Prepared for:
Riverside Civic and Welfare Club

Prepared by:
City Planning Department
Department of Transportation and Engineering,
Office of Environmental Management and
Department of Community Development
City of Cincinnati

RIVERSIDE

Strategic Community Plan

March 1, 2002

Credits

At the request of the Department of Community Development, this plan was prepared for the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club by the Departments of City Planning, Transportation and Engineering, Community Development, the Office of Environmental Management and the Riverside Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

Riverside Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Dave and Carol Audretch
Dave Beck
Joe Damico
Richard Dodd
Tim Flynt
JoAnne and Jim Gibbons
Daniel and Janet Gilday
Theresa and Tom Gilday
Neal Gilday, Jr.
Mary C. Ruprich
Kim Gilday-Weber
Lori Hallbauer
Terry and Debbie Hess
Floyd Merida
Mike Namaky
Kate Radkey
Theresa A. Ruprich
Ruth Schwant
Dave Zelman

Other Participants, Stakeholders and Interested Parties

Don Alexander, River Transportation
BLC Development
Cincinnati Fire Department
Mr. and Mrs. Dan Depenbrock
Shannon Gilday
Tim and Diane Gilday
Hibernian Home Committee
Karl and Tonya Ingle
Ricci and Karen Ward
Linda Liebau, College of Mt. St. Joseph
Rick Ritter, Holnam Inc.
Dick Oehler, Oil Distributing Inc.
Sam O'Koon, Marathon Ashland
St. Vincent de Paul Church
Carl Meier
Philip B. Mink
Riverside Academy
Michael Ruprich
Matthew T. Sensel
Erin Gilday
Edward Steinmetz
Alan Weiner
Susan Feldman
Bess Feldman
Jill Shoemaker
Joe Shoemaker
Paula Sexton
Sandy Sexton

Staff from the City of Cincinnati

- Elizabeth A. Blume, AICP, Director, City Planning Department
- Vanessa McMillan-Moore, Administrator, City Planning Department, Community and Strategic Planning Division
- Matthew Andrews, Senior Architect, Department of Transportation and Engineering, Office of Architecture and Urban Design
- Julia Carney, AICP, Senior City Planner, City Planning Department, Division of Land Use Planning
- Kathy Clayton, Air Quality Manager, Office of Environmental Management
- Pete Gillon, Neighborhood Division Manager, Department of Community Development
- Shaun Bellman, Development Officer, Department of Community Development
- Martha Kelly, Supervising Engineer, Department of Transportation and Engineering
- Rochelle Thompson, Senior Community Development Analyst, Department of Community Development

Project Manager:

- Katherine Keough-Jurs, AICP, City Planner, City Planning Department, Community and Strategic Planning Division

City Council

Mayor Charlie Luken
Minette Cooper
David Crowley
Paul Booth
John Cranley
Pat DeWine
Chris Monzel
David Pepper
Alicia Reece
James Tarbell

City Planning Commission

Caleb Faux
Terri Hankner
Jacquelyn McCray
Don Mooney
David Rager, Acting Deputy Manager
Tim Riordan, Acting City Manager
James Tarbell, Council Representative
Peter Witte

Executive Summary

The purpose of this plan is to provide the Riverside community with a guide to their development and improvements. A group of 17 Steering Committee Members comprised of residents, property owners, employees and other stakeholders developed a set of seven goals with objectives and strategies.

Location

The Riverside community stretches for approximately 12 miles along Cincinnati's western riverfront from Illinois Avenue to Bender Avenue. A very long, narrow-shaped community, it is bordered by the Ohio River to the south and Delhi Township to the north.

Background

The Riverside community has a dual nature. River Road, the main road through Riverside, is U.S. 50, a major truck route with railroad tracks running parallel to it. The land south of River Road is primarily industrial while the land north of River Road is primarily residential. The main conflict in the community is co-habitation of these two uses.

Issues

The plan seeks to address the following issues:

Accessibility and Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrian safety is the number one goal. Improve sidewalks and intersections in heavily traveled areas while managing speed.

Greenspace and Recreation Areas

Enhance existing recreational area and create additional opportunities.

Industrial Environmental Impact on Residential Areas

Reduce pollutants in residential areas and improve communication between businesses and residents.

Image and Marketability

Improve the appearance of the neighborhood through elimination of blight. Enhance visibility of Riverside's assets and improve communication between neighborhood stakeholders.

Quality and Responsiveness of Community Services

Improve the relationship between the community and the City.

Attraction of Neighborhood-Friendly Development

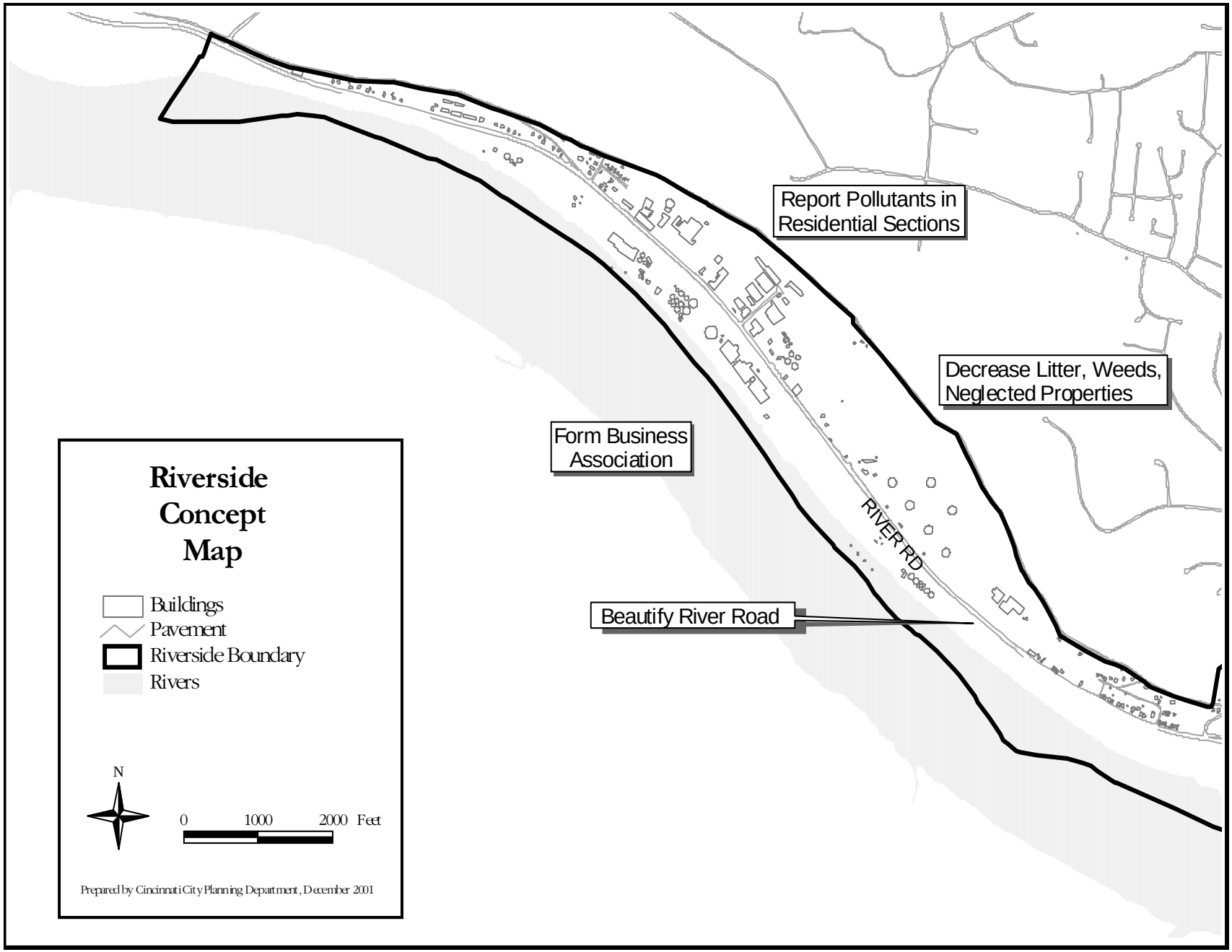
Designate Anderson Ferry and River Road intersection as target area for future commercial development. Improve communication between businesses.

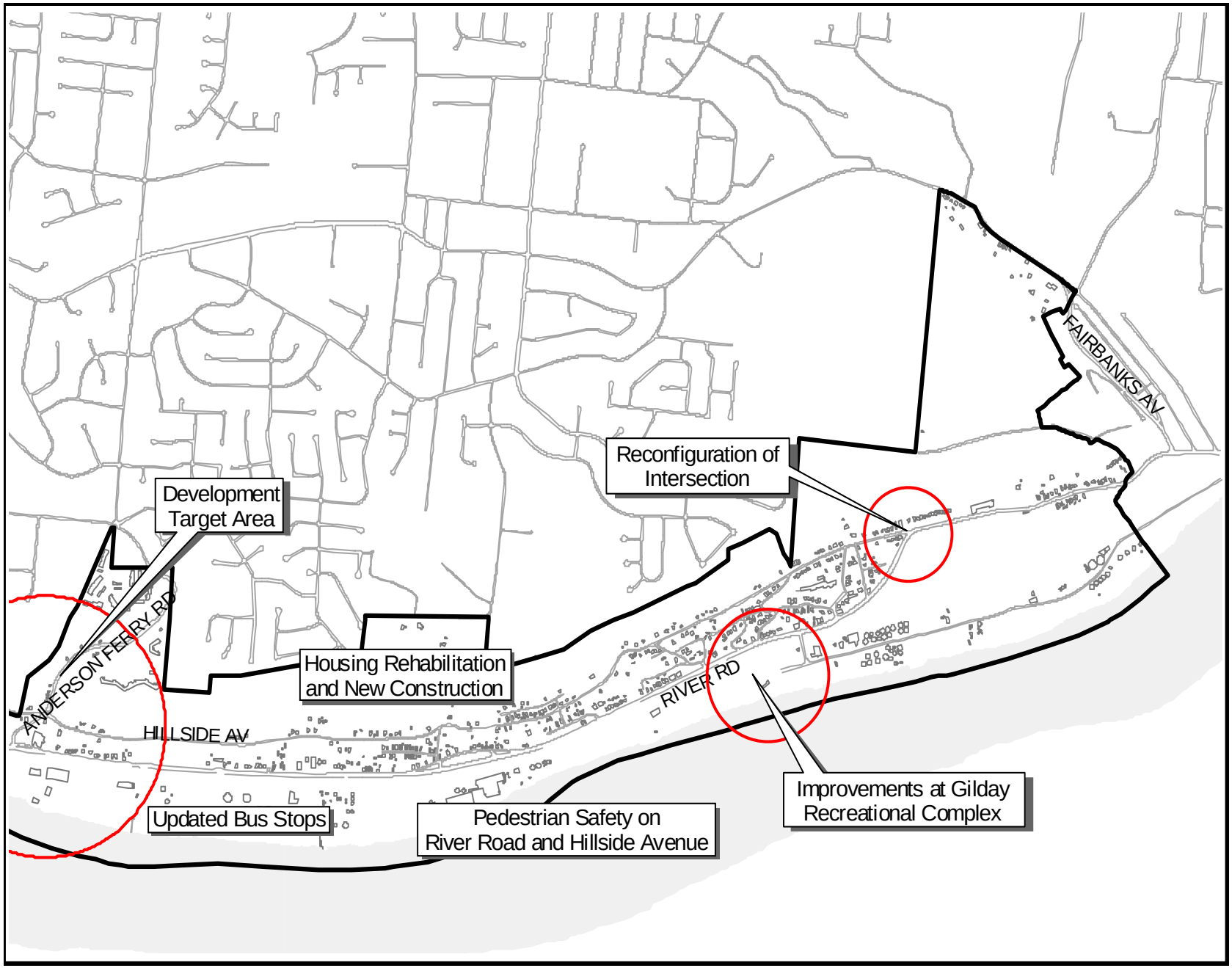
Increased Homeownership for Mixed Incomes

Rehabilitate existing structures and build new houses on infill sites. Assist homeowners in purchasing and maintaining homes.

Implementation

This plan contains an Implementation Chart showing each strategy, the level of priority, the level of difficulty, and the possible implementing agencies. It is also recommended that the Riverside community assemble an implementation committee to insure the proper completion of each strategy.


Report Pollutants in Residential Sections
Decrease Litter, Weeds, Neglected Properties
Form Business Association
RIVER RD
Beautify River Road
Riverside Concept Map
Buildings
Pavement
Riverside Boundary
Rivers
N
0
1000
2000 Feet
Prepared by Cincinnati City Planning Department, December 2001


Reconfiguration of Intersection
Development Target Area
Housing Rehabilitation and New Construction
Improvements at Gilday Recreational Complex
Pedestrian Safety on River Road and Hillside Avenue
Updated Bus Stops
ANDERSON FERRY RD
HILLSIDE AV
RIVER RD
FAIRBANKS AV

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Introduction

The primary goal of the Riverside Strategic Community Plan is to give community leaders a definitive guide to future development and improvements in the Riverside neighborhood. With that in mind, each goal and strategy was well thought out and great consideration was given to the ability to implement each recommendation. Community leaders wanted, above all else, a Plan that would guide them through specific actions to provide a significant improvement to the Riverside neighborhood.

Description of the Planning Process

In March 2001, community volunteers began meeting on a monthly basis to discuss the assets and challenges in Riverside. A core group of approximately 17 Steering Committee Members consisting of interested residents, employees and other stakeholders attended the meetings. The objective was to determine how to build on the neighborhood's assets and make improvements to weaker areas.

The Steering Committee developed a set of seven goals with objectives and strategies. The goals represent challenges in the neighborhood and the objectives and strategies define how the neighborhood intends to address the challenges through capitalization on its assets, key infrastructure improvements, future private development, resident education and coalition building.

The strategies recommended were assigned a priority level and a difficulty level (Low, Medium or High) to give further guidance to current and future community leaders charged with implementation of the plan. The purpose of this exercise was to show that the Committee took a very realistic, comprehensive view of what strategies to recommend.

Introduction

History of Riverside

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the primary Native groups to occupy the Ohio River valley were the Shawnee and the Miami. The tribes settled here perhaps to take advantage of the protective hillsides and accessibility to the river.

During the 1800's Cornelius Sedam, Squire Ethan Stone and Mrs. Jeremiah Reeder owned a large amount of the property along the riverfront west of Cincinnati. In 1823, upon the death of Cornelius Sedam, the land was divided among his sons. David Sedam inherited the estate west of Bold Face Creek, where he built a large stone home overlooking the Ohio River, which he named Riverside. The community that grew up around this estate was incorporated in 1867 as the Village of Riverside. The City of Cincinnati later annexed Riverside in 1896.

Riverside experienced many physical changes during the twentieth century. The 1937 flood damaged many homes and businesses and made way for the expanded River Road. During the construction phase, all traffic was routed along Hillside Avenue. This caused future infrastructure problems, as the loss of drainage ditches allowed more water to run down the hillside to residents' homes causing slippage, landslides and deep potholes. The road was so damaged that in 1973, Hillside Avenue was declared a disaster area, not to be reopened until 1976.

The widening of River Road did open up new opportunities in industrial development by giving more support for traffic and heavy trucks. This brought more industrial development and changes in the zoning. The new industry consisted of Ashland Oil Company's Valvoline Division, The Tresler Oil Company, Texaco's River Terminal, Indiana Grain Company's Queen Elevators, Morton Salt Company, Diamond Salt Company and the Conrail roundhouse and distribution center.

During the last quarter of the 20th Century, the Riverside community saw additional changes. During the 1970's, Riverside's elementary school was closed and the children were transfered to Sayler Park School. This event is seen as a turning point in the neighborhood, as some residents feel that it was the catalyst that sparked an exodus of families with children from the neighborhood. In the years that the elementary school was open, it was the heart of neighborhood life. It was common for parents to walk their childern to and from school each day, interacting with other members of the community on the way. The loss of the elementary school was equal to the loss of the community's center in the eyes of Riverside residents.

Riverside's residents continued to create ways to keep the community connected, however. In the late 1970's, the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club began it's annual practice of hosting a summer picnic and a winter dinner dance. Both events are very popular in the community, with residents and businesses alike participating in the events.

Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, land adjacent to the Gilday Recreational Complex was acquired to slowly expand the park. The Riverside community dedicated itself to acheiving the park's planned expansion. In the past year, the final parcel was aquired to complete the park's expansion.

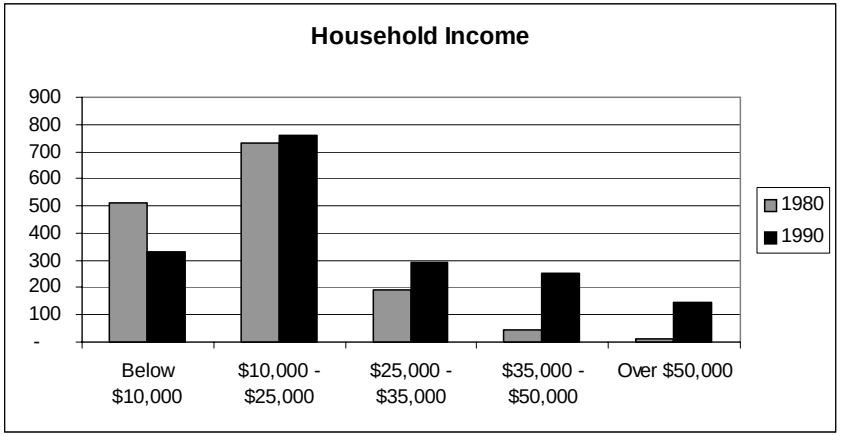
The recommendations made in this plan are intended to build upon the history of the Riverside neighborhood, and the dedication of its residents and businesses. This document serves as their guide to the continuation of this proud history.

Existing Conditions

Demographics[1]

In the year 2000[2], Riverside's population was 3,674, a 15% drop from 1980, which is similar to the City of Cincinnati's 14% drop. In addition, persons between the age of 20-24 decreased 41%.

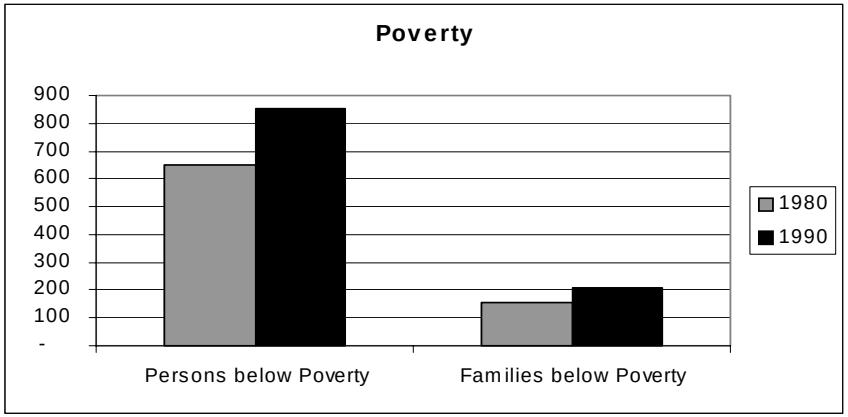
During the 1980's and 1990's incomes rose dramatically. In comparison to the City's increase, fewer Riverside residents are earning less than $10,000 per year. However, persons and families below poverty has increased 31% and 36%. This may suggest that while incomes are rising, some families are not seeing enough of an increase to get above the poverty level. City of Cincinnati residents are experiencing similar trends, although not as drastically.

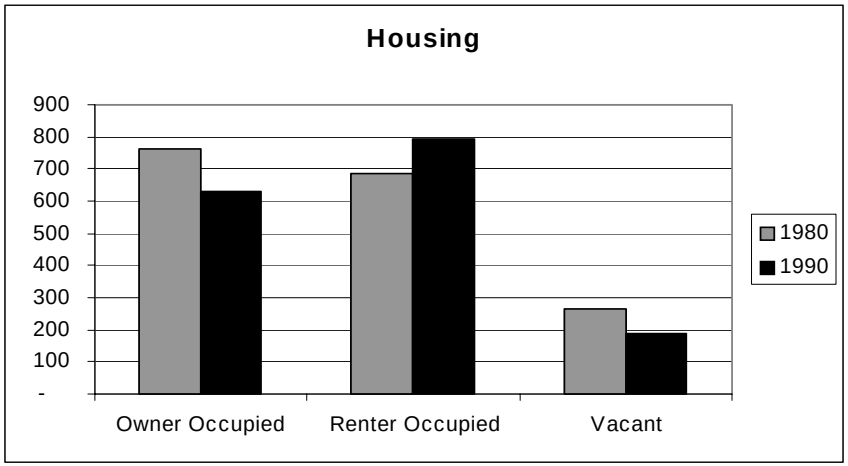


[1] An analysis of 1980, 1990, and some available 2000 census data is difficult to use to describe the Riverside neighborhood. Due to the alignment of the census tracts, it is impossible to separate Riverside neighborhood data from that for the Sedamsville or Sayler Park neighborhoods.

[2] For additional census data, including updates from the 2000 census as information is released, please check the City Planning Department website: www.rcc.org/cplanning

Between 1980 and 2000, the number of owner occupied housing units decreased 17% while the number of renter occupied housing increased 15%. This suggests that more housing units are being transferred from owner occupied to renter occupied. Vacant buildings, however, have decreased 28%.





Existing Conditions

Physical Boundaries and Landmarks

The Riverside neighborhood has several distinguishing physical characteristics. One is its size and shape. Stretching approximately 12 miles along the banks of the Ohio River from Illinois Avenue to Bender Road, Riverside is much longer than it is wide. The neighborhood is bounded by the Ohio River to the south and Delhi Township to the north, just as the terrain begins to slope rapidly uphill.

The neighborhood is split by River Road, U.S. Route 50, a designated truck route. The portion lying to the south is almost entirely industrial while the property to the north is primarily residential. The residential part of the neighborhood is clustered along River Road and Hillside Avenue and their many side streets, most of which are on steep terrain, and are very narrow with little on-street parking. Many of these streets are unimproved, meaning that they have no curbs, storm sewers or sidewalks.

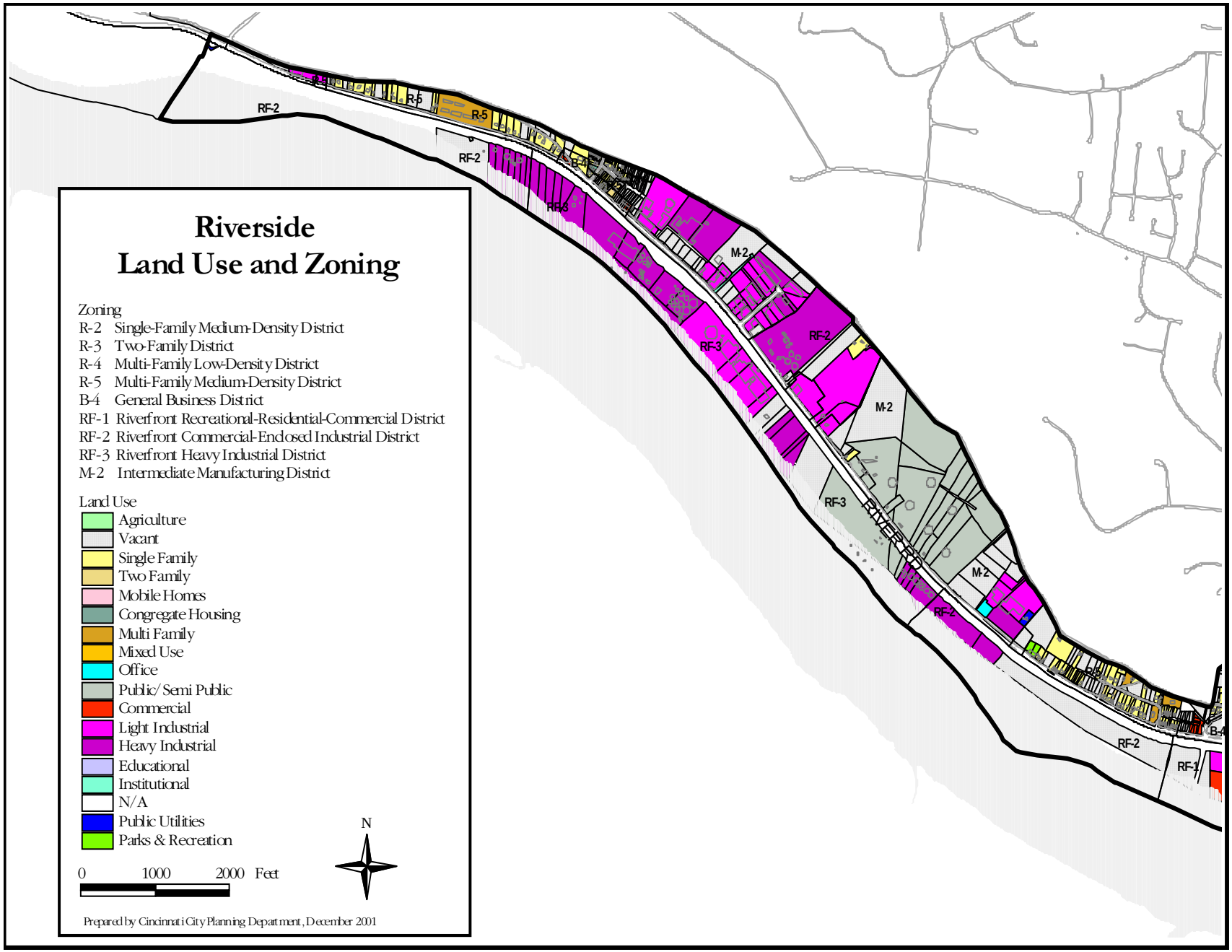
There is not a traditional neighborhood business district in Riverside. Instead, Southside Avenue and the south side of River Road are comprised of a row of industrial companies that provide the City of Cincinnati with a portion of its economic base. Most of these industrial sites are located in the flood plain.

River Road itself is extremely important to the region. The primary truck route traveling west from downtown Cincinnati, it is one piece of an intricate transportation system consisting of road, rail and river traffic. River Road runs parallel to the Ohio River, and between the two lies two sets of heavy rail lines operated by CSX and Indiana and Ohio Railroad.

At the center of the neighborhood along River Road is Anderson Ferry Road, at the head of which is historic Anderson Ferry, the only remaining ferry service in Cincinnati, which crosses to Kentucky Route 8. Anderson Ferry offers the most direct route to the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky airport from the western side of Cincinnati. Cars waiting to board the ferry often back up onto River Road or Anderson Ferry Road. This is a valuable and unique mode of transportation, and a well-known landmark, Nationally Registered Historic Place and symbol of the Riverside neighborhood.

Land Use and Zoning

Riverside's land use is fairly consistent with it's zoning. The neighborhood is primarily zoned for riverfront uses south of River Road. Most uses are industrial, with the exception of Gilday Recreational Complex. The area north of River Road is zoned primarily for Residential uses east of Anderson Ferry Road. West of Anderson Ferry is zoned mostly Riverfront and Intermediate Manufacturing uses. There is also a small area at the very western end of the neighborhood that is zoned for Residential and Business uses. In a few areas, a commercial use resides in a residential zone and a residence exists in a business or manufacturing zone. In these areas where residential uses are existing side by side with industrial uses, conflicts can arise.


Riverside
Land Use and Zoning
Zoning
R-2 Single-Family Medium-Density District
R-3 Two-Family District
R-4 Multi-Family Low-Density District
R-5 Multi-Family Medium-Density District
B-4 General Business District
RF-1 Riverfront Recreational-Residential-Commercial District
RF-2 Riverfront Commercial-Enclosed Industrial District
RF-3 Riverfront Heavy Industrial District
M-2 Intermediate Manufacturing District
Land Use
Agriculture
Vacant
Single Family
Two Family
Mobile Homes
Congregate Housing
Multi Family
Mixed Use
Office
Public/ Semi Public
Commercial
Light Industrial
Heavy Industrial
Educational
Institutional
N/A
Public Utilities
Parks & Recreation
0 1000 2000 Feet
N
Prepared by Cincinnati City Planning Department, December 2001
RF-2
R-5
R-5
RF-2
B-4
RF-3
M-2
RF-2
RF-3
M-2
RF-3
RIVER RD
M-2
RF-2
B-4
RF-2
RF-1
B-4

R-4
R-4
FAIRBANKS AV
R-2
R-4
R-2
R-4
R-5T
M-2
R-3
R-3
R-2
R-4
R-4
R-4
HILLSIDE AV
R-5T
R-5
B-4
RF-2
RF-2
RF-1
RIVER RD

Assets

The following assets were compiled from a series of community meetings and staff field work:

People

Riverside residents describe their neighborhood as a tight-knit community where neighbors are friendly and helpful to each other and their community. Many residents grew up in Riverside and in some instances, have returned to raise their families. The residents of Riverside are very active in the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club, which sponsors events including community picnics, holiday parties and monthly neighborhood clean-up activities.

Accessibility

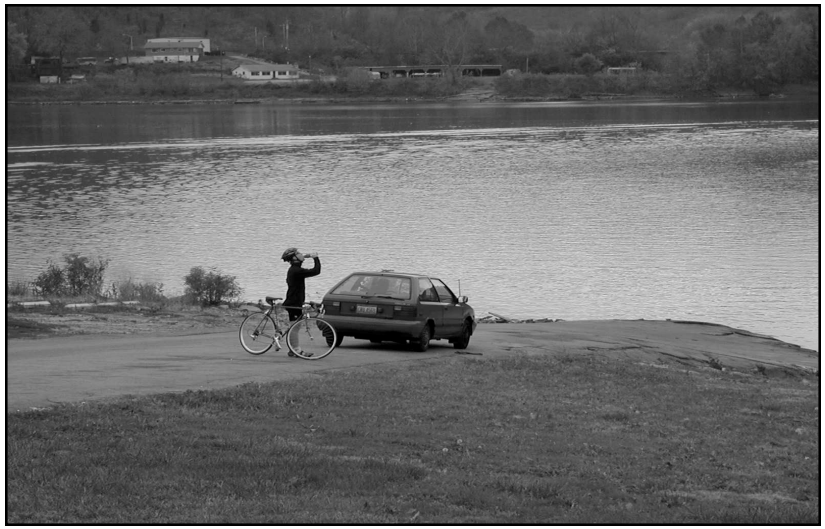
Only a five-minute drive to downtown Cincinnati, Riverside residents feel that they are close to everything they need. Interstates 71 and 75 are accessed with a five-minute drive, as are the shopping areas and restaurants in Delhi Township and communities of western Cincinnati. The neighborhood can also easily reach the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky airport and picturesque farmland through the use of Anderson Ferry.

Recreation and Greenspace

One of the greatest assets of the Riverside neighborhood is its potential for recreational activities. Gilday Recreational Complex is located on the riverfront on the eastern portion of the neighborhood riverfront, just south of a large residential area of the community. Since the primary residential section is located along the hillside, residents often have views of the river, are surrounded by greenspace, and come in frequent contact with different types of local wildlife. It is this pleasant surrounding that Riverside residents want to preserve, and see as a strong attraction to draw outsiders to the neighborhood. Many cyclists already visit Riverside to take advantage of the hillsides and the connection to Kentucky Route 8 via Anderson Ferry.

General Quality of Life

Riverside residents enjoy life in a quiet neighborhood filled with affordable, early to mid twentieth century homes. Residents feel safe and the crime rate is low. Views of the river and sounds of the trains as they pass through enhance the character of the neighborhood. Riverside residents consider the local schools, St. Vincent de Paul and Riverside Academy, to be an asset as well. Residents also feel fortunate to be in close proximity to local colleges, especially the College of Mount Saint Joseph, located just up the hill in Delhi Township.



A car and a cyclist wait to board Anderson Ferry.

Challenges and Opportunities

The following challenges and opportunities were compiled from a series of community meetings and staff field work:

Physical Constraints

The primary planning issue in the Riverside neighborhood is the combination of physical characteristics present; a good portion of the neighborhood is located either in the floodplain or on a steep hillside. Another issue is the dual nature of the neighborhood with industrial property south of River Road and primarily residential property with some industrial pockets north of River Road. How do two very different uses share a small amount of space?

Some residents are concerned about industrial pollution drifting north and affecting the air quality in residential portions of the neighborhood. Complaints regarding noise and light pollution from industries at night are often reported. Dust from industries and high volumes of traffic on River Road also contribute to reported poor air quality in the residential sections. Residents and industries have a somewhat indifferent relationship with sporadic communication. However, during this planning process both industrial representatives and residents expressed a willingness to work together to discuss and find solutions to their differences.

Accessibility

There are a few locations in Riverside that present accessibility challenges. Residents north of River Road have difficulty accessing Gilday Recreational Complex south of River Road because of the high volume of fast-moving traffic and an insufficient crossing area at the intersection near the park entrance.

Just east of Gilday Recreational Complex, Hillside Avenue and River Road intersect. This intersection has a poor safety history due to the sharp curve of River Road and unusual alignment of Hillside Avenue. Complaints of speeding on River Road and Hillside Avenue contribute to the uneasiness of traversing this intersection.

The intersection at River Road and Anderson Ferry already experiences back-ups, and is not capable of handling additional traffic in its current configuration. Some of the bus stops on River Road, especially those located in front of the school, are situated too close to the road with little or no shelter from traffic.

The dangerous intersection of Hillside Avenue and River Road.

Challenges and Opportunities

Amenities, Image and Marketability

Riverside does not fully benefit from its location. Despite the close proximity to the river, industry and overgrown brush hide many of the views. Because Riverside is so long and narrow with such differing uses, there is concern that Riverside lacks a sense of place. People not intimately familiar with Riverside are not always aware of their whereabouts and don't know very much about the neighborhood.

Gilday Recreational Complex needs to be developed further to enhance its unique situation along the Ohio River. It needs to provide upgraded facilities and additional activities for the community's youth. Another need in the Riverside neighborhood is a community center.

Residents complain of litter, dilapidated properties, and weeds and brush that are not regularly trimmed. Specifically, a residential property located on Tyler Street has been in very poor condition for several years. The community and City have made several attempts to clean it up to no avail.

Some Riverside residents feel that aggressive, proactive steps by the City, the community council, and their CNAS (Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy) Team are necessary to permanently alleviate these problems.

Vacant Property

There are many vacant parcels of land in the Riverside neighborhood, in both residential and industrial areas. This property could be developed into additional housing or business opportunities. Riverside residents are accustomed to going to Delhi Township or Western Hills for shopping needs, and do not consider the lack of a business district to be a drawback. However, they would not be opposed to future development along River Road as long as it fits the character of the neighborhood and will not add to traffic or litter problems. Riverside residents hope that some of the vacancies in the residential part of the neighborhood can be used for infill housing and some preserved as greenspace.

Overgrown brush blocking views of Gilday Recreational Complex and the Ohio River.

Goals and Objectives

1. Improve accessibility and ensure pedestrian safety

Objectives:

1. Make sidewalks along River Road more pedestrian friendly
2. Upgrade intersection at River Road and Idaho Street to improve accessibility to Gilday Recreational Complex
3. Manage speed of through traffic
4. Improve safety of busy or unsafe intersections
5. Make bus stops safer to access and use

2. Enhance and preserve greenspace and recreation areas

Objectives:

1. Enhance current recreation area
2. Create opportunities for additional recreational activities
3. Preserve some hillside greenspace

3. Decrease industrial environmental impact on residential areas

Objectives:

1. Block pollutants from areas north of River Road
2. Encourage reporting of pollutants
3. Improve communication between residents and businesses

4. Improve physical image and marketability

Objectives:

1. Decrease litter, overgrown weeds and brush, and neglected properties
2. Enhance visibility of Riverside's assets
3. Use Urban Design techniques to beautify River Road
4. Improve communication between all stakeholders

5. Improve quality, frequency, timeliness and responsiveness of public services

Objectives:

1. Improve channels of communication between residents and service providers
2. Improve the relationship between the community and the CNAS Team

6. Attract responsible, market-driven, consumer-based, neighborhood oriented development

Objective:

1. Designate the intersection of Anderson Ferry and River Road as a location for future development

7. Increase homeownership for mixed incomes and encourage infill and rehabilitation

Objectives:

1. Assist current and future residents in purchasing and maintaining homes
2. Build new homes where feasible
3. Preserve the character of the neighborhood

Key Recommendations

Speed Management and Safer Pedestrian Areas

Improving pedestrian and vehicular safety is the primary recommendation in this plan. The two main roads, River Road and Hillside Avenue are two very different corridors with unique needs. Speed management and pedestrian access are important elements of improvements for both roads; but River Road needs to accomplish this while maintaining its high volume of commuter auto and commercial truck traffic.

There are several techniques that can be used to manage speed along River Road as well as improve the perception of pedestrian safety. One such technique, a more long-term solution, is to create raised islands in the middle of River Road where there are currently painted zones. Ideally, these islands can be planted or designed with paver treatments to create a visual narrowing of the roadway leading to reduced speeds and improved safety for pedestrians. These islands could only be used in areas where they will not interfere with residential or business access.

One simple recommendation to increase the pedestrian perception of safety along River Road is to trim back all brush along the sidewalks. A more complex solution would be to widen sidewalks to increase the distance between pedestrians and traffic. This should be accomplished in two phases. The first phase is to move the white line approximately two feet farther from the curb line on the north side of River Road, where current excess lane width allows, thus narrowing the lanes. This can be done when River Road is resurfaced, since painting will have to be completed in that process. The next phase is to completely widen the sidewalks along the north side of River Road, which would be very costly and take more time to complete.

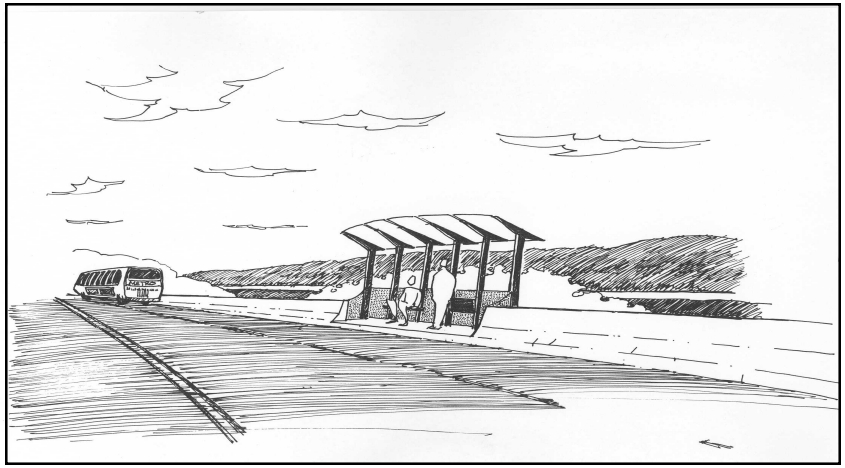
Hillside Avenue is unimproved, meaning that it has no curbs or sidewalks, however, it is frequented by Riverside residents in cars, on bicycle and on foot. The speed of the vehicular traffic is of particular concern to the bikers, joggers and walkers on Hillside, and to the residents whose homes and front yards are situated very close to the street. Most of the homes on Hillside do not have dedicated parking, meaning that many residents park in the street. Hillside Avenue also has a section that is a school zone for St. Vincent de Paul School. These two factors increase the pedestrian traffic on the street, also. The first recommendation is to encourage property owners and the City's Public Services Department to trim brush along the road, especially in areas near curves. Other improvements include the installation of additional speed limit, "Watch for Pedestrians in Roadway," curve warning and intersection warning signs. Raised pavement markers have also been recommended along the centerline of the road to improve visibility at night.

In this situation, conventional traffic calming scenarios need to be combined with more innovative approaches. The community has suggested increased speed enforcement as a potential solution to the problem, although traditional means of enforcement are difficult since there are few places for police to safely pull over speeding cars. One solution to this problem is the increased use of the Speed Cart to remind drivers that they are exceeding the speed limit. Other solutions may be devised by increased communication between community members, police representatives and representatives from the Department of Transportation and Engineering. These city organizations may be able to assist the community in identifying options to successfully manage the speed of cars and safety of pedestrians on Hillside Avenue.

Key Recommendations

Safer Bus Stops on River Road

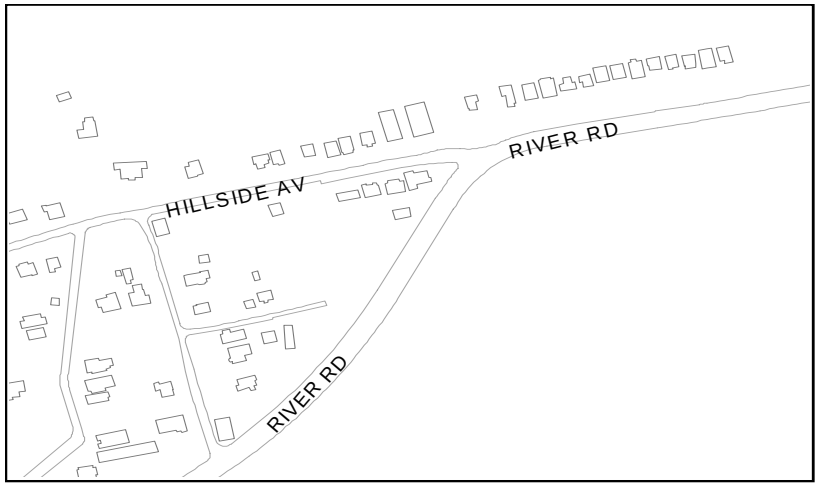
While bus shelters and benches would be preferable improvements to ensure rider safety, simply trimming the surrounding shrubbery and widening the waiting areas would make a tremendous difference. The bus stops in the greatest need of repairs are located in front of the schools and businesses.



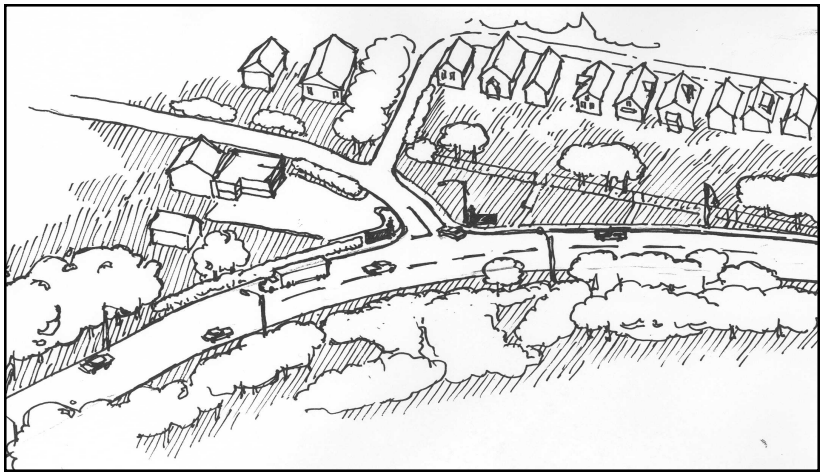
A safer, more visually appealing bus shelter on River Road.

Improvements to a Dangerous Intersection

The intersection of Hillside Avenue and River Road should be improved to increase traffic visibility. This should be done in two phases. First, the brush along the curve on River Road should be trimmed back to improve current sight lines. As a long-term strategy, the intersection should be completely redesigned to smooth the curve and allow the intersection to come to a more normal T-type configuration as shown in the drawing below. These changes will provide improved visibility of the intersection in the short-term, and completely alleviate difficulties in the long-term.



Current configuration of River Road/Hillside Avenue intersection

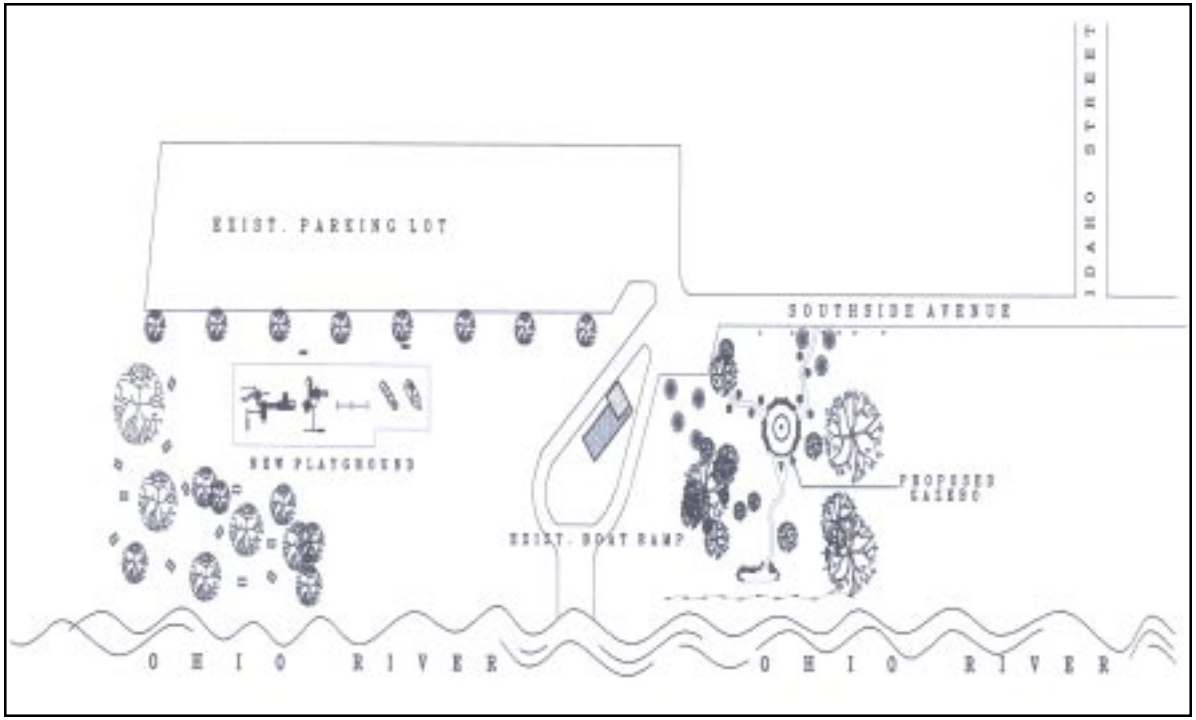


Proposed improvements to the River Road/Hillside Avenue intersection

Key Recommendations

Enhanced Gilday Recreational Complex and Surroundings

Upgrades to Gilday Recreational Complex:
Gilday Recreational Complex is in need of some general upgrades, including new play equipment, new plantings and benches, an open shelter, and improved river views. Trimming brush along the railroad tracks and riverbank, where possible, can enhance views. In the future, improvements such as additional picnic tables, basketball courts, a walking/running trail, tennis courts, and enhanced bleachers should be considered. Also, Cincinnati Recreation Commission should analyze the play fields to determine whether they are being used to their capacity. If any of the fields is not used frequently, replacing it with another recreational use, such as those listed above, should be considered.



A site plan of scheduled improvements at Gilday Recreational Complex.

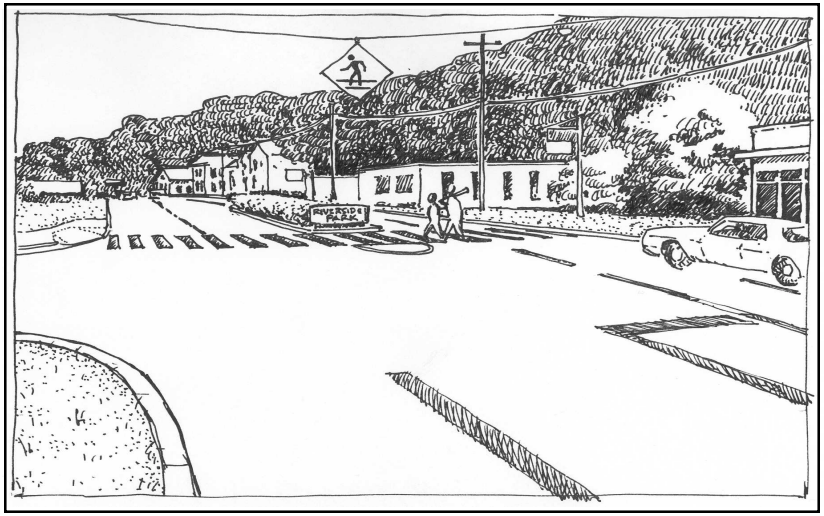
Key Recommendations

Improved Access to Gilday Recreational Complex

With changes recommended for Gilday Recreational Complex, it is logical to improve the access to the park as well, especially since many neighborhood children already cross River Road to reach the park.

After reviewing many options for an improved pedestrian crossing at Idaho Street and River Road, there is one that appears to be the best alternative for the Riverside community: a painted pedestrian crossing with a small island in the middle of River Road, as shown in the drawing below. This does not require an enormous amount of funding, but allows a much-improved area for pedestrians to cross River Road to reach Gilday Recreational Complex. In addition, it is recommended that a sidewalk be built along the western side of Idaho Street to provide a safe walking area from the pedestrian crossing to the park.

The current intersection of River Road and Idaho Street.



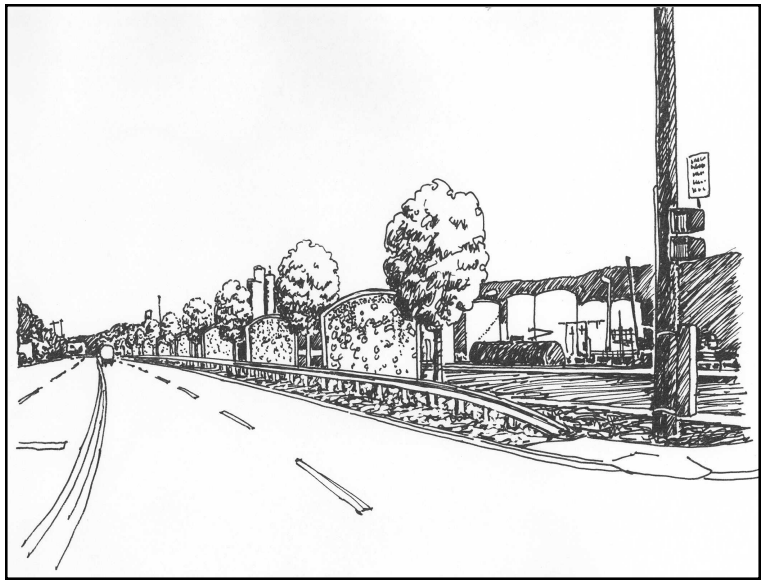
A proposed crosswalk improvement at River Road and Idaho Street.

Key Recommendations

Improved Quality of Life

Decreased Pollution North of River Road

Many pollutants can be blocked from the area north of River Road by installing natural barriers, such as trees. The Cincinnati Park Board, Urban Forestry Division, offers trees free of charge to private property owners. It is recommended that where possible, conifer trees can be placed along River Road to buffer out some of the dust, light and noise pollution. Increasing the sweeping of River Road and industry parking lots will also help to keep dust at a minimum. Decorative walls interspersed between the trees in certain locations along River Road can also act as visual buffer.



Decorative walls shown between existing trees along River Road

Increased Reporting of Pollution

Another way to help combat pollution is to report it. By notifying City of Cincinnati Office of Environmental Management (OEM) and Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services (HCDES), residents will be able to receive a professional reading of what type of pollution is in the air, water or in solid form. OEM and HCDES will then be able to determine the source of the pollution and mitigate if necessary. The important part about the reporting process is the need to report the pollution immediately and wait for the professional to arrive to take the reading. OEM and HCDES officials should also be encouraged to attend Riverside Civic and Welfare Club meetings to educate community members about how and why to report suspected pollution.

Improved Communication between Residents and Industries

Many concerns with air, noise and light pollution are exacerbated by the lack of contact between community members and industries. It is recommended that industrial and community representatives meet regularly to discuss issues such as pollution, and also to collaborate on neighborhood projects and activities. A greater understanding between the two groups may be a result of such meetings.

Key Recommendations

Improved Neighborhood Appearance

Decrease Litter

The Riverside Civic and Welfare Club already schedules monthly litter clean-ups, and this practice should be continued. Riverside residents and Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy (CNAS) Team A should also work with Keep Cincinnati Beautiful to take advantage of programs and encourage more frequent reporting to Litter Patrol.

Address Dilapidated Buildings

Some vacant buildings can also be converted to homeownership units by placing buildings in the Homesteading Program through the Department of Community Development. For those buildings that are not in suitable condition to participate in the Homesteading Program, CNAS Team A should work with the Department of Buildings and Inspections, and the Law Department to contact the property owners and ensure speedy clean up of the property. In the past, there have been concerns that community requests of this nature were not being addressed in an adequate time period. Better communication between the community and the City can be addressed through the CNAS Team. An essential piece of this recommendation is the appointment of a dynamic Coach for CNAS Team A. The job of the CNAS Coach is to provide oversight to team functions and ensure that the Team is fully staffed with an active representative from each City department. Additionally, the CNAS Team and the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club together should develop a step-by-step process to address community needs.

Address Unsightly Weeds and Brush

One of the most frequent requests in this process was to have all weeds and brush tended to, whether they were on private property or public property. This should be done specifically along River Road, on both sides of the street, but especially in areas where the brush blocks views of the Ohio River. CNAS Team A should assist the neighborhood in getting the brush trimmed back by contacting the appropriate City department, private property owner or railroad and following up on the request.

Preservation of Greenspace

Much of the hillsides are already greenspace, as a good deal of property remains undeveloped. Some parcels are not as favorable for development as others, and those parcels should be left undeveloped and preserved as greenspace.

In places where it is feasible, greenspace may also be preserved in the form of passive recreation areas. Private property owners, not the Cincinnati Recreation Commission, will most likely champion these passive greenspace areas. Great care must be taken to include the community in the design and location of these places, and a considerable amount of thought must be given to ensure that there is sufficient parking, safe access, preservation of wildlife and arranged maintenance of the property.

In the event that these pocket passive recreation areas do develop, they will act as a way to preserve valuable greenspace as well as enhance the neighborhood's recreational activities.

Key Recommendations

Synchronize Walls along Hillside Avenue

Many of the walls along Hillside Avenue are in need of maintenance. Whenever possible, homeowners should use consistent materials when building or replacing walls along Hillside Avenue. Instead of using various materials, walls should be constructed of stone, or concrete that has been made to resemble stone. This will create a consistent theme throughout the residential area.

An example of an ideal wall along Hillside Avenue.

Identification Signage throughout Riverside

Visible signs should be placed at key entrance points and in the area surrounding Anderson Ferry. Visible, coordinated signs will help to designate the boundaries of the Riverside neighborhood and welcome and direct visitors.

Specialized signs, such as one with removable letters, can also be used in community spaces to help relay information or advertise special events. A possible location for this type of sign is on the grassy strip of land on River Road near Tyler and Pattison, known as the "island." A well known location in the neighborhood, it would complement other recommended improvements to the site such as a picnic shelter and benches.

Proposed signage and a picnic shelter at the "island."

Anderson Ferry – Target Area for Development

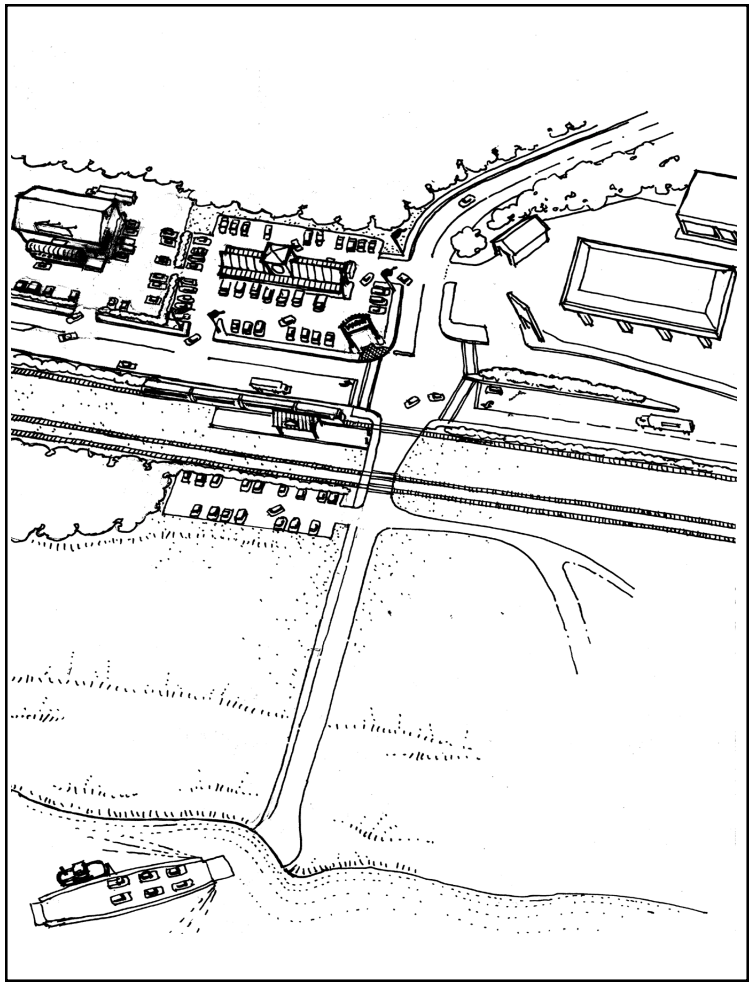
Farmer's Market and Park-and-Ride

While Riverside residents do not mind driving a short distance to purchase goods and services, better availability of certain convenience items such as fresh fruits and vegetables is needed. A farmer's market would service this need, as well as supplement the new United Dairy Farmers store, which provides some basic foods and dry goods. The proposed site for the farmer's market is at one the vacant corners of the River Road/Anderson Ferry Road intersection. The first step to setting up the farmer's market is for the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club to work with the Community Development Department to encourage vendors to sell their goods. The market can first be set up on an unimproved lot. Later, once the need for this type of market is established, the area could be paved and a permanent structure built out of the flood plain.

The paved lot can also act as a park-and-ride for Anderson Ferry patrons and any future light rail patrons. This will help those who wish to drive to Anderson Ferry, unload bicycles, and then take the Ferry over to Kentucky. Potential future plans to direct a hike and bike trail through the western riverfront would then make Riverside the ideal place for a trail head.

Restaurant at River Road/Anderson Ferry

One of the vacant lots at the northwest corner of River Road and Anderson Ferry would also be the ideal location for a regional restaurant. The restaurant, preferably one that provides sit-down service, not fast food, would replace two restaurants that historically were sited at that location. The restaurant would not only serve Riverside residents, but would also serve travelers driving through Riverside to reach downtown or back to their homes west of downtown.



A proposed vision for improvements and development at Anderson Ferry and River Road (drawing shows River Road parallel to the Ohio River).

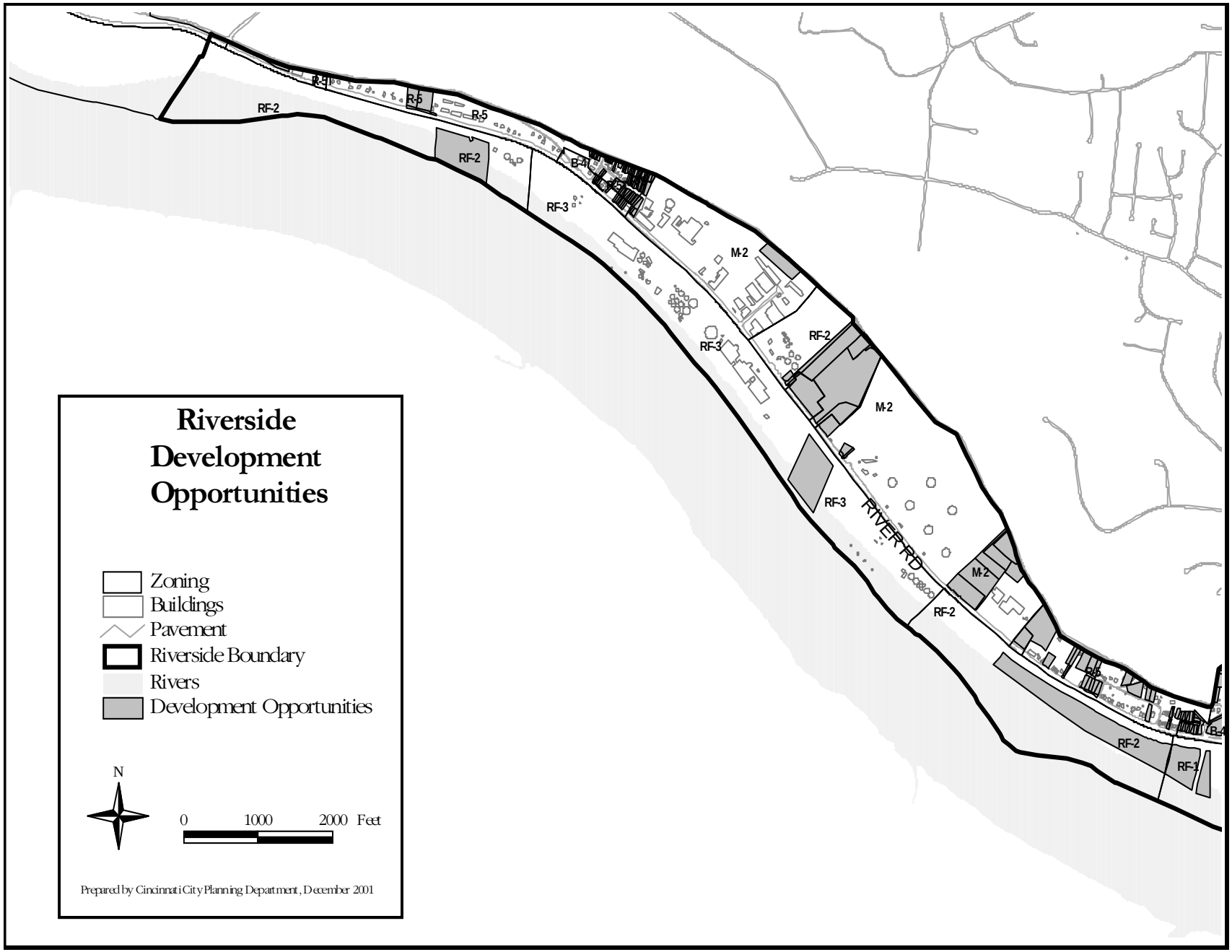
Key Recommendations

Housing Development

New Construction - Targeted Infill Development
Infill construction of single-family homes and some multi-family homes should be targeted for the vacant parcels of land in the residentially zoned areas. (Please see the map on pages 21 - 22.) New construction should fit the character of the neighborhood and should be targeted to mixed incomes.

Maintenance - Education about Rehabilitation
There are many programs sponsored by the City of Cincinnati Department of Community Development that assist homeowners with maintenance of homes such as the Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program (HRLP), the Homesteading Program and Housing Maintenance Assistance. It is recommended that these programs be marketed to homeowners in the neighborhood. One of the avenues for marketing is the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club, who can schedule time during one of their monthly meetings to invite a representative from the Department of Community Development to present information about the programs available.

Increased Home Ownership - Assistance to Homebuyers
The convenient location and river views in Riverside may draw prospective new residents to the area. To encourage those new home-buyers, the Department of Community Development should assist residents in need of low-interest rate mortgage products, direct residents to down payment and closing cost grants, and work with the City's Ambassador Program to promote the neighborhood to prospective home-buyers.


Riverside
Development
Opportunities
Zoning
Buildings
Pavement
Riverside Boundary
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Development Opportunities
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Prepared by Cincinnati City Planning Department, December 2001
RF-2
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Implementation

Collaboration greatly enhances strategy success rates. City staff strongly recommends that the Riverside Civic and Welfare Club establish and monitor an implementation committee comprised of residents, business representatives, and appropriate partnering agencies to advance the strategies set forth in this plan. This committee should work with City departments, private investors, property owners and residents to identify and seek funding opportunities and recruit volunteers to implement the plan recommendations.

No City funding availability is implied in these recommendations. Certain types of improvement projects require private property-owner participation through assessments, modification of utility services, or legislation adoption. Each strategy must secure funding, coordinate with appropriate agencies, and integrate with the surrounding community. Additionally, it may be required that entities be identified to provide operating and maintenance functions for public improvements projects.

Land improvement projects require preliminary and detailed cost estimates based on accurate field surveys, subsurface investigation, property owner participation, finalized scope, and design, acquisition, demolition or relocation costs. Costs pending final scope of the project may also depend on private and other contributions, including in- kind; and available funding from the City.

Implementation

Goal 1: Improve accessibility to all parts of Riverside and ensure pedestrian safety				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
1. Make sidewalks along River Road more pedestrian friendly	• Trim brush around sidewalks	❖ Public Services, RCWC[1], CNAS Team A	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Short-term: re-stripe white line approximately two feet from curb to provide greater distance between pedestrians and traffic	❖ DOTE[2]	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Scheduling and Funding
	• Long-term: Widen sidewalk	❖ DOTE	❖ Medium	❖ High: Funding
2. Upgrade intersection at River Road and Idaho Street to improve accessibility to Gilday Recreational Complex	• Add a painted crosswalk at intersection of River Road and Idaho Street	❖ DOTE	❖ High	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Add a sidewalk on Idaho Street	❖ DOTE	❖ High	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Add an island in River Road and Idaho Street	❖ DOTE	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Design, Funding

[1] RCWC – Riverside Civic and Welfare Club
[2] Department of Transportation and Engineering

Implementation

Goal 1: Improve accessibility to all parts of Riverside and ensure pedestrian safety				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
2. Manage speed of through traffic	• Hillside Avenue: Trim brush to improve sightlines around curves	❖ Public Services, RCWC, CNAS Team A	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Hillside Avenue: Install speed limit and other appropriate warning signs throughout	❖ Public Services	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Hillside Avenue: Install raised pavement markers along center line	❖ Public Services	❖ High	❖ Low
	• River Road: Install islands where feasible	❖ DOTE	❖ High	❖ High: Design, Funding
	• Set meeting with community and Police Division to discuss enforcement issues	❖ RCWC, CNAS Team A, Cincinnati Police Division	❖ High	❖ Low

Implementation

Goal 1: Improve accessibility to all parts of Riverside and ensure pedestrian safety				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
4. Improve safety of busy or unsafe intersections	• Short Term: Trim brush along curve at intersection of River Road and Hillside Avenue	❖ Public Services, RCWC, CNAS Team A	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Long Term: Straighten curve at intersection of River Road and Hillside Avenue to improve safety	❖ DOTE	❖ High	❖ High: Funding
	• Reengineer the geometrics and traffic signal arrangement at River Road and Anderson Ferry intersection to provide safe and efficient traffic operation for any new development while recognizing needs for railroad preemption.	❖ DOTE and the Traffic and Road Operations Division of Public Services	❖ Medium	❖ High: Design, Funding
5. Make bus stops safer to access and use	• Designate bus stops in need of upgrades	❖ RCWC	❖ High	❖ **Complete**
	• Widen and repave bus stops in front of schools	❖ Metro	❖ High	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Widen and repave more dangerous bus stops on River Road	❖ Metro	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Design, Funding
	• Add well-designed bus shelters	❖ Metro	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Funding

Goal 2: Enhance and preserve greenspace and recreation areas

Objectives	Strategies	Participating Agencies/Groups	Priority	Level of Difficulty
1. Enhance Current Recreation Area	• Install new play equipment at Gilday Recreational Complex	❖ CRC[3], RCWC	❖ High	❖ **Complete**
	• Install open shelter with river view at Gilday Recreational Complex	❖ CRC	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Install new plantings and benches at Gilday Recreational Complex	❖ CRC	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Where possible, trim brush from banks at Gilday Recreational Complex to enhance views	❖ CRC, RCWC, CNAS Team A	❖ High	❖ High[4]
	• Trim brush from Railroad tracks at Gilday Recreational Complex	❖ Railroads, Public Services, RCWC, CNAS Team A	❖ High	❖ Medium: Contacting Railroads
	• Consider additional improvements to Gilday Recreational Complex, including: additional picnic tables, basketball courts, walking/running trail, tennis courts and bleachers	❖ CRC, RCWC	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Acquire parcel of land near corner of Idaho St. and River Rd.	❖ CRC	❖ Medium	❖ **Complete**

[3] CRC – Cincinnati Recreation Commission
[4] Care must be taken to ensure river bank stabilization is not compromised; may be timely and/or costly

Goal 2: Enhance and preserve greenspace and recreation areas				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
2. Create opportunities for additional recreational activities	• Create viewing area with benches and historic markers near Anderson Ferry	❖ City, Private Industry	❖ High	❖ High: Funding, Location
	• Assist community in seeking funding sources for and siting of community center, possibly in an existing building	❖ City, Private Industry, schools	❖ High	❖ High: Funding
	• Investigate feasibility of installing bike path along river or abandoned rail lines	❖ DOTE	❖ Medium /Low	❖ High: Funding, Configuration, Timing
	• Coordinate with College of Mount St. Joseph for joint recreational activities	❖ RCWC, College of MSJ	❖ Low	❖ Low
3. Preserve some hillside greenspace	• Designate parcels suitable for greenspace areas	❖ City Planning, DOTE and Hillside Trust	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Create passive recreation areas on existing vacant land to preserve greenspace and enhance recreational opportunities	❖ Private Property Owners	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Funding, Configuration

Implementation

Goal 3: Decrease industrial environmental impact on residential areas				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
1. Block pollutants from areas north of River Road	• Encourage industries to take advantage of Re-Leaf program through City of Cincinnati Urban Forestry Department to plant buffer of conifer trees	❖ Park Board, Private Industry, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Increase sweeping of River Road to once per month to help alleviate dust problem	❖ OEM[5], Public Services, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Encourage industries to redirect lights	❖ RCWC, Department of Community Development, OEM	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Legwork
	• Encourage industries to enact a noise policy	❖ RCWC, Department of Community Development, OEM	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Legwork
	• Encourage more frequent spraying and sweeping of lots for dust	❖ OEM, HCDES[6]	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Cost

[5] OEM – Office of Environmental Management
[6] HCDES – Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services

Implementation

Goal 3: Decrease industrial environmental impact on residential areas				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
2. Encourage reporting of pollutants	• Educate residents about how to report air-quality issues and any other issues that residents deem necessary	❖ OEM, HCDES, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low
3. Improve communication between residents and businesses	• Set up regularly scheduled forums between residents and industrial representatives	❖ OEM, CNAS Team A, Department of Community Development, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low

Goal 4: Improve Riverside's physical image and marketability				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
1. Decrease litter, overgrown weeds, brush, and neglected property	• Increase reporting to Litter Patrol	❖ RCWC, CNAS Team A	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Continue regular litter clean-ups	❖ RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low
2. Enhance visibility of Riverside's assets	• Make Anderson Ferry more visible through improved signage and accessibility	❖ Anderson Ferry owners, DOTE, HCO[7]	❖ High	❖ Medium/High: Funding
	• Keep grassy strip on River Road near Tyler and Pattison mowed and free of brush. Consider adding additional benches and picnic shelter.	❖ Public Services, CNAS Team A, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Increase and enhance river views by keeping brush trimmed on River Road	❖ Public Services, Private Owners, CNAS Team A, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Medium: Funding, Coordination
	• Find storage area (not in flood plain) for community to store litter supplies, meeting notification signs, etc.	❖ RCWC, CNAS Team A, CRC, Private Industry	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Legwork
	• Make Gilday Recreational Complex more visible through improved signage and accessibility	❖ CRC	❖ Low	❖ Medium: Funding
	• Determine Riverside's role in the Underground Railroad and note historic importance at any sites	❖ HCO, Community Development, RCWC	❖ Low	❖ Low/ Medium: Legwork

[7] HCO – Historic Conservation Office

Goal 4: Improve Riverside's physical image and marketability				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
3. Use Urban Design techniques to beautify River Road	• Place decorative wall in certain locations along River Road to block industrial sites from view of the road	❖ Office of Architecture and Urban Design, Urban Forestry	❖ Medium	❖ Medium: Funding
4. Improve communications between all stakeholders	• Increase opportunities for businesses and residents to interact through planning and collaboration for events	❖ CNAS Team A, RCWC, Private Industry	❖ High	❖ Low

Goal 5: Improve quality, frequency, timeliness and responsiveness of Public Services in Riverside				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
1. Improve channels of communication between residents and service providers	• Devise a step-by-step community response process to address service issues.	❖ CNAS Team A, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low
2. Improve the relationship between the community and the CNAS Team	• Assign a dynamic Coach to CNAS Team A • Solicit involvement from Cincinnati Police in neighborhood functions such as monthly litter clean-ups, community picnic, etc.	❖ RCWC, CNAS Team A, CNAS Administrator ❖ Cincinnati Police Division and RCWC	❖ High ❖ High	❖ Low ❖ Medium/Low: Legwork

Goal 6: Attract responsible, market-driven, consumer-based, neighborhood-oriented development				
Objectives	**Strategies**	**Participating Agencies/Groups**	**Priority**	**Level of Difficulty**
1. Designate the intersection of Anderson Ferry and River Road as a location for future development	• Establish a framer's market on a lot at northwest corner of River Road and Anderson Ferry	❖ Department of Community Development, Private Development, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Medium/Low: Funding, Legwork
	• Encourage commercial development near northwest corner of River Road and Anderson Ferry; niche commercial development or regional restaurant. This was historic site for popular restaurants The Trolley and Shulte's.	❖ Department of Community Development and Private Development	❖ High	❖ Medium: Legwork, Market Driven
	• Pave farmer's market and establish Park-and-Ride for Ferry and future light rail on a lot at southwest corner of River Road and Anderson Ferry	❖ Department of Community Development and Private Development	❖ Medium	❖ Med./High[8]
2. Improve communication between businesses	• Form a Business Association and encourage regular meetings	❖ Department of Community Development, RCWC and Local Businesses	❖ High	❖ Low

[8] Depends upon success Farmer's Market, and feasibility and timing of future Light Rail

Goal 7: Increase homeownership for mixed incomes and encourage infill and rehabilitation

Objectives	Strategies	Participating Agencies/Groups	Priority	Level of Difficulty
1. Assist current and future residents in maintaining homes	• Encourage senior citizens to take advantage of emergency repairs grants	❖ People Working Cooperatively, Normar, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Educate property owners about the tax advantages of home improvements and low-interest rehabilitation loans	❖ Department of Community Development, Homeownership Center	❖ High/ Med	❖ Low
2. Assist current and future residents in purchasing homes	• Educate current residents about City funded pre-purchase counseling programs and the Homebuyer Training Program	❖ Department of Community Development, Better Housing League, Working in Neighborhoods, RCWC, Homeownership Center	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Convert vacant buildings to homeownership units by placing in the Homesteading Program	❖ Department of Community Development	❖ Med/ High	❖ Medium[9]
	• Work with the City's Ambassador's Program to promote Riverside to prospective home-buyers	❖ Department of Community Development	❖ Med	❖ Low
	• Assist residents in need of low-interest rate mortgage products	❖ Department of Community Development, Homeownership Center	❖ Med/ Low	❖ Low
	• Direct residents to down payment & closing costs grants	❖ Department of Community Development, Better Housing League	❖ Med/ Low	❖ Low

[9] Not all vacant buildings are eligible for Homesteading Program; must meet certain structural criteria and must be donated or sold to City.

Goal 7: Increase homeownership for mixed incomes and encourage infill and rehabilitation

Objectives	Strategies	Participating Agencies/Groups	Priority	Level of Difficulty
3. Build new homes where feasible	• Designate parcels to target as infill and those that are appropriate for larger developments	❖ DOTE, City Planning, Community Development	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Encourage single-family development on larger vacant lots	❖ Community Development, City Planning, RCWC	❖ Medium	❖ Med./High[12]
	• Promote the Housing Round[10]	❖ Community Development	❖ Medium	❖ Low
	• Encourage infill development consistent with surrounding structures on smaller vacant lots	❖ Community Development, City Planning, RCWC	❖ Medium	❖ Med./High[13]
	• Promote the Cincinnati Homeowner Infill and Rehab Program[11]	❖ Community Development	❖ Medium	❖ Low
4. Preserve the character of the neighborhood	• Encourage responsible renters and fewer absentee landlords by promoting the Rental Rehab Program[14]	❖ Community Development, RCWC	❖ High	❖ Low
	• Encourage future development that complements the neighborhood's structural, archaeological and landscaped features	❖ City Planning, Community Development	❖ Medium	❖ Low

[10] Funding program for large development projects
[11] For small developments of 3 lots or less
[12] New housing construction is primarily market-driven, considerable amount of legwork will be necessary to promote
[13] New housing construction is primarily market-driven, considerable amount of legwork will be necessary to promote
[14] Deferred loan program/ converts to a grant