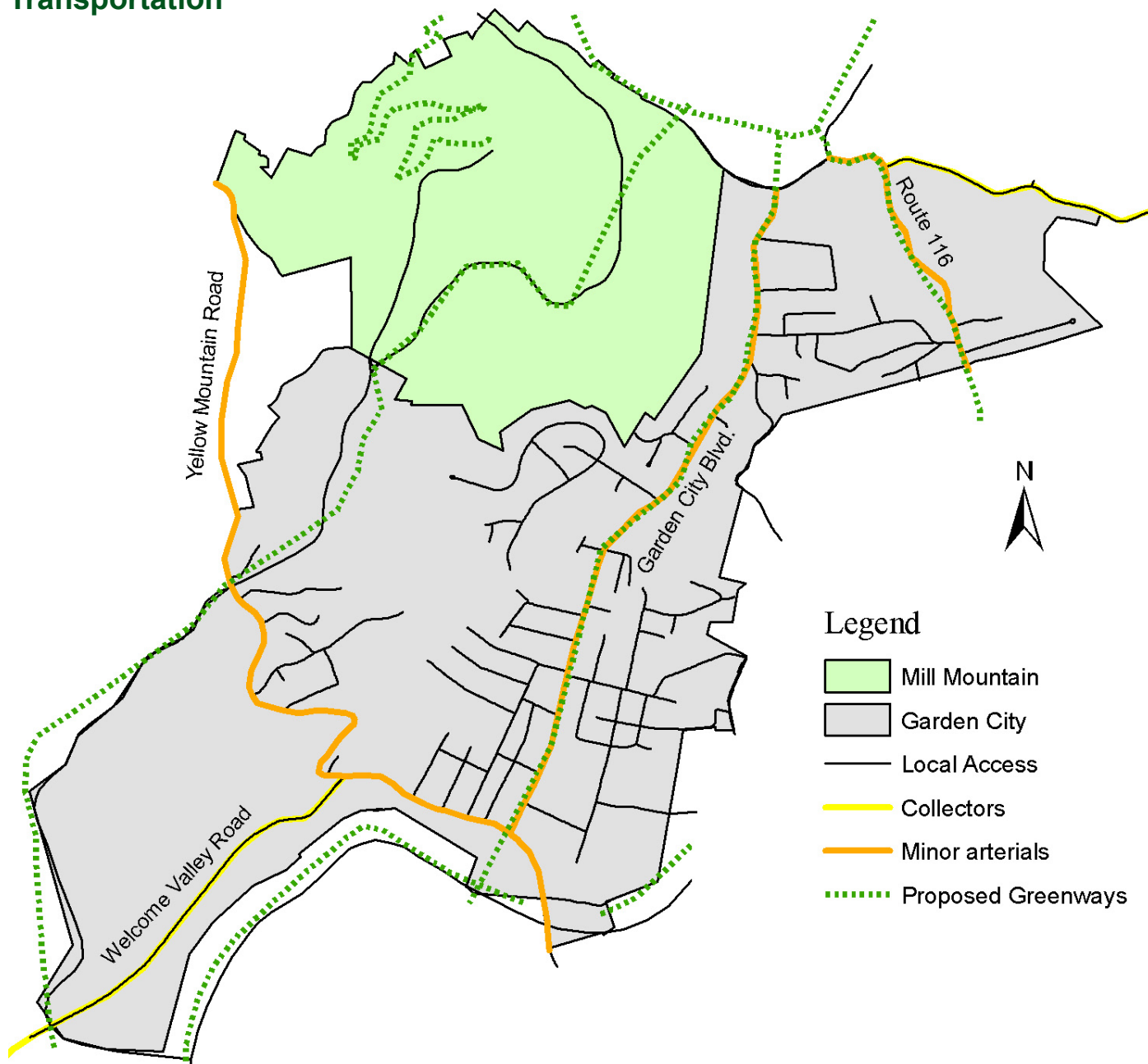
Vision 2001-2020 identifies a village center at Bennington Street and Riverland Road. This area is also included in the Morningside/Kenwood/Riverdale Neighborhood Plan. In that plan it is noted as "large village center" with vacant outparcels that could be developed. Because it serves several neighborhoods, it also has characteristics of a local commercial center. The Morningside/Kenwood/Riverdale Neighborhood Plan recommends streetscape improvements to Riverland Road and Bennington Street which will enhance pedestrian access for nearby residents.



Gas station located in the village center at Ray Road and Victory Street along Garden City Boulevard

Infrastructure

Transportation



Garden City’s street system can be categorized as “hierarchical,” a combination of older, rural curvilinear streets, with suburban streets and dead ends. Hierarchical street patterns are characterized by main arterial streets that accommodate most, if not all, traffic from adjoining streets that are not connected to others.

All streets in the neighborhood have at least two lanes. The neighborhood has few functioning alleys. There are a number of ‘paper,’ or unimproved alleys. Garden City Boulevard and Yellow Mountain Road are the major arterial streets, though Welcome Valley Road also provides a gateway from Route 220. Mount Pleasant Boulevard also provides access to the neighborhood off of Rutrough Road, and Bandy Road is a collector street that connects directly to Roanoke County.

Overall, Garden City’s street system is not problematic. However, attention needs to be paid to traffic patterns on the neighborhood’s edges.



Dead-end street with no cul-de-sac



Typical neighborhood street



Garden City Boulevard



North Garden City Boulevard



Garden City Boulevard in front of the elementary school

Garden City Boulevard serves as the main north-south arterial street. Most of the collector streets and access streets connect to Garden City Boulevard at some point. It is a two-lane paved street with speed limits averaging 30 miles per hour. About half of the boulevard has curb and gutter, but there is very little sidewalk.

The Virginia Department of Transportation 2003 Annual Average Daily Traffic Count ranged from 4,200 vehicles per day near Yellow Mountain Road to 5,300 vehicles per day near Riverland Road. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations would facilitate alternative means of travel throughout the corridor. Opportunities for parking are also needed along the boulevard. Garden City Boulevard should remain a two-lane road, but additional right-of-way may be required to accommodate pedestrian, bicycle, and parking. While pedestrian improvements are a focal point of this plan, aggressive traffic calming measures are not necessary to improve overall function and safety.

There are numerous opportunities to place curb, gutter, and sidewalk along Garden City Boulevard; however, right-of-way is insufficient in several areas. Curb and gutter are needed on both sides of the boulevard from the intersection of Ivywood and Davenport Road, south to the school property line. Curb and gutter are also needed in front of Bible Baptist Church several hundred yards south on both sides. There is no curb, gutter or sidewalk on the northern section of Garden City Boulevard. Sidewalks can be placed along some of this same stretch. Topography may preclude sidewalk construction in some places along the west side of the boulevard. The east side of the road could contain curb, gutter, and sidewalk from Riverland Road all the way to the bridge over Gum Spring Branch.

Garden City Greenway

The Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan includes a Garnand Branch route, which is roughly aligned with the stream and Garden City Boulevard. The route would connect the Roanoke River Greenway corridor to the Blue Ridge Parkway, just south of the neighborhood's borders.

Development of the Garnand Branch Greenway should be considered in the form of an off-road trail from the Roanoke River Greenway and Riverland Road to an area near Crown Point Road, Hartsook, Davenport and Ivywood Avenues. From that point, there are three alternatives to complete the route:

1. On-road facilities could be developed along Garden City Boulevard from the area noted above to its terminus at Yellow Mountain Road. A lighted trail could be developed from the Garden City Recreation Center to the Blue Ridge Parkway to complete the route.
2. Connecting to new trailhead plans at Mill Mountain Park via Crown Point Road, S.E. This option remains almost entirely on public right-of-way from Riverland Road to the trailhead at Mill Mountain Park.
3. Connecting to new trailhead plans at Mill Mountain Park via Hartsook Boulevard.

Considerations for developing the Garnand Branch route should also include:

- Use publicly-owned parcels to create as much of an off-road trail as possible.
- Shared bicycle/pedestrian facilities
- Bicycle lanes on Garden City Boulevard
- Infill of curb, gutter and sidewalk on Garden City Boulevard with lighting and signage denoting the greenway route
- A design of the route may vary between on and off-road connections as needed. Appropriate lighting and signage would be required.

Aside from the Garnand Branch Greenway Route, Garden City Boulevard should be evaluated for streetscape improvements consistent with *Vision 2001-2020*. Specifically these include bike/pedestrian facilities, street trees, lighting, and landscaped medians if possible. As the main street of the neighborhood, Garden City Boulevard needs to both accommodate vehicles and pedestrians, and add to the neighborhood's small town character. Any future right-of-way acquisition along Garden City Boulevard should be for bike/pedestrian or beautification improvements. Garden City Boulevard should not be considered for any future widening that would add travel lanes.

**Riverland Road/
Bennington Street**

Overall, there were few concerns about traffic in the public workshops. One exception is the intersection of Riverland Road and Bennington Street. VDOT’s six-year improvement plan includes improvements to this intersection. At present, City staff is conducting preliminary engineering studies to redesign the intersection. The project will be funded by VDOT but will be designed by City Transportation Division staff according to the schedule below.

Phase	Estimated Cost	Commencement
Preliminary		
Engineering	\$120,000	Underway
Right-of-way		
Acquisition	\$100,000	Fiscal Year 2008
Construction	\$800,000	Fiscal Year 2009
Total	\$1,020,000	

Road	Section	Average Daily Trips (1990-1992)	Projected Daily Trips (2015)	Change
Garden City Blvd.	Ray Rd. to Bandy Rd.	7,959	6,700	-16%
Garden City Blvd.	Bandy Rd. to Riverland Rd.	7,959	16,600	109%
Yellow Mtn. Rd.	Jefferson St. to Rte. 672	2,313	3,100	34%
Yellow Mtn. Rd.	Rte. 672 to Garden City Blvd.	2,313	3,100	34%
Yellow Mtn. Rd.	Garden City Blvd. to SCL Roanoke	2,313	3,100	34%
Riverland Rd.	Bennington St. to 9th St.	8,892	14,300	61%
Mount Pleasant Blvd.	SCL Roanoke to Riverland Rd.	4,571	7,200	58%

Source: Roanoke Valley Area Long Range Transportation Plan, 1995-2015



Current neighborhood welcome sign

Gateway

Garden City has a tremendous opportunity to create a dramatic gateway to the neighborhood. The flat land within the floodplain along Garnand Branch provides the opportunity to incorporate gardens and a greenway to add to what is currently in place, the neighborhood welcome sign. This gateway space would continue to allow the neighborhood to give a warm and welcoming impression to people entering from Riverland Road and Bennington Street.



Possible Gateway alternative with greenway

Stormwater Management



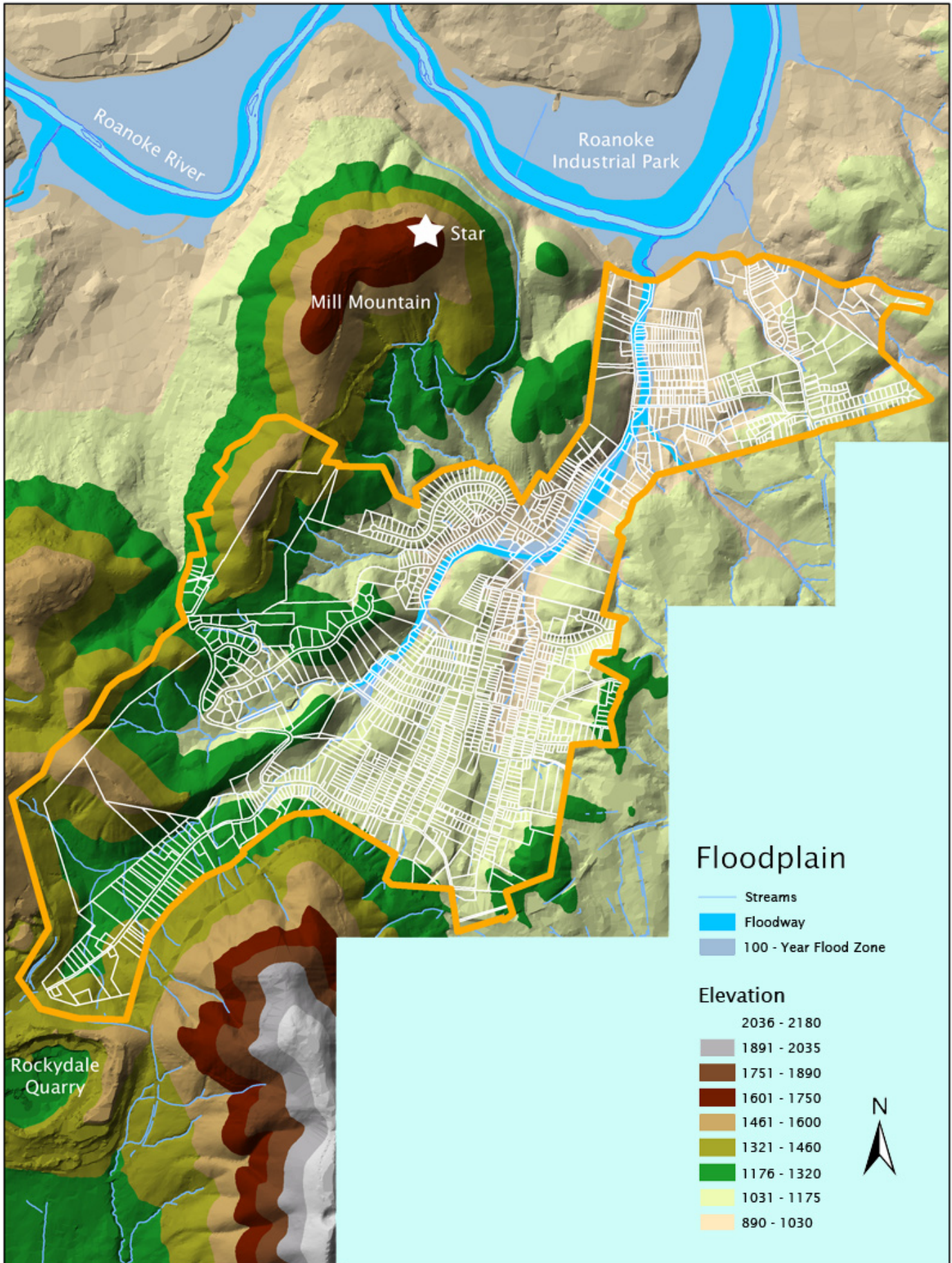
Northern section of Garnand Branch

Flooding has been an ongoing problem in Garden City and was the most commonly cited issue raised by residents during the public workshops. At the time of the planning process, the most recent Capital Improvements Program (CIP) lists 13 projects in Garden City, all of which are related to flood reduction. CIP projects are ranked by priority. The highest ranking Garden City project is ranked 33rd out of 154 total.

Garden City is flood prone due to its proximity to the Roanoke River. Two tributaries, Gum Spring and Garnand Branch, flow through the neighborhood. The 100-year flood plain covers almost all of the Riverland Road/Bennington Street village center and follows Garnand Branch south past Tipton Avenue.

The neighborhood experienced serious flooding in the City's major flood of 1985, but also experienced a storm in 1995 that was centered on Garden City and created intensive flooding. After the flood of 1995, Garden City was declared a federal disaster area. The City used federal grant money to develop the Garden City Flood Reduction Plan and purchase properties with homes within the flood plain. The Garden City Flood Reduction Plan includes 10 phases. At present, Phase 3—channelization of Gum Spring Branch—is being completed. Continuing these projects is the highest priority of this plan. However, a future reduction of flooding is the best that can be achieved. The best means of limiting future flood damage is to limit development in the flood plain.

Recently, federal funds were appropriated for the Roanoke River Flood Reduction Project and work has begun on the section of the river between 9th and Bennington Streets. Completion of this project should reduce future flooding levels.



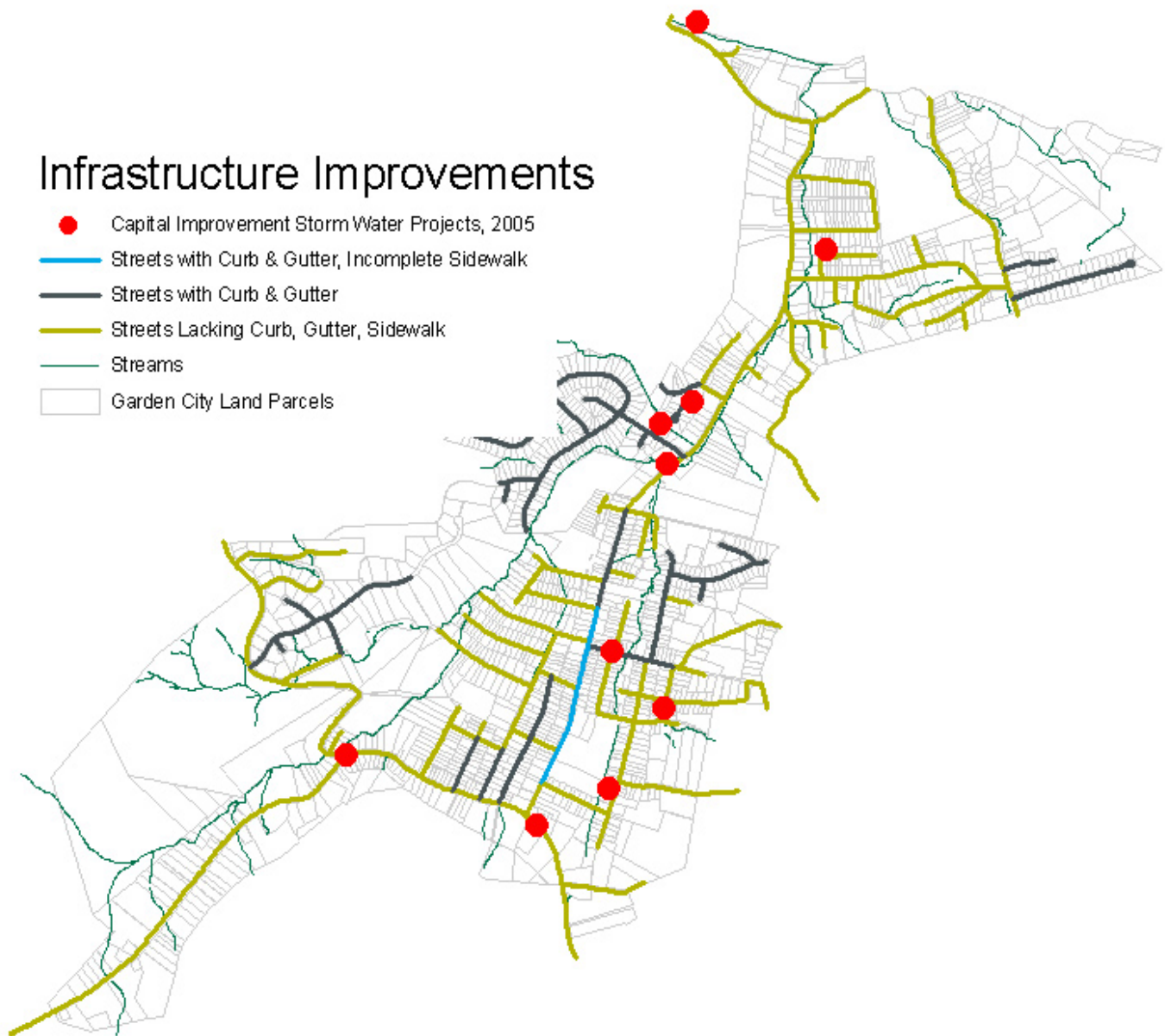
General Infrastructure

General infrastructure improvements were identified in the public workshops as a major shortcoming of the area. Curb, gutter and sidewalk are lacking on most streets in Garden City and several households in the neighborhood are not served by public sewer lines.

Requests for infrastructure improvements—curb, gutter, sidewalk, and storm drainage mitigation—are submitted to the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works. All requests are reviewed by several City departments and rated based on their need, feasibility, and relationship to any special project areas. One criterion is the location's inclusion in a neighborhood plan. In addition to providing direction for individual requests, this plan should serve as the primary source for determining where infrastructure funds should be allocated in Garden City.

Aside from sections of Garden City Boulevard, most streets do not have curb, gutter and sidewalk. Some residential streets have curb only. On some streets it is not feasible to install curb, gutter and sidewalk due to the lack of right-of-way, rolling topography, and drainage issues. Due to the area's hilly topography, development with impervious surfaces can lead to or exacerbate the collection of stormwater in low lying areas. Coordination of stormwater and curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements is essential to ensure new curbing will not create storm water problems.

Infrastructure Improvements



Curb, Gutter, and Sidewalk

Of all the streets in the neighborhood, Garden City Boulevard is the highest priority for a complete system of curb, gutter and sidewalk. Many residential streets could benefit from curb installation only, and are not developed densely enough to justify sidewalk installation.

The Infrastructure Improvements map lists all streets that lack curb, gutter, and sidewalk. A number of factors should be considered when making decisions for the installation of curb, gutter and sidewalk:

- *Vision 2001-2020*: The comprehensive plan addresses streetscape improvements as a priority, including sidewalk installation.
- The Subdivision Ordinance: The ordinance requires that developers install curb, gutter, and sidewalk whenever subdividing land for development.



Stormwater drainage and curb and gutter issues along Ray Road

- Width of the street's right-of-way: Many streets in the area are not wide enough to install sidewalks, but can accommodate curb and gutter.
- Pedestrian safety and volume of traffic: Sidewalk installation improves pedestrian safety, especially on heavily traveled streets.
- Storm water drainage problems: curb and gutter can alleviate drainage and run-off problems on many streets, but often have little to no impact on properties below the grade of the street.

Public water lines serve virtually the entire neighborhood. Sewer lines are not as prevalent, though the vast majority of the neighborhood's houses are connected to public lines. Residents cited the lack of sewer lines as a concern during the planning process. Septic tanks are the responsibility of private property owners; however they pose public health risks if owners fail to maintain them properly.

Water and Sewer

City Council adopted an amendment to the City Code in 2003 that would require all new development to connect to City sewer lines. Only in circumstances where gravity connections or pump stations are impossible can a property owner install a septic tank. This likely applies to some lots in Garden City. The recently-created Western Virginia Water Authority now processes and administers all sewer and water connections. The Authority's policy for extending main sewer lines requires residents of a given area, usually a block or more of a street, to cover half the costs. This is a considerable expense for most property owners and it requires significant time for them to reach consensus and organize their efforts.

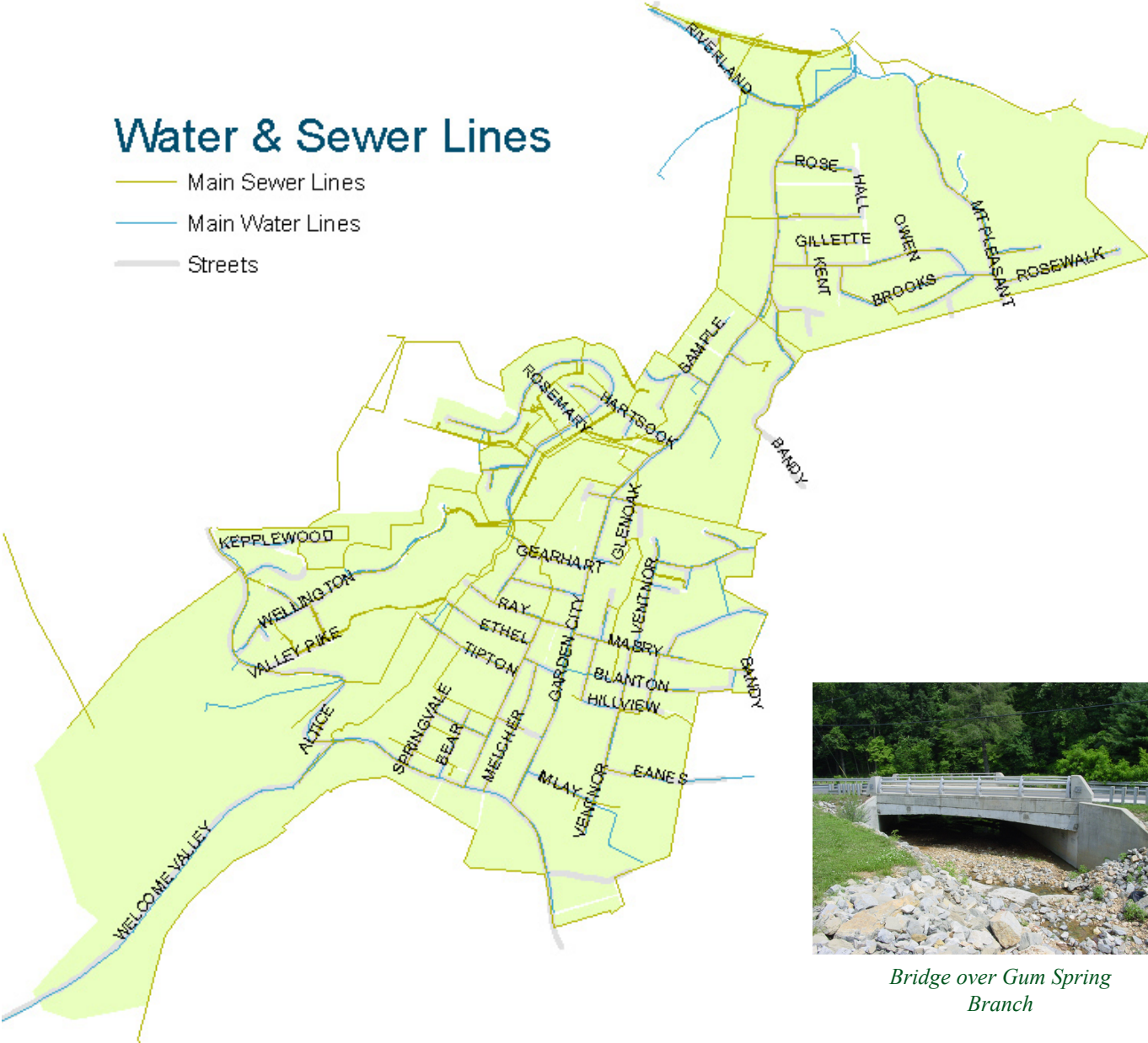
The Authority desires to connect as many properties to public sewer lines as possible and continues to evaluate sewer line extensions.

Infrastructure Issues

- Pedestrian access on Garden City Boulevard
- Traffic control at the intersection of Riverland Road/Bennington Street
- Flood prone properties
- Lack of public sewer service in some areas

Water & Sewer Lines

- Main Sewer Lines
- Main Water Lines
- Streets



Bridge over Gum Spring Branch

Public Services

Fire/EMS

Fire/EMS response is provided from Station #11 and Station #8. Fire Station #11 is located at 1502 Riverland Road. It houses two engines (water trucks), one of which is a reserve unit. The City's newest fire truck is located at Station #11. Station #8, located at 2328 Crystal Spring Avenue, houses an engine truck. These stations are also part of a joint service agreement with Roanoke County in the Clearbrook area. The neighborhood receives ambulance service from Station #6 and Roanoke County's Mount Pleasant station through an automatic aid agreement.

Libraries & Schools

The closest branch library is the Jackson Park Branch on Morningside Street next to Jackson Middle School.

Garden City Elementary School, located on Garden City Boulevard, has 400 students from pre-school to 5th grade. Upon graduation from Garden City Elementary, students go to Stonewall Jackson Middle School and then to Patrick Henry High School.



Garden City Elementary School

Transit Service

Valley Metro provides bus service with one route that travels along Garden City Boulevard from Riverland Road into the southwest corner of the neighborhood. The majority of residents are not within one-half mile of the route and do not have easy pedestrian access to transit. However, this was not cited as an issue by residents.

Solid Waste Management

Roanoke's Department of Solid Waste Management indicates there is a city-wide problem with residents failing to remove trash containers from the street after collection. City Code requires that containers be placed at the curb no earlier than 7:00 PM the day before collection and must be removed by 7:00 PM the day of collection. Complying with this law is important to maintaining neighborhood appearance.

Automated refuse collection and recycling collection are provided on-street throughout the neighborhood. No issues with solid waste management were cited by residents.

Vision 2001-2020 states that the City of Roanoke wants to be known as a model of the Valley when it comes to recycling. Roanoke City Council made a commitment to expanding recycling in Roanoke. For that growth to take place, each neighborhood needs to improve recycling rates.



Quality of Life



Property at the eastern end of Craig Robertson Road, S.E.

Garden City provides a high quality of life. Its location southeast of the City and on the south side of Mill Mountain gives it its own special feel. The neighborhood does not contain any industry or manufacturing and few commercial uses.



Garden City contains a park and a recreation center with a playground. The recreation center is the old Garden City School. Built in 1927, it became a community center in 1949. The center is located at the intersection of Garden City Boulevard and Yellow Mountain Road. Various activities such as ceramics classes, neighborhood cookouts, and after-school activities for neighborhood students also take place at the center. Garden City Park is located along Hillview Avenue at its intersection with Troxell Avenue. The park contains a baseball field, restrooms, picnic shelter, and a playground. The park also provides a field for various events. The park is lighted so that games can be played at night. The Roanoke Department of Parks and Recreation operates and maintains the community center and Garden City Park.

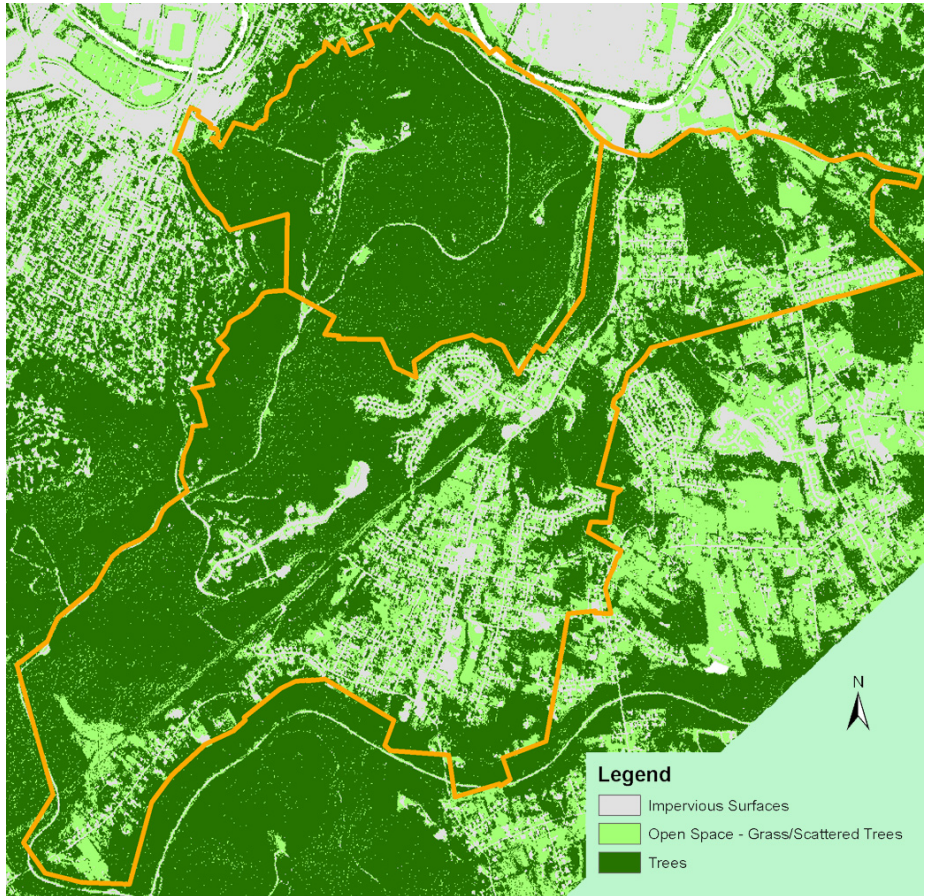


The neighborhood has an active neighborhood organization. The Garden City Civic League (GCCL) meets in the community center regularly and often has informal gatherings at the center. The civic league has undertaken numerous community projects such as the neighborhood gateway, Garden City Park, and the building of a playground and basketball court at the recreation center. The civic league conducts bi-monthly neighborhood meetings to carry out the official business of the league.



Former school now serves as the recreation center.

Environmental Resources



There is abundant tree cover in the neighborhood as well as large areas of open/green space. The City's Urban Forestry Plan calls for 40% tree coverage within the City limits in ten years. About one-half of the Garden City neighborhood including Mill Mountain, is covered by tree canopy. Garden City has more tree canopy than any other neighborhood in the City of Roanoke even without Mill Mountain included.

Garnand Branch runs along the eastern and northern sections of the neighborhood. The Garden City Greenway, when developed, will allow access to green spaces along the branch. Gum Spring enters into Garnand Branch. Policies should promote improvements to the water quality of these streams by controlling storm water quality and volume. Vegetated buffers should be established along these streams to filter runoff before it enters the stream channel.

Recommendations

Community Design Policies:

- Development patterns will be organized around four commercial centers located along Garden City Boulevard. Higher density residential will be encouraged around these centers, with residential densities generally decreasing with distance from the centers. Zoning will implement and reinforce this development pattern.
- The transportation system will support mobility within the neighborhood and to other parts of the city. New development should seek to enhance or maintain the connectivity of the street system. Streets, particularly Garden City Boulevard, should support pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation.

Community Design Actions:

- Change zoning patterns to reinforce primarily single-family residential areas and to encourage future commercial development that is compatible with neighborhood character in terms of intensity and scale.
- Provide continuous pedestrian and bicycle access along Garden City Boulevard.

Residential Development Policies:

- Zoning patterns will reinforce appropriate residential densities.
- New development on vacant land should use land efficiently. Principles for cluster development patterns, as discussed in *Vision 2001-2020*, should be considered for remaining developable land in the Garden City area. PUD (planned unit development) zoning districts should be considered to facilitate such development.

Residential Development Actions:

- Change zoning patterns to encourage appropriate residential density patterns as established by existing development.
- Consider higher density development near commercial centers and cluster developments on a case-by-case basis through the rezoning process.

Economic Development Policies

- Commercial zoning districts should be clearly delineated and compact.
- Village centers should provide a pedestrian oriented commercial area for nearby residents.

Economic Development Actions

- Limit commercial zoning to properties that are located at identified commercial centers.
- Encourage redevelopment of vacant commercial properties before adding land for new commercial development.
- Encourage outparcel and linear building development at the Riverland Road and Bennington Street village center.
- Improve pedestrian access and enhance and denote the village centers at Riverland Road/Bennington Street, and along Garden City Boulevard between Ray and Victory Roads with landscaping and stamped asphalt crosswalks.

Infrastructure Policies

- Streetscapes should be well maintained, attractive and functional for pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle traffic.
- Streets widths should be kept to the minimum necessary to accommodate vehicular traffic and on-street parking including fire and EMS vehicles.
- Public water and sewer service will be provided for all new developments unless it can be demonstrated that connection is not possible. Existing development should be evaluated for connections within the framework of existing policies.
- Curb, gutter and sidewalk will be provided for all new developments. Arterial and collector streets should have urban amenities such as sidewalks, and curb and gutter. Appropriate species of trees should be planted as a part of such improvements.
- Infrastructure should be installed in conjunction with new development, in some cases including street improvements to address added traffic. Traffic studies by prospective developers may be required.
- Stormwater runoff should be mitigated as much as possible through improvements that are consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Infrastructure Actions

- Install sewer and water connections where needed within the framework of existing connection policies.
- Construct new curb, gutter and sidewalk based on the following factors:
 - Install curb, gutter and sidewalk on arterial streets and infill of blocks with incomplete networks.
 - New subdivisions – all new developments will have curb, gutter, and sidewalk.

- In select residential areas, install curb and gutter depending on existing drainage conditions. Refer to the infrastructure improvements map to identify potential project areas (p.32).
- Focus improvements in areas that have been identified as having storm-water problems. Sidewalks may be installed on only one side of a street where residual right-of-way is limited.
- Improve the appearance of Garden City Boulevard without compromising its function as the neighborhood's main street. Consider the following:
 - Improve pedestrian access with curb, gutter and sidewalk where feasible, and a stamped crosswalk in the vicinity of the village center between Ray and Victory Roads.
 - Add bike lanes and/or a greenway route (Garnand Branch) that will connect to the Mill Mountain Greenway and/or the Blue Ridge Parkway
 - Consider a center landscaped median near the village center between Ray and Victory Roads.

Storm Water Management Policies

- Alleviate storm water runoff as much as possible through alternatives to curb and gutter. Install curb and gutter in select areas that will alleviate drainage problems.
- Establish or maintain vegetated strips along streams to filter runoff and improve water quality.

Storm Water Management Actions

- Implement River and Creek Corridor overlay district along streams to protect vegetative buffers.
- Complete the remaining phases of the Garden City and Roanoke River Flood Reduction Projects.

Public Services Policies

- Police officers should keep neighborhood residents informed of significant occurrences of crime trends in the area.
- Fire/EMS stations should be outfitted to provide efficient and effective response.
- Code enforcement inspectors should take a proactive approach to addressing all property maintenance violations

Public Services Actions

- Continue communication between neighborhood organizations, Neighborhood Services, and the Police Department regarding crime prevention.
- Improve Fire/EMS Station Number 11 per the recommendations of the Fire/EMS Strategic Business Plan and continue automatic aid agreement with Roanoke County.
- Increase code enforcement efforts in the neighborhood, with particular emphasis on citing illegal outdoor storage.

Quality of Life Policies

- Neighborhood and area parks will be preserved to provide excellent recreational facilities for residents.
- The greenway routes of the Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan will be developed to enhance the quality of life in the area.

Quality of Life Actions

- Identify park and public open space areas for preservation in the update of the zoning ordinance.
- Maintain and enhance access to recreation resources.
- Develop the Garnand Branch Greenway with a combination of on and off-road facilities.

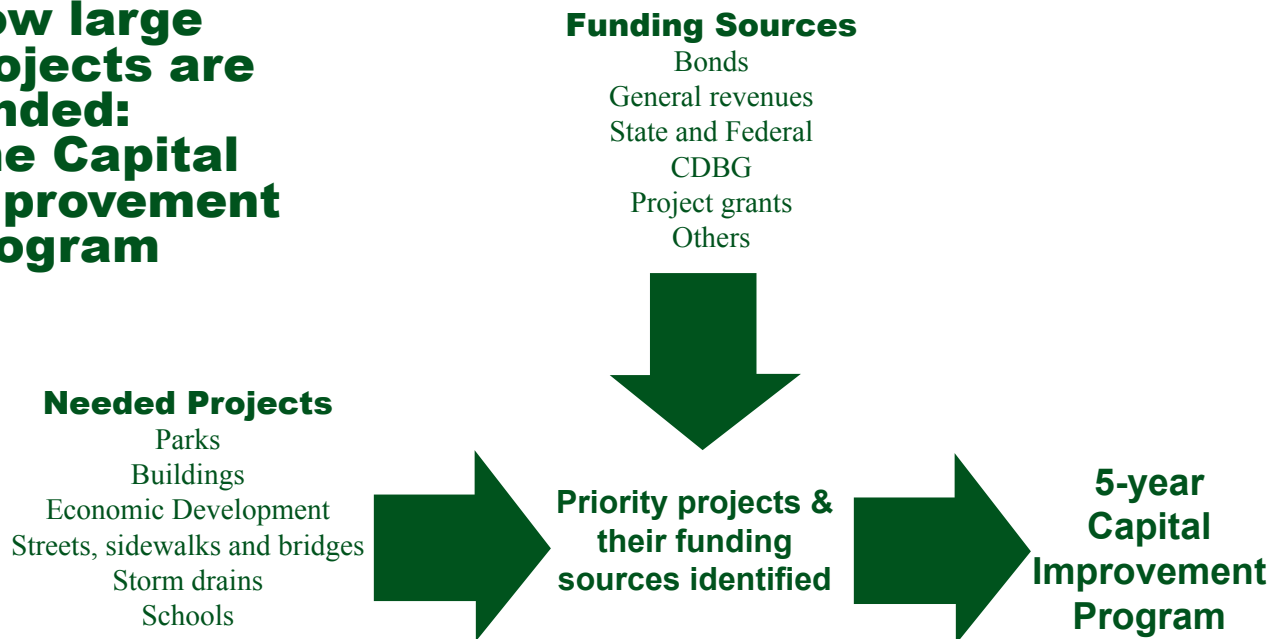
Implementation

Funding

Funding for major infrastructure projects is generally provided through the City’s Capital Improvement Program. Funding can come from a variety of sources, including CDBG, transportation funding, state and federal funds, and general revenue. The Capital Improvement Program is developed by identifying needed projects and matching them with potential funding sources. Each project is reviewed and ranked in terms of priority.

The chart on the following page identifies major projects, their time frame, the lead agency or department, and potential sources of funding. The cost of most projects such as streetscape improvements is usually determined after more detailed planning is completed.

How large projects are funded: The Capital Improvement Program



Below is a general guide to the time needed to carry out the actions of this plan. It is intended to assist with scheduling priority projects, but does not provide a specific timeframe for each item.

Action	Y 1	E 2	A 3	R 4	Ongoing	Lead Agency	Potential Funding Sources
Zoning Changes	*					PB & ED	PB & ED Operating Fund
Improvements to Ray Road and Victory Road				*		PW	PW capital account
Improvements to Garden City Boulevard Corridor				*		PW	VDOT, TEA-3, Bond, PW capital account
Improvements to intersection of Bennington and Riverland Road			*			PW	PW capital account
Install curb, gutter, and sidewalk on arterial streets				*		PW	PW capital account
Install curb, gutter, and sidewalk on residential streets				*		PW	VDOT, TEA-3, Bond, PW capital account
Install sewer/water lines				*		WVWA	PW capital account
Complete storm water projects				*		PW	Residents, WVWA capital account
Construct Garden City greenway				*		PW	PW capital account

*Included in VDOT 6 year plan and fully funded, still subject to public review of design proposals

**Included in VDOT 6 year plan, but not funded

Abbreviations:

PB & ED = Roanoke Planning Building and Economic Development

PW = Roanoke Public Works

WVWA = Western Virginia Water Authority