



Harrison & Washington Park

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

ROANOKE
VIRGINIA



Adopted by City Council November 17, 2003

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Planning Building & Development

Introduction

The Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods are distinct areas, but are being combined into one plan to facilitate completion of plans throughout the city. The Harrison neighborhood is bounded by Orange Avenue on the north, by Moorman Road on the south, by Fifth Street on the east, and by Fourteenth Street on the west. The neighborhood provides the opportunity for traditional historic neighborhood living. Washington Park is defined as the area bounded on the north by I-581, on the south by Orange Avenue, on the east by I-581, and on the west by Tenth Street. The area offers a traditional neighborhood setting in addition to several multifamily developments.

This plan is a component of Vision 2001-2020, Roanoke's 20-year comprehensive plan. Vision 2001-2020 recommends the development of neighborhood plans in order to provide a more detailed assessment of the neighborhoods and to provide a guide for future decisions. This plan identifies significant issues that need to be addressed in the future. Discussion is organized into the following six elements:

- Community Design
- Residential Development
- Economic Development
- Infrastructure
- Public Services
- Quality of Life



Planning Process

Planning staff conducted a detailed study of current neighborhood conditions such as land use patterns, housing, and infrastructure. Residents were involved with the development of the plan through workshops and draft reviews. This plan is a reflection of participation from residents, neighborhood stakeholders, and City of Roanoke Planning staff. Citizen participation through meetings, phone calls, and email was a valuable part of the neighborhood planning process.

Community Issues

The major issues identified through the process include:

- Aging housing
- Code enforcement
- Large numbers of low-income, multifamily units
- Compatibility of infill development
- Tenth Street improvements

Priority Recommendations

This plan makes recommendations for neighborhood improvement and development. Most recommendations are for action over a 5-year period, while some recommendations are longer term. Major recommendations include:

- Encouraging a balance of housing choices in all price ranges and housing options that promote social and economic diversity
- Promoting general physical enhancement through continued code enforcement efforts
- Adopting the Neighborhood Design District to encourage compatible infill housing
- Improving the appearance and function of major streets

A goal of the planning process was to involve the community in determining its own future. While city government will be a major participant in implementing this plan, citizen involvement will be essential. Harrison and Washington Park residents must take an active role in neighborhood improvement, cooperating with City departments, monitoring progress, and getting involved in implementation.

History

Harrison and Washington Park are historically single-family neighborhoods. However, the neighborhoods have seen some increases in commercial and industrial uses. In the Harrison neighborhood, most of the homes were built between 1900 and 1920. Many of the original homes are still standing and contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood. The Washington Park neighborhood experienced new development between 1920 and 1960. After World War II, many people settled in the northwestern area of the neighborhood.

Development Milestones

- In 1914, Harrison School was built as the first school for blacks in the Roanoke Valley.
- In the 1920s, a small commercial area developed on Moorman Road and Fairfax Avenue.
- Lucy Addison School was built in 1950 to accommodate the growing population.
- Washington Park was used as a landfill in the 1950s. It was capped and the park was established in the early 1960s.
- Lincoln Terrace public housing project was built in 1952.
- In 1954, Burrell Hospital was built. The hospital was the first in the valley for the black community.
- The Britewood apartment complex, now known as Afton Apartments, was developed in 1970.
- Hunt Manor was developed in 1974.
- Brown-Robertson Park was established in 2002.

Population

The population in the area increased between 1990 and 2000. In addition, the area also had an increase in households. The study area experienced an increase in black residents and residents of other races, while white residents decreased by 17%. The area also experienced substantial increases in the number of younger and middle age populations, while the number of younger adults and the elderly decreased.

To compare demographic changes between 1990 and 2000, census tract level information had to be used. However, the census tracts do not match neighborhood boundaries and include substantial portions of surrounding areas. The chart below compares the same census tracts in both 1990 and 2000.

Population Trends 1990-2000			
	1990	2000	% change
Total Population	5,719	5,976	+4.5%
Racial Distribution			
White	709	587	-17%
Black	4,968	5,193	+4.5%
Other races & multiracial	42	193	+359%
Age Distribution			
0-17 years old	1,485	1,776	+20%
18-34 years old	1,523	1,185	-22%
34-65 years old	1,788	2,205	+23%
65 years +	923	824	-11%
Households	2,230	2,439	+9.4%
Source: US Census Bureau			

A more accurate count is provided by looking at census blocks, which are small portions of census tracts. In the year 2000, the population of the Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods was 2,273, about 2.4% of Roanoke's population. The area has a predominantly black population. The largest age bracket is 35-64. In the Harrison neighborhood, the population is 1,019, with 393 households, and in Washington Park, the population is 1,254, with 531 households. Census data indicate the following trends:

- Minority populations are increasing
- Increases in youth and middle age brackets
- Large youth population

Population Characteristics			
	Harrison/ Washington Park	Neighborhood Percentage	Percentage for Roanoke
Total Population	2,273	n/a	n/a
Racial Distribution			
White	1,921	84%	27%
Black	271	12%	69%
Other races & multiracial	81	4%	4%
Age Distribution			
0-17 years old	670	29%	23%
18-34 years old	459	20%	23%
34-65 years old	788	35%	38%
65 years +	356	16	16%
Households	924	n/a	n/a
Source: US Census Bureau			

Community Design

Harrison is a traditional urban neighborhood that was developed in the early 1900s that consists mainly of single-family homes. Multifamily housing and limited commercial uses are scattered throughout the area. *Vision 2001-2020* designated a small area along Eleventh Street as a village center.

Noted developments in the Harrison neighborhood are the Harrison Museum of African American Culture, which is the old Harrison School, the old Burrell Memorial Hospital, five churches, a funeral home, three convenience stores, and one gas station.

Alleys provide access to the rear of properties. Rolling terrain provides views of downtown and surrounding areas.

Washington Park, a neighborhood which has both traditional and suburban characteristics, developed between 1920 and 1960. It contains areas of single-family detached homes on small lots, large multifamily apartment complexes, and commercial / industrial areas. *Vision 2001-2020* identifies a small area along Tenth Street and Andrews Road as a village center.

Noted land uses in the Washington Park area include the Roanoke City School Administration building (once the Booker T. Washington High School), Booker T. Washington Park, Addison Middle School, Lincoln Terrace Elementary School, and a small industrial area.

The neighborhood has few street trees. Topography is rolling, streets in the areas to the south and far east of the neighborhood have a grid pattern, while others are interrupted by dead-ends, due to the fact that Booker T. Washington Park is positioned in the center of the area.

Orange Avenue, a busy four-lane arterial street, represents an edge between the Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods. Orange Avenue and Tenth Street are the busiest streets within both neighborhoods. Historically, homes lined both sides of Orange Avenue from Burrell/Gainsboro Road to Tenth Street. Today, many of the properties are now vacant and wooded, especially the area near Washington Park.

Most streets in the Harrison neighborhood are medium to narrow in width. Several streets, such as Rutherford and Madison Avenues, are narrow to the extent that only a single lane of traffic can flow between parked cars.

Vacant land is abundant in the neighborhoods, accounting for 604 parcels and 30% of the land area. Over 90% of the vacant land has been classified as developable by Roanoke's Real Estate Valuation Office, so there are many opportunities for infill development. In addition, the need for improved maintenance and code enforcement of existing structures will be a deciding factor for the successful development of vacant parcels.



View of Afton Apartments in the Washington Park neighborhood

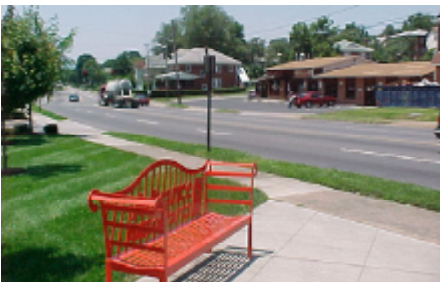
Zoning and Land Use Patterns

Most of the Harrison neighborhood is residential, but Orange Avenue between Tenth and Fourteenth Streets and along Eleventh Street are zoned and used for commercial uses. The most prevalent zoning in the Harrison neighborhood is RM-2 (Residential Multifamily, Medium Density District). This district encourages medium-density population with a mix of single and multifamily development.

The Washington Park neighborhood is also mostly RM-2. A small residential area located north of Tenth Street, from Andrews Road to Hunt Avenue is zoned RM-1 (Residential Multifamily, Low Density District). The RM-1 zoning designation is intended to promote and encourage the revitalization and preservation of traditional single-family neighborhoods. West of Tenth Street, on Rockland Avenue, are several businesses zoned Light Manufacturing (LM).

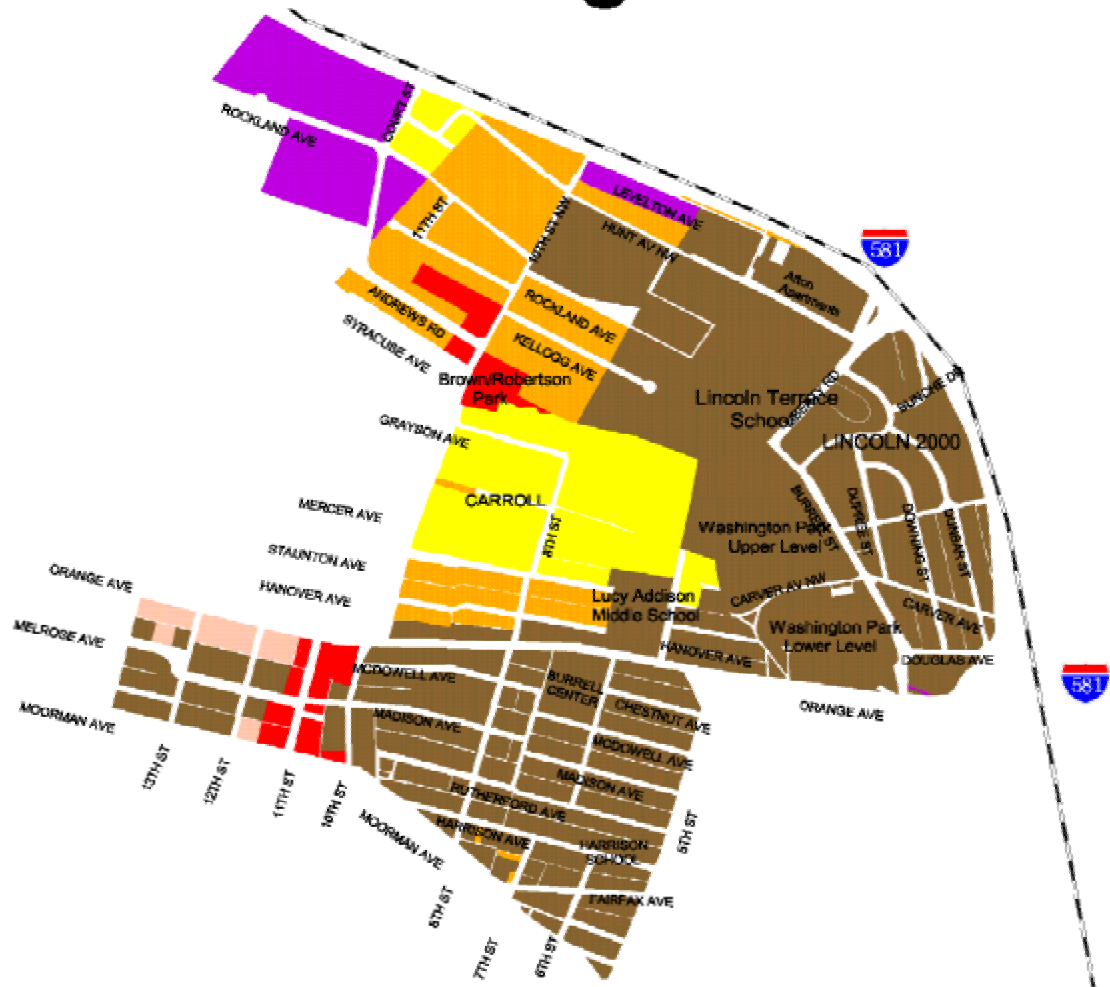
There are four identifiable nodes that form centers of activity:

- **Large Village Center** - Areas along the 1000 and 1100 block of Orange Avenue and along Eleventh Street form a commercial center. The existing zoning, General Commercial (C-2), reflects the emphasis on retail and other services in this area. However, this zoning could encourage commercial development that is out of scale with the neighborhood.
- **Small Village Center** - The area along Tenth Street near Brown-Robertson Park is a small village center with potential for expanded services.
- **Public Housing Complex** - The Villages at Lincoln (formally Lincoln Terrace) public housing development form a mix of single and multifamily residences. Other public multifamily housing developments are Hunt Manor and Afton Apartments, located along Hunt Avenue.
- **Industrial Area** - A small industrial area is located along Rockland Avenue and Andrews Road. This area contains retail, manufacturing, and storage facilities. The area is zoned Light Manufacturing (LM) district.

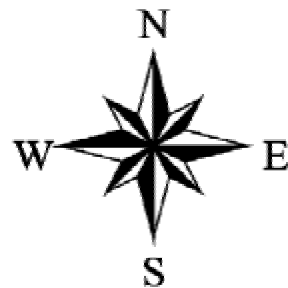


Orange Avenue at Tenth Street

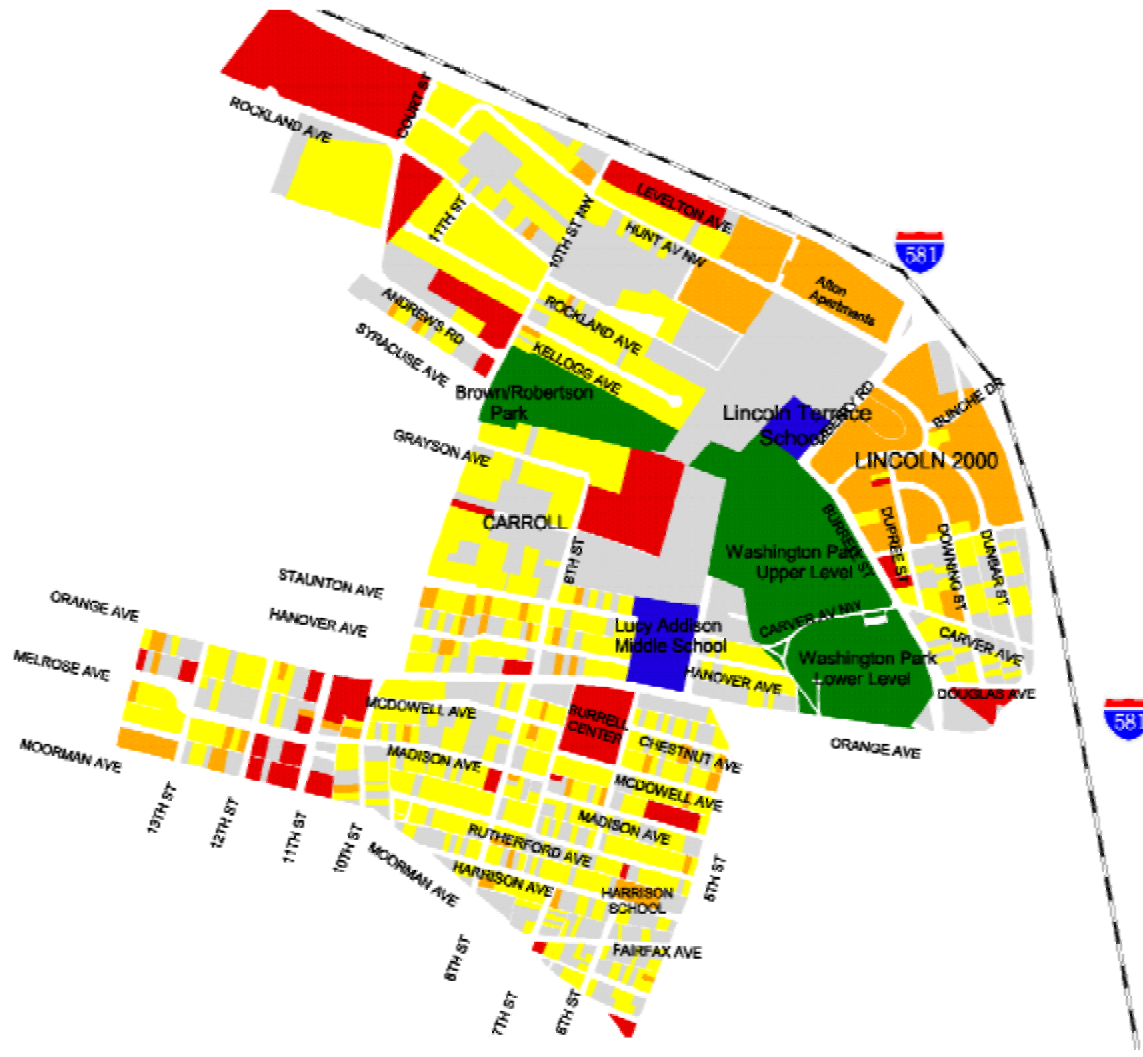
Harrison / Washington Park Zoning



-  **RS-3 Single-family Residential**
-  **RM-1 Multifamily Residential**
-  **RM-2 Multifamily Residential**
-  **C-1 Office District**
-  **C-2 General Commercial District**
-  **LM Light Manufacturing**



Harrison / Washington Park Existing Land Use



Zoning			
Zoning Districts	Parcels	Acres	% of land area
Residential Single-family (RS-3)	120	42	12
Residential Multifamily Low Density (RM-1)	328	55	15
Residential Multifamily Medium Density (RM-2)	951	222	61
Office District (C-1)	29	5	1
General Commercial (C-2)	30	12	3
Light Manufacturing (LM)	7	30	8

The predominant land use is residential, which occupies 44% of the area's land. Vacant properties make up 30% of land in the study area. Most of the multifamily housing is concentrated in the Washington Park neighborhood.

Community Design Issues

- Developing vacant land with appropriately-designed infill housing
- Concentration of high density public housing
- Access to basic retail and services

Residential Development

Population and Housing



Homes on Staunton Avenue, in the Washington Park neighborhood.

The Harrison neighborhood has a considerable amount of aging housing stock. Most of the homes were constructed between 1900 and 1930, with most being built during the 1920s.

During the 1940s, Washington Park experienced a housing boom. Orange, Hanover, Alview, Rockland, and Kellogg Avenues saw a considerable amount of development in the decade following WWII. The largest concentration of new homes is in The Village at Lincoln (formally Lincoln 2000) and on Kellogg Avenue.

The Lincoln 2000 project in Washington Park brought positive changes in recent years. The project used a HOPE VI grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to revitalize the Lincoln Terrace public housing development. Its goals are to integrate residents socially and economically with the surrounding community. When the Lincoln 2000 project is completed, 50 duplex units and 10 single-family homes will replace 33 existing apartment buildings (145 units). These new units include rental housing and lease/purchase units to create a continuum of housing opportunities on the site.

Afton Garden Apartments, located on Hunt Avenue, is a 108-unit government assisted apartment complex. In 2002, Afton Apartments underwent significant renovations that included new siding, appliances, carpet, and heating/air-conditioning systems. Several neighborhood residents mentioned that Afton apartments and The Village at Lincoln renovations were a great improvement from past conditions. Hunt Manor, also a public housing development, is located beside Afton Gardens Apartments. This 96-unit apartment complex was built in 1970.

Vision 2001-2020 recommends against concentration of federally subsidized or assisted housing, favoring equitable distribution throughout the region. In Washington Park alone, there are three publicly-assisted housing developments, representing the highest concentration of public housing in the Roanoke Valley.



Hunt Manor, in the Washington Park neighborhood.

Housing Units					
	Harrison Neighborhood		Washington Park Neighborhood		Roanoke
	Number	%	Number	%	%
Housing Units	477		949		
Owner-occupied	180	38%	256	27%	56%
Renter-occupied	222	46.5%	495	52%	44%
Vacant	77	15.5%	198	21%	7%

Source: US Census Bureau

Housing Character

The design of older houses adds a sense of history and character to a neighborhood, but this housing tends to require a greater cost of maintenance. Lack of maintenance of homes and weed overgrowth in the area have contributed to blight, especially in the Harrison neighborhood.

The 21st Century Challenge Final Report (Roanoke Regional Housing Network), reported that 84% of the houses in the Harrison neighborhood were in fair to good condition. Owner-occupied units tended to be in better condition than renter-occupied units.



Homes on Hanover Avenue in the Washington Park neighborhood

The area experienced a decrease in homeownership between 1990 and 2000. Most of the newer development in the study area has been single-family homes. The area provides excellent opportunities for new market-rate housing. More single-family and two-family residential development should be encouraged throughout the study area. The development of vacant lots and infill housing are complex issues that require partnerships between the public and private sectors to develop strategies for specific areas.

The entire Harrison neighborhood is designated as a conservation/rehabilitation district. This designation makes special programs and incentives available to encourage rehabilitation.

While there are many architectural styles in both neighborhoods, the most common in the Harrison area is the two-story Foursquare with wood siding. In Washington Park, the small Bungalow is most prevalent. Many residents feel that a consistent design character is important to the neighborhood. Residents are concerned about the design of new infill housing and feel that new development should “fit in” with the other homes in the neighborhood.

Key Development Opportunities

Harrison neighborhood - The neighborhood has a large number (604) of vacant lots scattered throughout that would provide opportunities for infill development. These lots are generally narrow and some have steep terrain. Most are appropriate for single-family or two-family residential development. New infill housing development is needed in the Harrison neighborhood to add economic stability and help to address the problems associated with blight and vacant lots. Infill development should be carefully designed to ensure compatibility with existing houses. Current zoning of the Harrison area is mainly RM-2 (multifamily residential). A zoning that encourages single-family development with scattered duplexes would be more appropriate.

Harrison School - Formerly a school for the African American community, now houses the Harrison Museum of African American Culture on the first floor, and has subsidized housing on the remaining upper floors. This historic building would be appropriate for mixed income multifamily residential, with a community-oriented use on the first floor.

Carroll Avenue (along Eighth Street) - This property is near the Addison Middle School walking track (Washington Park neighborhood). The street could possibly be extended through to Tenth Street. The site is sloped and wooded. The area is surrounded by single-family residences. Zoning for the site is Residential Single Family, RS-3. This site would be appropriate for market rate, single-family development.

Marlian Avenue (between Tenth Street and Hunt Avenue) - This property has potential for 20 -25 new single-family dwellings. Development would require installation of a street in an existing strip of land. Extension of Marlian Avenue east of Tenth Street would facilitate development of a 5.6-acre property of single-family housing.

This segment of Carroll Avenue in the Washington Park neighborhood is a potential development opportunity.



Rockland Avenue and Tenth Street (site between Rockland and Hunt, Rockland and Kellogg) - This property is 5.6 acres and has potential to be developed for over 20 new dwellings. Development would require installation of a street that extends from Tenth Street or Rockland Avenue to Hunt Avenue.

Rockland Avenue (along Rockland and behind Hunt Manor) - This site has potential for 15 or more new dwellings and would require installation of a street to Hunt Avenue.

Residential Development Issues

- Blighted, abandoned, and aging housing stock
- High number of vacant parcels
- High concentration of low income, multifamily housing in the area
- Repeated code violations
- Need for compatible housing design
- Low homeownership rates



Home on Grayson Avenue in Washington Park

Hunt Manor in Washington Park



Economic Development

The *Vision 2001-2020* Comprehensive Plan advocates development of village centers as an economic development strategy to strengthen neighborhoods. Many of Roanoke's traditional neighborhoods developed as villages—self-contained centers that provided opportunities for people to live, work, shop, play, and interact in a local setting. Village centers offer amenities typically not found in suburban areas such as convenient access to schools, local services, and jobs.

Eleventh Street Commercial Area in the Harrison neighborhood.



The largest concentration of commercial development has occurred along Orange Avenue and Eleventh Street. The Eleventh Street corridor is designated in *Vision 2001-2020* as a village center. Future development and revitalization should be geared toward providing a healthy mix of small-scale, neighborhood-oriented uses. The Eleventh Street village center currently features an auto parts store, a gas station, a funeral home, the Blue Ridge Housing Development Corporation office, and a number of convenience stores. Buildings are positioned toward the front of the property with most parking provided on street. Residents expressed a need for a grocery store, day care services, and a community center closer to the neighborhood.

Several residents expressed concern about establishments on Eleventh Street, noting improper business practices, alcohol-related offenses, and loitering. This area has high foot traffic during the day and loitering at night. A community challenge will be to maintain public safety while encouraging commercial services within the neighborhood.

Vision 2001-2020 designates a small village center along the west side of Tenth Street between Andrews Road and Syracuse Avenue. The area contains a small shop, a convenience store/gas station and a plant nursery. Brown-Robertson Park is located on the east side of Tenth Street. The area has high foot traffic from the surrounding neighborhood, but does not have a complete sidewalk system. In addition, parts of this area are located in a flood zone. The proposed Tenth Street improvement project should enhance pedestrian access to the area.

Industrial uses are located near the northwestern border of the Washington Park neighborhood along Rockland Avenue and Court Street, next to I-581. The area is well established and economically viable. The businesses include a warehouse, a manufacturing facility, and a wholesale equipment establishment. This area also contains a large vacant parcel on the corner of Rockland Avenue and Court Street, the parcel would be appropriate for a light industrial use.

Both neighborhoods have a disproportionate amount of the City's low-income residents. The median annual household income for all income brackets is over \$12,000 less than the average for the City. The high number of low-income residents is partially due to three publicly-assisted housing developments located in the Washington Park neighborhood.

Commercial development on Eleventh Street and Orange Avenue, Harrison neighborhood



Income Distribution

Annual Household Income	Washington Park/Harrison	Roanoke
\$0-\$14,000	38%	23%
\$15,000-\$24,999	19%	18%
\$25,000-\$34,999	15%	16%
\$35,000-\$49,999	15%	17%
\$50,000-\$99,999	12%	21%
\$100,000+	1%	5%

Source: US Census Bureau

The median household income for the study area (\$18,269) is considerably less than the citywide average for Roanoke (\$30,719). The two lowest median incomes are found in the Washington Park neighborhood.

Low levels of income are an issue for the Harrison and Washington Park area. In addition, the education level of adults over 25 years is substantially lower than that of the average City resident of similar age.

Education Levels		
	Washington Park/ Harrison	Roanoke
Less than high school	40%	24%
Some high school	30%	30%
Some college	18%	21%
Associates degree	6%	6%
Bachelors degree	4%	12%
Graduate or professional degree	2%	7%
Source: US Census Bureau		

Part of the Village at Lincoln project is the remodeling of the administration building for a new Opportunity Center, which will provide a small business center, space for training, and offices. Programs at this community outreach facility could help address community issues of low incomes and education levels in the Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods.

Economic Development Issues

- Low levels of income and education
- Relationship between commercial and residential uses
- Establishing Eleventh Street as a safe and viable neighborhood commercial area

The Villages at Lincoln in the Washington Park neighborhood



Infrastructure

Transportation

Street patterns differ throughout the study area. The Harrison neighborhood has a consistent, interconnected grid system that provides good vehicular access through its streets and alleys. Due to the topography and the land use patterns, Washington Park's residential and commercial areas contain more cul-de-sacs and varying street patterns that divide the neighborhood into several smaller areas.

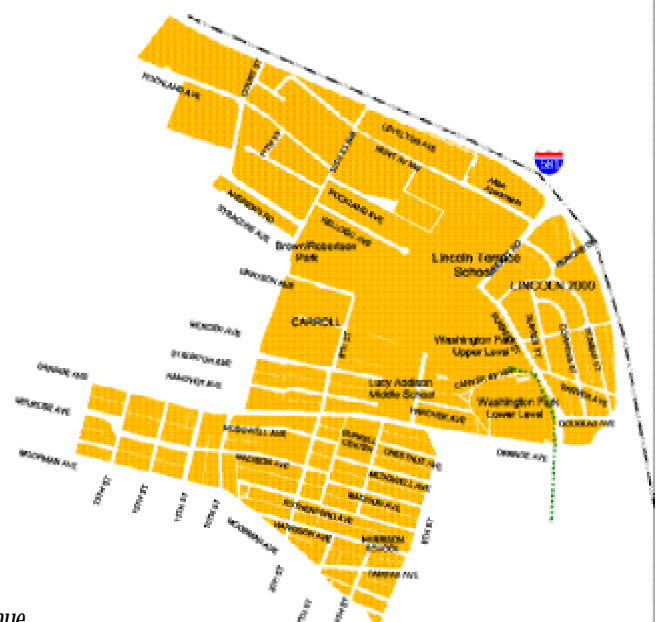
Orange Avenue runs through the study area along the shared boundary of the two neighborhoods. It is the main arterial street in the area and has the greatest traffic volume. Orange Avenue also provides access to other arterial streets in and around the neighborhood, including Fifth Street, Tenth Street, and Burrell Street. Moorman Road is a collector street that provides east-west traffic flow along the southern boundary of the Harrison neighborhood.

The 1995 Roanoke City Thoroughfare Plan identified and ranked two corridors in the study area with Level of Service (LOS) Ratings. The LOS ratings range from A to F. An LOS rating of "C" is generally considered the standard for an urban area and indicates that a street is experiencing an optimal rate of travel. The Orange Avenue corridor from Burrell Street to Fifth Street received a rating of "C" for 1990 and a forecasted rating of "C" as well for 2000 and 2015. The Tenth Street corridor between Grayson and Staunton Avenues received a "D" or sufficient rating for 1990 and a forecasted rating of "C" with proposed improvements.

Street System



Orange Avenue



Tenth Street is the only transportation improvement project planned for the area. Current plans call for Tenth Street to remain a two-lane street with safety improvements at key intersections. VDOT has conducted several public review meetings to ensure public consideration. Proposed improvements for the Tenth Street corridor include sidewalks, bike lanes, and street trees.

Opportunities exist in Washington Park to enhance connections in the street grid and promote residential development. Rockland, Marlian, Carroll Avenues, and behind Hunt Manor apartments, are areas with unimproved rights-of-way. These areas should be connected with other surrounding streets.

Neighborhood residents expressed concerns about speeders and dangerous traffic conditions on Fifth Street, Orange Avenue, Tenth Street, Burrell Street, and Liberty Road. Residents have safety concerns on Fifth Street that is known for its steep topography and blind spots. Residents also report speeding problems along Burrell Street and Liberty Road, which border Booker T. Washington Park, where many children play and teams practice. Traffic management/calming measures should be taken on major streets to reduce speeding.



Corner of Tenth Street and Orange Avenue, the Harrison neighborhood

Public Transportation

Each neighborhood is well served by public bus routes. Valley Metro operates four routes through both neighborhoods. Currently, there are no covered bus stops in the area. Residents in the study area voiced the need for covered areas for protection from inclement weather. Most of the bus stops in the neighborhood do not have benches. Many elderly residents ride the bus and have problems standing for long periods of time waiting for the bus. In addition, residents have raised the issue that the routes and times of the routes do not meet the needs of the people in the Washington Park area for access to jobs. Valley Metro should assess the feasibility of after-hour routes to higher density areas and major employment centers.

Streetscapes

Streets generally have narrow to average widths. Orange Avenue and Burrell Road are exceptions, being multi-lane arterial streets. Vacant lots and remains of old retaining walls define the streetscape along Orange Avenue. Overgrown vacant lots decrease curb appeal. Most of the smaller streets tend to have homes with even front yard setbacks, creating a pleasant rhythm along the streetscape. In some areas, however, infill housing with inconsistent setbacks has created an awkward appearance along the block face.

Gateways

Gateways are important to the image of a neighborhood. *Vision 2001-2020* views neighborhood gateways as important civic design elements that define different areas of the city. Few gateways in Washington Park and Harrison are well defined. Fortunately, there are numerous opportunities for beautification:

- Fifth Street at Orange Avenue
- Fifth Street at Gilmer
- Liberty Road and Hunt Avenue
- Burrell Street and Orange Avenue
- Tenth Street and Hunt Avenue
- Tenth Street and Orange Avenue

These areas have higher traffic flows and thus have good exposure for people entering and leaving the neighborhood.

Sidewalks

Several locations in the Washington Park neighborhood have heavy pedestrian traffic, but lack sidewalks. Examples include the 900 block of Hunt Avenue, Tenth Street from Grayson Avenue to I-581, and Liberty Road near I-581.

The Harrison neighborhood is well covered with sidewalks, though in some areas the sidewalks systems are incomplete. Streets, especially along Madison and McDowell Avenues, have aging sidewalks that need repairs.

Curb and Gutter

Most streets have curb and gutter. However, some streets such as Andrews Road and Hunt Avenue on the west side of Tenth Street lack curbing. Some residents feel that lack of curb and gutter is the reason for flooding in these areas. Where curb and gutter are not present, people tend to park vehicles so they straddle the edge of the pavement. On Rockland Avenue, asphalt curbing is used in place of a concrete curb and gutter system.

Street Lights

The study area is well served by street lights. Most of the residential areas have street lights on at least one side.

Utilities

The study area is fully serviced with public water and sewer systems. Power and telephone lines are located above ground throughout the area. Residents in the Harrison neighborhood area expressed concerns that the power infrastructure needs upgrading. Residents have stated that they frequently lose electrical power during severe storms.

Storm Water Management

Lick Run, which runs through the Washington Park neighborhood, is susceptible to periodic flooding during heavy rainfall. In 1985, the Shadeland Avenue area experienced severe flooding that involved loss of life and severe property damage. The residential uses along this street were later removed and the land became Brown-Robertson Park.

Residents expressed concern about the quality of the water in Lick Run, particularly downstream from the former landfill. Field testing performed by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality indicates that most of the pollutants identified in Lick Run are associated with polluted storm water runoff and improper sanitary sewer connections rather than from contaminants that might be associated with a landfill.

Currently, the city is in its first year of the Virginia Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (VPDES) storm water program. This is a five-year program to improve the quality of storm water discharged to surface waters throughout the region. Lick Run is a priority to be addressed by this program.



Area along Lick Run Greenway in the Harrison neighborhood, possible area for development

The City of Roanoke is already responding to this issue by mapping discharge points along the stream and conducting inspections to identify illicit sewer connections and discharges. Sewer lines are being checked for storm water infiltration and inflow problems, which are typically caused by overflows during heavy rains. Roanoke is also working to educate citizens and raise public awareness about activities that might result in polluted runoff entering the stream.

Infrastructure Issues

- Older sidewalks need repair
- Tenth Street improvements
- Lack of continuous curb and gutter
- Dated utility lines and problems with power outages
- Appearance of streetscapes
- Lack of covered benches on bus stops, and lack of bus service for 3rd shift workers.
- Speeders on Liberty Road and around school bus stops
- Safety issues on major streets (i.e., Fifth Street, Tenth Street and Liberty Road)

Corner of Tenth Street and Moorman Avenue in the Harrison neighborhood



Public Services

Code enforcement is a major issue for residents. Many vacant lots in the neighborhood have weeds and debris. Junk cars and outdoor storage are recurring violations. Effective code enforcement is essential for future revitalization efforts and must be aggressively pursued in the Harrison and Washington Park area.

Automated solid waste collection is provided on street. Residents had few concerns about solid waste collection, except that collection vehicles periodically block the narrower streets. Recycling collection services are provided throughout the area. Participation in the recycling program should be increased to encourage overall awareness of the neighborhood's environment.

The City of Roanoke offers over 30 social service programs for people with problems stemming from lack of nourishment to lack of proper physical care. The city also offers program and grants to aid in home purchase, business building, home renovation, and repair. Many residents expressed concerns that they were not aware of such programs. There is an apparent lack of information about the public support programs offered.

Police

Public safety is a priority concern for residents in both areas and is crucial to the neighborhood's future. Compared with other neighborhoods, Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods have higher rates for police "calls for service." However, calls for service have decreased in recent years.

Residents have expressed concerns of drug trafficking and other illegal activity in pockets through out the area. Washington Park has a neighborhood watch program. More neighborhood watch programs should be part of a strategy to address issues of crime within the neighborhood.

*Saint Gerard's
Catholic Church*



Fire/EMS

The Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods are served by Station #2 on Noble Avenue and Station #5 on Loudon Avenue. Station #9 on 24th Street will serve as a backup if needed. Current response times average four minutes. Roanoke has decided to consolidate stations #5 and #9 into a single large station that includes other public services. The location of the new station is not yet determined, but will likely be in the Melrose Avenue area between Eighteenth and 20th Streets.

The Roanoke Fire/EMS department follows a national “Resource Allocation Model” as its standard for response times. The standard is to respond to 90% of calls within four minutes.

Public Service Issues

- Recurring code violations for junk cars and outdoor storage
- Crime, especially drug trafficking
- Lack of public information about available public services
- Overgrown lots harbor rodents

Quality of Life

Historic Resources

Harrison School was the first public high school built in Roanoke for African-American students. Located on the ground floor of Harrison School is the Harrison Museum of African American Culture. The building is an important historic landmark and an asset to both the neighborhood and the community at large. In fall of 2002, the Harrison Museum announced that the museum would be relocating to Henry Street. Although the Harrison Museum is relocating, it will continue to reserve space in the Harrison School. Another historic landmark is Burrell Memorial Hospital. It became chartered in 1915 and has served the African-American community of Roanoke. It expanded to a 150-bed facility during the 1930s. Although it closed as a hospital in the early 1970s, it remains open today for several health-related institutions. Both Harrison School and the Burrell Hospital are listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register and National Register of Historic Places.



View from upper Washington Park

Schools

Children in the Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods attend Lincoln Terrace, Crystal Spring, Fallon Park, Fishburn Park, Round Hill, Huff Lane and Lucy Addison Schools. While Lincoln Terrace and Lucy Addison are located within the neighborhood, other schools are located at considerable distances from the neighborhood. Older children attend William Fleming and Patrick Henry High Schools. The Higher Education Center and Roanoke Catholic School are private educational facilities that are located in the adjacent neighborhood of Gainsboro.

Parks and Recreation

The neighborhood contains two parks and a segment of the Lick Run Greenway. Lucy Addison Magnet School houses a fitness center available to residents for a nominal monthly fee. Residents in the Harrison neighborhood also have easy access to Melrose Park.

Brown-Robertson Park is a 7½ acre open space located on Tenth Street. The park was named after Dorothy Brown and Hazel Robertson who lost their lives during the devastating Flood of 1985. The park is primarily a greenway. However, community representatives have worked with Virginia Tech landscape architecture students to develop ideas for the park. Several concepts arose as a result of the class, and the project is now in the planning stage with the City's Park and Recreation Department.

Washington Park is a 40-acre park. Topography divides the park into upper and lower areas. The upper area features an Olympic size pool, lighted tennis and basketball courts, playground equipment, and a picnic shelter. The lower park contains a historic caretaker's house, a shelter with restrooms, a playground, and a softball field. New playground equipment was added in the fall of 1998. Residents believe that the park would be used more if recreational facilities were improved.

In fall 2000, a volunteer committee formed to provide guidance for improvements to Washington Park and develop a Booker T. Washington Memorial. In February 2001, the committee submitted an improvement plan for the park, and later a concept plan was completed for the memorial. In summer 2003, work began on new picnic and rest room facilities for the park. Details are continuing to be discussed concerning the memorial concept.

The Lick Run Greenway is a bike and walking path stretching from the I-581/Valley View interchange through Washington Park to the Roanoke City Market. The developer of Valley View Mall donated a 14-acre strip to the Western Virginia Land Trust in 1999, which transferred the land to the City of Roanoke.



Washington Park Pool

Community Organizations

Northwest Neighborhood Improvement Council area includes the entire Harrison neighborhood. Its mission is to restore and rebuild the community by means of empowerment and collaboration with other organizations in restoration projects.

The Washington Park Neighborhood Alliance is a network of residents who have vested interest in the future growth, beautification, and development of the Washington Park area.

There are six churches in the neighborhood and many have outreach services for the community, many of which are duplicated. Residents expressed concern about a lack of information and education concerning outreach and social services in the neighborhoods. The churches in the area could play a more unified role as a conduit for information and services for the area.

Several residents noted that there is no community center in the neighborhood and residents have few places for community interaction. Residents said that a central place is needed for community activities and for distributing information to residents. Since the Harrison Museum announced that it will relocate to Henry Street, the first floor of the former Harrison School could be a potential location for a community center. Lucy Addison Magnet School is also a centrally-located resource for the community. The school is frequently used for community events and meetings.

Quality of Life Issues

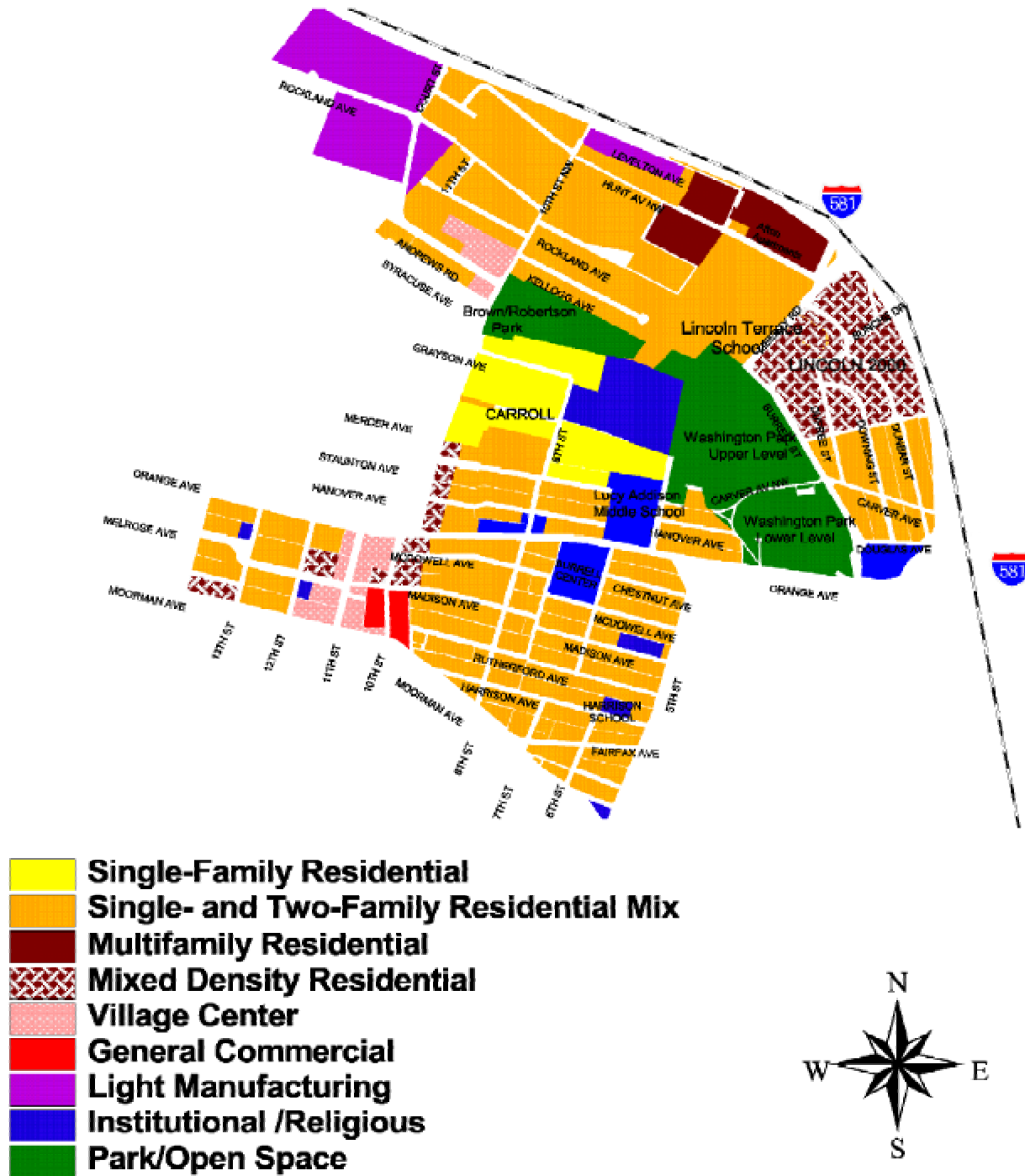
- Brown-Robertson Park development
- Harrison Museum moving to Henry Street - future use of 1st floor of Harrison School
- Lick Run Greenway implementation
- Need for a community center
- Washington Park improvements (handicap accessible bathrooms, sufficient picnic equipment, and improved parking)

Recommendations

Recommendations are organized by the Plan Elements (community design, residential development, etc.). Recommendations take the form of *policies* or *actions*. Policies are principles or ways of doing things that guide future decisions. In general, policies are ongoing. Actions are projects or tasks that can be completed and have a definite end.

The Future Land Use plan on the following page is the most important recommendation of this plan. It specifies how future development should take place. Zoning is the principal tool that is used to implement the future land use plan. Some of the current zoning is not consistent with the future land use plan, so the plan recommends changes in zoning so that future development will be consistent with the future land use plan.

Harrison/Washington Park Future Land Use



Community Design

Policies

- Roanoke will implement zoning patterns that allow for and encourage the Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods to be mixed-use urban neighborhoods with opportunities for housing, employment, and services for all ages, races, and incomes.
- The Harrison and Washington Park neighborhoods are recognized as having unique architectural and historic value to the city. Therefore, Roanoke must ensure that future development is compatible with the neighborhood fabric. The design of new development should enhance and contribute to the neighborhood's continued viability.
- A village center is designated along Eleventh Street between Orange and Centre Avenues. The areas immediately surrounding the village center will be designated for higher-density residential development.
- Encourage a balance of sustainable range of housing choices in all price ranges and options that encourage social and economic diversity. Discourage the concentration of federally-subsidized housing.
- Encourage attractive streets that support auto, pedestrian, and bicycle transportation modes.
- Encourage development of a village center at Tenth Street and Andrews Road.

Actions

- Initiate comprehensive rezoning to encourage the desired development patterns in accordance with the Future Land Use map.
- Identify vacant lots and develop neighborhood initiatives for development of those lots in a manner consistent with the policies of this plan.

Residential Development

Policies

- Ensure the design of new infill housing is compatible with existing development.
- Encourage development of market-rate, owner-occupied housing.
- Promote a balance of housing choices in all price ranges and options that encourage social and economic diversity. Discourage the concentration of federally-subsidized housing in the neighborhood.
- Encourage more homeownership to a rate of at least 50%.
- Encourage stewardship of vacant properties through code enforcement.
- Encourage infill development of vacant parcels.

Actions

- Implement Neighborhood Design District overlay zoning.
- Amend the zoning map where needed to reduce density in areas with an over-concentration of multifamily housing.
- Provide incentives to encourage compatible market-rate housing development.
- Identify opportunities for new residential development.
- Neighborhood organizations should collaborate with interested home developers to address the infill needs of the community.
- Develop a strategy to encourage market rate infill housing development.
- Ensure continued code enforcement efforts, especially with respect to housing maintenance and vacant lot maintenance.
- Expand the Rehabilitation District in the Washington Park neighborhood.

Economic Development

Policies

- Support, retain, and expand businesses that are compatible with neighborhood character and scale.
- Encourage a diversity of housing choices in all price ranges that encourages a social and economic balance.
- Encourage a mix of uses that will improve vitality and continuous use of existing commercial areas.
- Encourage good relationships between commercial and residential development through thoughtful site and building design, landscaping, and transitional uses.
- Support initiatives that retain and expand businesses aimed to create jobs for the residents in the neighborhood.
- Ensure that job training and education programs are available to residents.
- Develop commercial design guidelines.
- Consider placing public service facilities in village centers.

Actions

- Evaluate the market for a grocery store that can be conveniently located to serve northwest neighborhoods and downtown.
- Implement zoning that will encourage the appropriate uses and scales in village centers. In addition, commercial design guidelines should be developed to guide the form of new commercial development.
- Improve the buffer on Court Street adjacent to the LM district by planting trees and establishing green space.
- Target the area for job training and education programs.
- Continue and expand incentives that increase employment opportunities (Enterprise Zone, for example).
- Encourage programs of entrepreneurship for the people in the area to be part of Roanoke's economic development strategy.

Infrastructure

Policies

- Streetscapes should be well maintained and attractive. Streets should be designed to support pedestrian, bike, and vehicular traffic.
- Safety issues on Fifth Street, Tenth Street, Orange Avenue, Burrell Street, and Liberty Road will be addressed through traffic calming measures.
- Encourage greenway connections between destinations such as schools and village centers.
- Encourage timely development of the Tenth Street improvement plans.
- Maintain a continuous system of sidewalks.
- Provide a complete system of curb and gutters.

Actions

- Define and target beautification projects at gateways on:
 - Fifth Street at Orange Avenue
 - Fifth Street at Gilmer Avenue
 - Liberty Road and Hunt Avenue
 - Burrell Street and Orange Avenue
 - Tenth Street and Hunt Avenue
 - Tenth Street and Orange Avenue
 Initiate beautification projects for the study area
- Implement streetscape improvements, with priority on the following streets:
 - Orange Avenue
 - Fifth Street
 - Tenth Street
 - Eleventh Street
 - Burrell Street
 - Liberty Road
- Encourage neighborhood organizations to collaborate with Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates to encourage beautification projects.
- Improve transit stops in key areas such as village centers with benches and shelters.
- Establish a spur from the Lick Run Greenway to Lincoln Terrace Elementary School.
- Assess the feasibility of providing public transportation for people who work 2nd and 3rd shifts.
- Assess utility lines for repair/replacement where needed.

Public Services

Policies

- Aggressively enforce property maintenance and nuisance codes.
- Support and encourage partnership approaches with the Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates and community organizations in order to share and sustain information flow.
- Support neighborhood watch programs.
- Encourage Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles in new development, while respecting good urban design principles.
- Continue community policing programs in partnership with community groups to ensure clear objectives, information flow, enforcement, and community outreach.
- Emphasize prevention strategies to reduce crime.
- The Roanoke Fire/EMS Department will continue to provide excellent response to the neighborhoods. The Department will work to meet the goal of responding to 90% of calls within four minutes.

Actions

- Establish Neighborhood Watch programs throughout the area.
- Identify vacant lots that have rodent infestation problems and initiate steps to address problems through a multi-agency approach that includes the Health Department, Code Enforcement, and the Police Department's Animal Control Unit.
- Continue programs that provide incentives for police officers to live in core neighborhoods.
- Initiate concentrated code enforcement efforts in the neighborhood.

Quality of Life

Policies

- Encourage neighborhood churches to coordinate efforts to improve the quality and range of outreach services.
- Strengthen, expand, and improve coordination among neighborhood organizations to improve outreach services, beautification projects, and neighborhood awareness.
- Support the completion of Lick Run greenway, Brown-Robertson Park, and Washington Park improvements.

Actions

- Initiate beautification projects in the neighborhoods.
- Evaluate opportunities for community center(s) in existing buildings such as Harrison School and Lucy Addison Magnet School.
- Continue improvement projects for Washington Park and Brown-Robertson Park.

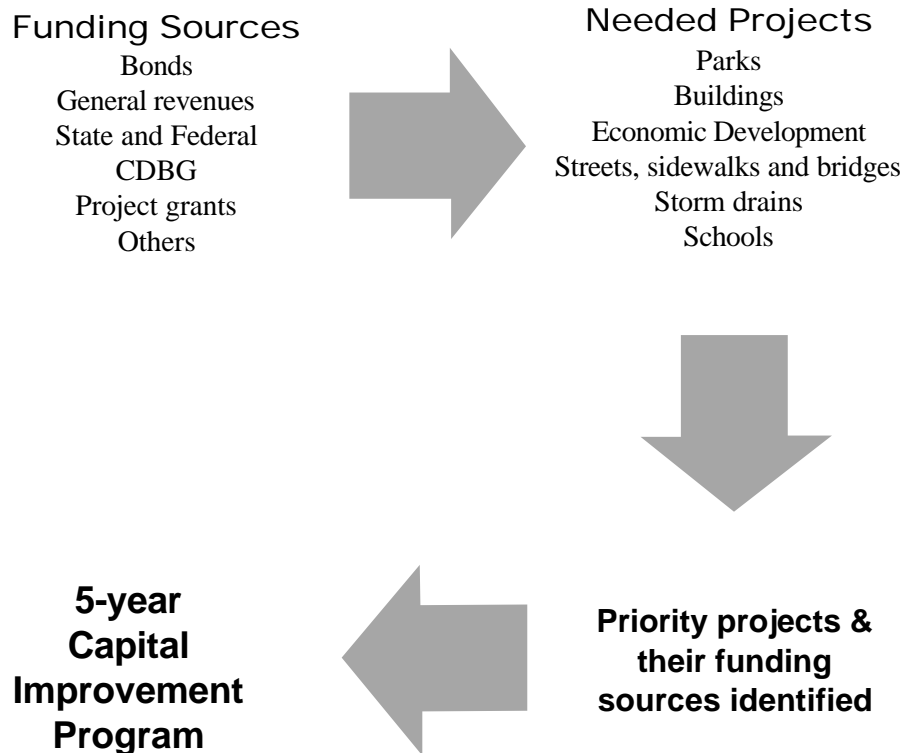
Implementation

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 cannot be determined until more detailed planning is completed.

How large projects are funded: The Capital Improvement Program



Actions	Participants	Time Frame
Neighborhood Design District	PBD	1 year
Comprehensive Rezoning	PBD	1 year
Vacant lot development	HNS	Ongoing
Home ownership programs	NG/HNS	Ongoing
Identify development opportunities	NG/HNS	1 year
Job training and education	ED/NG	Ongoing
Neighborhood economic development initiatives	ED/NG	Ongoing
Improve gateways and streetscapes	TD/NG/PW	Ongoing
Improve transit stops	TD/VM	5 years
Assess expansion of public transportation	VM	5 years
Greenway & bikeway development	PR/NG	5-10 years
Assess power lines	AEP	1-5 years
Repair/construct sidewalks and curbs	PW	5-10 years
Crime prevention and code enforcement	PD/NG/HSN	Ongoing
Park improvements	PR/NG	5 years
Address problems with vacant lots	NG/HNS	3-4 years

Abbreviations:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| AEP: American Electric Power | PD: Police Department |
| ED: Economic Development | PR: Parks and Recreation Department |
| HNS: Housing and Neighborhood Services (code enforcement) | PW: Public Works |
| NG: Neighborhood Groups | VM: Valley Metro |
| PBD: Planning Building & Development | TD: Transportation Division |

Acknowledgments

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