

**The
Downtown
Neighborhoods
Plan
for the
Future
2006**

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS PLAN COMMITTEE

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DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD’S PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

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INTRODUCTION

Area: Interstate 630 - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive - Roosevelt Road - Interstate 30

This 2006 Update is a revision of the Plan for the Future adopted in March 1999, by the Little Rock Board of Directors, as well as the Little Rock Planning Commission.

Residents continue their belief that close links between the commercial and residential area north of Interstate 630 and the residential area south of the Interstate should be recognized in city planning. As more residents come back, this becomes more important than ever.

This area includes neighborhood associations, crime watches, city-formed historic districts and a state-authorized historic district surrounding the Governor's Mansion and State Capitol. All the area lies in the Pulaski County Enterprise Community, and numerous blocks are eligible for Community Development Block Grant aid.

This Plan acknowledges overlapping policies and connections to other planning documents that concern this area and adjacent areas, including *The Framework for the Future Plan* for the commercial district and the MacArthur Park area; the Six Bridges Plan; the Downtown Corridors Study; the Capitol Zoning District Commission Master Plan; the Downtown Partnership Plan; the River Market Plan and the Pulaski County Enterprise Community Plan.

Within these boundaries are three neighborhoods, each with its own distinct history. In the center, between Main and State Streets, is the Governor's Mansion neighborhood, where development flourished from the 1880s to the 1920s. The neighborhood east of Main developed during the same period, but on a more modest scale and with a more diverse population. From approximately State to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive is an historically black residential area, sometimes known as the "Center City" neighborhood, where most development occurred from about 1900 to 1930.

Currently, we have 6,316 population, of which 74 percent is black, 24 percent is white and two percent is Hispanic and other races. The age groups are 61 percent for those 18 to 64 years old; 24 percent for those under 18; and 14 percent for those over 64. We have 2,726 households. One-parent households are 11 percent of the total, while one-person households are 29 percent of the total. The neighborhood lost population and housing stock following the January, 1999 tornado.

A third of our households lack cars, and public transportation is inadequate. Over 68 percent of the households have low to moderate income, and over five percent have an income over \$100,000. In housing, 29 percent are owner-occupied, 49 percent are rental dwellings and 22 percent of our houses are vacant.

Achievements of the 1999 Plan

(Text of state laws may be found at: www.arkleg.state.ar.us and city ordinances at: www.littlerock.org. Select “municipal code”)

Community improvement work since adoption of the Downtown Neighborhoods Plan for the Future 1999 has resulted in these accomplishments:

Community Preservation

- The population increased notably in loft apartments, new apartment buildings and renovated residential property from the bank of the Arkansas River southward. Since 1999, 248 building permits were issued for work totaling \$4.6 million on 159 residential properties.

Housing

- Approval of \$1 million to aid homeowners to rebuild after the 1999 tornado under the city’s Targeted Neighborhood Enhancement Program.
- Passage of Act 1538 of 2001, which authorizes cities to recover the costs of work done to maintain health and safety on rental property, where landlords fail to make necessary repairs.
- Passage of Act 1205 of 2003, which allows the purchaser of a tax-delinquent property to clear the title in a shorter period than before. Those items left unsold go to the Negotiated Sales List. Yet, when sold, the law still had allowed the former owner two years to redeem the property, obstructing any re-development for that time. The redemption period was cut to 90 days.
- Passage of City Ordinance Number 18,742 on September 3, 2002, that required out-of-state property owners to name a local agent to take service on city notices of rental inspections and orders to make repairs. To date, **x** property owners have complied with city orders to name a local agent to ensure rental inspections are effective, and tenants are provided safe and healthy living conditions.

Historic Preservation

- Publication of the Historic District Infill Development Plan in August 2000 to guide redevelopment in the downtown area damaged by the 1999 Tornado. Six house plans were provided for public use.
- Expansion of the Capitol Zoning District boundaries and protections south to Roosevelt Rd., and west to Chester St., in August, 2001.
- Creation began in 2004 of the Dunbar Historic District between Chester St. and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive.

Public Safety

- City efforts to resolve problems of the homeless began with an August, 2003 task force report outlining the size and complexity of the problem facing the downtown business district and residential areas, which called for a public-private partnership to continue this work.
- City Ordinance Number 18,939 was approved on September 16, 2003, that revised the zoning code and provided a new definition of homeless shelter. The new rules require a conditional-use permit from the city to begin operation, and provide procedures for revocation of the permit if the facility becomes a nuisance to the neighbors.
- Passage of Act 678 of 2005, which establishes regulations on halfway houses for convicts whose good behavior earned them probation or return to the community in advance of their parole. An operator must comply with all local housing codes for health and safety, and failure to comply is grounds to lose the state license, as well as state funding for operation. The Arkansas Department of Community Correction administers the program. Act 679 of 2005 also regulates operation of halfway houses.

Land Use and Zoning.

- Passage of a Group Home zoning revision on September 6, 2005, Ordinance Number 19,395, that meets Fair Housing standards at the same time it regulates group homes, which have in some cases operated so badly as to be a nuisance to neighbors. A companion policy to begin rental inspections of these facilities was pressed by community activists, and supported by city staff. Currently, these facilities are deemed commercial, and neither inspected nor held to minimum health and safety standards for a residential property use.
- Passage of a Design Overlay ordinance, Number 18064, on July 20, 1999, that provides for new construction in an area to be architecturally compatible with surrounding homes. The ordinance applies to three areas abutting the Capitol Zoning District. The first area is generally, but not all of the area between 15th, 19th, Commerce and Scott Streets. The second area is generally, but not all of the area between Wright Avenue, State, 20th and Chester Streets. The third area is generally, but not all of the area between Chester, Roosevelt, MLK, and 21st Street.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- City-paid maintenance of sidewalks began for the first time in the 2005 city budget.

VISION STATEMENT

The East of Main, Governor's Mansion and Center City neighborhoods - collectively known as the Downtown Neighborhoods - will be safe and attractive places for a diverse population to live, work, shop, and play.

As residents of the Downtown Neighborhoods, we will send our children to neighborhood schools that will be well maintained and serve as neighborhood centers. The area will be "child friendly." Single parents will benefit from good child-care programs and other services that meet their needs. Our youth will enjoy recreation and job training in the neighborhood, and good employment opportunities will be in or near the area.

Our senior citizens will enjoy retirement because shops suit their needs, delivering items such as food and medicine. Services such as health care will be affordable and accessible. Recreation opportunities will meet their needs. Senior citizens will be encouraged to remain in their own homes with programs to support their need for health care or house maintenance. They will enjoy community activities that support productive lives.

We will walk to neighborhood businesses that satisfy all of our basic needs for goods and services. Many businesses will be owned by residents, and they will provide jobs for more residents. Small businesses will be incubated in the homes, then find reasonably-priced commercial space in which to expand. Modern technology will enable residents to sell creative skills and artistic services worldwide without leaving home, promoting a new class of entrepreneur.

Our diversity will be reflected in the many churches and other religious organizations that meet spiritual needs of residents. Strong Neighborhood Associations will bring citizens together to act collectively for the public good.

The Downtown Neighborhoods will be clean, well lit, and graced with tree-shaded streets. The area will be adorned with small parks and community gardens. Facilities promoting physical fitness will be available to all of our residents, with bike lanes and pathways also providing an alternate means of transportation.

No homes in the Downtown Neighborhoods will be vacant, and new construction will blend in with the existing structures, occupying formerly vacant lots. Discrimination will be ended by lenders and insurance companies, so no longer will they refuse service to a person because of the downtown address, and mortgage and insurance redlining no longer will hinder development. Strong enforcement of fair-housing laws will end the practice of refusing a person an apartment or home because of their color or similar prejudice. Real estate agents will compete to locate newcomers in our neighborhoods.

Historic preservation will save our best buildings, not only creating appealing homes and businesses, but also tapping into the lucrative tourism industry. Our historic school buildings

will remain in use as schools, or, if closed, be redeveloped for uses that benefit our neighborhoods. Historic preservation efforts coupled with sensitive zoning will maintain our neighborhood character and prevent damage to our streetscape.

Our historic street grid will be maintained and strengthened, and all the streets will have curbs, gutters and sidewalks. Public transportation - buses and streetcars - will be readily accessible to all residents. Our alleys will be improved and in regular use, providing space for off-street parking.

In administering regulations in the Neighborhood, city officials will understand when to be flexible, as in helping to start new business or residential projects, or firm, as in enforcing housing codes for health and safety.

GOALS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Six interlocking priorities were established, dependent one upon the other. They were:

1. **Rehabilitate decayed structures and overgrown vacant lots, residential and commercial.**
 - Increase home ownership to at least 60 percent of our housing units.
 - Support vigorous city action to hold property owners accountable for meeting minimum health and safety standards.
 - Stop violations of the Fair Housing laws so that a home purchaser or renter is not refused because of his/her color or other prejudice.
 - Stop discrimination by insurance and mortgage companies, which refuse coverage because of the address (Redlining).
 - Improve protections for historic structures.
2. **Continue to reduce crime. Focus upon:**
 - More Community Policing;
 - Youth programs; and
 - Treatment for drug and alcohol abuse.
3. **Promote affordable and accessible health care for all residents, especially the elderly and low-income families.**
4. **Establish schools as neighborhood centers, so that lifelong learning is encouraged, and children have safe places to go all year round.**
5. **Promote jobs and job training for unemployed and poor residents.**
6. **Reverse the negative image of the Downtown Neighborhoods by publicizing our safe and desirable quality of life and attracting people to occupy our vacant houses and lots.**

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION

Objective: Maintain our diversity of population.

- Support programs that provide assistance to low- and moderate-income families, and enable them to move up to higher levels of income.
- Vigorously uphold fair housing laws to prevent discrimination.
- Support welfare-to-work programs for residents.

Objective: Increase our population.

- Continue effort to reverse negative perceptions and promote the area for business, residential, shopping and recreational activity.
- Work with city officials and economic development leaders to provide incentives and financial rewards for selecting these neighborhoods in which to live and do business.
- Provide adequate public transportation - bus service, bike lanes, etc. - to prevent traffic congestion from vehicles likely to accompany increased population.

Objective: Maintain our diversity of income levels

- Support programs that provide assistance to low-income families, to enable them to obtain higher incomes. Control “gentrification.”
- Support investment in the neighborhoods by families of all income levels, and assure current residents are not displaced in the process. The quantity of available property should reduce the likelihood of major displacement, since the primary need is to bring back residents and business to fill vacant houses and lots.

Objective: Support ALERT Centers and their services to benefit housing, fight crime, and aid residents in meeting their needs.

- Advocate adequate funding in the annual city budget.

HOUSING

Objective: Promote downtown living.

- Publish a brochure detailing available properties, and referrals to historic property restoration resources, grants and tax credits.

Objective: Conduct a vigorous city program of rental property inspection.

- Advocate strong enforcement, and adequate budget and staff for the program with city officials, applying to local landlords and absentee owners both.

Objective: Increase owner-occupied homes to 60 percent of our residential housing units.

- Link to objective to increase population, and promote additional homeowner families to fill vacant homes and lots.
- Obtain 10-year freeze on property taxes for family renovating older home.
- In re-use of blighted properties, make sure ownerships are promoted, to meet the goal of 60 percent owner-occupied housing, while rental properties are monitored to keep this in the desired proportion.
- In promoting new rental property development, encourage duplex, triplex and carriage house units, which are most compatible with current practices. This would also help assure landlords remain close to their renters, and manage their properties better. This style of housing would also support diverse family groups from single-person households to extended-family households that include several generations together, or large numbers of children. Block-long apartment complexes would be discouraged. Apartment complex design would have to be compatible with surrounding structures.

Objective: Redevelop vacant lots and re-occupy vacant houses and apartments.

- Use CDBG programs for low-income families to acquire these homes and lots.
- Establish a new Targeted Neighborhood Enhancement Area and bring those benefits to this area, and to this Plan, following the requirements set under Act 320 of 1997.
- Promote more use of the Urban Homestead Law by which a property unsold at tax auction may be acquired for \$1 for use as a dwelling for a low-income family.
- Support the Downtown Little Rock Community Development Corporation in promoting single-family house purchases. The CDC has built four homes and has two more in construction.
- Support renovation of rental property that meets minimum health and safety standards, and provides affordable housing to low-income families, such as Kramer School Loft Apartments, and Mahlon Martin Apartments, projects of the Downtown Little Rock Community Development Corporation. The ARC of Arkansas has renovated and operates Trinity Apartments and Eastside School Apartments, and the Community Mental Health Center similarly operates Kathleen Peak Apartments for persons with mental illness.
- Support redevelopment work of the Philander Smith Community Development Corporation.

- Support formation of an effective Land Bank to acquire vacant property and redevelop it.
- Create a database of vacant houses and make it available to the public.
- Establish other city programs to enable vacant houses to be re-used. One important service of city financing would be to provide seminars to instruct homeowners how to maintain their homes, as a condition of receiving public money.
- Change state Constitution to allow city acquisition of abandoned property and promote its redevelopment.

Objective: Repair or demolish condemned houses, with the emphasis upon rehabilitation of structures listed as repairable by city staff.

- Create a city policy to rehabilitate condemned houses rather than demolish them by promoting salvage of the condemned houses.
- List and map addresses of condemned houses to promote rehabilitation, by publicizing list. (See Appendix.)
- Establish city program of incentives for repair rather than demolition.
- Fund demolition in city budget so burned houses and public nuisance structures are removed.

Objective: Promote re-use of properties unsold at delinquent tax auctions.

- Promote purchase of delinquent-tax properties and publicize availability of this type of property.
- List and Map tax-delinquent properties. (See Appendix)

Objective: Eliminate redlining by insurance companies that hinder redevelopment because persons are denied insurance because of the address.

- Educate residents about their rights.
- Ask concerned group, perhaps ACORN Fair Housing organization, to lead the project.

Objective: Eliminate discrimination that denies a person a home or apartment because of their color or other prejudice, known as Fair Housing violations.

- Support vigorous enforcement of Fair Housing laws.

Objective: Offer programs to educate public on financing a home, and maintaining it.

- Support and expand home loan counseling funding in the city budget, so the city may contract for such services and serve the neighborhoods.

Objective: Vigorous city enforcement to hold out-of-state property owners accountable for failing to meet minimum health and safety standards in their rental housing.

- Support city enforcement of an ordinance requiring landlords to meet minimum health and safety standards, and that out-of-state landlords name an agent for service in the city, to facilitate official contact with owners where defects are found, and remedies required.

Objective: Establish a vigorous program to board and secure vacant structures, and keep them secured.

- City housing officials must make this a priority, and fund it.

Objective: Support vigorous enforcement of city ordinances to keep vacant lots mowed and clear of litter.

- Advocate adequate funding annually for funds cutting weed lots.

Objective: Support city program to fund minor repair and painting with Facade Enhancement Program.

- Advocate adequate funding in annual budget for the program, which grants up to \$1,500 to a low-income family to paint their house.

Objective: Support new programs to enable the homeless to leave the streets for safe housing and find jobs to support themselves, as well as obtain treatment for those suffering addiction or mental illness.

- Advocate adequate funding for these programs, which are being detailed in the Ten-year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, a public-private partnership.

Objective: Improve city and state regulation of group homes.

- Support city-zoning changes to uphold Fair Housing laws and provide for regulation of group homes, which have sometimes become a nuisance to neighbors, which was enacted September 6, 2005, by the Little Rock Board of Directors. Support 2005 state regulations for group homes for ex-convicts, which provide for close communication with city officials.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Objective: Assure affordable and accessible health care for all residents, especially the elderly and low-income families.

- Advocate these policies with elected officials at all levels of government.

Objective: Support programs for single-parent households.

- Develop job training and job-seeking skills workshops, such as are being conducted by the Pulaski County Enterprise Community.
- Assure families at risk are enrolled in prevention programs such as Healthy Families, which offers the mother of a newborn child a variety of support services that continue until the child starts kindergarten.

Objective: Develop more summer employment for youth.

- Support expanded city-funded youth employment opportunities.

Objective: Develop more employment programs for youth.

- Support expanded Youth Employability Program of the Little Rock Education Commission and similar programs.

Objective: Assure programs assist our elderly residents with necessary transportation, home health care, home maintenance and other programs, to enable them to continue living independently in their own homes.

- Support elder-care law practices, which would provide the elderly with representation in dealing with government agencies and better enable the elderly to conduct real-estate transactions and other business. The elderly are a target for fraud of all kinds.
- Establish a maintenance program that provides financing and volunteer labor for low-income elderly persons whose homes are found deficient by city housing inspectors and who cannot afford to make those repairs. Link the program to persons brought before the Environmental Court, since many fail to make repairs because they cannot.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Objective: Educate owners and prospective owners of historic houses.

- Establish one-day seminars detailing restoration techniques and resources.

Objective: Survey neighborhoods and document all historic buildings.

- Use 1998 updated Survey of Capitol Zoning District Commission.
- Survey remainder of area, first with Certified Local Government (CLG) grants sought by city officials, and if these prove unavailable, the city should fund the work directly. CLG funds are provided by the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program.
- Target Historic Public Schools in surveys to ensure these buildings are identified and remain in use as schools or rehabilitated for new uses, such as a community center offering programs in literacy, job training, recreation, child care, elderly daycare programs, and similar concerns.

Objective: List all buildings and districts eligible in the Arkansas and/or the National Register of Historic Buildings.

- Obtain funding for preparation of Arkansas and/or National Register nominations, first through Certified Local Government grants from the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program to the City of Little Rock, through its Dept. Of Housing and Neighborhood Programs, or by direct city funding if these prove unavailable.
- Work with the Quapaw Quarter Association on opportunities to use student interns and volunteers to prepare Arkansas and/or National Register nominations.

Objective: Protect historic buildings from demolition or inappropriate alterations.

- Protect properties with city ordinances, state law and the Capitol Zoning District Commission laws.
- Amend the Little Rock Historic District Ordinance by city officials to make the historic district designation more palatable, by clarifying its administration and including minimum maintenance standards, and economic provisions.
- Pass state legislation, with support of city officials, that enables Arkansas cities to choose from a variety of methods for protecting historic buildings from demolition and inappropriate alteration, including landmark designation and conservation districts.
- Support and publicize the revised 1998 statutes of the Capitol Zoning District Commission to extend greater protection to historic buildings in the Mansion Area.

Objective: Ensure that infill construction is compatible with the historic architecture of the Downtown Neighborhoods.

- Publicize city design guidelines for new development.
- Publicize and expand a “Design Overlay Ordinance,” which provides guidelines for new construction in areas of Downtown neighborhoods not otherwise protected. (See model under **Land Use and Zoning Chapter**.)

- Support efforts of the Little Rock Historic District Commission and Capitol Zoning District Commission to ensure new construction is compatible in the MacArthur Park Historic District and the Mansion Area.

Objective: Rehabilitate all historic buildings.

- Support and expand the program by city officials to provide funds to owners of historic homes to make repairs.
- Apply flexible housing code enforcement by city housing inspectors, so that rehabilitation projects are not deterred.
- Use city housing programs combined with other funding sources to make rehabilitation projects possible.
- Establish new incentives for owners by city ordinances to promote rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- Amend state law, if necessary, to permit the City of Little Rock to seize vacant, derelict structures from unresponsive owners while rehabilitation still is possible, and then make the structures available to individuals, nonprofits or developers for rehabilitation
- Assemble related program representatives together to provide “one stop shopping” for persons interested in undertaking rehabilitation projects, including city agencies, lenders, neighborhood associations, historic preservationists and other stakeholders.
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Objective: Use CDBG funds for historic preservation projects.

- City officials must allocate funds for this purpose.

Objective: Create the Dunbar Neighborhood as a National Register Historic District.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Objective: Establish the perception that our neighborhoods are safe.

- Publicize police statistics that show reductions in crime. (See Appendix.)
- Increase Community Police hours to evenings and weekends.
- Establish a zero-tolerance policy for petty crimes.
- Discourage loitering.
- Target criminals for habitual-offender penalties that increase prison sentences and keep them longer from returning to the neighborhoods. Support prosecutor and staff in asking for such penalties.
- Coordinate police patrols and crime watch activities, and improve exchange of information.
- Control truck traffic on residential streets.
- Add streetlights.
- Keep ALERT Centers open later.
- Support School Resource officer assigned to Dunbar Junior High School. Expand program to elementary schools.
- Promote enrollment of residents in the Citizens Police Academy to improve understanding of police operations.

Objective: Improve remedies to close down a nuisance such as a drug or gang house.

- Pass legislation allowing neighbors to sue owner for damages in Small Claims Court. (A bill was proposed in the 1997 General Assembly but did not pass.)

Objective: Encourage community police officers to purchase homes or rent in our neighborhoods.

- Promote use of city program of low-interest loans to officers who buy homes in older neighborhoods. The 1994 program uses local lenders and loans from the Arkansas Development Finance Authority (AFDA).
- Encourage city hiring of residents to become police officers.

Objective: Eliminate drug and alcohol addiction, which stimulate numerous crimes. (Eighty percent of the inmates of the Pulaski County Regional Detention Center have a history of drug/alcohol abuse. That matches a national study of prison inmates, which found 80 percent of prison inmates linked to drug and alcohol abuse.)

- Support and expand city Fight Back programs and projects funded by the city Prevention, Intervention and Treatment Division. Treatment works, but available resources fall short of meeting the need.
- Publicize and support treatment programs, which include 212 meetings weekly of Alcoholics Anonymous, and 38 meetings weekly of Narcotics Anonymous and Cocaine Anonymous. List and promote outpatient treatment programs and residential programs, both private and public.

- Support and expand city treatment for alcohol and drug abuse, including treatment for adults in residential centers, the Women’s Outpatient Treatment program; and the Adolescent Treatment Program.
- Support and expand Operation Safe Summer, Youth Initiative Projects, and Our Clubs in our facilities.
- Support community crime prevention programs.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Objective: Establish schools as neighborhood centers

- Offer computer access and other facilities evenings and weekends.
- Amend educational codes to promote full-time use.
- Offer community programs evenings and weekends.
- Offer adult education classes leading to the GED.

Objective: Landscape schools and recruit community groups to maintain them

- Invite school PTA groups, and area organizations such as the Quapaw Home and Garden Club to landscape schools.

Objective: Promote excellent public schools as a reason for living in Downtown Neighborhoods.

- Market our schools vigorously as part of the new promotion campaign sponsored by the Alliance to Save Public Schools, which is directed at real-estate agents and homebuyers.

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Objective: Encourage business mentoring programs to improve job opportunities for youth.

- Work with summer program of the Little Rock School District.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Objective: Promote interaction between the community and businesses.

- Support the Southside Main St. Program, a nonprofit corporation that promotes retail activity on Main St. And nearby areas.

Objective: Increase cooperation between zoning officials and developers to renovate existing properties and build new ones.

- Revise city and Capitol Zoning Commission laws so they are more understandable.
- Create “one-stop shopping” to obtain permits and meet all government requirements without delay or trips to various agencies.
- Maintain close relationship with city legislative program.

Objective: Recognize the economic development value to urban forestry, further described in chapter on Parks and Recreation.

- Continue to promote urban forestry, especially planting of curbside trees to shade our streets undertaken by Tree Streets, a private organization.

Objective: Increase Small Business development.

- Continue to support the Pulaski County Enterprise Community, which has a Small Business Incubator program.

Objective: Publicize available commercial properties in a brochure and circulate to Realtors and others.

- Work with Realtors to print and distribute the information.

Objective: Target jobs training and mentoring toward current residents, to enable them to improve their incomes.

- Work with current programs of the city and the Pulaski County Enterprise Community.
- Support welfare-to-work programs for residents.

Objective: Attract a discount store to serve the neighborhoods.

- Add population and raise incomes of residents, and stores will follow.

Objective: Attract other businesses and services, such as pizza places that make home deliveries, another grocery, another pharmacy, video stores, cafes, a sporting goods store, and more restaurants open after 8 p.m.

- Work with the Greater Little Rock Chamber of Commerce on a campaign.
- Work with the Downtown Partnership on a campaign.

Objective: Establish a fixed-route trolley line along Main Street from Markham south.

- Persuade city officials and transit officials to plan and fund the route, to promote tourism between the River Market District and the Central High Visitors Center, and later the Museum.

Objective: Promote successful re-development of the Job Corps Center at Vance and Charles Bussey Ave. A new facility is under construction, and upon completion, the current building, a former high-rise hotel overlooking Interstate 30, will be sold.

- Assure community involvement in any redevelopment of this public property.

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Objective: Provide adequate transportation for additional population attracted to the Downtown Neighborhoods.

- Improve bus services with CATA, to get more frequent schedule.
- Establish bike lanes that enable adults to go to and from work; children to go to and from school; and families to circulate together.
- Persuade city to resume responsibility for maintenance of alleys, as the means of rear parking access to homes.
- Promote good design in new garage construction, such as joint driveways serving two adjacent lots, which would separate at rear of houses to serve separate garages. (See **Design Guidelines**.)
- Recognize street parking as part of the planned provision for parking, and support an ordinance to allow for on-street permit parking, by the block.

Objective: Promote increased use of the bus service.

- Ask CATA to operate a shuttle in blocks surrounding the new downtown transfer station to bring in riders to catch buses at the station, and return them to homes or firms off regular bus routes. Create a “circulator loop.”

Objective: Provide additional public funding for public transit.

- Support the proposed county 1/4-cent sales tax for public transit.

Objective: Enlist Utility Companies to support improvement efforts.

- Arrange for gas and electric company meter readers to report problems such as clogged storm drains, potholes, sewer backups, etc.

Objective: Preserve and restore granite curbstones.

- Assure public works crews and utility repairmen are instructed to preserve granite curbstones in place, and to return them once work is performed. Replace these where destroyed by public works activity.

Objective: Repair problem streets.

- Fix bad drainage in 2300 block of State St.

Objective: Improve traffic circulation and parking.

- Eliminate one-way streets north of 14th St. (As of this writing, some of these street are being converted to two way, (Louisiana and Center).
- Make 14th and 17th two-lane streets.
- Create bike lanes. See draft map of proposed bike paths.
- Consider redesign of the I-630 and Center intersection to add right-turn only lane, but not at the cost of maintaining links to the Central Business District.
- Make alleys the area for utility lines.

Objective: Maintain and strengthen the grid of streets and alleys.

- Encourage access to parking from alleys.
- Coordinate utility work and resurfacing projects to avoid unnecessary patches.
- Budget for city maintenance of alleys.

Objective: Ensure curbs, gutters and sidewalks on all streets.

- Repair curbs and gutters.
- Add sidewalks where they are missing.
- Support expanded city sidewalk maintenance funding.

Objective: Maximize options--buses, streetcars, bicycles, etc.

- Add bicycle lanes on some neighborhood streets.
- Add walking paths.
- Add streetcar routes in the neighborhoods.

Objective: Restore boulevard structure to 2100 block of Broadway.

- Obtain support from Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, which has authority over the street, since it is also State Highway 70.

LAND USE AND ZONING

Objective: Establish a sustainable growth plan for the city, which will benefit these neighborhoods.

- City directors should pass a sustainable growth plan ordinance.

Objective: Develop regulations modified for the special needs of older areas that have long been developed.

- Repeat language of the River Market Design Guidelines in ordinance 17,240: “Guidelines and strategies must be in place to protect the Downtown Neighborhoods from the negative impact of poorly planned or incompatible projects. Incompatible development has the potential to destroy the attributes that will attract people to the Downtown Neighborhoods. Buildings, signs, street furnishings and landscaping should all be designed to complement and encourage pedestrian use during the day and night. Careful planning is necessary to insure the proper placement of such items to avoid visual clutter.”
- Review and remove spot zoning areas of unsuitable use, such as a block of C-3 commercial property that in fact has residences on the land, and which is surrounded by other residences zoned residential, on East 21st Street.
- Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in the design of new structures, modified as necessary to fit character of the neighborhood. (See draft city ordinance.)
- Allow garages and storage buildings on lot lines (reduced setbacks).
- Encourage home-based occupations, a lower level of activity than a home business, without the traffic or noise concerns of a home business.
- Encourage mixed-use (both residential and business) activity in small commercial structures in residential blocks, but do not lift restrictions to protect homeowners from traffic and noise.
- Review sign ordinances and consider changing sizes for commercial structures that are out of character with the neighborhoods. For example, provide for no signs on poles; for no backlit signs, favoring a directional light on the sign instead; and for no spillover, favoring shaded lights instead that focus light where desirable, and avoid light undesirable to neighbors. Many commercial firms are close, or even next door, to residences in our neighborhoods, and these provisions would remove some problems.
- Establish and enforce standards for minimum repair and appearance on commercial structures.
- Support expanded application of design guidelines for new development.

Model Design Overlay Concept

The Downtown Neighborhoods are unique historic areas. Collectively, they represent some of the most important phases in Little Rock’s history, from the boom era of the post-Civil War years to the tumultuous school integration period of the late 1950s.

All of this history is embodied in the neighborhoods' buildings, many of which already are recognized landmarks. Dunbar Junior High School, the Villa Marre, Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, the Hotze and Hornibrook Houses, and the Governor's Mansion are just a few of the scores of significant structures in the Downtown Neighborhoods.

In recognition of the importance of preserving the historical and architectural character of neighborhoods that are among the city's oldest, two sections of the Downtown Neighborhoods presently receive some protection from harmful development. A small portion of the MacArthur Park Historic District extends south of I-630, into the Downtown Neighborhoods, and the Capitol Zoning Mansion Area encompasses about 90 square blocks surrounding the Governor's Mansion. In both of these special districts, review procedures help to ensure that new development enhances the neighborhoods' unique character rather than destroying it.

Very detailed architectural guidelines such as those followed in the MacArthur Park Historic District and the Mansion Area probably are not warranted in most other sections of the Downtown Neighborhoods. However, some level of protection is needed to prevent, or at least to provide an opportunity to modify, new development of the type that recently occurred at 15th and Rock Streets, a project which clearly does not "fit" the neighborhood and was strenuously opposed by neighbors -- but was allowed by city zoning.

A "design overlay" for the Downtown neighborhoods would enable residents to monitor development proposals and participate in their review. Design standards would concentrate on the major features of new construction--siting, height and width, roofline, materials, placement and proportions of windows and doors, parking--rather than on the smaller details that sometimes consume time in the MacArthur Park Historic District and the Mansion Area. The object would **not** be to stop new development but to make sure new development strengthens and enhances the Downtown Neighborhoods.

Siting

New buildings should be positioned on their sites in a manner similar to nearby existing buildings. In a residential area, this means having the same front- and sideyard setbacks as surrounding houses; in a commercial district, it may mean having no setbacks at all.

Height and Width (Proportion)

In order to fit into an established neighborhood, the height/width ratios, or proportions, of new buildings should mimic those of existing buildings. In the Downtown Neighborhoods, this generally will mean that new buildings that are wide and low should be discouraged because the majority of existing late-19th and early-20th century buildings are more vertical in proportion than horizontal.

Roofline

Shape

The shape of the roof of a new building should be similar to roofs of existing buildings. Gabled and hipped roofs predominate on houses in the Downtown neighborhoods; roofs of other shapes (flat, mansard, etc.) Should be discouraged on new houses.

Pitch

The pitch, or degree of slope, of a roof is a critical element in the design of houses and other buildings that will be located in a residential setting. Existing houses in the Downtown Neighborhoods generally have steeply-pitched roofs; lower rooflines should be discouraged in new construction.

Materials

Wood is the predominant building material in the Downtown Neighborhoods, with the majority of existing houses being sheathed in clapboard siding. A number of brick houses and commercial also are present. New construction generally should employ these materials--wood and/or brick--and avoid other types of materials that have not traditionally been used in the Downtown Neighborhoods (stucco or Dryvit; stone; concrete block; aluminum, vinyl, and steel siding, etc.)

Windows and Doors

Fenestration--the arrangement, proportions and design of windows and doors--is an important design element that often is given little consideration in new construction. The fenestration of new buildings should be similar to that of existing buildings in the Downtown Neighborhoods. Generally, this will mean generously-sized window and door openings that are taller than they are wide; placing several door and/or window openings in all facades (i.e., no blank walls); and having a front door that faces the street and clearly says "this is the main entrance to this house/building." (Note: New buildings sometimes have their main entrances off a parking lot rather than facing the street. This arrangement definitely should be discouraged in the Downtown Neighborhoods.)

Parking

The Downtown Neighborhoods developed before automobiles became the primary mode of transportation for most people, so driveways, garages and parking lots are not part of the historic development pattern of the neighborhoods. In order to accommodate cars without destroying the historic character of the Downtown Neighborhoods, parking behind buildings should be encouraged. Alley access to rear parking should be promoted. Front-yard parking should not be allowed in either residential or commercial development.

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACES

Objective: Promote recreation with a brochure listing available parks, bike trails and facilities.

- Obtain city aid to print and distribute the brochure. Correlate with the existing brochure detailing a walking tour of historic structures, a private printing.

Objective: Turn vacant lots into wildlife areas and promote visits by residents.

- Work with wildlife enthusiasts in neighborhood, and city officials to obtain owner consent for use of vacant lots. Promote groups to visit such as church and school and youth groups.

Objective: Assure recreational opportunities suited to needs of the elderly.

- Open adult day care facility.
- Support and expand active senior recreation program.
- Provide better van transportation to activities and organize car pools to get the elderly to the Adult Center on W. 12th Street.
- Develop activities within the neighborhoods.
- Encourage programs that provide interaction between seniors and youth.
- Develop a program at Pettaway Park, based at the ALERT Center at 500 E. 21st Street.

Objective: Assure Recreation for Youth.

- Work with city and transit officials to provide transportation to existing sites for organized activity in and out of the neighborhoods.
- Develop active competitive and recreational teams or leagues for tennis, baseball, soccer, gymnastics, and dance.
- Support expansion at Dunbar Community Center to add facilities.
- Support continued operation of Dunbar Community Garden.

Objective: Assure tree-shaded streets along main avenues in the neighborhoods and small parks and community gardens scattered across the area.

- Establish an active street tree program that includes planting, removing and pruning.
- Work with city parks officials on an Urban Forestry nursery.
- Convert vacant lots to “play lots” or landscaped community gardens.

Objective: Beautify our Gateways - entrances to the neighborhoods, including I-630 and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive; Broadway and I-630; Main and I-630, and Roosevelt Rd. And Broadway.

- Support concept of Gateway to our Historic Governor’s Mansion District proposed by Capitol Zoning District Commission, which calls for landscaping and Interpretative Plaza at I-630 and Center St.
- Encourage local businesses and organizations to sponsor plantscapes.

- Plant trees along Broadway, Chester, Main and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr.

Objective: Ensure major institutions have landscaped exteriors that promote a good image of the neighborhoods.

- Recruit community groups to landscape and maintain Parris Towers, Cumberland Towers, Philander Smith College, and all public schools, in partnership with the owners.
- Invite groups such as the Quapaw Home and Garden Club to take part in such projects.

Objective: Promote physical fitness.

- Open existing facilities to all in neighborhoods, especially schools and churches.

IMPLEMENTATION

Throughout the discussion of the Goals of the Plan, the responsibilities of organizations or agencies to realize the Plan have been noted. Also listed were prospective partners in these revitalization efforts. Here a summary of those organizations is noted:

Neighborhood Associations

Downtown Neighborhood Association, East of Broadway Neighborhood Association

City of Little Rock:

Little Rock School District and PTA organizations

Pulaski County government

Central Arkansas Transit Service

Pulaski County Enterprise Community:

Downtown Little Rock Community Development Corporation
and

Philander Smith Community Development Corporation:

Greater Little Rock Chamber of Commerce

Arkansas state government

Capitol Zoning District Commission

Federal government:

Private Agencies:

Southside Main St. Program
MORE, advocates for Main St. Redevelopment
Quapaw Quarter Association
Tree Streets
Quapaw Home and Garden Club
Philander Smith College
ACORN
ACORN Fair Housing
Dunbar Alumni Association
South Main Improvement District
Center City Coalition of Congregations

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Downtown Neighborhoods Plan area today offers an exciting mixture of historic mansions, Victorian cottages, and more modern homes and apartments that have attracted and held a variety of residents, black and white, rich and poor. Demand for houses is strong and sales are profitable. City investments have improved housing for poor families. The neighborhoods are a major retirement center, with several large apartment complexes serving those residents. The neighborhoods are near the Central Business District firms, the Capitol, the Federal Building and Federal Courthouses, The University of Arkansas Law School, the Clinton Presidential Library, the Clinton School of Public Service, Arkansas Children's Hospital, the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences Center and St. Vincent Infirmary, making the area attractive to employees of these institutions. Under construction is the new headquarters for Heifer International, which will offer more opportunity.

The Neighborhoods are close to our city's major employers, including the State of Arkansas, the top employer, and the United States government, the next largest employer, Arkansas Blue Cross & Blue Shield, a large private employer downtown, and the headquarters of our largest banks. The classic neighborhood is found here, with tree-shaded streets laid in a grid of major thoroughfares leading to quieter, residential streets, where children ride bicycles and residents walk daily for exercise. Our Crime Watches are vigilant in taking back our streets from the criminals, and members assist our various Community Police patrols and city employees at our two ALERT Centers.

We know one another, and demonstrate our concern for those less fortunate than we are. We take pride in our heritage - and we want to maintain that heritage for our children. Residents work together in neighborhood associations, garden clubs, historic preservation groups, churches, youth groups, and a variety of other organizations to improve our neighborhoods.

Our commercial districts include South Main Street, which boasts the best bakery in Little Rock, and shops and restaurants of all kinds; and the River Market, on Markham Street, which is a major revitalization project with its own schedule of events attracting the public to its array of cafes and shops. The Arkansas Arts Center and the Museum of Discovery are part of our neighborhoods, and so is the Central Arkansas Library System main library, and Williams Library, at 1800 S. Chester St.

We owe much to the 1988 Plan of the Central City Planning District, whose boundaries are Interstate 630, Interstate 30, and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. We find the same conditions and remedies apply today. "The mix of old and new, deteriorating and vibrant, creates a complex area with several possible futures," the 1988 Plan said. "In order to maintain and protect the investments thousands have made in the District, this document proposes strengthening the existing development and better defining single-family and nonresidential use areas. The recommended future land use pattern is to emphasize residential use with support commercial conveniently located to meet the needs of residents."

The 1988 Plan noted that the number of condemned and fire-damaged structures was significant, more than twice the number of the next highest District in the city. Recurbing and sidewalk repair are needed throughout the District, the Plan said. The Plan concluded with six major recommendations:

1. Rehabilitate existing structures in the northeast section of the District.
2. Increase infill residential with rehabilitation of local commercial structure structures in the eastern portion of the District.
3. Increase infill residential and work on Swaggarty Park in the southern portion of the District.
4. Increase infill residential in the Central High area with high quality, professional office and commercial uses around the Children's Hospital.
5. Improve neighborhood streets and local storm drainage.
6. Reoccupy abandoned (vacant) public structures in the District, use for continuing education or additional housing.

Executive Summary of Plan Update

The Downtown Neighborhood Action Plan was presented on February 4th, 1999 to the City of Little Rock Planning Commission and to the Board of Directors on March 16, 1999. Each of these bodies supported the Neighborhood Action Plan by passing a resolution acknowledging their support of the vision and goals as expressed in the plan.

The Department of Planning and Development initiated a review of the Neighborhood Action Plan in September 2004 at the request of area residents. Planning staff contacted other City Departments for an update of any projects that had been implemented in response to the action plan. Staff also examined city permits issued for new construction, renovations, demolitions, etc., as well as Planning Commission activity in the study area from February 1999 to September 2004. The summary of changes were recorded as follows:

Population and Demographics

The area's population has declined significantly over the last decade. The city estimated the area's population was 7100, based on the destruction of 150 residential units, while preparing the 1999 Neighborhood Action Plan. The 1990 Census shows a population of 7456 and Census 2000 shows a population of 6316. The Census 2000 population translates into a 784 person decrease from the 1999 population estimate and a 1140 person (15 percent) decrease compared to the 1990 Census, respectively. The area's black population has decreased four percentage points to 74% based on the 1999 population estimates. The areas white population makes up approximately 24% of the population while Hispanic, Latino, and other races have slightly increased in the area now representing the remaining 2%.

The age of area residents has changed slightly with people under the age of 18 remaining constant at 24%, and the population over 64 has declined four percentage points to 14%. The 18-64 age range still represent the majority of the population at 61%, a three percentage point increase. The breakdown by sex has become more evenly distributed with 52% women and 48% men. Previously the breakdown was 55% women - 45% men.

The Downtown Neighborhood continues to have a high vacancy rate, however, it has decreased from 23% to a 22% vacancy rate. Only 29% of the homes are owner occupied, an eight percentage point decrease, and Census 2000 indicates 49% of the units are rentals.

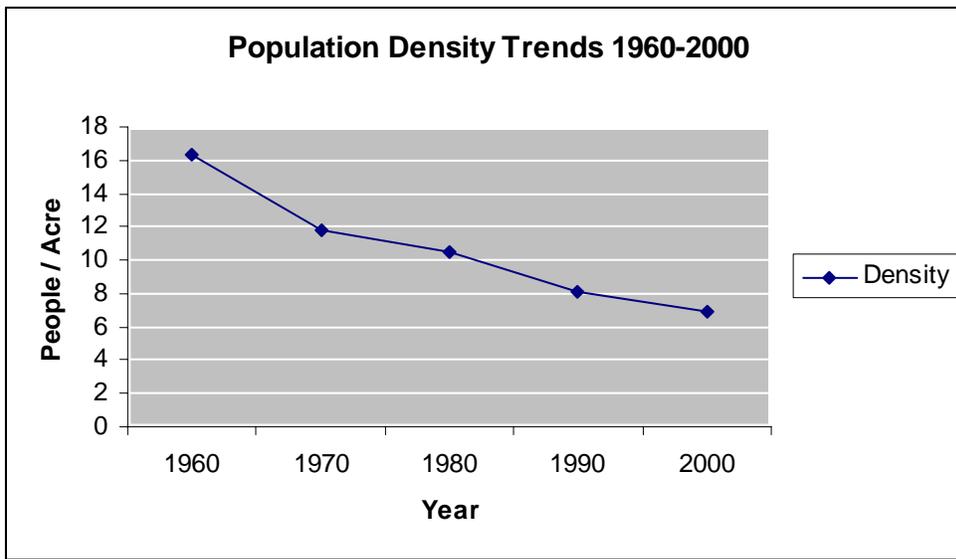
The number of area households has decreased from 2946 to 2726 (7.5% decrease) and the number of one-person households has increased by six percentage points to 29%, and the number of one parent household (single parents with children) has decreased significantly from 18% to 11%.

The percentage of low to moderate incomes again remained high, approximately 68% of area residents. (Based off the Census 2000 Little Rock Median Income \$47,446, Low to Moderate Income Standard (MIS) is 80% of areas median income, Little Rock’s MIS is \$37,956). However, the amount of households earning less than \$20,000 decreased two percentage points to 58% and the amount of households earning over \$100,000 more than tripled from 1.5% to 5.2%.

POPULATION CHANGES					
Year	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Population	14,938	10,824	9,659	7,456	6,316
Black	N/A*	6,784	7,453	5,786	4,662
Total Units	5,548	4,577	4,143	3,811	3,455
Vacant Units	380	534	446	865	761
Owner Units	1,875	1,363	1,277	1,098	1,004

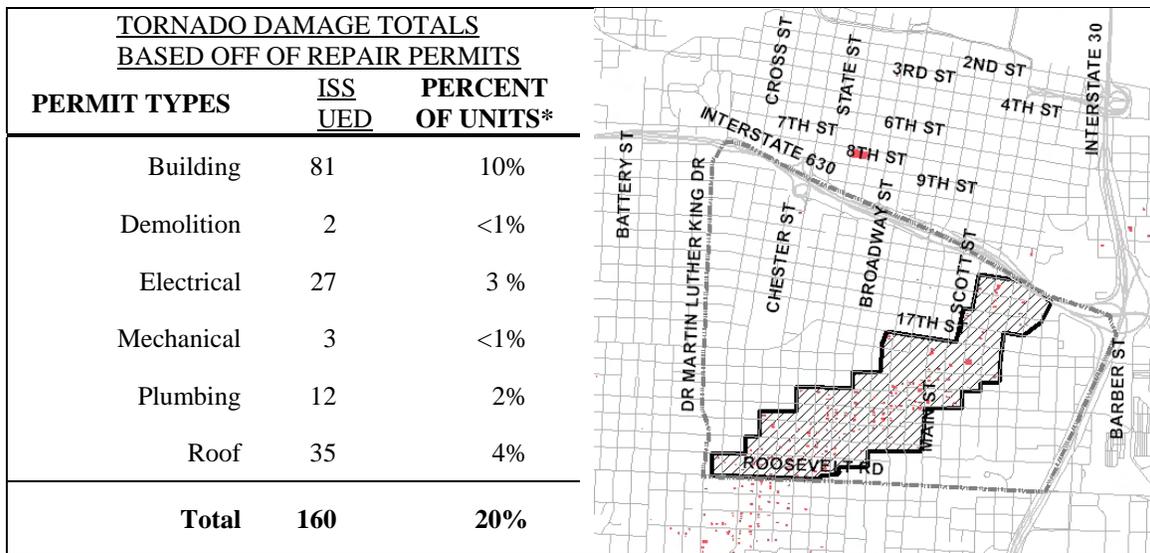
**The race information for 1960 is unavailable because the study area does not conform to the census tracts.*

Steadily, population density has decreased in the downtown neighborhood since 1960. The density is approaching a density of six people per acre similar to the population densities of suburban subdivisions zoned R-2 Residential District. With the average household size in the neighborhood is 2.2 people per housing unit density of units per acre transforms to roughly 3.1 dwelling units per acre. Since the neighborhood is approximately 900 acres, pockets of vacant land and existing business have created the low ratio of dwelling units per acre. The 1999 neighborhood action plan indicates infill development for construction of new homes similar to the existing fabric of the neighborhood. Encouraged is the revitalization of existing housing stock and new construction of duplexes, triplexes, and carriage houses to help restore the density to levels equal to or greater than that of 1960.



January 21, 1999 Tornado

On January 21, 1999 a major tornado outbreak occurred in Central Arkansas bringing over 30 tornados to 15 Arkansas counties. Several tornados touched down in the Little Rock area resulting in loss of lives and over 100 injuries. The diagram below shows the area of the downtown neighborhood effected by the tornado.



The area of the Downtown Neighborhood hit the hardest.

**The Percent of Units is representative of permits issued compared to all buildings in the tornado area.*

The previous diagram shows the area where major damage occurred in the downtown neighborhood. In the shaded area approximately 20% of all homes and buildings were damaged which include residential and commercial structures. The neighborhood grocery store was also destroyed by the tornado, which was later reconstructed.

Construction and Reinvestment

An additional 292 living units were removed from this neighborhood since January of 1999 while only 21 units were added. Of the single-family homes destroyed 9 were destroyed as a result of the tornado and 15 were removed by the City of Little Rock because they were unsafe structures. However, new home construction is slower as new home starts dropped 20% from 14 to 11. Permits for additions have remained steady with 11 permits for additions since 1999. The largest project in the area was the construction of the Philander Smith College Dormitory, which opened in 2004 and will have 130 units. The 130 units will add an additional population of 260 students to the area –a four percentage point increase in the area’s population. This number was not included in the total residential units because they are not available on the open market.

RESIDENTIAL UNIT CHANGE			
(March 1999-October 2004)			
Type	<u>Demolished</u>	Added	Change
Homes	78	11	-67
Multifamily	214	10	-204
Dormitory	0	134*	134*
Total Units	292	21	-271

**Not included in the total units because they were constructed for institutional use by Philander Smith College.*

OTHER STRUCTURE CHANGE			
(March 1999-October 2004)			
Use Type	<u>Demolished</u>	Added	Change
Office	0	0	0
Commercial	1*	1*	0
Public/Institutional	0	1	1
Total Units	1	2	1

**Accounts for the demolition and rebuilding of the Harvest Foods Building damaged by the January 21, 1999 tornado..*

Building permit data shows minimal construction of new commercial, office, and Public Institutional structures. The one new Commercial construction was the demolition and rebuild of the Harvest Foods Grocery Store that was damaged by the tornado. Additional retailers were included in the reconstruction of the building.

Building Permit data reflects significant change in the residential character of neighborhood since 1999. Since 1999 248 permits were issued for improvements of at least 159 residential properties in the area. The permits are best used to indicate dollar investment in the community as to the fact that multiple permits for different aspects of construction can be issued for the same project.

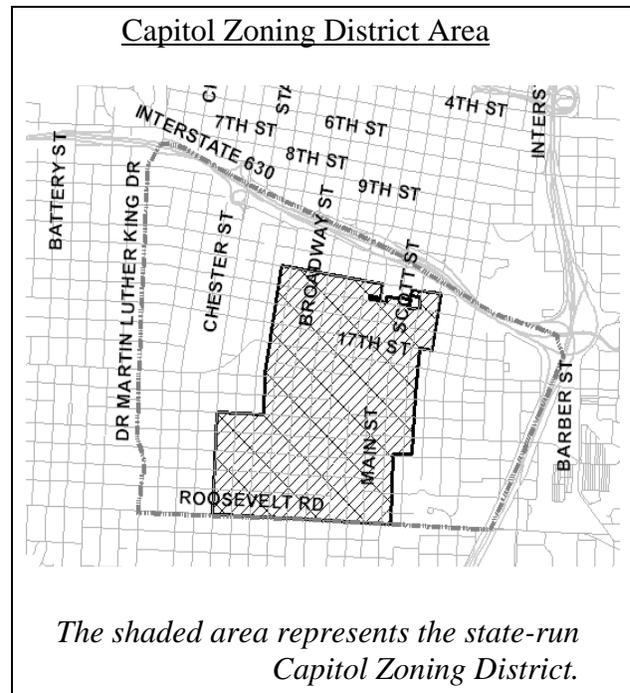
RESIDENTIAL RENOVATION PERMITS			
(March 1999-October 2004)			
Type	Number	Dollars	Percent
Bring to Code	58	\$995,194	23%
Interior Remodel	54	\$708,407	22%
General Remodel	46	\$1,033,228	19%
Exterior Remodel	39	\$535,951	16%
Addition	11	\$590,076	4%
Storm Repair	9	\$380,000	4%
Other	31	\$400,209	12%
Total	248	\$4,643,065	100%

Zoning and Land Use

Planning Commission activity in the area has been light over the last five years. In April of 1999 several rezonings and Land Use Plan amendments were enacted as a result of the previous Neighborhood Action Plan. Also, several Conditional Use Permits were issued that ranged from church parking lots to temporary school buildings. The table at right indicates the three zoning changes in the area. Z-7142 was approved by the Board of Directors on an appeal.

Zoning Cases, (1999- 2004)		
Case	Type	Details
Z-4028-C	CUP	Arkansas Baptist College
Z-5675-B	CUP	Student Housing
Z-6730-B	CUP	Existing warehouse
Z-6765	R-4 to PCD	Home to Commercial
Z-6868-A	CUP	Fence Placement
Z-7013	CUP	Dunbar Portable
Z-7013-A	CUP	Dunbar Portable Placement
Z-7094	CUP	N/A
Z-7142	R-4 to POD	Home to Office
Z-7312	CUP	Church Parking Lot
Z-7341	CUP	UU Variances
Z-7347	C-3 to PDR	Single Family Home Addition
Z-7395	CUP	Office Use
Z-7416	CUP	Church Parking and Addition
Z-7498	CUP	R-4 to PCD
Z-7648	CUP	Childcare Single Family Building

In the mid-1970's state Legislature established the Capital Zoning District around the Governor's Mansion to help preserve and protect the historical character of the area. This area operates as a state-run special planning and historic preservation commission that regulates almost 40% of all zoning and land use decisions in the downtown neighborhood area. In August of 2000 the capital zoning district was expanded west from the mid block of Gaines and State Streets to Chester Street (between 23rd and Street and Roosevelt Road, and south from 23rd Street to Roosevelt Road. Area residents who wanted more protection of the neighborhood's historic character brought the expansion request to Senator Bill Walker who presented it to the State Legislature in 2000 where it was approved.



Transportation

Central Arkansas Transit Authority (CATA) contacted staff in response to the neighborhood action plan. CATA specifically addressed the Dial-A-Ride service that is provided in the area and states that the service is available for area residents, and discount passes are available for seniors, the disabled, and students. Furthermore CATA related to other action statements, such as a fixed route trolley on Main Street, and additional bus service. CATA acknowledged that they are good ideas but unfortunately are not cost effective at this time and the best way to increase use is through education. However, they have identified a high priority double track streetcar line on Main Street from 2nd to 17th Streets on the Streetcar Expansion Plan. Interim steps for transportation solutions are for citizens to take advantage of the current bus system. CATA has mentioned that a more cost effective step to improve transportation in the area would be to increase service frequencies, modify routes, or offer subsidized passes to area residents.

Public Works

Public Works commented on several objectives within the Neighborhood Action Plan. The plan has identified area resident's need for alley and road maintenance. Additional goals were identified in the action plan relating to infrastructure improvements such as burying electrical lines, adding traffic calming devices such as planters to streets, and improvements to areas curbs, gutters, and sidewalks. Public Works acknowledged their concerns but stated the improvements were not cost effective at this time, and does not support the placement of planters in the road for traffic calming because they could create a hazard for motorists. Public works noted that City of Little Rock Ordinance states it is the property owner's responsibility to maintain and replace existing curbs, gutters, and sidewalks and they expressed the idea that the community can create an improvement district to fund improvements they desire.

Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation acknowledged community concerns within the neighborhood. The department was interested in several Action Statements and expressed that they were either “willing and ready” or “needed specifics,” concerning the action statements related to team sports and transportation to organized activity in and out of the neighborhood. Furthermore, Parks and Recreation has earmarked almost \$2 million dollars of its 2003 Bond money for the Dunbar Community Center expansion. This will provide for replacement of the existing facilities and furnishings and allows for the expansion of new facilities as determined and shared by community input. With this bond money Parks and Recreation are planning on accomplishing several of the neighborhood goals related to “Promoting Physical Fitness.” Initiated action statements include adding “a pool to Dunbar Community Center,” and the opening of several existing facilities (schools and churches) all in neighborhoods, however, there is school board and school staff resistance to opening all buildings for public use.

Parks and Recreation has identified their willingness to consider converting vacant lots to “play lots” or landscaped community gardens if they can get funding for the projects or volunteers.

Public Safety

The Downtown Patrol District responded to several of the Objectives and Action Statements in the 1999 Neighborhood Action Plan. Police have indicated that Community Oriented Policing Officers (COPP) were examining their hours in order to react and counter crime problems in the area. Also mentioned by the Police is the ability of residents to view area crime statistics at Neighborhood Alert Centers.

The neighborhood plan addressed numerous other goals for public safety including: extending Alert Center hours, publicizing positive crime news, discouraging loitering, and attracting police officers to live in the area. The Police have recently extended the hours of the Alert Centers citywide to include Saturdays. In response to additional action statements they recommend that area residents contact their local Alert Center to address areas of frequent loitering, and to look into their local crime statistics. Unfortunately publicity of a decrease in area crime, and the Arkansas Development Finance Authority’s (AFDA) low interest loan program for police officers, has not been acted upon. The information is readily available to the media interested parties through the Alert Centers, departmental meetings, and the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Programs.

The Downtown Neighborhood Consists of several Police patrol Districts. Districts H-401, H-415, and H-414 represent a majority of the neighborhood and have been used to represent crime statistics in the neighborhood. Reports of crime incidents from 1997 decreased by almost 50% compared to 2003 averaging a 5.6% decrease per year. The average number of crime incidents per year from 1998 - 2003 indicates a 28% decrease in robberies, a 27% decrease in reported rapes, and a 63.7% decrease in aggravated assaults, as compared to the average rate from 1994 - 1998. Crime statistics below were provided by the Little Rock Police Department. Specific statistics for 1998-2003 were requests were based off of statistics gathered for the 1999 Neighborhood Action Plan.

Similar incidents were analyzed in the neighborhood reflecting changes over the last decade. Most crime incidents seem to be decreasing in the area with the exception of the number of residential and business burglaries in recent years. Residential burglaries dropped from 192 in 1994 to only 70 in 1996 but have steadily risen to 110 in 2003. A similar situation exists with the rate of average business burglaries per year from 1998-2003 indicating an increase of over 40% compared to the 1994-1997. Also on the rise were the average number of homicides per year due to four reported incidents in 1998 and 1999 and two in 2003.

Selected Incident Totals by Type, and Year 1998-2003							
<i>Incident Type</i>	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Average per Year
Homicide	2	2	0	0	1	2	1.2
Rape	5	4	4	2	2	6	3.8
Robbery (Business)*	5	2	3	6	3	5	4
Robbery (Individual)*	36	18	29	27	19	21	25
Aggravated Assault	38	50	35	35	37	59	42.3
Simple Assault / Terror Threat**	223	175	139	111	124	124	149.3
Arson	5	7	5	2	5	6	5
Burglary (Business)	18	20	10	25	21	18	18.7
Burglary (Residential)	78	95	89	93	101	110	94.3
Burglary (Storage Type Building)**	5	122	9	9	47	44	22.7
Larceny (From Vehicle)**	112	100	188	141	159	166	144.33
Larceny (Other)**	220	154	159	177	212	192	185.7
Stolen Vehicle	44	52	58	68	45	48	52.5
Total	791	701	728	696	776	801	748.3

***Results joined in Comparison Table*
***Not Included in Comparison Table*

<u>Comparison Table: Selected Incident Totals by Type, and Year 1994-2003*</u>										
Type	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Robberies	42	43	41	35	41	20	32	33	22	26
Burglary of Residence	192	93	70	87	78	95	89	93	101	110
<i>Burglary of Business</i>	25	15	7	5	18	20	10	25	21	18
Aggravated Assault	154	123	117	73	38	50	35	35	37	59
Homicide	1	0	0	3	2	2	0	0	1	2
Rape	6	6	6	3	5	4	4	2	2	6
Stolen Auto	90	70	48	49	44	52	58	68	45	48
Arson	4	5	14	0	5	7	5	2	5	6
Total	514	355	303	255	231	250	233	258	234	275
Percent Change	-	-30.9%	-14.7%	-15.8%	-9.4%	-8.2%	-6.8%	10.7%	-9.3%	17.5%

Other Area Notes

Locally based Heifer International, a non-profit international organization began a community garden project near the Dunbar Community Center in 2002. The Dunbar Garden Project is a multi-racial urban school and community garden. This project will help educate area residents and youth about the environment, self self-sustainability, while also providing technical skills, leadership and entrepreneurship. The Community Garden works hand in hand with nearby Dunbar Junior High School and Gibbs Magnet Elementary.

MONITORING, EVALUATING AND UPDATING THE PLAN

Conduct annual reviews of goals and the progress made toward accomplishing them.

Form a committee of residents and representatives of organizations working to improve the Neighborhoods to conduct this review annually, and provide oversight to the Plan for the Future. Committee members would volunteer to work on their areas of interest.

Identify potential opposition to Plan goals and seek common ground to win over opponents.

Work with city officials and others to identify sources of funding and mechanisms to realize the Plan goals.

Enact ordinances by the city to meet Plan goals.

Obtain passage of state laws necessary to complete Plan goals.

Begin work to establish Design Overlay guidelines.

Set priorities for infrastructure projects, and work on funding options.

Work with Community Development Corporations and private developers on housing rehabilitation and infill projects.

Undertake regular events to publicize pleasures of Downtown living, in cooperation with existing events.

Set benchmarks to record progress toward achieving Plan goals, both short-term and long-term. Record progress annually on form. See sample form below.

Annual Review of Downtown Neighborhoods Plan for the Future

(List Numbers of families helped; Numbers of Houses rehabilitated; Crime Statistics, Etc.)

Date:

Participants:

Executive Summary:

Community Preservation:

Housing:

Annual renovation and construction, by city permits issued:

Renovation of single-family dwellings:

CLXX. Multifamily dwellings:

CLXXI. Commercial structures:

New Construction of single-family dwellings:

CLXXII. Multifamily dwellings:

CLXXIII. Commercial structures:

Demolitions - Residential:

CLXXIV. Nonresidential:

Social Services:

Historic Preservation:

Public Safety:

Public Schools:

Economic Development:

Transportation and Infrastructure:

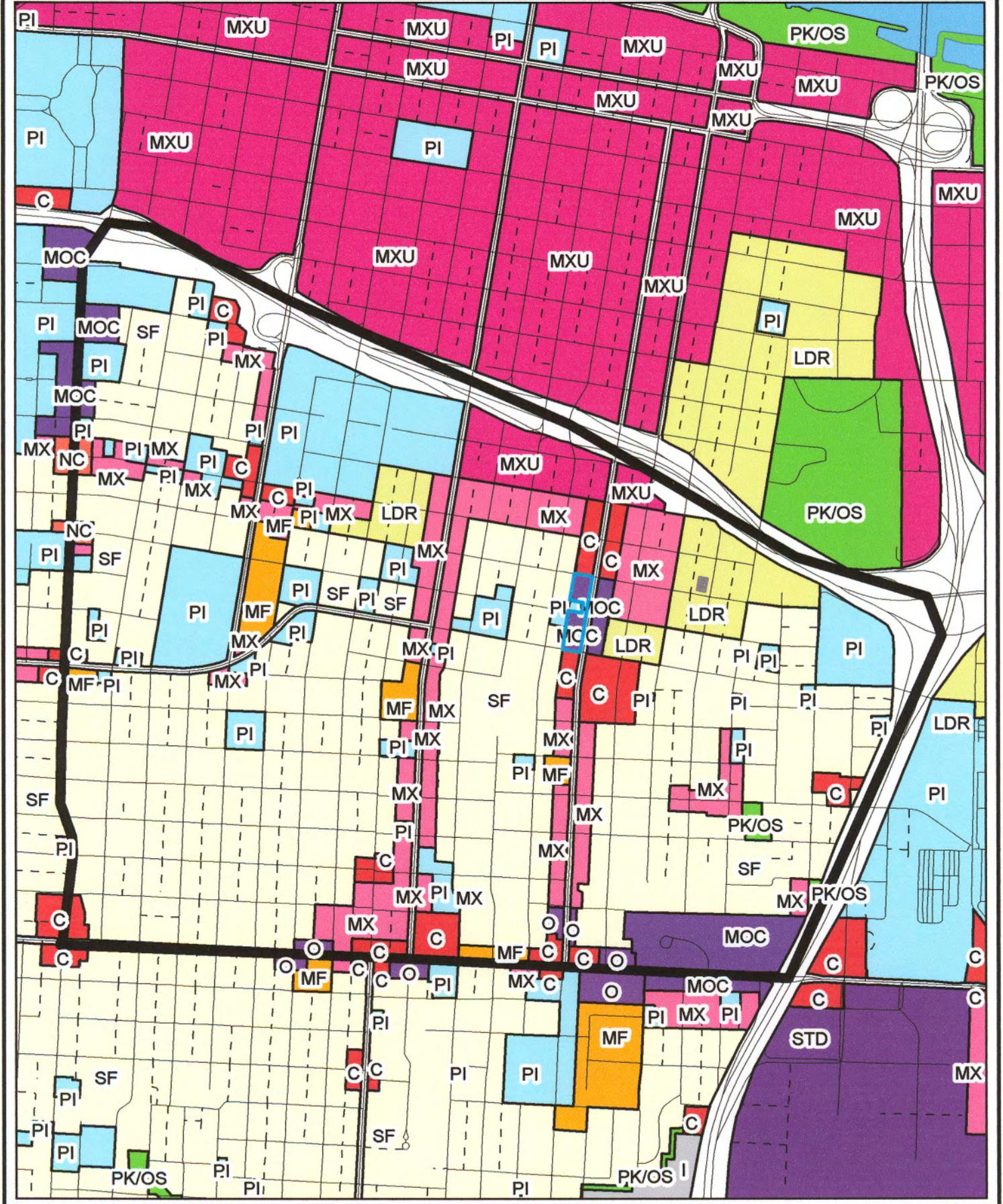
Land Use and Zoning:

Design Overlay Concept Applied:

Recreation and Open Spaces:

State laws passed:

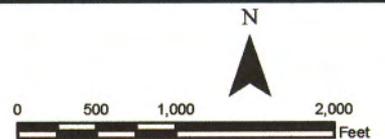
City Ordinances enacted:



The data contained herein was compiled from various sources for the sole use and benefit of the Pulaski Area Geographic Information System (PAGIS) and the public agencies it serves. Any use of the data by anyone other than PAGIS is at the sole risk of the user, and by acceptance of this data, the user does hereby hold PAGIS harmless and without liability from any claims, costs or damages of any nature against PAGIS, including cost of defense, arising from improper use of the data, or use by another party. Acceptance or use of this data is done without any expressed or implied warranties.

The geographic data herein was taken from March 1990 Photography

Future Land Use



Alpha Listing of UV Structures

ADD	DIR	STREET	APT	WARD	UNIT #	FILE LOC	STATUS	MT#	YR	MEMO
215	W.	12th	5	1	1-00182	1	L	1	96	Ordinance 41 New Owner
615	W.	13th		1	2-01943	2		3	2002	
1321-23	W.	13th		1		2		9	2003	
1417	W.	14th		1	2-02084-89(6)	2		8	2002	
415	E.	15th		1	1-00526	1	L	8	94	No Progress
613	E.	16th		1	1-00077	1	OOJ	9	95	No Progress
614	W.	16th		1		2		3	2003	
621	W.	16th		1		2		3	2003	
810	W.	16th		1	2-00513	2	L	9	96	Repairs in Progress
522	E.	17th		1	1-00222	1	L	7	97	No Progress
617	E.	17th		1		2		8	2003	
623	E.	17th		1		1	L	7	99	No Progress
709	W.	19th		1		C/D		6	2003	Ord. 67; Admin. HOLD; CZD
1213	W.	19th		1		3		10	2004	
1315	W.	19th		1	1-01406	1	L	9	95	No Progress
414	E.	20th		1	1-02334	1	L	9	97	New Owner/New Notice
1203	W.	20th		1	1-01718	1	L	4	99	Owner Deceased
1204	W.	20th		1	1-01719	1	L	4	99	Owner Deceased
1209	W.	21st		1		2		3	2003	
1318	W.	21st		1		2		4	2003	
1320	W.	21st		1	1-00274-75(2)	1		3	2001	
212	W.	22nd		1	1-01831-33(4)	1	L	7	96	New Owner/New Notice
220	W.	22nd		1	1-01008	1	OOJ	2	95	No Progress
522	E.	22nd		1		1		7	99	
525	E.	22nd		1	1-01141	1	L	5	95	
809	W.	22nd		1	1-00408	1	L	1	2001	New Owner/New Notice
907	W.	22nd		1	1-00410	1	L	7	97	HUD property
909	W.	22nd		1	1-00411	1	L	7	97	HUD property
1221	W.	22nd		1		2		3	2003	
310	W.	23rd		1	1-00380-81(2)	1	L	1	97	Owner in Bankruptcy Court
311	W.	23rd		1	1-02053	1	L	11	96	In Court
1217-19	W.	23rd, 3 units		1		2		8	2003	
617	W.	24th		1	1-00343-46(4)	1	L	6	96	New Owner/New Notice
1205	W.	24th		1		2		4	2003	
1214	W.	24th		1		2		3	2003	
112	E.	25th		1	1-02327-28(2)	1	L	9	97	Mothball Status per JP
1510	S.	Bragg	a, b & c	1		2		3	2003	
1808	S.	Bragg		1		3		10	2004	
2107	S.	Bragg		1	1-00811	1	L	2	94	Owner Not Located
2223	S.	Bragg		1		C/D		2	2004	Ord. 67/pulled from Ord./ new owner.
1201	S.	Center	1 - 8	1	1-00423-430(8)	1	L	5	94	New Owner/New notice
2100		Center		1	1-01560	1		4	2001	
2216		Center	N & S	1		2		4	2003	
2408	S.	Center		1		1	L	7	99	
1114	S.	Chester		1	2-02740-43(4)	2	L	3	2000	New Owner/New notice
2114	S.	Chester		1		1	L	1	95	New Owner/New notice/Converted to single family 1/2003
1512	S.	Commerce		1	1-00510-13(4)	1	L	12	94	Ordinance 40
1614-16	S.	Commerce	N & S	1		2		5	2003	
1618-20	S.	Commerce	N & S	1		2		5	2003	
1622-24	S.	Commerce	N & S	1		2		5	2003	
1623	S.	Commerce			2 units	2		3	2003	
2012	S.	Commerce		1	1-00607	1	L	1	95	Owner Deceased
2115	S.	Commerce		1		2		8	2003	
2219	S.	Commerce		1		2		2	2004	
2223	S.	Commerce		1		2		9	2004	
1714	S.	Cross		1	2-00503	2		5	2001	
1858	S.	Cross		1	1-00409	1	OOJ	2	95	No Progress
1801		Cumberland		1		2		6	2003	
1907	S.	Cumberland		1	1-01698	1	OOJ	4	96	In Court
2122	S.	Cumberland		1	1-02003	1	L	10	96	No Progress
1907		Dr. M.L. King, Jr. Dr.		1	1-01643	1	OOJ	5	2002	
2103	S.	Dr. M.L. King, Jr. Dr.		1	1-00298	2	L	8	95	No Progress
2105		Dr. M.L. King, Jr. Dr.		1		2		2	2003	

Alpha Listing of UV Structures

ADD.	DIR.	STREET	APT.	WARD	UNIT #	FILE LOC.	COU.	MT.	YR.	MEMO
2108	S.	Dr. M.L. King, Jr. Dr.		1		2		7	99	Owner Not Located
1410	S.	Gaines		1	2-00185-86	2		8	2002	
1414	S.	Gaines		1	2-00144	2	L	5	2000	Repairs in Progress
2300	S.	Gaines		1	1-01819	1	L	7	96	New Owner Oct. 2003; repairs in progress.
2309	S.	Gaines		1	1-00471-77(7)	1	L	9	94	New Owner/New Notice
2321	S.	Gaines		1	1-00983	1	OOJ	2	95	Ordinance 40/Convtd to Stor/ occupied as of 11/03/03
2401	S.	Gaines		1	1-00347	1	OOJ	6	96	New Owner/New Notice
1406	S.	Izard		1		2		6	2003	
1923	S.	Izard		1		3		11	2004	
2010		Izard		1	1-02251	1	L	8	2002	
2210	S.	Izard		1		2		8	2003	
2305	S.	Izard		1		2		9	2003	
1221	S.	Louisiana		1	1-00741-45(5)	1	OOJ	7	91	No Progress
1414	S.	Louisiana		1	1-02363	1	L	10	97	New Owner/New Notice
1414	S.	Parklane		1	1-01365	1	L	8	95	In Court
1901	S.	Parklane		1	1-01355	1	L	8	95	No Progress
1012	S.	Pulaski		1	2-00403	2	L	4	95	In Court
1215	S.	Pulaski		1	2-02791	2	L	1	2001	Repairs in Progress
1309	S.	Pulaski		1		2		3	2003	
1510	S.	Pulaski		1		2		4	2003	
1701	S.	Pulaski		1		2		1	2004	
1702	S.	Pulaski		1		2		1	2004	
1859		Pulaski		1	1-02890	1		5	2001	
1860	S.	Pulaski		1		2		3	2003	
1915	S.	Pulaski	3 units	1		2		5	2003	
1917	S.	Pulaski		1		2		5	2003	
1919-23	S.	Pulaski	N & S	1		2		4	2003	
1926	S.	Pulaski		1	1-00100	CH	L	7	97	File @ Central 4/00
2002	S.	Pulaski		1	1-02517	CH	OOJ	8	98	Ordinance 56; Admin Hold
2004	S.	Pulaski		1	1-02722	CH	OOJ	1	99	Ordinance 56; Admin Hold
2004.5	S.	Pulaski		1	1-02723	CH	L	1	99	Ordinance 56; Admin Hold
2100	S.	Pulaski (2 units)		1		2		6	2003	
2104	S.	Pulaski		1	1-00433	1	L	11	93	No Progress
2209	S.	Pulaski		1	1-00502-03(2)	1	L	10	93	Owner Deceased
2324	S.	Pulaski		1		2		12	2003	
2409	S.	Pulaski		1	1-00088	1	L	10	96	
2200	S.	Ringo		1		2		3	2003	
2224	S.	Ringo		1	1-00723	1	L	9	94	New Owner/New Notice
2407	S.	Ringo		1	1-00360	1		3	2001	
1608	S.	Rock		1		2		8	2003	
2000	S.	Rock		1	1-00456	1	L			New Owner/New Notice
2305	S.	Rock	N	1	1-01446	1	OOJ	10	95	No Progress
2307	S.	Rock	S	1	1-01447	1	OOJ	10	95	No Progress
2317	S.	Rock	N	1		2		12	2003	
1300	W.	Roosevelt		1		3		10	2004	
1302	W.	Roosevelt		1		3		10	2004	
1915	S.	Scott		1	1-02167	1	L	2	97	New Owner/New Notice
2216	S.	Scott		1	1-02702	1	L	11	98	No Progress
2221	S.	Scott		1	1-02954	1	L	4	2002	
2301	S.	Scott	10	1	1-00299	1	L	1	97	Converted to Storage
2400	S.	Scott		1		2		12	2003	
2410	S.	Scott		1	1-02005	1	OOJ	11	96	No Progress
2123	S.	Spring		1	1-00280-83(4)	1	L	4	95	Ord. 66; Awaiting CZD approval for demo. 10/21/03; 10/31/03 40 day admin hold. For CZD.
2413	S.	Spring		1	1-02228	1	L	2	2002	
2419	S.	Spring		1	1-02355	1	L	2	2002	
1868	S.	State		1	1-01933	1	L	9	96	In Court
1900		Vance		1		2		6	2004	

List of Weed lots as of 1/25/05

1101 W 13rd	2418 E 18th	2407 Arch
1313 W 14th	2418 E 18th	1304 Arch
318 E 14th	511 E 19th	1300 Arch
401 E 14th	2310 W 19th	1601 Bragg
2414 E 15th	2312 W 19th	1604 Bragg
601 E 15th	2316 W 19th	1609 Bragg
526 E 15th	808 E 19th	1611 Bragg
417 E 15th	804 E 19th	1314 Broadway
400 E 15th	2416 E 19th	1316 Broadway
514 W 15th	2305 W 20th	1406 Broadway
1015 W 15th	2306 W 20th	1408 Broadway
1001 W 15th	2310 W 20th	1500 Broadway
2408 E 16th	215 E 20th	2001 Broadway
2409 E 16th	2415 E 20th	2003 Broadway
2410 E 16th	2416 E 20th	1823 Center
2412 E 16th	2416 E 20th	1858 Center
2413 E 16th	2320 W 21 St	1859 Center
215 E 16th	2323 W 21 St	1861 Center
412 E 16th	2324 W 21 St	1864 Center
504 E 16th	2400 W 21 St	1866 Center
600 E 16th	2401 W 21 St	1900 Center
601 E 16th	2403 W 21 St	1901 Center
609 E 16th	2424 E 21 St	1903 Center
900 W 16th	2519 E 21 St	1904 Center
721 W 16th	2524 E 21 St	1906 Center
712 W 16th	300 E 21 St	2201 Chester
516 W 16th	519 E 22nd	2203 Chester
518 W 16th	2320 W 22nd	2204 Chester
701 E 17th	2421 E 22nd	2205 Chester
623 E 17th	2423 E 22nd	2208 Chester
518 E 17th	2319 W 23rd	1900 Chester
2317 W 18th	2320 W 23rd	2122 Chester
2319 W 18th	2320 W 23rd	2400 Chester
902 W 18th	2408 W 23rd	2415 Chester
523 E 18th	2404 W 24th	1517 Commerce
522 E 18th	2405 W 24th	1513 Commerce
520 E 18th	2406 W 24th	1416 Commerce
516 E 18th	2407 W 24th	1512 Commerce
515 E 18th	2408 W 24th	1602 Commerce
513 E 18th	2419 E 24th	1706 Commerce
521 E 18th	2420 E 24th	2324 Commerce
517 E 18th	2421 E 24th	2223 Commerce
514 E 18th	2419 E 25th	2000 Commerce
2417 E 18th	2416 Arch	2123 Commerce

2111 Commerce	604 Cumberland	1706 Main
2119 Commerce	609 Cumberland	1715 Main
1410 Commerce	619 Cumberland	1717 Main
1412 Commerce	900 Cumberland	1719 Main
1414 Commerce	910 Cumberland	1720 Main
1415 Commerce	911 Cumberland	1724 Main
1418 Commerce	913 Cumberland	1800 Main
1420 Commerce	916 Cumberland	1801 Main
1500 Commerce	1000 Cumberland	1701 McAlmont
1501 Commerce	1017 Cumberland	2008 M L King Drive
1503 Commerce	1018 Cumberland	2011 M L King Drive
1504 Commerce	1022 Cumberland	2015 M L King Drive
1511 Commerce	1700 Cumberland	2016 M L King Drive
1514 Commerce	1701 Cumberland	2018 M L King Drive
1515 Commerce	1801 Cumberland	1612 Park Lane
1518 Commerce	1802 Cumberland	1617 Park Lane
1519 Commerce	1802 Cumberland	1618 Park Lane
1522 Commerce	1813 Cumberland	1620 Park Lane
1524 Commerce	1823 Cumberland	1621 Park Lane
1600 Commerce	1901 Cumberland	1624 Park Lane
2110 Cross	1921 Cumberland	1700 Park Lane
2112 Cross	1923 Cumberland	1701 Park Lane
2115 Cross	2001 Cumberland	2222 Park Lane
2116 Cross	2207 Cumberland	2018 Pulaski
2117 Cross	2208 Cumberland	2019 Pulaski
2119 Cross	2211 Cumberland	2020 Pulaski
2121 Cross	2215 Cumberland	2022 Pulaski
2122 Cross	2304 Cumberland	2024 Pulaski
1009 Cross	2300 Gaines	2100 Pulaski
1012 Cross	2301 Gaines	2100 Pulaski
1022 Cross	1402 Gaines	2101 Pulaski
1316 Cross	1500 Gaines	2104 Pulaski
1720 Cross	1600 Gaines	2105 Pulaski
2123 Cross	2208 Izard	2108 Pulaski
2216 Cross	2209 Izard	2110 Pulaski
2319 Cross	2211 Izard	2400 Pulaski
2424 Cross	2124 Izard	2405 Pulaski
417 Cumberland	1804 Louisiana	2200 Pulaski
507 Cumberland	1806 Louisiana	2022 Pulaski
509 Cumberland	1807 Louisiana	2018 Pulaski
511 Cumberland	1808 Louisiana	2123 Ringo
512 Cumberland	1813 Louisiana	2123 Ringo
516 Cumberland	1817 Louisiana	2124 Ringo
518 Cumberland	1819 Louisiana	2200 Ringo
519 Cumberland	1820 Louisiana	2421 Ringo
523 Cumberland	1703 Main	2106 Ringo

1120 Ringo
1101 Rock
1115 Rock
1201 Rock
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2219 State
2224 State
2225 State
2400 State
2301 State
1619 State
1701 Vance
1904 Vance

DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Box 164485, Little Rock, AR 72216

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lr-dna>

Founded 1984 {Area: Arkansas River, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr., Roosevelt Rd., Interstate 30}

President Sharon Welch-Blair

501-375-1701, fax 375-4537

December 19, 2006
Mayor Jim Dailey
Little Rock Board of Directors
500 W. Markham St.
Little Rock, AR 72201

Dear Mayor Dailey and City Directors,

The Board of Directors of the Downtown Neighborhood Association endorsed the revised Downtown Plan for the Future at its December 14 meeting, and urges you to adopt this as well.

We have new homes going up, businesses opening, and progress being made on our problems. Our community still is overcoming the loss of homes resulting from the 1999 Tornado, and we still need the city's attention to advance in this field.

Low-income families still lack enough good places to live. Owners of historic homes need aid to preserve them for future generations.

All need good streets, sidewalks, recreational facilities and strict city enforcement of safety codes, as well as vigorous law enforcement to keep our families safe.

We look forward to working with city officials in future years, as we implement the various projects in this Plan.

Yours Truly,



Sharon Welch-Blair
President