



Wasena

**NEIGHBORHOOD
Plan**

Adopted by City Council
September 15, 2003

**ROANOKE
VIRGINIA**



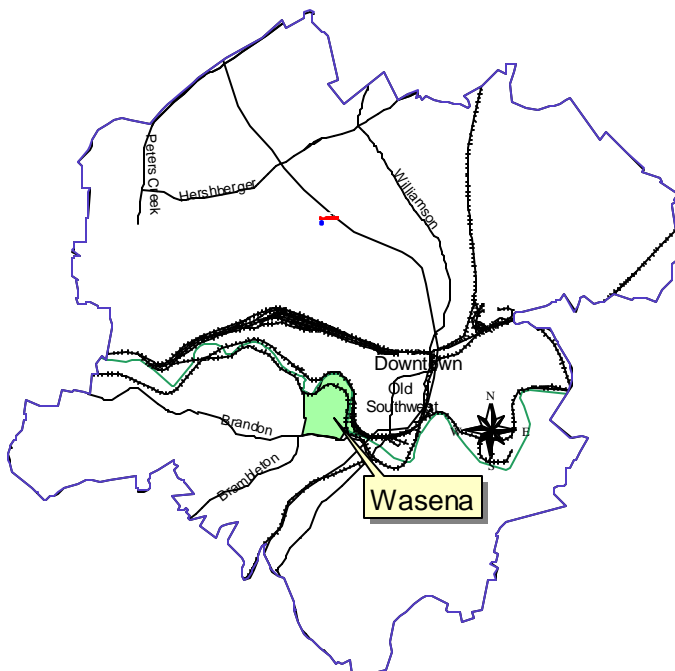
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Planning Building & Development

Introduction

Wasena was one of Roanoke's early suburbs, and has maintained virtually the same character as when it was developed in the 1920s. Since its inception the neighborhood has been one of the most stable communities in the City. Wasena is located southwest of downtown and is bounded by the Roanoke River to the north and east, Greater Raleigh Court to the west, and Brandon Avenue to the south. 'Wasena' in a Native American language translates as "beautiful view." The neighborhood has an undulating terrain that provides great views of downtown Roanoke, Old Southwest, and Mill Mountain. While it was termed a suburb when the land was first subdivided, it is now a traditional urban neighborhood that combines the convenience of the City with an appropriate scale of development and good quality of life. It is only a 20-minute walk from downtown. It is centrally located, convenient to Grandin Village, downtown, Mill Mountain, and Towers Mall, and is home to one of the City's largest and most frequented parks. Wasena has a solid core of long-term homeowners as well as a more transient population of renters. There is also an increasingly diverse mix of people of different backgrounds and age groups. With real estate values escalating in much of the valley as homebuyers search for houses with large front and back yards, Wasena is a hidden treasure that maintains a healthy balance of community, comfort, tradition, convenience, diversity and value.



Priority Initiatives

The plan proposes four priority initiatives:

Zoning:

Based on the Future Land Use Map:

- Maintain a zoning district similar to the current RM-1 in residential areas in the update of the zoning ordinance.
- Expand the variety of uses in the current industrial district to allow for a mix of commercial and high-density residential opportunities.
- Amend the zoning ordinance to ensure that new residential development is compatible with existing structures in terms of setbacks and lot coverage, and to maximize the development potential of vacant properties and structures.
- Regulate the conversion of single-family homes to multifamily by requiring a special exception permit to ensure that compatibility with the existing neighborhood is maintained.

Housing:

- Encourage a continuation of the neighborhood's current residential mix of single-family, duplex, and multifamily structures.

Economic Development:

- Market the Main Street village center with particular emphasis on:
 - o Small-scale buildings with 2-3 stories.
 - o Neighborhood commercial uses with minimal noise and lighting impacts.
 - o Shared parking arrangements, including public/private partnerships.

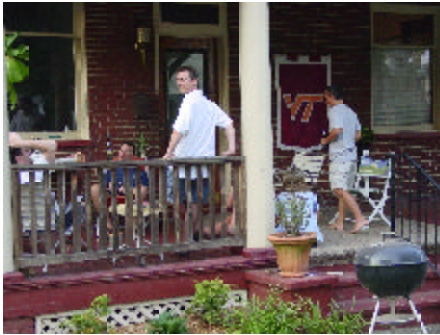
- Target the former ice and cold storage building and industrial district for adaptive reuse. Considerations for redevelopment will include:
 - o Zoning that allows for flexibility in permitting a vibrant mix of commercial and residential uses, particularly live/work space.
 - o High-tech or other industrial uses that have a minimal environmental and neighborhood impact.
 - o Possibilities for public/private partnerships.

Infrastructure:

- Implement traffic-calming measures and gateway improvements on both ends of Main Street.



People



The population for Wasena decreased between 1990 and 2000 by 3 percent. The number of households increased slightly, indicating the national trend towards smaller households. The neighborhood has increased in racial diversity. While white residents comprise 91% of the population, the number of black residents almost doubled since the 1990 Census. The decrease in the number of "other race" residents from the 1990 census is probably explained by the Census Bureau adding a new "two or more races" category to the 2000 Census. Because of the different classifications of the Census, in Table 1 below, the category "other," encompasses races other than black and white and all multiracial categories.

The neighborhood has a healthy age distribution. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of children and teenagers increased, while the number of younger adults decreased. More dramatically, the middle-aged adult population increased 20%, while the number of elderly decreased 40%.

Table 1. Population Demographics

	1990	2000	Percentage Change
Total Population	1,685	1,633	-3%
Households	764	769	1%
White	1,595	1,480	-7%
Black	54	103	91%
Other Races & Multiracial	36	25	-31%
Two or more races	n/a	25	n/a
0-19 Years Old	337	370	10%
20-34 Years Old	554	477	-14%
35-64 Years Old	520	633	20%
65 Years and Over	255	153	-40%

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

Though the number of young adults decreased between 1990 and 2000, compared to the City, a large percentage of Wasena's residents are young adults. The neighborhood has a smaller percentage of elderly residents.

**Table 2. Population Age Distribution:
Wasena and Citywide**

Age	Wasena		City of Roanoke	
	Persons	Percentage	Persons	Percentage
0-19	370	23%	23,455	25%
20-34	477	29%	20,146	21%
35-64	633	39%	35,750	38%
65 and over	153	9%	15,560	16%
Total	1,633	100%	94,911	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

In general, residents 25 years of age and over have more education than the citywide average. Over 59% of the residents have at least taken some college courses compared to only 46% citywide.

The majority of Wasena households earn more than the citywide household income annually. The average household income in Wasena is \$37,130 compared to \$30,719 citywide. Wasena has over half of its households earning between \$25,000 and \$50,000, while only 33% of the households citywide earn the same amount.

**Table 3. Educational Attainment,
25 Years of Age and over**

Education Level	Total	Percentage	City of Roanoke Avg.
Less than High School	191	18%	24%
High School	248	23%	30%
Some College	331	31%	21%
Associate's Degree	62	6%	6%
Bachelor's Degree	208	19%	12%
Graduate or Professional	33	3%	7%
Total	1073	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Table 4. Household Income in 1999

Income Bracket	Wasena		City of Roanoke Avg.
	No. Households	Average	
\$0 - \$14,999	104	15.1%	22.7%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	63	9.2%	17.8%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	191	27.8%	16.1%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	154	22.4%	17.1%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	163	23.7%	21.3%
\$100,000 +	13	1.9%	5.0%
Total	688	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 3

(Data based on Sample)

Neighborhood Organization

The Wasena Neighborhood Forum (WNF) is a member of Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates. The organization meets at Wasena Elementary School on the first Thursday of every month, with the exception of the summer season in July and August. Among its annual activities are a spaghetti dinner and a block party, both of which attract large numbers of residents. The organization also circulates a quarterly newsletter around the neighborhood to inform residents of various neighborhood news and upcoming events.



Staff held public workshops in conjunction with the Wasena Neighborhood Forum's monthly meetings at Wasena Elementary School.



Community Design



The subdivision of lots and the design of the streets in Wasena were done in a narrow fashion to maximize the number of single-family lots. The vast majority of lots in Wasena are in the 6,000 - 6,500 square foot range. While at the time of its development it was by definition suburban, today Wasena is a medium-density traditional urban neighborhood.

The grid street system was designed around the rolling topography and as a result features a series of streets that angle and curve in an unconventional manner. These streets create triangular and irregularly shaped lots. The rolling terrain and the curves of these streets create pockets where the houses are enclosed from outlying areas. This is in contrast to the higher elevated streets such as Wasena, Howbert, Hamilton and Windsor that feature the views after which the neighborhood is named.

Aside from sections of Main Street and Brandon Avenue, all of the streets are relatively narrow (less than 30 feet wide), two-lanes, and have on-street parking on both sides. Sidewalks and trees line most of the streets. These street designs are conducive to both pedestrian and bicycle activity.

The architecture in Wasena is reflective of the styles of the early-to mid-20th Century when the neighborhood was developed. Most of the houses date to the area's first few waves of development between the 1920s and 1950s. Very little development occurred thereafter. Several Revival styles are represented, with a large number of Craftsman Bungalow and American Foursquare houses. There is a good mix of one and two story, and one-and-a-half story houses. Most blocks in the neighborhood have a prevailing pattern of size and style. Brick veneer is the dominant type of exterior finish. Brick requires less maintenance and thus increases the longevity of structures. The preservation of the housing stock gives the neighborhood a sense of character and continuity in design.

Residents stated that the quality of the housing is a major attribute of the neighborhood, however some of the newer infill housing development is incompatible. Wasena is not currently in a designated conservation or rehabilitation district, so it is not eligible for the Neighborhood Design District overlay zoning, which regulates the design of structures. With relatively few vacant lots and a stable housing stock, there are few opportunities for new infill development.

Several of Wasena's streets are characterized by brick houses perched along the undulating terrain.



Zoning and Land Use



This photography studio on Winona Avenue features a second floor apartment. This live/work space is ideal in village centers.



Skateboard Ramp at Wasena Park



10th Street

The predominant land use is residential. Along Main Street there are some commercial properties. A former industrial area lies to the east of Main Street. The neighborhood is characterized by its healthy mix of single and multifamily dwellings and one of the City's largest parks. Most of the neighborhood functions in essentially the same manner as when it was first developed.

The zoning and land use in Wasena can be summarized in four general categories:

- *Traditional residential neighborhood* - with the exception of the park and the industrial area along the Roanoke River, the core of the neighborhood features a variety of housing, the vast majority of which is zoned RM-1, Residential Multifamily, Low Density.
- *Wasena Park* - on the northern edge of the neighborhood, the park lies along the Roanoke River. A railroad line borders the southern side of the river.
- *Industrial district* - East of Main Street along the Norfolk Southern rail spur.
- *Neighborhood Commercial* - on each end of Main Street there are commercial properties. The northern end of Main Street is a small village center and the commercial properties are appropriately zoned CN, Neighborhood Commercial. On the southern end there are a few commercial establishments that are zoned C-2, General Commercial. The zoning and use of these properties are not compatible with the neighborhood.

There are few vacant parcels in Wasena. The Department of Real Estate Valuation lists only 82 properties as vacant, defined by a lack of a building. Some of these properties are used as parking lots or are used as additional yards for adjoining properties. A concentration of vacant land is in the southeastern corner of the neighborhood between Floyd, Hamilton, Suburban, and Welton Avenues, and the Roanoke River. Most of this land is vegetated and serves as a natural buffer between the river, railroad tracks and industrial district to the north and east, and the residential areas to the south and west. The terrain is hilly in this area and many parcels are in the flood plain or floodway. Thus, these properties would be difficult to develop.

The Main Street village center and the small industrial district nearby both are lacking tenants, which has created a noticeable void in this part of the neighborhood. The storefronts along Main Street are in fairly good condition, but would be improved simply with the addition of new occupants. While this village center is already appropriately zoned, residents stated that parking may be an issue for potential establishments.

The industrial district along the Roanoke River is zoned LM, Light Manufacturing, yet today there is little industrial activity in this area. Several buildings are vacant and their proximity to the river makes them flood prone. This area has several issues that need to be addressed if it is to be redeveloped, however rezoning it for mixed use or expanding the number of uses that may be allowed in a light industrial district, would be the first step to making it more marketable.

Community Design Issues:

- Reviving the village center
- Adaptive reuse of buildings in the industrial district



Busy convenience store on Main Street



Zoning & Land Use
in Wasena

Zoning & Land Use

- Zoning District Boundaries
- Single-family
- Multi-family
- Commercial/Industrial
- Park
- Vacant

Residential Development



Wasena has a healthy mix of housing styles and options. Many homes have two or more units, yet have retained their original quality and character.



Wasena enjoys a stable housing stock. There are rarely any building code enforcement issues in the neighborhood. In addition, the diversity of housing options, i.e. single, duplex, and multifamily, in Wasena is a model of the policies of *Vision 2001-2020*, the City's comprehensive plan.

The total number of housing units in the neighborhood fell slightly between the 1990 and 2000 Census, while the vacancy rate decreased two percentage points. This indicates little or no growth in the construction of new units, but the fortitude of the existing housing. In addition, the percentage of owner-occupied units increased over the same time period. According to the 2000 Census, Wasena's homeownership rate was six percentage points higher than that of the City as a whole.

Table 5. Housing

Year: (Total Units)	1990 (818)	2000 (808)	Percentage Change
Occupied Housing Units	764	769	1%
Vacant Housing Units	54	39	-28%
Vacancy Rate	7%	5%	2%
Owner Occupied	452	475	5%
Renter Occupied	312	294	-6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 1990 Census, 2000 Census

Overall, Wasena offers affordable housing options. The median house price is moderately higher than the city average. Almost fifty percent of the rents are less than \$500 per month. The average household is smaller in Wasena than citywide, which may indicate that it is attractive to single people and young couples.



Table 6. Housing Statistics

	Wasena	City of Roanoke
Median House	\$80,900	\$80,300
Percentage of Rents below \$500/month	47%	66%
Persons per Household	2.1	2.6
Owner Occupied	62%	56%
Renter Occupied	38%	44%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Wasena's housing stock is older than that of the City as a whole. According to the 2000 Census, over 90% of the homes were built prior to 1960 compared to only 58% citywide. The neighborhood has experienced virtually no growth in new housing units since the 1970s. Considering the age of most of the homes, the sound condition of the housing stock indicates that property owners in Wasena value their properties and are committed to maintaining them long-term.

There are a number of duplexes and triplexes in Wasena that were converted from their original single-family structure. While such conversions often lead to unintended consequences when rental units replace homeowners, Wasena has maintained a steady balance of owners and renters, and has not seen a decline in property maintenance and values. Residents stated the appreciation of their property values as one of the attributes of housing in Wasena. However, conversions of single-family houses can quickly decrease the number of owner-occupied homes, and in turn have a negative impact on the maintenance of property and the character of the neighborhood. Additional conversions should be kept to a minimum in Wasena.



The quality and value of housing in Wasena is crucial to the neighborhood's continued stability. Future policy decisions will take the neighborhood's success into account and maintain those elements of the current zoning ordinance that have enabled such conditions.

Residential Development Issues:

- Incompatible infill development
- Conversions of single-family homes



Economic Development

Commercial activity in Wasena is of two general categories as previously noted: neighborhood commercial and industrial. While economic development potential is limited in Wasena, investment in the small existing commercial nodes would greatly benefit the neighborhood. Conversely, resident support for redevelopment of these areas indicates untapped economic potential. If these areas are not redeveloped, there is a danger of properties becoming blighted and in turn affecting a larger part of the surrounding neighborhood.

Village Center



Storefronts on Main Street

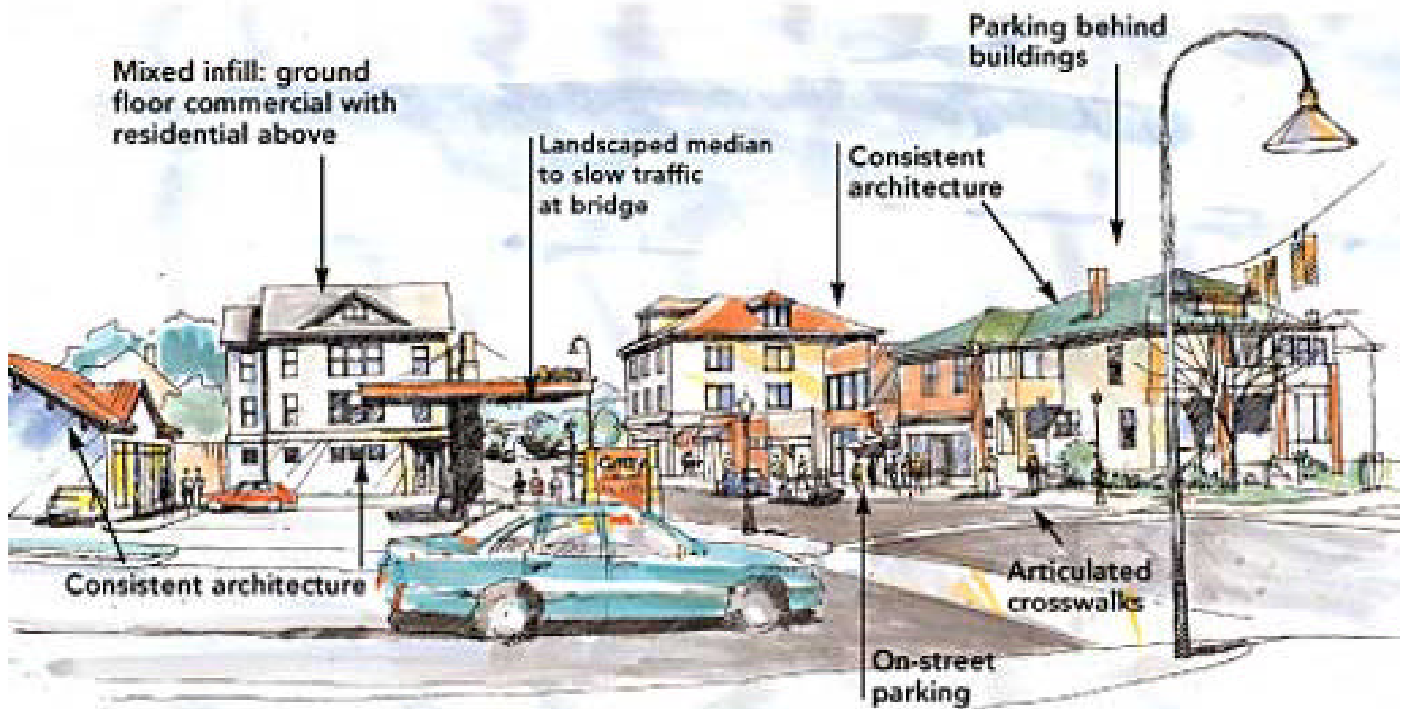
Vision 2001-2020 promotes the village center concept - small commercial nodes with high-density residential elements - as a strategic initiative for development in City neighborhoods. The area around the 1100 block of Main Street is noted in *Vision 2001-2020* as a "village center for revitalization."

This block features traditional storefronts that are either vacant or underused as commercial properties. Currently, there is a gas station/convenience store, furniture upholstery shop and a photography studio. There are also four CN-zoned properties with traditional storefronts bordering the sidewalk that are either vacant or being used for storage. Thus, the built environment of this small village center is intact, but it has not been fully occupied for many years.

Residents expressed a strong interest in seeing the village center revitalized with uses such as small retail shops, specialty stores, and restaurants or coffee shops. Parking has been identified as being a hindrance to investment in the



village center, yet there are parking spaces south of Main Street that are underused. A City-owned parcel between the river and Wiley Drive is often used for parking by people visiting Wasena Park and/or the river. In addition, there are several parking lots and spaces at businesses along 8th Street that are rarely full. Shared parking arrangements could benefit both parties if village center businesses created a demand for parking.



A rendering of Wasena's Main Street Village Center from the City Design chapter of *Vision 2001-2020*. This rendering was drawn to depict the Plan's design guidelines for a small village center. Note the landscaped median: while this plan does not specifically call for a median on the bridge, traffic-calming is recommended to create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Industrial District



Some homes on Winona Avenue abut industrial uses.

The area along the Norfolk Southern railway and the Roanoke River was once a small, yet viable industrial complex. Aside from the New Century Venture Center and the Advance Auto warehouse, most of the industrial properties are unoccupied. The New Century Venture Center was created in a partnership with the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority. It is a small business incubator that provides training and assistance to small businesses in their early stages of development.

While most of the industrial activity has long since vanished, the remnants of those uses are visually prominent for much of the eastern side of the neighborhood. The five-story brick, former Roanoke Ice and Cold Storage building at 806 Wasena Avenue has been vacant for several years. Specific desired uses for the former Roanoke Ice and Cold Storage building were mentioned as apartments, or some form of live/work space - commercial establishments on the ground floor with residential dwellings in the stories.

Residents also expressed interest in seeing this area redeveloped as a small mixed-use district, incubator space, or high-tech center. This area is in the flood plain and future use of these properties will require flood proofing. To increase the chances of this area redeveloping, rezoning will be considered to allow a wider a range of uses.



The former ice and cold storage building at the eastern end of Wasena Avenue offers a wide range of redevelopment potential.



Auto-oriented Commercial

The eastern side of the 1800 - 1900 blocks of Main Street features a car wash, and a heating/air conditioning shop. Located near the busy intersection of Main Street and Brandon Avenue, these establishments are situated for through traffic, and are less neighborhood oriented. Two commercially-zoned properties near the corner of Brandon and Sherwood Avenues are vacant. These parcels should be rezoned to promote village center development that is more compatible with the neighborhood.

Economic Development Issues:

- Vacancy in commercial and industrial buildings
- Potential degradation of areas surrounding commercial and industrial property



The New Century Venture Center

Infrastructure

Transportation



Main Street



New sidewalk infill on Winona Avenue.

Wasena's street network is comprised mainly of two-lane residential streets. Main Street, Route 221, is a two-lane arterial street that connects to Elm Avenue on the northern side of the Wasena Bridge and to Brandon Avenue to the south. Brandon Avenue is a four-lane arterial street that borders the neighborhood on the south and is intersected by Main Street.

Brandon Avenue is the heaviest traveled street in the neighborhood with an average of 22,267 trips per day. Main Street is the second heaviest traveled street with a current 12,233 trips per day. According to the *Roanoke Valley Long Range Transportation Plan*, the projected daily trips are predicted to decrease to 11,800 along Main Street by 2015.

Table 7. Street Level of Service (LOS) Projections, 1990 - 2015

Street	Section	Average Daily Trips	Projected Daily Trips
Main Street	Brandon Ave to Winona Ave	12,233	11,800
Main Street	Winona Ave to Elm Ave	12,233	11,800
Brandon Avenue	Elm/Main to Wonju Street	22,267	28,100

Source: Roanoke Valley Area: Long Range Transportation Plan 1995-2015, VDOT and Fifth District Planning District Commission

Streetscapes



Kerns Avenue

Wasena has a well-maintained network of neighborhood streets, most of which are narrow and designed appropriately for residential traffic with on-street parking on both sides. Wasena has a healthy network of sidewalks, curb and gutter, and streetlights. Many sections of sidewalks have been repaired recently. The streetscapes in the neighborhood are attractive and pedestrian friendly, with healthy trees and landscaping along most streets.

Several Wasena residents expressed concerns about the narrowness of Floyd and Kerns Avenues and requested they be converted from their current two-way to one-way on the west side of Main Street. Although *Vision 2001-2020* recommends two-way streets as a standard, both streets are narrower than the desired width for *yield* streets—two-way streets with three lanes, two of which are for parking. The guideline for such streets is 26 feet, while Floyd and Kerns are both only 20-22 feet wide. Further evaluation of these streets is needed, and any proposed changes to one-way traffic will consider the input of the residents who

would be directly affected. Converting these streets to one-way would make them safer both for driving and parked vehicles. However, the impact on the overall neighborhood circulation pattern will be considered before any final decisions are made.

Main Street Gateways



Hamilton Avenue

The neighborhood has two gateways, both on each end of Main Street. The northern end of Main Street begins at the Wasena Bridge. The southern end of Main Street begins at the intersection of Main Street, Sherwood and Brandon Avenues.

Streetscape and traffic-calming improvements on both ends of Main Street will improve the neighborhood's most visible points. Such improvements are important to improving livability along Main Street, supporting revitalization of the village center, and improving neighborhood image. Improvement strategies for both of these gateways should address the following goals:

- Improve overall livability along the street
- Improve pedestrian safety
- Minimize disruption of the existing neighborhood
- Reduce speed - at least 85% of the traffic should travel at 30 m.p.h. or less
- Retain capacity to handle current and future volumes, while not inducing more traffic
- Keep commuter traffic off of side streets
- Ensure other thoroughfares carry their "fair share" of traffic

Streetscape and traffic-calming measures can respond to these goals. Following are some potential streetscape/traffic-calming tools that may be used along Main Street:

- Planting large-species trees on both sides of the street.
- Installing curb extensions at intersections and mid-blocks to reduce crossing distance for pedestrians and define parking lanes.
- Marking pedestrian crossings with stamped asphalt or other material to create a change in color and texture.
- Painting the shoulder to reduce the apparent pavement width and keep traffic away from street trees.
- Lateral shifts in the travel lanes from one side of the street to the other.
- Speed tables and raised intersections

Main Street/Wasena Bridge



Wasena Bridge

The Wasena Bridge originally had three lanes; two for cars, and one in the middle for street cars. As the automobile superseded the street car, the Wasena Bridge was widened to four lanes of traffic that funnel into two-lane streets. This creates high speeds on the bridge, though traffic eventually has to slow down for traffic signals on both sides. The placement of traffic signals has more of an impact on trip times in urban areas than the design of the street, since traffic will always be halted for periods at signals. Thus, the four-lane section of the Wasena Bridge leads only to increased speeds for approximately a third of a mile between traffic signals, but does not, on average, decrease the amount of time that motorists spend on this stretch of Main Street and the bridge.

Wasena Bridge and the northern end of Main Street will be evaluated for restriping and reduction to two lanes with bicycle lanes added, while maintaining the existing turn lanes at the intersections of Main Street, Elm and Ferdinand Avenues, Main Street and Winona Avenue, and Main Street and Wasena Avenue. Reducing the bridge to two lanes will slow down traffic and improve safety conditions, as well as leaving leftover lane space for bicycle lanes or other alternative modes of transportation. In addition, any revitalization efforts in the Main Street village center will benefit from traffic calming, which will improve pedestrian access and safety.

Main Street, Brandon and Sherwood Avenues

The intersection at the southern end of Main Street with Brandon and Sherwood Avenues is the busiest in the neighborhood. As a gateway into the neighborhood, it is a highly visible intersection and for many people in the City it is the only view of Wasena they encounter regularly.

There are three grassy medians on the north side and two in the middle of Brandon Avenue. The medians help to slow down and disperse traffic well. The medians are also landscaped and well maintained, however residents expressed some dissatisfaction with the appearance of the intersection, namely with the placement and design of the large poles, power lines, and traffic signals that dominate its appearance. Redesign of the entire intersection to enhance its appearance and function will be considered in conjunction with any future improvements.

Public Transportation

Valley Metro provides one route that directly serves the Wasena neighborhood. Route 61/62 circulates along Main Street between the Campbell Court bus terminal and Red Rock Road (near Grandin Court Elementary School). This route provides quick access to downtown as well as to the Towers Shopping Center. Route 65/66 runs along the western edge of the neighborhood, with service along Wasena Avenue near Maiden Lane.

Other Infrastructure

Storm water drainage is not an issue for most of the neighborhood, with the exception of those properties along the Roanoke River that are in the flood plain. The neighborhood is served by public water and sewer.

While the presence and illumination of street lights in the area is satisfactory, residents expressed interest in having decorative street lamps in the Main Street Village Center.

Infrastructure Issues

- Speed of traffic on Main Street at the Wasena Bridge
- Appearance of intersection at Main, Brandon and Sherwood
- Streets below normal width

Public Services

Police

Although the Wasena neighborhood enjoys a low crime rate, calls for service have increased in many of the categories of offense between 2001 and 2002. In addition, the total number of calls for service and reports filed increased eighteen percent and nineteen percent respectively.

The Roanoke Police Department divides the City into 14 districts. The Wasena neighborhood is completely contained in the Police Department's District 9. The district includes the neighborhoods of Wasena, Franklin Road, Grandin Court, and part of Raleigh Court. The increase in total calls for service and reports filed in Wasena reflect the trends in the district as a whole.

Residents have noted problems recently with burglaries and petty theft. Police Officers regularly attend meetings of the Wasena Neighborhood Forum and are informed of issues in the neighborhood. Residents should continue to inform officers of problems and maintain their neighborhood crime watch committee. In addition, basic crime prevention tactics should be employed, such as leaving front porch lights on overnight and when out of town, locking doors and windows, and bringing in valuables off of porches.

Fire/EMS

Fire Station Number 7 at 1742 Memorial Avenue is the closest station to the neighborhood. It houses an engine and a ladder. The Fire/EMS Strategic Business Plan recommends future improvements to the station to continue its operation.

Public Service Issues:

- Slight increase in crime

Quality of Life

Parks and Recreation



Valley Avenue Park



Wasena Park

Wasena Park is a 41-acre community park. The Department of Parks and Recreation defines a community park as one which is designed to meet community-based recreation needs, as well as preserving unique landscapes and open spaces. A community park usually serves two or more neighborhoods and a half-mile to 3-mile radius. Wasena Park includes amenities for recreational activities (softball, basketball, tennis, etc.), playgrounds, picnic tables, a comfort station (a restroom and water fountain) and a scenic drive. In addition, the park offers nice biking, jogging, walking, and fishing opportunities. The general public and various organizations frequently use it as a venue for cookouts and parties, while the Department of Parks and Recreation hosts league softball games and other sporting events there.

Located adjacent to Wasena Park, Smith Park is a 10-acre community park. The facility includes a picnic shelter with restrooms, a large playground structure, and a small memorial garden. Triangle Park is a .3-acre park located between Hamilton Avenue and Kerns Avenue. It provides a scenic open space with a picnic table. The Wasena Neighborhood Forum hosts an annual block party at the park in the fall.

In the heart of the neighborhood, between Hamilton and Valley Avenues near Triangle Park, Valley Avenue Park is a two to three block stretch of well vegetated land. This park provides the neighborhood with attractive green space; there are several tall trees that hang over a grassy field.

The Roanoke River Greenway runs along Wiley Drive through Wasena and Smith Parks. A segment of Wiley Drive is half pedestrian and half one-way vehicular. It is in the floodway and has been closed in the past due to flooding. The pedestrian lane is well utilized by pedestrians, runners, and people walking pets. It also provides a connection to Rivers Edge Park on Reserve Avenue.

Greenways



Wiley Drive and the
Roanoke River Greenway

In addition to the Roanoke River Greenway, the proposed Brambleton Avenue Greenway runs through the neighborhood. This greenway would connect to the Roanoke River Greenway from Brambleton Avenue via Brighton Street. The proposed Murray Run Greenway would intersect with the Brambleton Avenue Greenway and run along Brandon Avenue to connect with the Roanoke River Greenway. These routes are listed in the Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan, but have yet to be developed.

Flood plain

Wiley Drive has in the past been closed for long periods when the Roanoke River floods. Most of the properties that lie within the flood plain are in the industrial district. The Roanoke River Flood Reduction Project will reduce the impact of flooding along this segment of the river, however in periods of excessive rainfall and water accumulation, Wiley Drive will likely flood. This situation has not caused concern, as the street can easily be closed, and the parks are an appropriate land use for this flood prone area. In addition to the properties acquired for the Flood Reduction Project, in the future additional properties should be acquired along the River and incorporated as park land.

Schools and Libraries

Wasena Elementary School lies on the edge of the neighborhood on Sherwood Avenue. Patrick Henry High School is approximately a half-mile from the neighborhood at the corner of Grandin Road and Brandon Avenue. The Raleigh Court Branch Public Library is on the campus of Patrick Henry on Grandin Road.

Quality of Life Issues:

- Flooding of Roanoke River



Wasena Elementary School

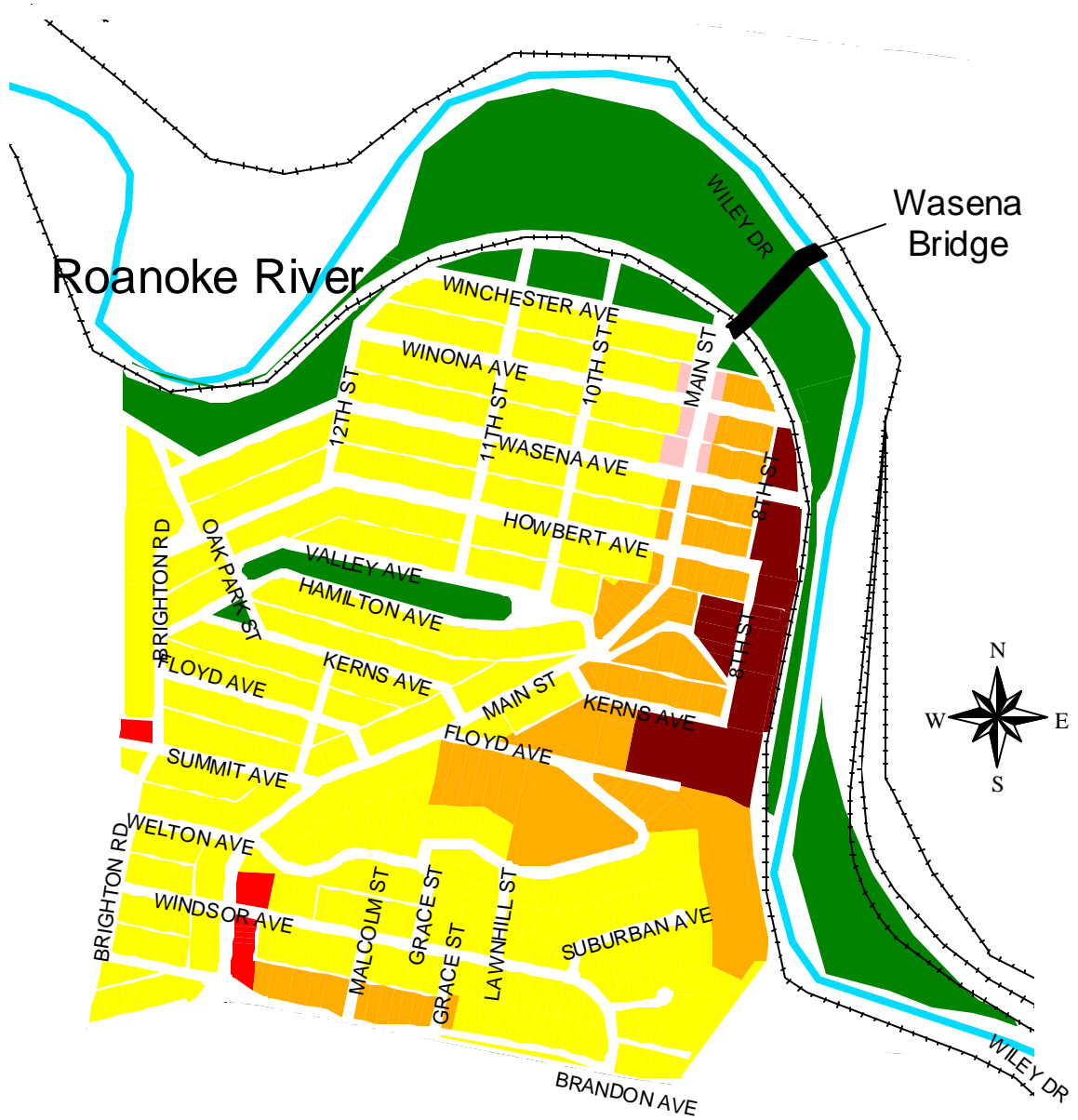
Recommendations

Recommended Policies and Actions

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. Generally, policies are ongoing. Actions are projects or tasks that can be completed and have a definite end.

Future Land Use

The *Future Land Use* map 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.



Future Land Use
in Wasena

Future Land Use

- Single & Two Family Residential
- Mixed Density Residential
- Village Center
- Mixed Use
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Park

Community Design Policies

- **Development Model:** Future development should follow the traditional neighborhood model prescribed by *Vision 2001-2020*.
- **Building location:** To encourage a pedestrian environment and desirable streetscape, commercial buildings should be placed close to the street, adjacent to the sidewalk. Storefronts should be limited in width (25'-40'). Established building lines of existing development will guide placement of infill dwellings.
- **Main Street Village Center:** The village center will be dense, compact in size, and identifiable. Uses in the village center will generally be neighborhood-oriented commercial, but could contain some compatible businesses that serve a larger market. Live-work spaces and upper floor residential will be encouraged in the village center.
- **Parking:** Parking is recognized as a necessity, but will not be allowed to dominate any development. Parking will be located primarily on-street. Zoning regulations will consider the availability of on-street parking when determining appropriate levels of on-site parking. Where additional parking is warranted, it will be located to the rear or side of buildings.
- **Industrial District:** Industrial and commercial development will be designed and oriented in a manner that minimizes impacts on the environment and the neighborhood. Effective landscaping and buffering from adjoining residential properties will be employed to prevent encroachment.

Community Design Actions

- **Implement village center zoning:** Implement village center zoning to replace the current CN zoning in the Main Street village center, and the C-2 zoning on the southern end of Main Street.
- **Limit surface parking:** Develop mechanisms to limit surface parking lots and encourage use of on street parking for periodic uses.
- **Rezoning:** Rezone or change use regulations in the industrial district along the Roanoke River.

Residential Development Policies

- **Design and Orientation of Infill Housing:** New housing should be compatible with the existing structures in design and scale.
- **Diversity of Housing Options:** The diversity of housing that exists in the neighborhood should continue.
- **Discourage conversions:** Limit the number of single-family homes that are converted to duplex or multifamily.

Residential Development Actions

- **Orientation of Infill Housing:** Amend the zoning ordinance to ensure that new residential development is compatible with existing structures in terms of setbacks and lot coverage, and to maximize the development potential of vacant properties and structures.
- **Diversity of Housing Options:** Maintain a zoning district similar to the current RM-1 in residential areas in the update of the zoning ordinance.
- **Regulate conversions:** Regulate the conversion of single-family homes to multifamily by requiring a special exception permit to ensure that compatibility with the existing neighborhood is maintained.

Economic Development Policies

- **Neighborhood Commercial:** Commercial establishments should be compatible with the neighborhood, especially in the village center.
- **Underutilized Commercial/Industrial Land:** Encourage redevelopment of vacant buildings with commercial or industrial zoning.
- **Incompatible Land Uses:** Industrial and commercial uses should have as minimal impact as possible on adjoining residential areas in terms of visibility, noise and air quality.

Economic Development Actions

- **Limit surface parking:** Develop mechanisms to limit surface parking lots and encourage use of on-street and shared parking for periodic uses.
- **Redevelopment of Industrial District:** Target the former ice and cold storage building and industrial district for adaptive reuse. Considerations for redevelopment will include:
 - Zoning that allows for flexibility in permitting a vibrant mix of commercial and residential uses, particularly live/work space
 - High-tech or other industrial uses that have a minimal environmental and neighborhood impact
 - Possibilities for public/private partnerships
- **Main Street Village Center:** Market the Main Street village center with particular emphasis on:
 - Small-scale buildings with 2-3 stories.
 - Neighborhood commercial uses with minimal noise and lighting impacts. Consider installation of decorative street lamps.
 - Shared parking arrangements, including public/private partnerships.

Infrastructure Policies

- **Streetscapes:** Streetscapes should be well maintained, attractive and functional for pedestrian, bicycle and motor traffic, and traditional neighborhood streets should have urban amenities such as sidewalks and curb and gutter. Appropriate species of trees should also be planted along streetscapes.
- **Connectivity:** The connectivity of streets and the grid street system should be promoted and maintained.
- **Street width:** Streets should be kept at the minimum width necessary to accommodate vehicular traffic and on-street parking.

Infrastructure Actions

- **Plant Trees:** Initiate tree planting on streets where they are lacking or have not been replanted after being removed. Work with Neighborhood Services to plant trees and other landscaping.
- **Wasena Bridge:** Reduce Main Street on the Wasena Bridge to two travel lanes with turn lanes at Winona and Wasena Avenues.
- **Main Street Village Center:** Create a crosswalk across Main Street at Wasena Avenue with stamped asphalt.
- **Main Street, Brandon and Sherwood Avenues:** Make gateway improvements to this intersection to enhance its attractiveness.

Public Services Policies

- **Police:** The close relationship that officers assigned to the area have with residents and the neighborhood organization should continue to be strengthened and supported.
- **Public Services:** Public services will be delivered to citizens in the most efficient manner possible, including combining some in common facilities in areas where they are needed.

Public Services Actions

- **Continue communication between the neighborhood and Police:** Continue and improve upon collaborative efforts of residents, the neighborhood organizations and police.

Quality of Life Policies

- **Parks:** neighborhood parks will be safe and have well-maintained facilities that will be used by nearby residents.
- **Flood Way/Plain Land:** Land along the Roanoke River should be acquired to prevent future flooding problems from impacting citizens.
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodation:** Streets in the neighborhood should accommodate pedestrians and bicycles in addition to vehicles.

Quality of Life Actions

- **Plant Trees:** Initiate tree planting on streets where they are lacking or have not been replanted after being removed. Work with Neighborhood Services to plant trees and other landscaping.
- **Greenways:** Evaluate the Brambleton Avenue Greenway route.

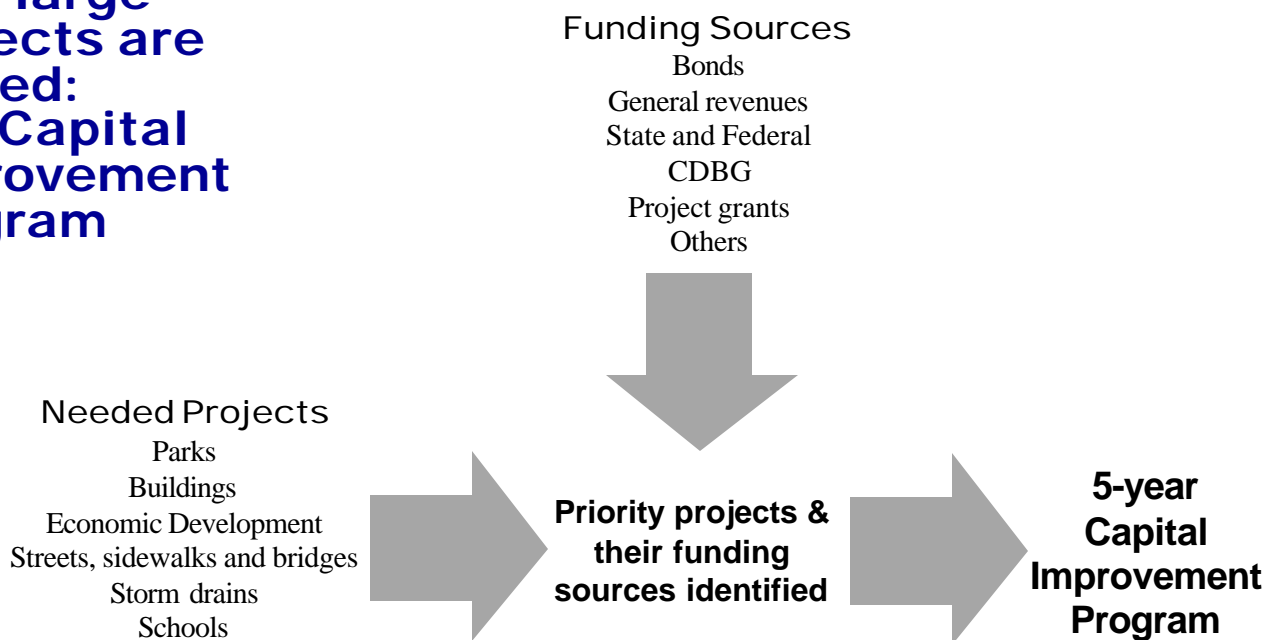
Implementation

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



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	Year						Lead Agency	Potential funding sources
	1	2	3	4	5	Ongoing		
Strategic Housing Plan (Citywide)		*					HNS	HNS operating budget
Zoning Changes	*						PBD	PBD operating budget
Market village center & industrial area						*	ED	ED operating budget
Wasena Bridge Traffic calming		*					PW	CDBG, TEA-21, Bond, PW operating budget
Tree planting and landscaping						*	HNS, P&R	CDBG, Bond, P&R operating budget
Develop Brambleton Avenue Greenway route			*				PW, P&R	PW operating budget, P&R operating budget
Continue COPE & Neighborhood Watch						*	PD, WNF	PD operating budget

Abbreviations:

- CDBG = Community Development Block Grants (Federal funding to the city)
- ED = Roanoke Department of Economic Development
- HNS = Roanoke Department of Housing and Neighborhood Services
- PD = Police Department
- PBD = Roanoke Planning Building and Development
- P&R= Roanoke Parks and Recreation
- PW = Roanoke Public Works
- TEA-21 = Transportation Enhancement Act (Federal transportation funding)
- VDOT = Virginia Department of Transportation
- WNF = Wasena Neighborhood Forum

Budget Estimates

Below is a general guide to the resources needed to carry out this plan where costs can be estimated. It is intended to identify needs during budget development, but does not necessarily provide for funding. In some cases, an estimated cost is unavailable because additional assessment is needed. Estimates should be used to anticipate and plan for future funding needs.

Project	Estimated Cost	Participants	Considerations
Residential Development: Strategic Housing Plan (Citywide)	\$100,000	HNS	Proposal is underway
Zoning Ordinance (Citywide)	\$100,000	PBD	Update of the zoning ordinance is presently underway & funding has been allocated. Note: Costs for both items are for the entire city.
Economic Development: Market Main St. village center	Unknown	ED	Gather & provide information for prospective developers
Market industrial area	Unknown		
Infrastructure: Wasena Bridge traffic calming	\$10,000	PW	Two-lanes w/bike lanes Wasena Bridge & Brandon/Sherwood/Main intersection
Gateway Improvements	Unknown		
Quality of Life: Brambleton Avenue Greenway	Unknown	P&R, PW	All potential greenway routes need to be evaluated further
Plant Trees	\$10,000	HNS, P&R, WNF	

Acknowledgments

City Council

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Vice Mayor C. Nelson Harris
William D. Bestpitch
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Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
Alfred T. Dowe, Jr.
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