

**POWELL-HOOD PARK  
HAMILTON  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

**CITY OF LA CROSSE**

**JUNE 1998**



APPROVED BY THE POWELL- HOOD PARK-HAMILTON NEIGHBORHOOD  
STEERING COMMITTEE ON MAY 26, 1998

ADOPTED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL ON  
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- Appendix B: Planning Department Memo on Possible Incentives to Encourage Owner Occupants
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## INTRODUCTION

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### *PURPOSE*

This neighborhood plan has two main functions. The first is to furnish residents and policy makers with information on the conditions that exist within the neighborhood today. The second is to provide a framework and recommendations to guide public and private initiatives and investment in the area over the next five to fifteen years. Additionally, some of the plan's recommendations call for general changes in policy or new programs which could help improve the quality of life not only in this area, but in neighborhoods throughout the City.

This planning initiative is the first of its kind for La Crosse. As part of this neighborhood planning process, City staff went directly to the residents and the neighborhood steering committee for their input. Instead of the City determining what the main issues and solutions should be, the residents directed the process. Steering committee members brought forth their primary concerns and their goals for the neighborhood and set the framework for how the plan would be developed. This approach helped empower the residents and gave them more of a stake in the outcome of the process. This ownership is important because the residents will play a vital role in helping to implement the strategies and actions outlined within this document, and only with the support of the residents can the goals of the neighborhood plan ever be fully achieved.

The City intends for this planning initiative to be the first of many that will be undertaken -- neighborhood by neighborhood -- to help strengthen residential areas and to encourage people to live and stay within the City of La Crosse. The City also hopes that stronger neighborhoods will help promote new business development and business retention.

### *BACKGROUND*

There has been concern for some time about the risk of decline in some of La Crosse's older neighborhoods. The average home in some neighborhoods is over 50 years old and some homes are becoming deteriorated. In addition, people have increasingly been moving from the La Crosse to its outlying communities. In 1980, 55 percent of the City's housing units were owner-occupied. By 1990, this number had declined to just under 50 percent. The next Census will likely show a continuation of this trend. For La Crosse to remain a vibrant city with quality neighborhoods, it is important to halt this exodus. This planning process was undertaken to help encourage people to remain in and move into La Crosse's older neighborhoods.

In the 1997 La Crosse mayoral race, the city's neighborhoods were one of the most discussed topics. Candidates agreed on the importance of promoting and improving the neighborhoods and stemming urban flight. This planning process, and others like it to come, is one way in which City officials are now working to address the main issues facing La Crosse's residential areas.

The Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton neighborhood was selected to host the first neighborhood plan for a variety of reasons. It is a neighborhood facing challenges. Some of the area's housing is in poor condition. Many of its residents are renters, as a result, the population is more transient than in more heavily owner-occupied neighborhoods. Household incomes in the neighborhood are lower than for the city overall. This neighborhood was also selected because it has strong neighborhood groups -- Project Watchdog, neighborhood watches, Skates for Kids, and others. Strong organizations within the neighborhood and commitment from residents are essential elements of both the neighborhood planning process and successful plan implementation.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The neighborhood plan contains three main sections. The first is an overview of the neighborhood as it exists today. The second section focuses on five primary areas of concern to neighborhood residents and develops a series of specific actions and recommendations for how the major issues can be most effectively addressed. The plan's third and final main section emphasizes implementation of the recommendations set out in the plan, and indicates which parties will be responsible for the plan's various recommended actions.

### ***OVERVIEW OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD***

The Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton area is one of La Crosse's oldest neighborhoods. It has an estimated population of 2,700 people (5 percent of the estimated city population of 53,218) and encompasses roughly 50 blocks. The neighborhood is bounded by Green Bay Street on the south, West Avenue on the east, Jackson Street on the north, and 3rd Street and South Avenue on the west. The area is primarily residential with some commercial activity scattered throughout the neighborhood and along the streets bounding the neighborhood.

This neighborhood has a number of strengths and is also facing some large challenges. One of the neighborhood's main strengths is its strong neighborhood organizations and neighborhood watches. The neighborhood is home to the Skates for Kids program in Hood Park, the Boys' and Girls' Club program at Hamilton School, Place of Grace, and a variety of other community-oriented activities. The neighborhood is also strengthened by the many neighborhood residents who are strongly committed to improving the neighborhood and keeping it a good place to live.

Other strengths of the neighborhood include its families, the large availability of affordable housing, and its racial diversity and rich historical heritage.

Among the challenges facing the neighborhood, the primary ones involve housing issues, poverty, and the aesthetic appearance of the area. Almost half of the housing stock was built prior to 1940, and a large portion of it was originally built inexpensively and is not withstanding the test of time well. In addition, some of the housing has not been well-maintained over the years and has become dilapidated and rundown. Other houses have been torn down in recent years and replaced with new rental structures: a change has introduced new issues into the neighborhood. In the 1990 Census, it was estimated that over two-thirds of the housing units in the neighborhood were rental-occupied. This is compared to a 50 percent rate for the City as a whole. Because renters are often more transient than owner-occupants, the increased number of rental units has challenged the neighborhood's sense of community and stability.

The neighborhood is also dealing with issues associated with having a high number of lower-income residents. More than 70 percent of neighborhood households made less than \$25,000 in 1989 (1990 Census). For the same year, 56 percent of City households overall had incomes of \$25,000 or less. The neighborhood also has a higher rate of child poverty. The 1990 Census indicated that 46 percent of the neighborhood children under 18 were living in households with incomes below the poverty level. In addition, a recent hunger and health needs survey for the Hamilton School area indicated that a number of the neighborhood's children may not be getting enough food to eat.

A third major issue facing the neighborhood is its physical appearance and how that appearance encourages people, including some

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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residents themselves, to think that the neighborhood is declining over time. One concern is that some of the homes have not been adequately maintained and kept-up. A related concern is that insufficient housing and zoning code compliance and enforcement has exacerbated this problem and contributed to neighborhood blight. Another issue is that most of the neighborhood's alleys remain unpaved. Also of concern is the fact that many of the homes in the southwest part of the neighborhood have been torn down, the lots converted to surface parking lots, and many of the former residents from that area have now moved out of the neighborhood.

### ***PROPOSED ACTIONS AND STRATEGIES***

The plan is comprehensive in its recommendations, containing both a general vision for the neighborhood as well as specific proposed actions. The committee sees the plan and its recommendations as a blueprint for improving the neighborhood.

Additionally, some of the recommendations are such that if they are adopted, they will translate into a higher quality of life for neighborhoods throughout the City of La Crosse, not just the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton area.

The Goals and Strategies section of the plan focuses on five main areas of concern: Housing, Strengthening of Community, Public Facilities, Redevelopment, Transportation and Parking. A vision statement is included in the discussion of each topic, outlining the broad goals for each area. There are also specific recommendations on how the goals can be attained.

### **HOUSING**

The vision: "Existing quality housing in the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton Neighborhood will be preserved and maintained. Increased housing and zoning code compliance and enforcement will lead to an upgrading of the neighborhood's problem properties. Existing residents will decide to stay in the neighborhood and new affordable single-family home construction will encourage new families to relocate to the neighborhood. There will be an increased sense in the overall community that the neighborhood is a desirable place to live."

#### Recommended priority actions:

- Inspection Department works with neighborhood organizations to eliminate problems regarding the maintenance of neighborhood properties.
- Improve follow-up on properties with ongoing code violations.
- Develop brochure on the primary dwelling and zoning code regulations and violations.
- Develop basic computer file to track code violations and warnings.
- Continue funding for existing housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs continued.
- Develop additional programs to encourage home ownership and owner-occupancy.
- Implement recommendations of the Code Enforcement Review Committee.
- Develop programs to recognize home owners who fix up or maintain their properties.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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### STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

The vision: “The neighborhood will further its sense of identity and community and will embrace the diversity that makes it such a dynamic place. Programs and services will meet the needs of all residents in the neighborhood, from the elderly to the young, from home owners to renters, and from long-term residents to recent immigrants. Neighbors assisting their neighbors and involvement from city departments and other agencies will help to reduce the current threats to the neighborhood and to make the neighborhood an even better place to live.”

#### Recommended priority actions:

- Establish community center for neighborhood activities.
- Continue Boys’ and Girls’ Club program at Hamilton School.
- Increase number of neighborhood blocks with neighborhood watches.
- Increase community policing presence in neighborhood.
- Combine existing neighborhood groups into a larger organization for some functions.
- Convince more residents to leave outside lights on at night.
- Develop additional neighborhood-wide programs and activities.

### PUBLIC FACILITIES

The vision: “Alley pavings begin to proceed in the neighborhood at an accelerated rate so that unpaved alleys no longer help encourage the development of slum and blight in the neighborhood. Parks and other open spaces are fully utilized by neighborhood residents who take advantage of the full range of programming available through the Parks and Recreation Department. Increased boulevard

tree plantings and streetscaping projects have helped beautify the major corridors in the neighborhood.”

#### Recommended priority actions:

- Increase code enforcement efforts in alleys.
- Pave more unpaved alleys in neighborhood.
- Increase level of night lighting at Hamilton School.
- Increase level of regular night lighting at Hood and Powell Parks.
- Use volunteers to make parks safer for children.
- Makeover and upgrade parks on regular 10-15 year cycle.
- Develop skateboard area or other play space for older youth.
- Plant additional boulevard trees.

### REDEVELOPMENT

The vision: “Vacant and underutilized lots and buildings in the neighborhood will be redeveloped in ways that benefit the neighborhood overall. Standards will be developed to minimize future parking lot encroachment into the neighborhood. A community development corporation or other neighborhood organization will be developed to help independently fund redevelopment projects and other initiatives designed to strengthen the neighborhood.”

#### Recommended priority actions:

- Promote the redevelopment of vacant lots for single-family housing.
- Reuse vacant commercial buildings for new neighborhood-scale businesses.
- Encourage large employers to consider alternatives to developing large surface parking lots in residential areas.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- Encourage employers with large parking lots in the neighborhood to landscape them to reduce their visual impact and increase the amount of green space.
- Consider using on-going vacant space not suitable for residential development for neighborhood spaces such as a community garden or a site commemorating the neighborhood's history.
- Improve problem intersections and crossings including the crossing near the Quillin's IGA store on West Avenue and the 10<sup>th</sup> Street-Jackson Street intersection, where diagonal parking can obstruct drivers' views.
- Large employers encourage their employees to either park on-site instead of on neighborhood streets or chose another mode to travel to work.

### TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

**The vision:** "Automobile traffic through the neighborhood has been calmed and proceeds at levels which do not exceed the speed limits. Residents feel comfortable walking and bicycling around the neighborhood. The neighborhood has become less isolated from the areas around it, from which it is somewhat separated due to the volumes of traffic on South Avenue, Jackson Street, Green Bay Street, and West Avenue. Large employers prohibit their employees from parking on-street in areas where there is a shortage of parking spaces for residents, and small employers also encourage their employees not to do so. In addition, most of the employers in the vicinity of the neighborhood, particularly the larger ones, have developed incentive programs to encourage their employees to try alternative means of commuting to work, as opposed to driving single occupancy vehicles."

#### Recommended priority actions:

- Keep neighborhood residents informed about transportation projects that could have an impact on the neighborhood.
- Add sidewalk to the southside of Green Bay Street from 9th St. to West Ave.

### PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The steering committee has worked hard to develop this neighborhood plan and is generally happy with how it has turned out. However, the committee realizes that despite the strengths of the plan itself, the hardest work of the neighborhood planning process is still ahead. Implementation is the key to helping the visions set out in the plan become realities. The committee is determined to see the implementation of the specific actions called for in the plan, and not allow the plan to sit on a shelf somewhere gathering dust once the Common Council has reviewed it.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

Many of the statistics included within the neighborhood profile come from the results of the 1990 U.S. Census. The Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton neighborhood (shown on Map A) encompasses City of La Crosse census tract 0009, block groups 5, 6, 7, and 8. The neighborhood is approximately fifty blocks in size.

Although the U.S. Census data is somewhat out-of-date at this point, it is still the best source of detailed demographic data available, especially on the neighborhood level. However, it is important to recognize that though some of the general trends indicated in the data likely still hold, specific numbers may no longer accurately represent the area. It is also anticipated that the upcoming year 2000 Census will show some significant changes in this neighborhood, particularly in terms of the racial composition of the neighborhood's population.

### POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

The 1990 Census shows the population for the neighborhood to be 2,737 persons. It is estimated that the population today may be slightly lower because the number of overall housing units in the neighborhood has declined since 1990. Another factor is that on some properties where single-family and duplex structures were torn down, multiple dwellings were built in their place, and in general, the average number of residents per dwelling is lower in multiple unit structures.

**Age distribution.** Table 1 provides a breakdown of the neighborhood residents by age and compares them to the city overall.

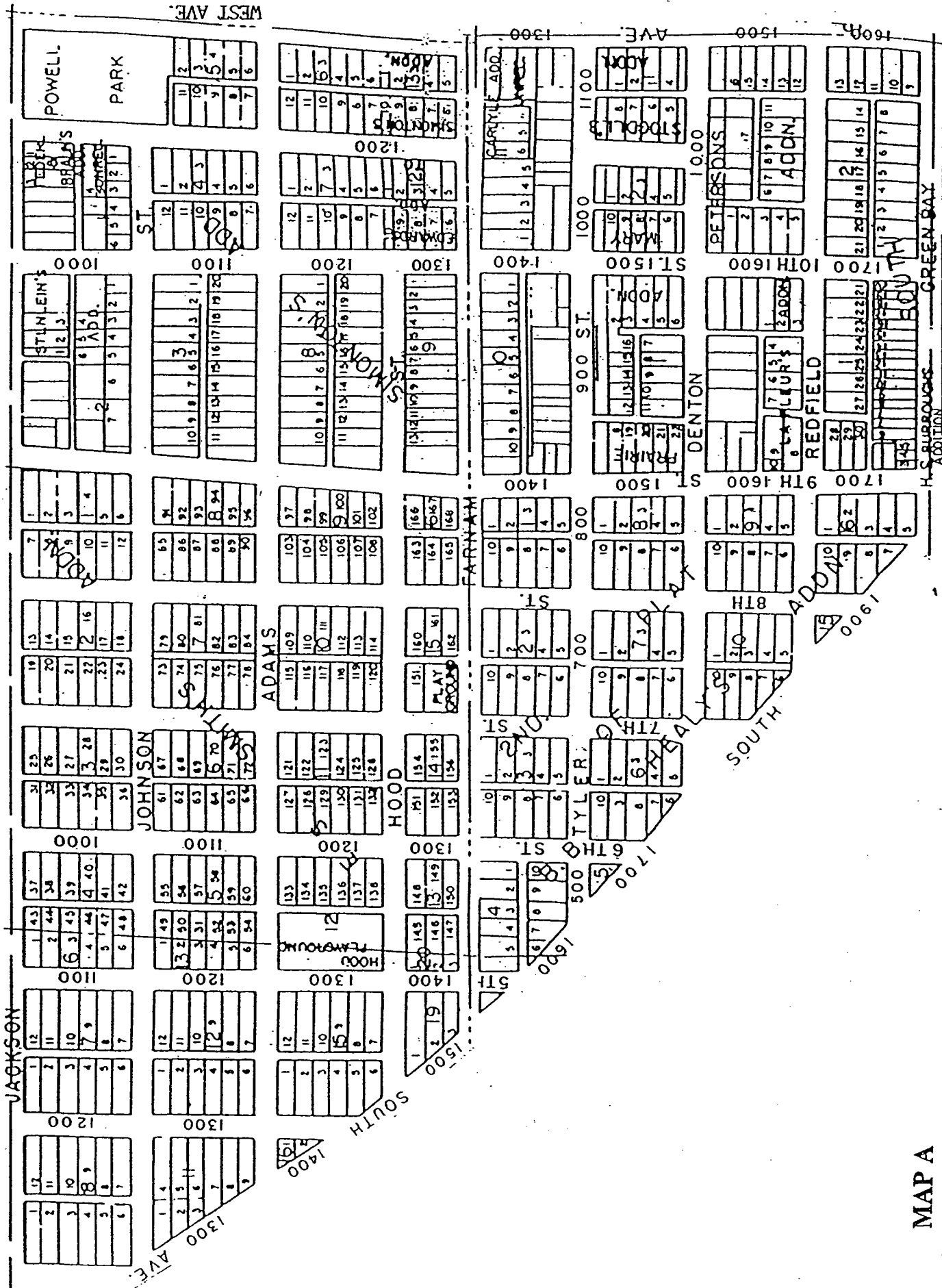
**TABLE 1  
POPULATION BY AGE**

Age	% for Neighborhood	% for City
0 to 4	10.7	6.6
5 to 9	8.8	6.2
10 to 14	6.0	4.8
15 to 18	5.1	5.1
19 to 24	11.7	19.9
25 to 34	21.4	15.7
35 to 44	13.1	11.7
45 to 54	4.9	6.8
55 to 64	6.2	7.6
<u>65 and over</u>	<u>12.2</u>	<u>15.6</u>

Source: 1990 Census

As Table 1 indicates, this neighborhood has a higher percent of children and youth (31 percent) than the city overall (23 percent). The neighborhood also has a lower rate of adults aged 19 to 24: 12 percent compared to 20 percent. One contributing factor to this second statistic is the neighborhood's distance from the UW-La Crosse campus.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREA



MAP A

**Racial distribution.** The racial composition of the neighborhood is shown in Table 2. The 1990 Census shows that this area has a higher percent of Asians (14 percent) than the city overall (5 percent). Most of the Asians are from southeast Asia and the majority of them are Hmong.

It is believed that the racial composition of the neighborhood has changed significantly since the 1990 Census. One estimate, put forth in the October, 1997 report "Bringing it to the 'Hood': The La Crosse Neighborhood Supervision Project" produced by the Wisconsin Department of Corrections is that the neighborhood population is now 20 percent Black, 30 percent Southeast Asian, and 50 percent White. Others estimate that the population of Southeast Asians in the neighborhood has declined since 1990, as Asian families have moved to other parts of La Crosse, such as the North Side, and outlying communities such as Holmen and West Salem.

**TABLE 2  
POPULATION BY RACE**

Race	% for Neighborhood	% for City
White	82.4	93.8
Asian	14.0	4.9
Black	1.1	0.7
Amer. Indian	2.3	0.4
Other	0.2	0.2

Source: 1990 Census

**Household size.** Table 3 gives the size of neighborhood households. Household size follows city trends except for the higher proportion of households with seven or more people. The average household size in the neighborhood is slightly higher than the city average of 2.34.

**TABLE 3  
HOUSEHOLD SIZE**

Number of persons	% for Neighborhood	% for City
One	32.2	33.1
Two	32.9	32.9
Three or four	22.7	25.5
Five or six	7.6	7.2
Seven or more	4.6	1.3

Source: 1990 Census

**TABLE 4  
TYPES OF HOUSEHOLD**

Household Type	% for Neighborhood	% for City
<u>Married-couple family</u>		
- children under 18 yrs	16.4	18.1
- no children under 18 yrs	21.6	24.9
<u>Female householder, no husband present</u>		
- children under 18 yrs	13.9	5.8
- no children under 18 yrs	3.9	3.6
<u>Male householder, no wife present</u>		
- children under 18 yrs	0.5	0.9
- no children under 18	0.0	1.4
<u>Male or female householder living alone</u>	32.2	33.1
<u>Other (group homes, shared housing, etc.)</u>	11.5	12.2

Source: 1990 Census

**Household types.** This neighborhood has a higher level of single mothers than La Crosse as a whole (Table 4). Within the city overall, 6 percent of households are female-headed with children under 18. Within the neighborhood, the rate more than doubles to 14 percent. The

percentages for other types of households are similar to those for the city as a whole, though the level of married-couple families is higher outside of the neighborhood (43 percent) than within it (38 percent).

**Household income.** A breakdown by household income is shown in Table 5. As the table indicates, the income levels within the neighborhood are lower than for the city as a whole. According to the 1990 Census, 56 percent of households city-wide made less than \$25,000. For the neighborhood, 70 percent had incomes under \$25,000.

**TABLE 5  
HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

	% for Neighborhood	% for City
<b>1989 Income</b>		
Under \$5,000	4.5	4.2
\$5,000 - \$9,999	18.9	16.6
\$10,000 - \$14,999	14.8	13.2
\$15,000 - \$24,999	31.9	21.6
\$25,000 - \$34,999	16.0	17.5
\$35,000 - \$49,999	10.7	15.6
\$50,000 - \$74,999	3.4	8.1
<u>\$75,000 and above</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>3.2</u>

Source: 1990 Census

**Level of poverty.** The level of poverty in the neighborhood is higher than in the city overall. (Table 6). The most alarming statistic is that almost half of the neighborhood's children were found to be living in households below the poverty level.

**TABLE 6  
LEVEL OF POVERTY**

	% for Neighborhood	% for City
Overall	27.1	21.0
Persons under 18 yrs	45.6	24.7
<u>Persons over 18 yrs</u>	<u>14.8</u>	<u>13.2</u>

Source: 1990 Census

One issue connected with the poverty statistic is whether people living in poverty get enough food. A recent study conducted for the La Crosse Community Foundation surveyed 232 households in the Hamilton School area on hunger and nutrition. The survey findings suggest that hunger and malnutrition are significant issues for the area. When asked to report whether the following statement - "I eat less than I think I should because I don't have enough money for more food" - was true, overall 46 percent of respondents said the statement was often or sometimes true. In addition, all of the 46 respondents from the Asian households surveyed said that statement was often or sometimes true. For another statement - "I worry whether my food will run out before I get money to buy more," overall 28 percent said it was sometimes or often true.

**LAND USE**

The current land use within the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton neighborhood is shown on Map B. The neighborhood is primarily residential. There are also a number of businesses along Jackson Street and West Avenue, as well as a commercial area to the south of Green Bay Street. Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center lies to the southwest and Viterbo College and Franciscan Skemp Healthcare to the north.

**Residential.** Most of the neighborhood residences are single-family homes and duplexes. There are approximately 60 housing structures with 3 units or more and these are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Many of the multiple-family dwellings were constructed over the last five to fifteen years and replace demolished single family homes or duplexes. Map C shows the estimated number of residential units on each block.

**Commercial.** There are approximately 23 businesses scattered throughout the neighborhood. These are listed in Table 7. Most are small in scale. Among them are 5 taverns, one restaurant (Houghtons'), and one convenience store (the Plaid Pantry). In addition, there are a few vacant commercial spaces such as the old Quillin's bakery site at 10th and Adams Streets.

Larger businesses exist south of the neighborhood and along South Avenue, as well as north of the neighborhood along 3rd and 4th Streets. The main grocery store near the neighborhood is the Quillin's IGA store at 1509 West Avenue S.

**Parks.** The neighborhood has two main parks. Powell Park is located in the northeast section of the neighborhood. It is 3 acres in size and has a lighted softball diamond. Football and soccer is played there in the fall and an ice skating rink is maintained during the winter. Hood Park, one acre in size, is located at 5th Avenue and Hood Street. Hood Park is home to the Skates for Kids program and has a warming house and shelter. It also has a playground and an open field area. The City also maintains two tennis courts at Farnam and 7th Streets.

**Community facilities.** The neighborhood's main community facility is Hamilton School. Hamilton School, in the block bounded by Johnson, 8th, Adams, and 7th Streets, is an elementary school that also serves as a center

for Boys' and Girls' Club activities. The Boys' and Girls' Club opened its Hamilton School branch in May of 1997, and recently received a grant to continue the program there through May, 1999.

Aside from Hamilton School, there is no large meeting place within the neighborhood. Some neighborhood groups, such as Project Watchdog, meet at the Southside Senior Center across West Avenue at 1220 Denton Street. Small community-oriented facilities within the neighborhood include the Place of Grace. The Place of Grace, 919 Hood Street, serves community meals and offers counseling and support programs. Two churches in the vicinity of the neighborhood are also important to residents: St. Paul's Lutheran Church at 420 West Avenue S. and Holy Trinity Church at 1333 13th Street S.

Discussion began over two years ago about building a center within the neighborhood for neighborhood gatherings and events. The City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) committee has already allocated \$225,000 in funds towards a neighborhood center and the Gundersen Lutheran Medical Foundation has provided a \$40,000 grant. No site has yet been purchased for the center, though three sites have been under consideration. The city is currently pursuing the acquisition of the one site deemed most suitable: 1302 6th Street S., formerly Betty's Sports Inn. The CDBG Committee sees the neighborhood center as having the following main goals and objectives (in order of importance): (1) meeting facility, (2) learning facility, (3) recreation facility, (4) nutrition center, and (5) information exchange center. The neighborhood center is planned to have general meeting space as well as office space for neighborhood groups, community policing officers, and others. Ideally, the City would like to begin construction of the neighborhood center sometime within the next 1-2 years.

LAND USE  
(1997)



14

MAP B

(based on La Crosse County tax parcel files dated August 1997)

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS PER BLOCK



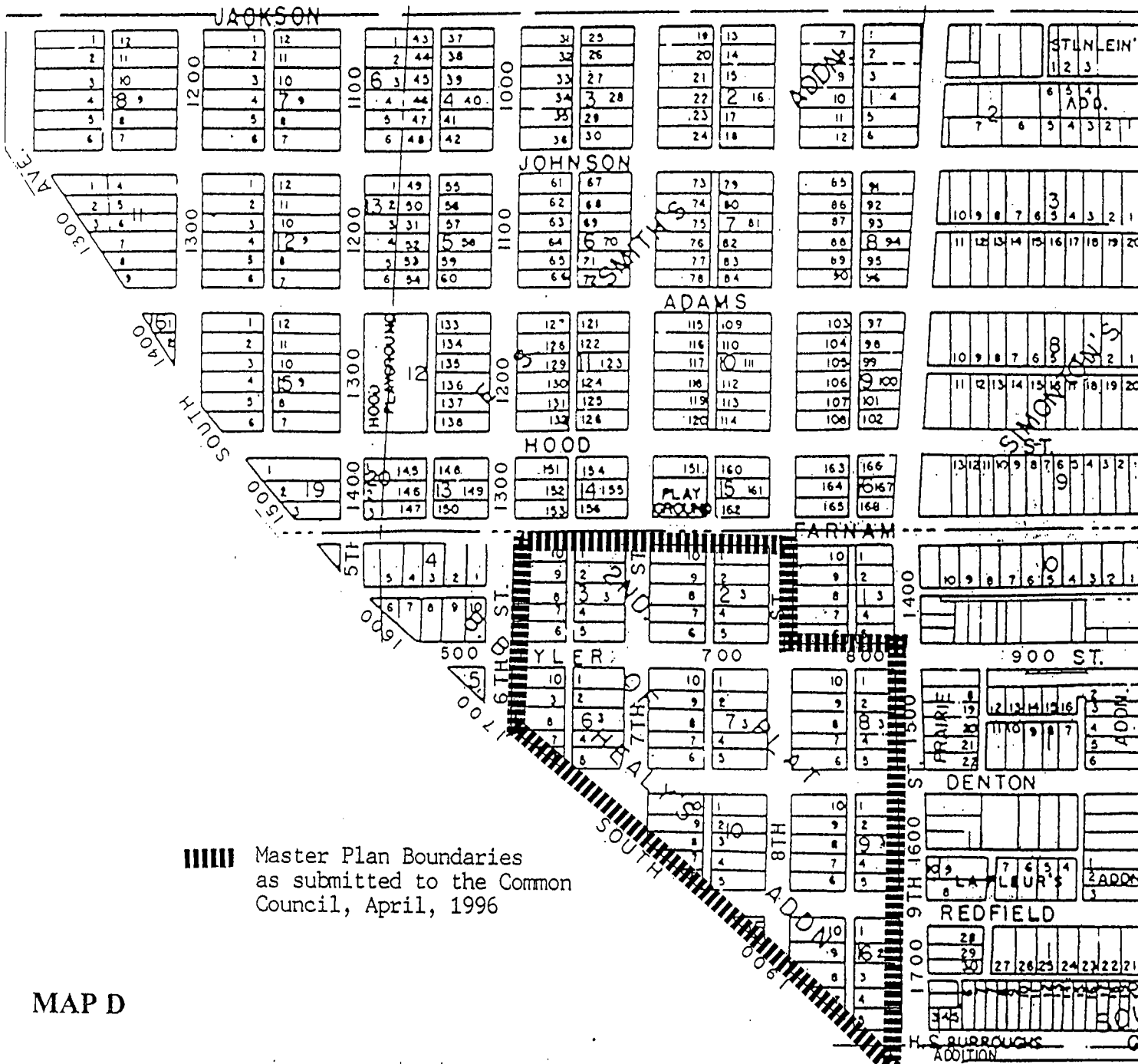


**TABLE 7**  
**BUSINESSES WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

1227 3rd Street S.	Dave's Guitar Shop
1412 5th Avenue S.	Cigardner's Smoke Shop and Home Brew Supply
1018 6th Street S.	Clark Construction (home business)
1503 7th Street S.	Betty's Sports Inn (tavern)
1209 8th Street S.	Bagnefski Heating and Air Conditioning
1303 8th Street S.	Affordable Repair Service (auto repair)
1321 8th Street S.	Chubs Uff Da Saloon (tavern)
1011 10th Street S.	Foster Awning and Canvas Products
1019 10th Street S.	Galloways (tavern)
1201 10th Street S.	Sisters Consignment Shop
1202 11th Street S.	Adams Street Pub (tavern)
943 Farnam Street	Steve's Landscaping (home business)
708 Hood Street	Abraham and Zahn Roofing and Sheet Metal
618 Jackson Street	Plaid Pantry
948 Jackson Street	Mr. Stix (tavern)
1002 Jackson Street	Houghtons' Fine Foods
821 Johnson Street	Craig River City Towing (home business)
1100 Johnson Street	Henry's Lawnmowing Shop
1034 Redfield Street	Willy Wash (laundromat)
1202 West Avenue S.	Kvien's Plumbing
1400 West Avenue S.	Second Showing (clothing consignment)
1618 West Avenue S.	ABC Accounting Service

**Institutions.** Viterbo College, Franciscan Skemp Healthcare, and the Chileda Foundation are located to the north of the neighborhood across Jackson Street. Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center is located in the southwest section of the neighborhood and to the south across South Avenue. The main portion of Gundersen Clinic and Lutheran Hospital are south of South Avenue and there are additional buildings in the south end of the neighborhood. The Gundersen Lutheran Master Plan submitted to the Common Council in April of 1996 showed that Gundersen Lutheran intends to acquire much of the area between 6th Street and 9th Street south of Farnam Street (Map D). Most of the affected properties has already been purchased by Gundersen Lutheran. Some of the properties have been converted into parking lots for Gundersen Lutheran employees, some have become vacant lots, and others remain rental housing.

GUNDERSEN LUTHERAN MEDICAL CENTER MASTER PLAN BOUNDARIES



Master Plan Boundaries as submitted to the Common Council, April, 1996

MAP D

## ZONING

The zoning is predominantly residential, with a few sections of Local Business, Commercial, and Public and Semi-Public. The current zoning is shown on Map E. The residential zoning ranges from Special Multiple Dwelling, which permits high rises, for the Salzer Square project, to single family residential. Many of the residential properties were rezoned from higher to lower densities as part of the Comprehensive South Side Rezoning of 1997. As part of the Comprehensive Rezoning, many properties were downzoned to Residence District (R-2) which allows single family dwellings and duplexes. Also, as a result of the lobbying of neighbors, most of the area between 9th Street and West Avenue south of Farnam to Green Bay Street was rezoned to Single Family Residence (R-1). Neighborhood blocks were rezoned to lower densities with the hope that the rezoning would encourage more single family and duplex construction in the neighborhood as well as a higher rate of owner-occupancy. The zoning for the neighborhood prior to the Comprehensive Rezoning is given on Map F.

## HOUSING

**Housing type.** The City of La Crosse Assessor's files (1997) show a total of 673 housing structures in the neighborhood. Table 8 breaks them down by type.

**TABLE 8  
HOUSING STRUCTURE TYPE**

Housing Type	Number	Percent
Single Family	461	68.5
2-3 unit	166	24.7
4-8 unit	45	6.7
32 unit	1	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>673</b>	<b>100</b>

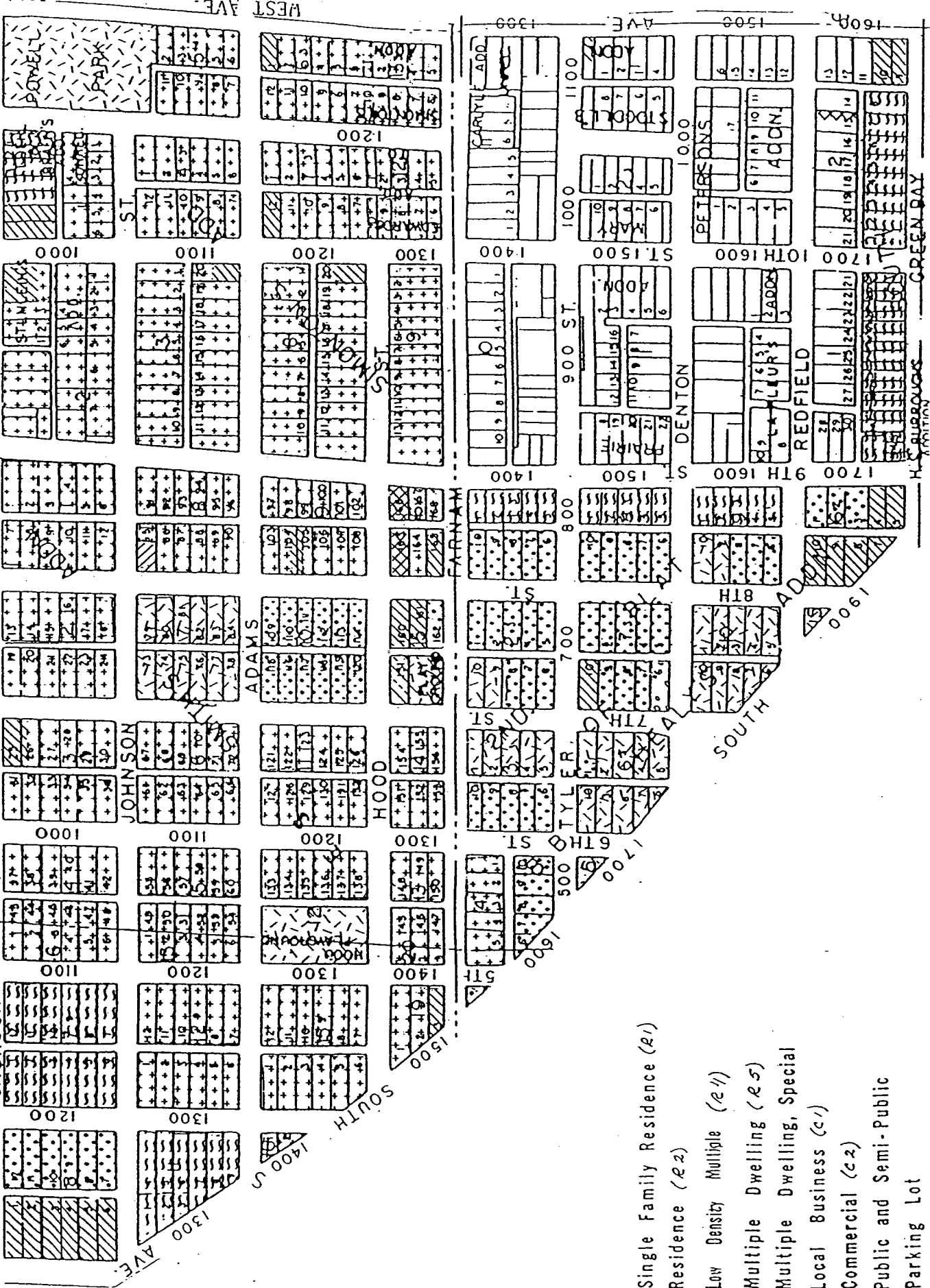
Source: City Assessor's files, 1997

Most of the housing structures are single-family homes. The 32 unit building is for Salzer Square.

In terms of housing units, the City of La Crosse Assessor's files (1997) show a total of 1,079 housing units in the neighborhood. Forty-three percent of these units are single family homes.

This neighborhood has seen a considerable reduction in the number of housing units since the 1990 Census. In the 1990 Census, the neighborhood was estimated to have a total of 1,217 units. Based on the updated figures from the Assessor's office, the neighborhood has lost over 130 housing units since 1990.

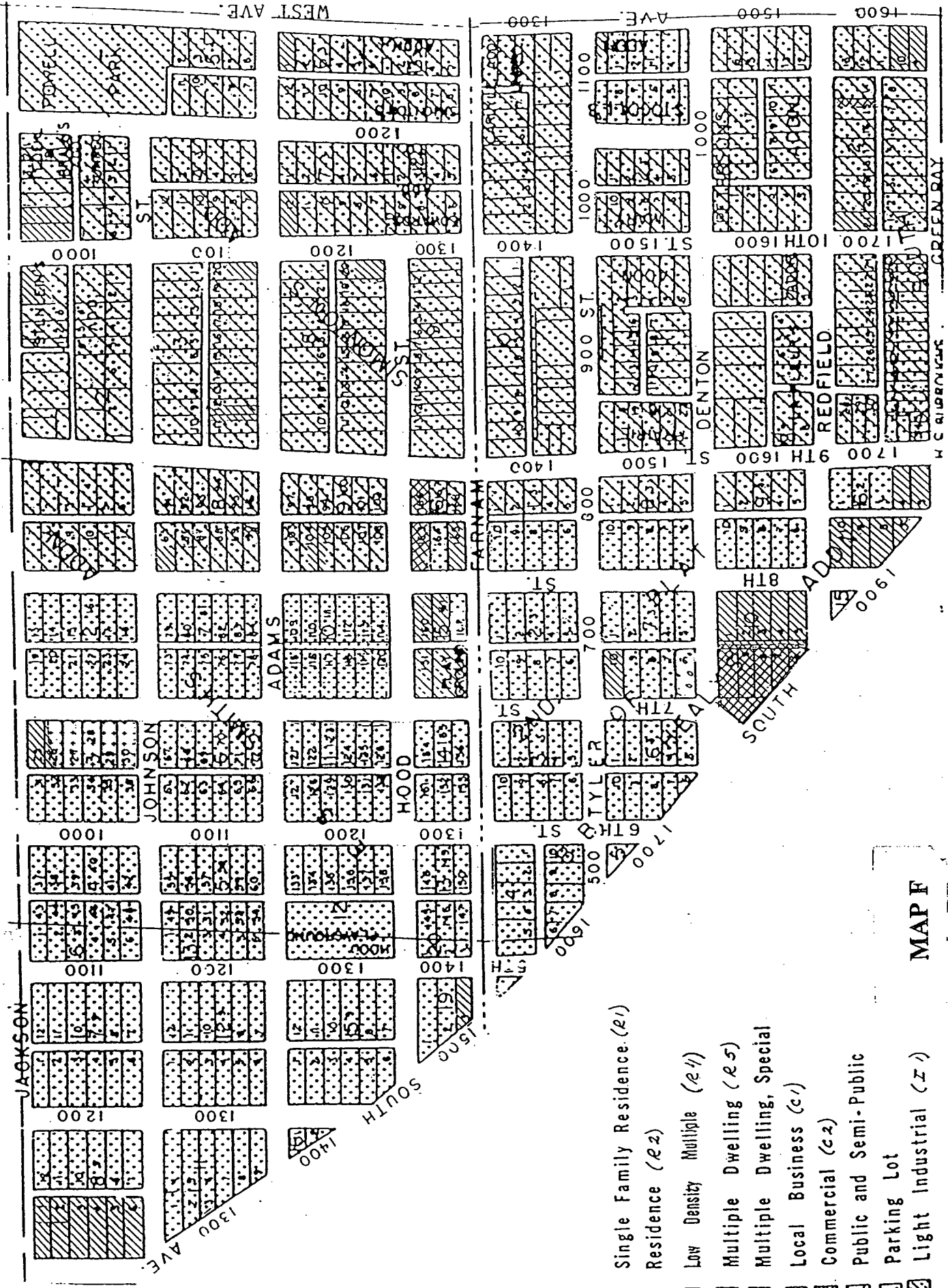
1" = approx. 380 ft



- Single Family Residence (R1)
- Residence (R2)
- Low Density Multiple (R11)
- Multiple Dwelling (R5)
- Multiple Dwelling, Special
- Local Business (C1)
- Commercial (C2)
- Public and Semi-Public
- Parking Lot
- Light Industrial (I1)

ZONING PRIOR TO THE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING ORDINANCE APPROVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION 2007

1" = approx. 380 ft



- Single Family Residence (R1)
- Residence (R2)
- Low Density Multiple (L1)
- Multiple Dwelling (L5)
- Multiple Dwelling, Special
- Local Business (C1)
- Commercial (C2)
- Public and Semi-Public
- Parking Lot
- Light Industrial (I1)

MAP F

**Housing age.** This is one of the older neighborhoods in the city, with much of the housing built prior to 1940, and a significant amount even before 1900. Table 9 shows the year in which housing was constructed.

**TABLE 9  
HOUSING AGE**

Yr. Structure Built	Number	Percent
1989 to March 1990	29	2.4
1985 to 1988	15	1.2
1980 to 1984	74	6.1
1970 to 1979	120	9.9
1960 to 1969	41	3.4
1950 to 1959	162	13.3
1940 to 1949	155	12.7
1939 or earlier	600	49.3
Unknown	21	1.7
Total	1,217	100.0
Median	1939	

Source: 1990 Census

One issue regarding the age of the housing is that much of the housing in the neighborhood was originally constructed for medium and lower-income families. Some of the initial construction was not high quality; that housing has not aged well and is now in a state of deterioration.

Another issue with older housing is the health risk associated with lead paint, which was commonly used until the 1970s. Many of the homes in the neighborhood are believed to still have lead paint, which could pose a health risk to current and future neighborhood children, is

family homes in the neighborhood is 64 percent of the city-wide value. The lower assessments in this area are a result of factors including the older housing stock and the smaller lot sizes.

**TABLE 10  
HOUSING ASSESSMENTS  
(MEDIANS)**

Type of Structure	within the neighborhood	within the city
Single Family	\$39,600	\$62,100
2-3 unit	\$47,100	\$58,600
4-8 unit	\$68,600	\$113,400

Source: City Assessor's Data, 1997.

**Tenancy.** This neighborhood has a higher level of renters than the city overall. Table 11 compares the two. For the neighborhood as a whole, there is a 33 percent rate of owner-occupancy. For the city, the rate is just under 50 percent.

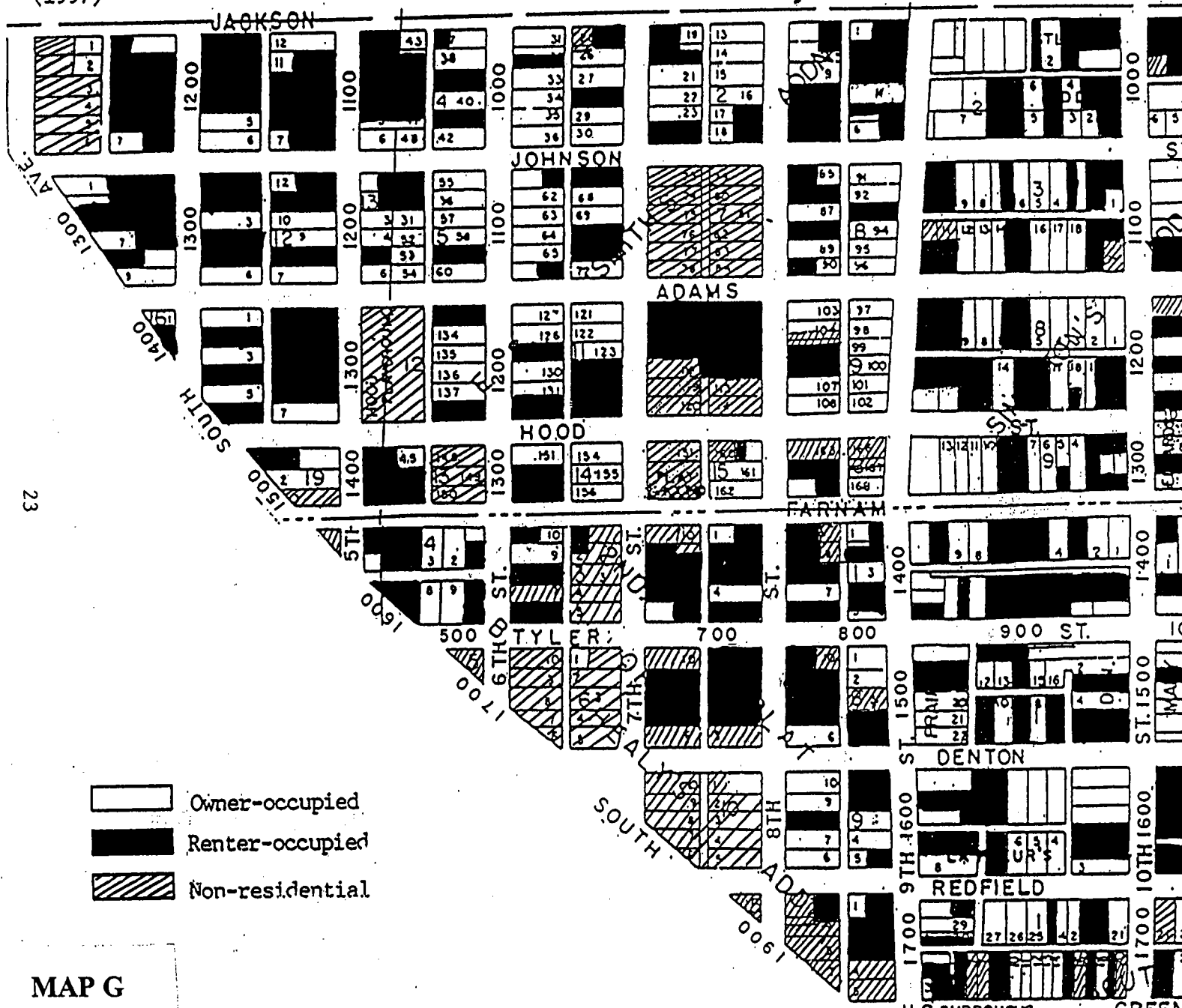
The level of owner occupancy varies in different sections of the neighborhood. Some blocks are over 85-90 percent renter occupied and other blocks have virtually no renters. Map G displays the estimated tenancy for each neighborhood property.

**TABLE 11  
HOUSING TENANCY**

Tenancy	% for Neighborhood	% for City
Owner occupant	33.4	49.6
Renter occupant	66.6	50.4

Source: 1990 Census

TENANCY  
(1997)



23

MAP G

(based on La Crosse County tax parcel files dated August 1997)



## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

The neighborhood is bounded by arterial roadways: Jackson Street (State Hwy 33) on the north, West Avenue (State Hwy 35) on the east, Green Bay Street on the south, South Avenue (US Hwy 14/61) on the southwest, and 3rd Street (US Hwy 14/61/53) on the west. Table 12 lists the average daily traffic volume for the main roadways.

**Roadway projects.** There are three main transportation projects planned for the neighborhood over the next few years. One is the Green Bay Street/Sims Place reconstruction, a project which is currently underway. Another is the resurfacing of 3rd Street between Cass Street and South Avenue. That project is planned for 1999. The third project, the reconstruction of the 7th Street/South Avenue intersection, is planned for 2001.

There are also three additional reconstruction and resurfacing projects under consideration. These projects, as well as the ones which the City of La Crosse is already working on, are shown on Map H.

Additionally, Wisconsin DOT's preferred alternative for the proposed North-South corridor, Alternative 5B-1, includes the conversion of 6th and 7th Streets to a one-way street pair with 6th Street providing two southbound driving lanes, and 7th Street providing two northbound lanes. The posted speed limits on 6th and 7th Streets would continue to remain at 25 MPH. Option 5B-1 also calls for the removal of parking from the

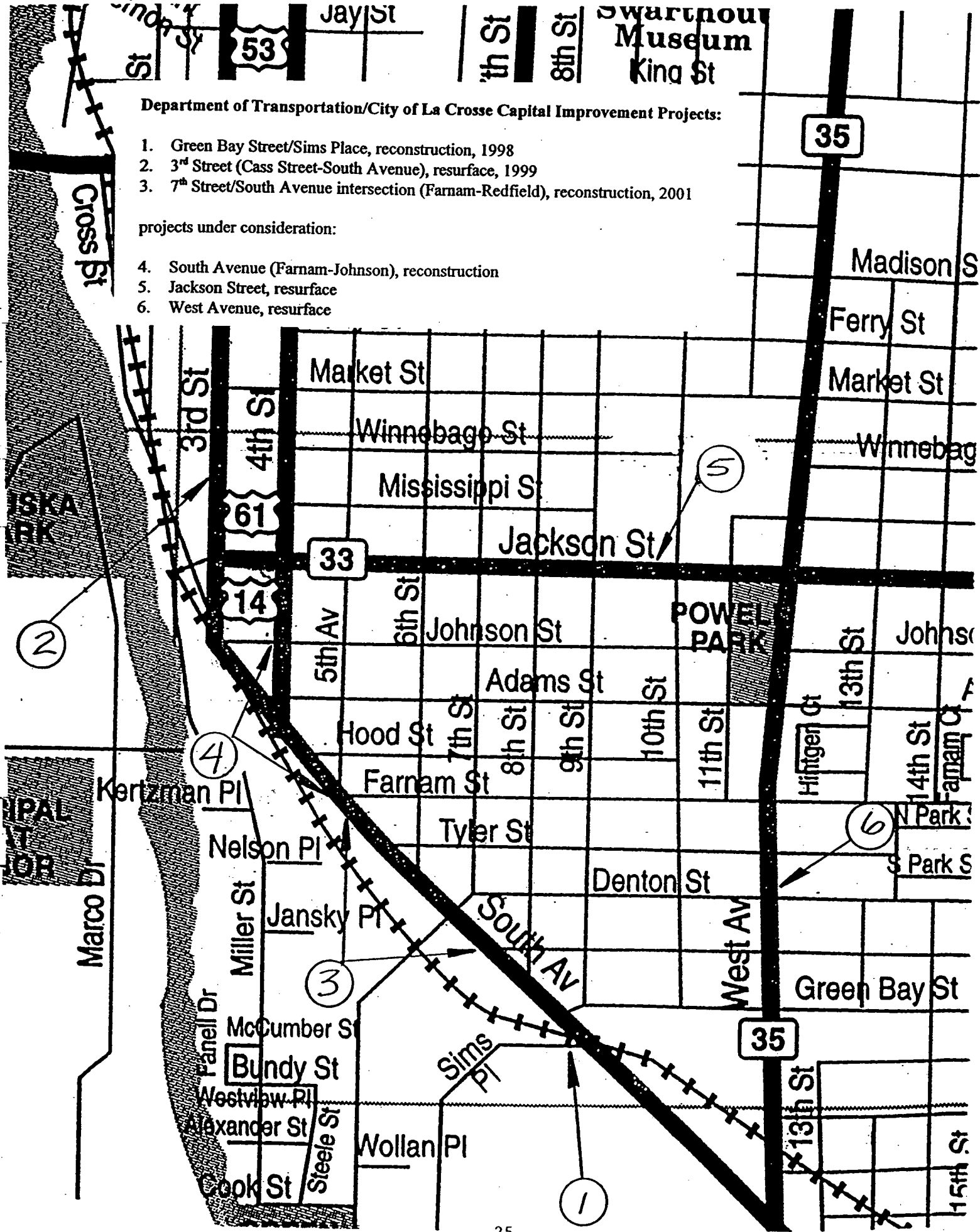
Street, however, is anticipated to increase significantly from 800 ADT in 1994 to 5,200 ADT in the year 2020.

The La Crosse Area Planning Committee, the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the region adopted a long-range transportation plan that included Alternative 5B-1. The Common Council has not yet taken a final vote for or against the project. At least one referendum on the issue of whether the North-South Corridor should be built is likely to be on the November, 1998 ballot.

TABLE 12  
AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES  
(ADT)

Roadway, intersection	ADT
Jackson Street, west of West Ave.	10,500
Jackson Street, west of 4th St.	7,000
West Avenue, south of Jackson St.	15,400
West Ave., north of Green Bay St.	11,100
7th Street, south of Jackson St.	5,200*
7th Street, north of South Ave.	8,300*
Green Bay Street, near South Ave.	7,600*
Green Bay Street, west of West Ave.	8,700*
South Ave., north of Green Bay St.	18,100
3rd Street, between Johnson and Adams Streets	15,600*
4th Street, between Johnson and Adams Streets	11,600*

Source: Wisconsin Department of Transportation, 1996.  
\*1993, ADT. \*1994, ADT.



Department of Transportation/City of La Crosse Capital Improvement Projects:

1. Green Bay Street/Sims Place, reconstruction, 1998
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street (Cass Street-South Avenue), resurface, 1999
3. 7<sup>th</sup> Street/South Avenue intersection (Farnam-Redfield), reconstruction, 2001

projects under consideration:

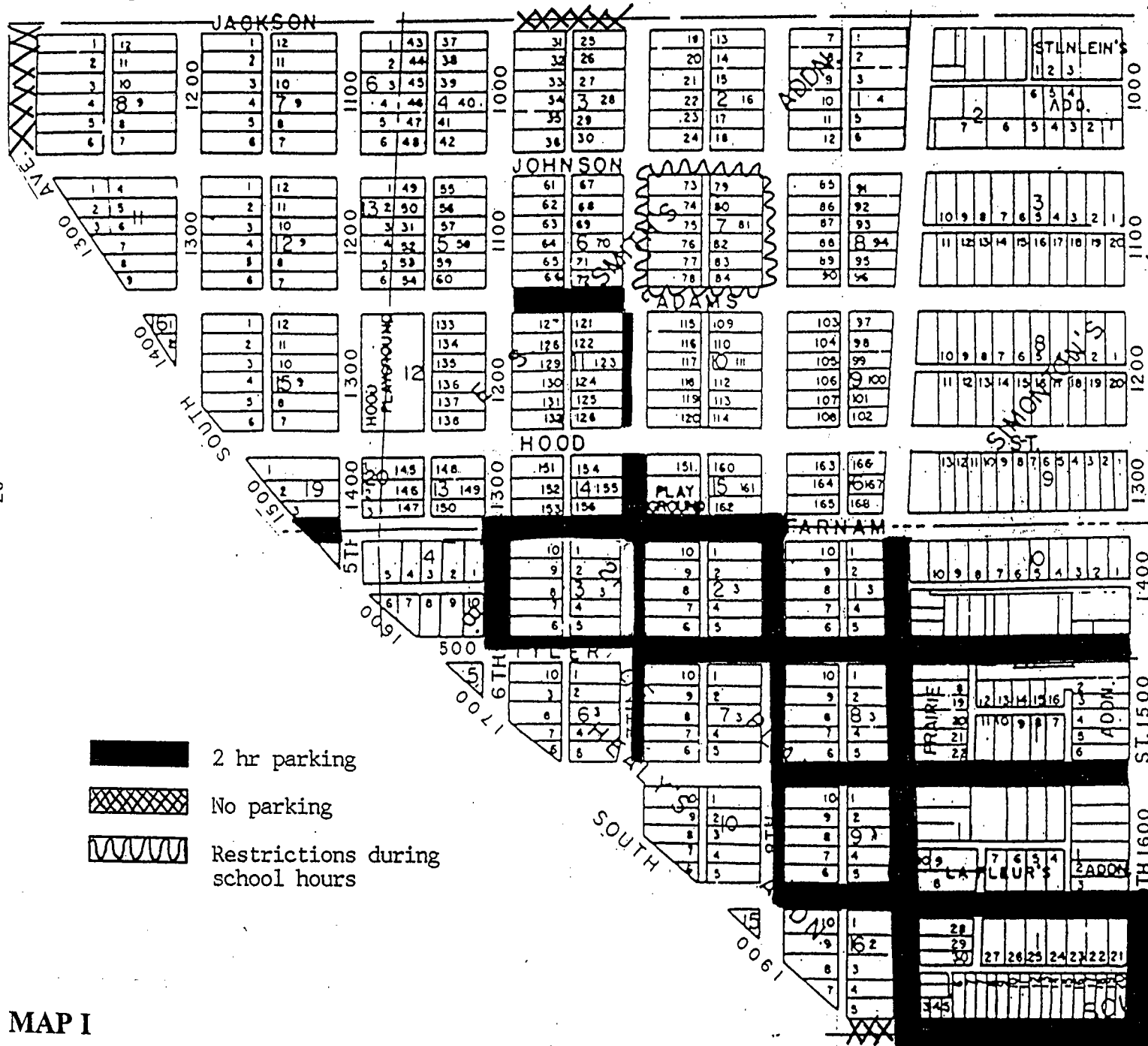
4. South Avenue (Farnam-Johnson), reconstruction
5. Jackson Street, resurface
6. West Avenue, resurface

**Traffic lights.** There are several traffic lights on the periphery of the neighborhood: at the intersections of 7th Street and Jackson Street, West Avenue and Jackson Street, West Avenue and Green Bay Street, 4th Street and Jackson Street, and 7th Street and South Avenue.

**On-street parking.** In some of the areas near the institutions, neighbors have complained about institution employees parking on-street in the neighborhood. Most of the houses in the neighborhood have no driveways and residents like park their vehicles in front of their homes, or behind their homes in the alley. When employees park on-street, it reduces the availability of parking for residents. The city has worked to address this problem by instituting two hour parking zones on some blocks. The current two hour parking zones are marked on Map I. Residents who obtain free parking permits are exempt from the restrictions. Gundersen Lutheran has also tried to address the problem by instituting a policy prohibiting its employees from parking on-street adjacent to neighborhood homes. Despite this policy, some neighborhood residents feel that Gundersen Lutheran employees are continuing to park on-street in the neighborhood next to residents' homes.

# PARKING RESTRICTIONS

(as of April, 1998)



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## **CRIME**

The main crime data available for the neighborhood are police calls. The number of calls within the neighborhood is in line with its percentage of the population. The neighborhood has about 6 percent of the city's population. The Police Department then expects that the neighborhood would produce about 6 percent of the calls. The number of neighborhood-generated police calls are shown in Table 13 for various categories.

The number of calls within the neighborhood for serious crimes is less than its proportion of the population. One type of calls for which there is a disproportionate number is fireworks; the neighborhood had 19 percent of the calls in this category.

One thing to note is that the number of calls do not necessarily correlate with the number of crimes or number of arrests. An area can have a higher number of calls if its residents are more vigilant and more active in contacting the police.

**TABLE 13  
1997 POLICE CALLS**

<b>Call type</b>	<b>Total # Calls - City</b>	<b>Total # Calls - Neighborhood</b>	<b>Percent of Calls in Neighborhood</b>
Assaults	313	17	5%
Drugs	160	2	1%
Sexual assault	130	6	5%
Burglary	338	33	10%
Damage to property	984	63	7%
Domestic incident	1,623	189	12%
Fights	335	25	7%
Fireworks	126	24	19%
Suspicious activity	2,927	185	6%
Theft	2,313	131	6%
Trespassing	83	5	6%
Trouble with party	2,201	138	6%
Alarms-burglary/robbery	790	35	4%
Animal complaint	721	78	11%
Attempt to locate person	2,223	240	11%
Welfare check	2,049	115	6%
Fraud	325	13	4%
Missing/runaway juvenile	652	43	7%
Disturbance juvenile	2,280	155	7%
Towed/abandoned vehicle	656	54	8%
Parking complaint	3,044	94	3%
Noise complaint	1,816	172	9%
Citizens report	1,322	87	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27,411</b>	<b>1,904</b>	<b>7%</b>

## **STRENGTHS AND RESOURCES**

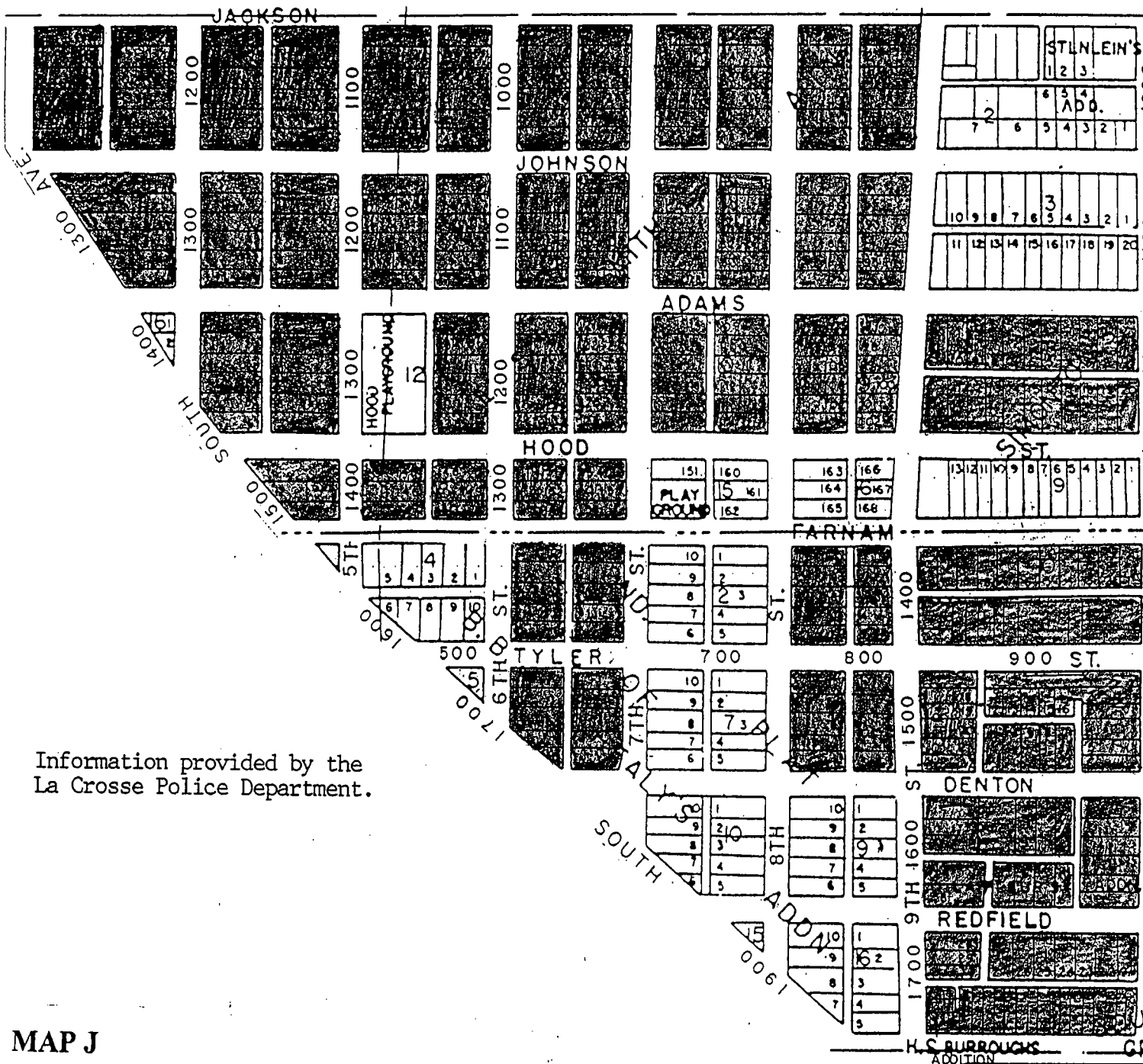
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This neighborhood has many strengths and positive characteristics. Among the most significant are residents who are committed to the neighborhood. Without them, this neighborhood planning process would not have even been possible.

Strengths and resources identified by the steering committee include:

- Strong neighborhood organizations.
- Homes being rehabilitated by residents.
- Residents who show pride in the neighborhood and in home ownership.
- Neighborhood families.
- Hamilton School and the summer program there.
- Boys' and Girls' Club program at Hamilton School.
- Gundersen Lutheran Medical Center, its partnership with Hamilton School and its activities to enhance the neighborhood.
- Powell Park and park activities.
- Hood Park and the Skates for Kids program.
- Place of Grace.
- Historical character of the neighborhood.
- Affordable housing.
- Diversity of the population.
- Neighborhood watch activity. (See Map J for watch blocks.)
- Community policing activities in the neighborhood.
- Neighborhood Supervision Project - Parole/Probation Program.

BLOCKS WITH REGISTERED NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH GROUPS  
(1998)



Information provided by the  
La Crosse Police Department.



## CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

The main issues and challenges identified through the neighborhood planning process are the following. During the steering committee meetings, many were reiterated time and time again. To facilitate developing strategies to deal with the major concerns, the issues have been separated into five major categories.

### **HOUSING**

- Need for better code compliance and cleanup of dilapidated and deteriorating housing which contributes to neighborhood blight.
- Need to maintain existing housing and retain current residents.
- Need to encourage new families and individuals to move into the neighborhood.
- Need to limit the number of additional rental dwellings that are constructed in the neighborhood and encourage more owner-occupancy.
- The number of homes which are owned by elderly residents and the impact on the neighborhood when those homes are sold, in terms of the potential for them to turn over into rental properties.
- Need to remove non-working vehicles and other junk from properties.

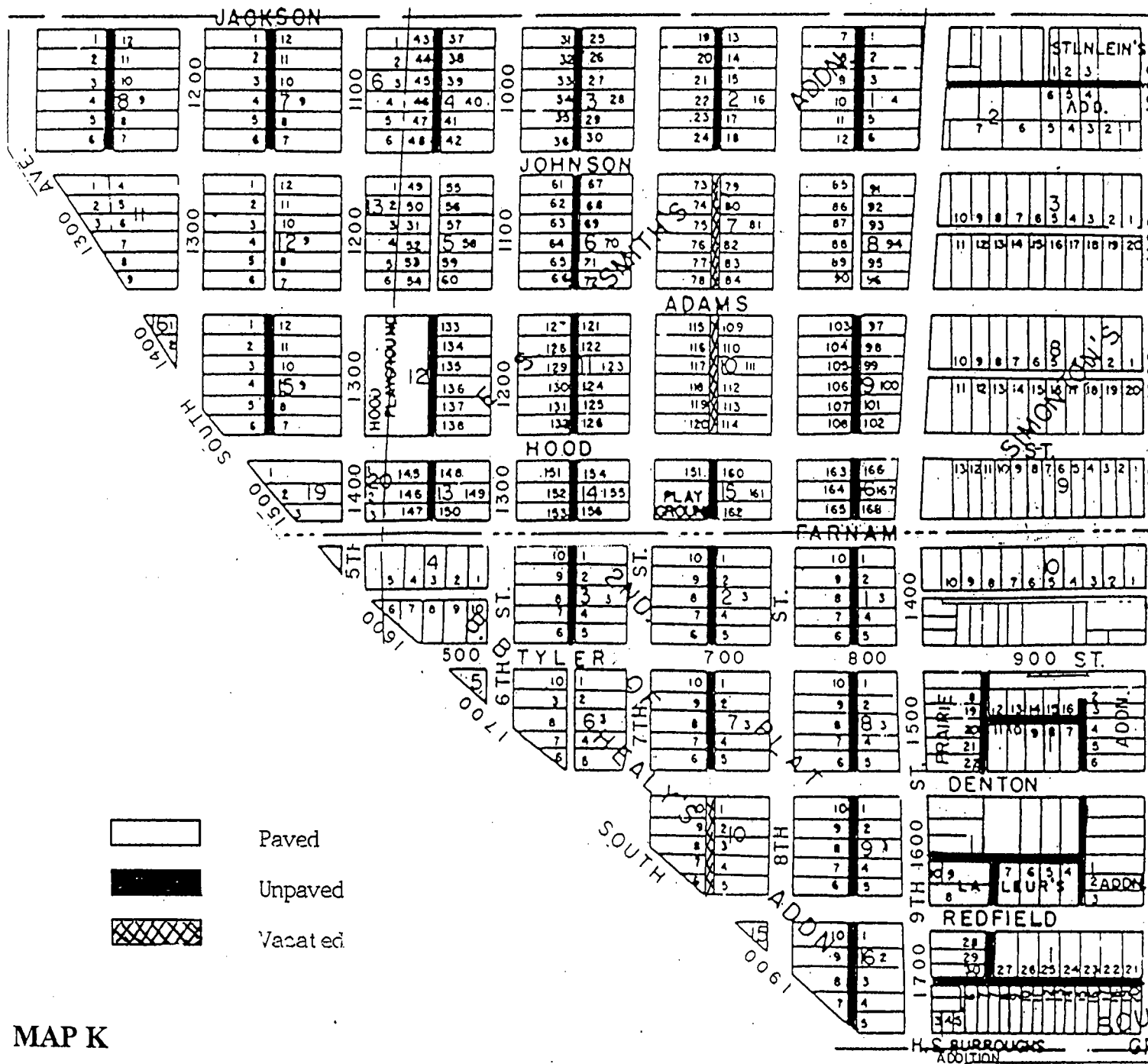
### **COMMUNITY SERVICES**

- Need for a neighborhood gathering place and community center.
- Need for more neighborhood watches and resident participation to reduce crime.
- Lack of education and understanding of the responsibilities that accompany homeownership and living in a neighborhood.
- Providing adequate food for all residents.
- Need to promote more of a sense of community within the neighborhood.
- Need to develop permanent programs and spaces for youth.
- Addressing the needs of a diverse population.
- Need to educate residents about lead paint and asbestos hazards.

### **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

- Need to clean up and improve alleys.
- Number of unpaved alleys in the neighborhood. (See Map K for location of unpaved alleys). The unpaved alleys, which sometimes get rutted out and can be less well maintained than the paved alleys, can contribute to making the neighborhood seem visually unattractive.

PAVED AND UNPAVED ALLEYS  
(as of April, 1998)



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MAP K

H.S. BURROUGHS ADDITION

## **REDEVELOPMENT**

- Need to positively redevelop underutilized and vacant commercial spaces and lots into new neighborhood businesses, single family homes, and neighborhood spaces.
- Need to minimize further parking lot encroachment on neighborhood.
- Need for stricter master plan requirements for institutions.
- Lack of community/neighborhood-wide organizations to help fund redevelopment efforts.

## **TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING**

- Need to minimize the conflict between residents and employees who park on street in the neighborhood.
- Need to slow traffic that cuts through the neighborhood on neighborhood streets.
- Need to better educate residents about both large and smaller proposed transportation projects that may affect their neighborhoods, including the North-South Corridor Project, the realignment of 7<sup>th</sup> Street, and the reconstruction of Green Bay Street and Sims Place.
- Need to minimize the impact of potential and ongoing transportation projects on the neighborhood.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENT GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

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The following goals and strategies were developed to help address the major neighborhood issues listed in the previous section.

The goals have been assigned into five topic areas. The primary intent of this categorization is to assist staff and neighborhood members with addressing the problems and issues that have been identified. The five topic areas are the following:

- Housing
- Strength of Community
- Public Facilities
- Redevelopment
- Transportation and Parking

Specific strategies and recommendations are given for each goal, and the strategies are listed in order of importance. For each of the strategies, an indication is given of which organizations or agencies will be taking the lead role in implementation, and a general timeframe is included. In a number of cases, the recommendations and strategies involve changes in policies and procedures which will be ongoing or completed only over the long term.

# HOUSING

## VISION

Existing quality housing in the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton Neighborhood will be preserved and maintained. Increased housing and zoning code compliance and enforcement will lead to an upgrading of the neighborhood's problem properties. Existing residents will decide to stay in the neighborhood and new affordable single-family home construction will encourage new families to relocate to the neighborhood. There will be an increased sense in the overall community that the neighborhood is a desirable place to live.

**GOAL 1: Improve compliance with the City's dwelling codes.**

## ACTIONS

1. The Inspection Department and neighborhood organizations work together to eliminate problems regarding the maintenance and appearance of neighborhood properties. The Inspection Department educates neighborhood groups about housing and zoning code violations so that they can work with the groups to eliminate on-going problems. In some cities, neighborhood groups are provided with worksheets listing the common code violations. The groups then use these checklists to make their reports to the inspectors. A copy of the City of Madison's version of such a worksheet is included in Appendix A. The Inspection Department could also do periodic neighborhood "walk-throughs" with neighborhood members to better identify and remedy problems.

There should also be a formal mechanism for notifying neighborhood contact persons when warnings or citations are written for neighborhood properties. The contact people could help track whether the problems are remedied within the warning period; if the problems are not fixed in a timely manner, they could make sure the housing inspectors are aware that the problem is continuing. Housing inspectors do not always get back to revisit a property and check compliance soon after a warning period has expired and the assistance of the neighborhood contact people could help to more quickly identify ongoing offenders.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department, neighborhood groups

**Timeframe:** Begin in 1998, ongoing

## HOUSING

**GOAL:** Improve compliance with the City's dwelling codes.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

2. Develop computer-based method to track code citations and warnings. The Inspection Department currently maintains a paper file containing all the citations that have been issued in a given year. However, there is presently no centralized file for warnings that have been written. For residents or city staff to check on the number of warnings written for a particular block or area, they need to look at each individual property file. A computer file with warning and citation data could allow easier access to the information and would also facilitate the tracking of repeat offenders, problem properties, and overall trends. Even a simple spreadsheet containing basic information (property address, owner, date of warning, violation) could be helpful and more user-friendly than the current system.

The Common Council should approve any expenditures required to upgrade the Inspection Department computers so that a simple tracking program could be initiated.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department, Common Council approval of funding  
**Timeline:** 1998-1999

3. Improve follow-up on properties with ongoing code violations. The Inspection Department should more frequently issue additional citations for ongoing code violations. The fines for ongoing or repeat offenses within a six month period should be increased with each additional citation. Another option would be to establish a policy similar to that in Madison, Wisconsin where property owners are charged a fine (Madison's is \$35) when inspectors need to revisit a property for an on-going code violations. Madison's code says that compliance is required "on a continuous basis" and their Inspection Department will issue fines for violations even if a home owner maintains that the original problem (such as trash in the yard) was fixed and that the problem the inspector sees on a visit is a new problem. It is also important that other City departments involved with code violations support stricter code enforcement by the Inspection Department. Prior to enacting stricter enforcement regulations and standards, the City should conduct a public information campaign to let residents know the rules are changing.

Also, the Common Council recently passed an ordinance enabling the Board of Public Works to authorize the removal of abandoned personal property, including abandoned vehicles, fourteen days after notice is given to the real estate property owner. Removal costs can then be assessed against that property owner. The Board of Public Works has already approved the clean-up of a number of properties under this ordinance. This tool should continue to be used to help remedy the nuisances created by abandoned property.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department, Board of Public Works, other City staff,  
Common Council

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## HOUSING

**GOAL:** Improve compliance with the City's dwelling codes.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

4. Implement the suggestions put forth by the committee which is reviewing the City of La Crosse code enforcement policies. The Common Council passed a resolution to establish this committee in March, 1998. The mayor appointed himself and seven Council members to sit on the committee. The committee will be issuing a report of recommendations to the Common Council. As the committee is developing its recommendations, it might want to consider the 1987 report of a previous Council committee convened to consider housing and inspection issues, as well as a memo released by the Planning Department last year suggesting mechanisms which could be used to create incentives for owner-occupancy in the City's older neighborhoods.

Neighborhood steering committee members and interested members of the public should attend the meetings of the code enforcement review committee and discuss their experiences and their own recommendations based on these experiences.

**Responsibility:** Common Council, Inspection Department, other staff,  
neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Begin in 1998, ongoing

5. Consider developing a licensing program for rental properties. Such a program could be voluntary or mandatory, though the neighborhood steering committee and the City Planning Department both support a mandatory approach. Under a mandatory program, all rental properties within the city limits would be inspected at regular intervals (every 2 to 5 years) for compliance with City codes. Properties failing to meet the standards set by the City dwelling codes would not be granted a license and would not be allowed to have occupants until the conditions were improved. The property owners would pay a per-unit fee to help defray the costs of the program. Stevens Point, River Falls, Platteville, and Elk River, Minnesota all currently have rental property licensing programs in place. The Planning Department has copies of the ordinances used in these communities.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department, code enforcement committee, Common Council approval needed

**Timeline:** 1999-2000

## HOUSING

**GOAL:** Improve compliance with the City's dwelling codes.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

6. Investigate the possibility of adding an additional housing inspector or reorganizing the Inspection Department. One comment made during the neighborhood steering committee meetings is that the City's housing inspectors already have a high workload and that it could be difficult to expand the Inspection Department's code enforcement efforts. Recently, there has been some discussion about reorganizing the Inspection Department to give more of the inspectors general dwelling code enforcement responsibilities. The Council committee examining the practices of the Inspection Department is considering this option. Another possibility might be to add an additional inspector, on either a short-term or permanent basis. The additional position could potentially be funded with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, and could concentrate on eliminating slum and blight in the City's neighborhoods through increased code compliance. The position could also emphasize working with neighborhood groups and the proactive inspection of neighborhoods.

**Responsibility:** Code enforcement committee, Inspection Department, CDBG committee, Common Council.

**Timeline:** 1998

**GOAL 2:** Take steps to encourage increased levels of home ownership and owner-occupancy.

**ACTIONS**

1. Continue funding for existing housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs. The City currently has two programs in these categories: the Housing Rehabilitation Program and Housing Replacement program. The Community Action Program (CAP) also has a number of programs including the Home Buyer Program -- which also rehabs homes for new buyers -- and new single family home development. The City's Housing Rehabilitation Program has provided loans to fix up over 40 houses in the neighborhood, and the City recently acquired two neighborhood properties for the Housing Replacement program. Additionally, now that the new position of Housing Rehabilitation Assistant has been filled, the City plans to expand both of its programs and target even more homes each year. All of the above mentioned programs have the potential to make significant impacts on the neighborhood, especially operating in unison. Each program is funded with either Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds or HOME funds. The CDBG Committee should continue to fund these programs and expand their funding levels as necessary to meet demand in future years.

**Responsibility:** CDBG Committee, Common Council, Planning Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing



## HOUSING

**GOAL:** Take steps to encourage increased levels of home ownership and owner-occupancy.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

2. Develop additional programs to encourage home ownership and owner-occupancy within the neighborhood. The City started the Housing Replacement Program last year and is already looking to increase the annual number of houses built under the program. In terms of additional programs that could be developed, the memo produced by the Planning Department last year regarding potential mechanisms for promoting owner-occupancy in the City's older neighborhoods provides a number of suggestions. The memo is attached as Appendix B.

Another possibility would be for the City's large employers to develop incentive programs to encourage their employees to live in this neighborhood, or other of the City's older neighborhoods. In the fall of 1997, a survey was conducted in the Gundersen Lutheran weekly newsletter, *Bridges*. The survey asked questions about employees' perceptions, positive and negative, of the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton neighborhood. It also asked employees about whether those who did not live within the neighborhood would ever consider moving there and whether employees potentially would be interested in an incentive program to encourage increased home ownership and owner-occupancy within the neighborhood. Forty-nine of the 136 respondents (36 percent) said that they might be interested in such a program.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, Common Council, large employers  
**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Notify absentee property owners and realtors that the neighborhood groups are working to promote owner-occupancy within the neighborhood. Property owners will be encouraged to notify the neighborhood associations first, if and when their properties will be for sale. The neighborhood groups should also notify realtors of the goal of increasing owner-occupancy in the neighborhood.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups  
**Timeline:** Begin in 1998, ongoing

4. Identify and prioritize target areas to concentrate owner-occupancy objectives. With Planning Department staff, work to identify the areas in which increased owner-occupancy could most promote the stability of the neighborhood overall. One idea would be to target the area around Hamilton School. Encourage home purchases in the targeted areas.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Planning Department  
**Timeline:** Ongoing

## HOUSING

**GOAL:** Take steps to encourage increased levels of home ownership and owner-occupancy.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

5. Expand marketing efforts for existing programs. Develop a brochure on the Housing Replacement Program. Annually update the brochure for the Housing Rehabilitation Program to reflect new income limits. Develop and update brochures as necessary for CAP's programs. Distribute brochures to neighborhood groups, downtown workers, schools, and agencies. Hold periodic public information sessions to attract new clients.

**Responsibility:** Housing Rehabilitation, CAP

**Timeline:** New brochures, 1998; Marketing, ongoing

6. Increase minimum standards for new housing construction. A consultant hired by the City is currently revising current codes and developing a Unified Land Development Ordinance. Improved new construction standards will be included in the new code. At a minimum, the City should consider adopting the Uniform Dwelling Code for renovation projects. The City and Council should also consider initiating a design review process for construction of multiple unit dwellings (as well as commercial and industrial projects). The design standards could be basic minimum requirements -- for example, door fronting on the street, windows on the street and alley sides of buildings, external vegetation -- and not comprehensive. Design review standards could also be incorporated into the new code.

**Responsibility:** Land Development Ordinance consultant, Planning Department, Common Council

**Timeline:** New code introduced to Council in 1998-1999

## HOUSING

**GOAL 3: Educate residents (owners and tenants) about the responsibilities of maintaining their properties as well as those issues involved with ownership and tenancy.**

### ACTIONS

1. Develop a brochure on the primary dwelling and zoning code regulations and violations. The brochure should include information on the city's dwelling and zoning code standards and the most common violations. It should also indicate whom to contact for particular problems. The brochure should be distributed to neighborhood groups and schools to help distribute it to neighborhood residents, as well as to area agencies and others. The brochure could also be used as a first step to help educate all participants in CDBG and HOME funded housing programs. An example of this type of brochure (used in Madison, Wisconsin) is attached as Appendix C.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department

**Timeline:** 1998, periodic updates

2. Hold educational sessions with neighborhood residents. City staff should hold periodic forums in neighborhoods to educate residents about City codes and code violations. The sessions with residents, could also include, as suggested earlier, the promotion of existing home buyer and housing rehabilitation programs.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department, Planning Department, other staff

**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Inform neighborhood residents about lead paint and asbestos hazards. Educate residents of older homes about the precautions that should be taken to eliminate lead paint and asbestos hazards and about abatement procedures. Distribute informational brochures through the school, neighborhood groups, and agencies.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Planning Department, Inspection Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

4. Develop a new resident/new home owner mentoring program. Such a program could help educate new residents and owners about city programs and regulations and give them a neighborhood contact for when they have questions or concerns. It could also help people feel more connected to their neighbors and that they are a part of the neighborhood. This program is particularly important for segments of the population -- for example, tenants or minorities -- who may be more likely to feel marginalized when they move into a new place.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## HOUSING

**GOAL 4: Promote the existing quality properties in the neighborhood and the neighborhood's history.**

### ACTIONS

1. Create a program to recognize home owners who rehabilitate or keep up their properties. Such a program would help create pride in the neighborhood and could encourage additional home owners to fix up their own properties. The program could be something little; for example, in South St. Paul, Minnesota, the Mayor places 20-25 door hanger flyers a month on residents' doors to let them know that their property looks. The program could also be something larger in scale. Some communities have "Beautification Award Recognition programs" to recognize outstanding improvements in the community. Other communities have more tongue-in-cheek "Orchids and Onions" programs which recognize both beautiful "Orchid" properties and unattractive "Onions."

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, community organizations

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Develop a brochure on the neighborhood's history and its historical properties. The *City of La Crosse, Wisconsin Architectural and Historical Intensive Survey and Report* completed by Joan Rausch in 1996 identified two properties in the neighborhood as historically significant. One was the August Heideman House at 823 Adams Street. The other was the Salzer building, now Salzer Square, at 1205 7<sup>th</sup> Street S. Other properties and parts of the neighborhood are also significant in terms of neighborhood history and culture. Developing a brochure would help create pride in the neighborhood and a sense of neighborhood place. The brochure should be created with the assistance of area historians and historical resources as well as long term residents of the neighborhood. Among other things, the brochure could include details on Native Americans in the area, immigrant history, the recent Southeast Asian migration, Bohemian Hall, the old Hamilton School, Salzer Square, the Strand Theater, Holy Trinity and other significant churches for residents, as well as the noteworthy people who have lived in the neighborhood.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Planning Department

**Timeline:** 1999-2000

3. Organize walking tours of the neighborhood. Walking tours could be created in conjunction with the brochure on neighborhood history. The tours could highlight significant historical properties in the neighborhood as well as residences and businesses that contribute to the neighborhood today. One idea for a walking tour could be an "Alternative Parade of Homes" which highlights well-maintained or restored older properties, as opposed to newly constructed ones.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** 1999-2000, ongoing

## HOUSING

**GOAL 5:** Ensure that housing is available for rent and sale on an equal-opportunity basis.

### **ACTION**

1. Encourage and participate in efforts to foster neighborhood diversity and eliminate unlawful housing discrimination. Work to ensure that all populations - especially low-income residents, minorities, and the developmentally disabled - are given equal housing access. Educate residents and landlords about equal opportunity housing practices.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, City staff

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

### VISION

The neighborhood will further its sense of identity and community and will embrace the diversity that makes it such a dynamic place. Programs and services will meet the needs of all residents in the neighborhood, from the elderly to the young, from home owners to renters, and from long-term residents to recent immigrants. Neighbors helping neighbors and involvement from city departments and other agencies will help to reduce the current threats to the neighborhood -- particularly crime -- and to make the neighborhood an even better place to live.

**GOAL 1: Establish a neighborhood center for neighborhood activities.**

### ACTIONS

1. Site the neighborhood center. The Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton Neighborhood has only limited public meeting space at the current time. There is Hamilton School, out of which an after school and summer southside Boys' and Girls' Club program is organized. There is the small park shelter in Hood Park which serves as a recreation center for children and is used for the Skates for Kids program. Some neighborhood groups, such as Project Watchdog, meet across West Avenue at the Southside Senior Center. A neighborhood community center within the neighborhood could serve as a focal place for neighborhood activity and meetings. It could help the neighborhood develop and sustain a sense of community and neighborhood pride.

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Committee sees the neighborhood center as having the following main goals and objectives (in order of importance): (1) meeting facility, (2) learning facility, (3) recreation facility, (4) nutrition center, and (5) information exchange center. The neighborhood center is planned to have general meeting space as well as office space for neighborhood organizations, community policing officers, and others. When a final site is selected and approved by the CDBG Committee and the Common Council, it should meet all of these criteria.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, CDBG Committee, Common Council,  
other stakeholders

**Timeline:** 1998

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL:** Establish a neighborhood center for neighborhood activities.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

2. Acquire sufficient funding for the project. The City has estimated that a neighborhood center will cost between \$350,000 and \$400,000. The cost range assumes that an existing structure can be rehabilitated and remodeled. An entirely new building would likely increase the costs by at least \$100,000. The cost of building the center on the site which is currently most favored (1302 6th Street S.) is estimated at slightly under \$350,000. The CDBG Committee has already set aside \$225,000 in 1997 and 1998 CDBG funds for the project. The Gundersen/Lutheran Foundation has donated \$40,000. The remaining shortfall could be made up by public and/or private dollars. Public dollars could include additional CDBG funding. Also, the City recently applied for a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Justice to help make up the difference. In terms of additional private funding, the Common Council recently passed a resolution to support the raising of funds for the project by private community development organizations.

**Responsibility:** Allocation of public funds - CDBG Committee, Common Council.  
Private fund raising - Neighborhood groups, community development corporations  
**Timeline:** 1998-2000

**GOAL 2:** Promote a sense of community within the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS**

1. Combine existing neighborhood groups into a larger area organization at least for some functions. Some of the neighborhood groups and watch blocks within the neighborhood appear to be somewhat isolated from each other. It may make sense for the groups to work together on some of the neighborhood issues. A larger umbrella neighborhood organization could help plan neighborhood-wide events such as neighborhood cleanup days, neighborhood flea markets, and social gatherings. It could also share information between neighborhood groups, and help report vital information on crime in the neighborhood and programs to help neighborhood residents, to a wider spectrum of neighborhood members.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups  
**Timeline:** 1998-1999, ongoing

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL:** Promote a sense of community within the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

2. Continue the existing Boys' and Girls' Club program at Hamilton School and expand to another school if possible. Encourage participation in the program by additional volunteers and youth. Work to assure that funding for the program is maintained. The current funding will expire after May, 1999. Although the program at Hamilton School is less than a year old, it has already been a tremendous asset to the neighborhood. Over 600 kids have joined and the program sees over 150 kids each day. Because of the high level of participation in the program at Hamilton School, the Boys' and Girls' Club is considering opening a branch at an additional school on the southside. The program at one school would be targeted to younger children and the program at the second school would be for older age groups.

**Responsibility:** Boys' and Girls' Club, neighborhood groups, Council members  
**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Start a neighborhood-wide newsletter. The newsletter could start out as an extension of the newsletter that Project Watchdog is already publishing. The newsletter could help educate residents about City policies and programs and let them know about events, crime stats, and other information relevant to the neighborhood as a whole. The publication of such a newsletter might be a good function of an umbrella organization of the area's neighborhood groups.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups  
**Timeline:** 1999

4. Develop additional neighborhood-wide programs and activities for residents. Programs could include neighborhood-wide block parties, pot luck suppers, cleanup initiatives, and activity days. Another idea would be to start a neighborhood vegetable and/or flower garden on a vacant lot. Neighborhood programs should emphasize getting as many neighborhood members and different populations in the neighborhood involved as possible.

One specific activity suggested by the Police Department and done in cities across the country is the National Night Out Program. Typically held during the summer, the program is aimed at neighborhood block watches. The program's goal to get people in each block outside for a night of fun, music, and food, and help residents connect with their neighbors. The Police Department is encouraging the City's neighborhood watch blocks to participate in the National Night Out Program this summer, and is coordinating their participation.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups; Police Department, other staff  
**Timeline:** Begin in 1998, ongoing



## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL:** Promote a sense of community within the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

5. Work to link neighborhood volunteers with neighborhood residents needing assistance. Events such as Neighbors Day '98 help match volunteers with residents who need assistance with projects around the house. It would be nice to extend these types of events into a year-round program or network where people needing help could contact one of the neighborhood organizations and be matched up with volunteers. For example, there is already an adopt-a-project program for jobs that do not get completed on Neighbor Day. Another idea would be to work with community-wide organizations that already provide volunteers for on-going and short-term projects to assure that the needs of neighborhood residents are being met. Neighborhood groups could also go door-to-door, targeting properties and owners that look as though they could use assistance, and offering help themselves or referring the residents to agencies and existing programs for assistance. Initial efforts should target residents who are disabled or those who are elderly, and cannot do the work themselves, and if necessary, projects should be screened in advance.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

5. Develop programs and spaces to celebrate the diversity of neighborhood residents. Encourage long term residents to share their experiences with newer residents and younger generations. Promote inter-generational activities which match children and older youth in partnerships with area senior citizens. Hold events -- for example, an international food fair and festival -- to promote different cultures. Consider using a vacant store front or other community space for displaying an exhibit on Southeast Asian history and culture. The La Crosse Public Library has an existing exhibit on Southeast Asia and the Hmong culture than can be loaned out to groups.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

6. Develop a welcome program for new residents. The welcome program would be a neighborhood-based effort to personally welcome new residents into the neighborhood. Block captains or other neighborhood liaisons would deliver a packet of materials to new residents that would include such things as the neighborhood newsletter and the Guide to City Services. A flyer on upcoming neighborhood meetings and activities could be provided as well to encourage participation in neighborhood events. The welcome program would help give new residents a contact person to turn to when they have problems or concerns and would also help make them feel like a part of the neighborhood. This program could be combined with the new resident/new home owner mentoring program.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** 1998-1999, ongoing

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL:** Promote a sense of community within the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

7. Develop an official name for the neighborhood. Developing an official name could help to instill neighborhood pride and a sense of community within the neighborhood. A committee of residents could meet and come up with ideas and then take their suggestions to the greater neighborhood for a vote. Once the residents have agreed upon a name, "Welcome to the \_\_\_ Neighborhood" signs could be posted at the neighborhood's main entry points, for example, along South Avenue, West Avenue and Jackson Street. One idea for a neighborhood name that came up at neighborhood steering committee meetings was "Coopers' Wedge." Coopers' Wedge reflects the shape of the neighborhood and recalls the many barrel makers who used to reside within the neighborhood.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood residents, neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** 1999-2000

**GOAL 3:** Increase outreach to neighborhood residents to make them aware of available resources and services.

**ACTIONS**

1. Have key City staff hold meetings in the neighborhood to address residents' concerns and answer questions. The meetings should be held at least a few times annually. The meetings could be informal and social -- for example, a neighborhood pot luck -- to promote participation by the greatest number of residents. These meetings could also be opportunity to disseminate information on city programs, regulations, and other matters of interest to residents.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, Police Department, other city staff

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Complete the Guide to City Services and distribute. The Guide will contain an overview of City Departments, Council committees and procedures, and will help direct people to the right department for help with different questions and problems. The guide will be distributed through neighborhood groups, City departments, and community businesses and agencies. The guide should also be given out to new city residents.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department

**Timeline:** 1998

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL:** Increase outreach to neighborhood residents to make them aware of available resources and services.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

3. Work to insure neighborhood residents have adequate access to basic food supplies. A recent survey conducted for the La Crosse Community Foundation of residents in the Hamilton School area asked whether residents "eat less than [they] think they should because [they] don't have enough money for food." Forty-six percent of respondents overall and 100 percent of Southeast Asian respondents said that the statement was either often or sometimes true. When respondents were asked if they "worry whether [their] food will run out before [they] get money to buy more," 28 percent overall reported this was sometimes or often true. It is important to make sure that residents who do not have enough food are aware of all of the community programs that can assist them, and to develop other mechanisms within the neighborhood to help meet the food demand. Neighborhood groups and community-wide organizations can work together to help disseminate information on existing programs and to develop other alternatives at the neighborhood level.

One of the recommendations made in the report summarizing the findings of the Hamilton School area hunger survey is that periodic classes, perhaps once a month, could be conducted in the neighborhood on issues such as nutrition, as well as basic job skills -- for example, how to interview for a job, how to look for work, rudimentary computer skills -- that can help residents find jobs which pay above minimum wage. In the Community Development Block Grant Committee's discussions about the neighborhood center, the committee felt that one of the main functions of the center should be to provide nutrition information and counseling. Steps should be taken to develop these types of classes for neighborhood residents.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, community organizations

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL 4: Reduce the level of crime in the neighborhood.**

### **ACTIONS**

1. Increase community policing presence in the neighborhood. The Police Department is already considering activities to increase the police presence in the neighborhood. Officers are interested in having regular officer hours at the new neighborhood center once it is completed. This summer, the Police Department will be utilizing the mobile community center (a mobile home) in the neighborhood and moving it to several locations in the neighborhood throughout the day. This will provide residents the opportunity to come out and meet with officers and ask questions or discuss problems. Residents will also be able to make formal complaints. The Police Department will also be expanding their bicycle patrols in the neighborhood to have more contact with residents. The Police Department is also interested in helping educate landlords and tenants about crime and crime prevention.

**Responsibility:** Police Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Work to increase the number of neighborhood blocks with neighborhood watch groups. There are 41 primarily residential blocks in the neighborhood and 33 registered neighborhood watches. As Map J (page 31) shows, the parts of the neighborhood with the fewest neighborhood watches are the northeast section and the area closest to Gundersen Lutheran. Residents should be encouraged to ask the Police Department to make presentations to promote the formation of additional neighborhood watches.

**Responsibility:** Police Department, neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Educate residents about the correlation between good night lighting and reductions in crimes at night. Distribute/produce brochures on this topic. Present information at neighborhood gatherings, and encourage more residents to leave outside lights on at night. Do a lighting survey to determine the least lit parts of the neighborhood. If cost is an issue, neighborhood groups could consider working with NSP and/or City staff to develop a way to split the costs for alley lighting (maintenance and monthly fees) between properties which border on the alley.

**Responsibility:** Police Department, neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## STRENGTH OF COMMUNITY

**GOAL:** Reduce the level of crime in the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

4. Provide residents with periodic updates on crime statistics for the neighborhood. The Police Department should keep the neighborhood groups up to date on crime trends and crime safety issues for the neighborhood. The neighborhood groups could then publish the crime stats in a neighborhood newsletter. The Police Department should also continue to make presentations at neighborhood meetings on important neighborhood crime issues.

**Responsibility:** Police Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

5. Maintain neighborhood files on crime within the neighborhood, sexual predators in the area, and crime prevention information. Project Watchdog has already developed files on crime issues in the neighborhood. These files should continue to be maintained and responsibility for updating them could be expanded to the other neighborhood groups. The files on crime within the neighborhood should be kept at a central location -- for example, at the neighborhood center -- and made accessible to all neighborhood residents. The Police Department could assist the neighborhood groups by providing them with crime information.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

6. Consider the establishment of a crime-free multi-housing program City-wide. This type of program could be coordinated through the Police Department and Inspection Department. It is intended to empower landlords against tenants who are causing problems and engaging in criminal activity. Some of the City's community policing officers have received training on setting up such a program. Enacting this type of program would require making changes to the City's Code of Ordinances. The Planning Department could assist with developing the new ordinances which would facilitate a crime-free multi-housing initiative.

**Responsibility:** Police Department, Inspection Department, Planning Department  
Would require approval by the Common Council.

**Timeline:** 1999-2000, or beyond

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

### VISION

Alley pavings begin to proceed in the neighborhood at an accelerated rate so that unpaved alleys no longer help encourage the development of slum and blight in the neighborhood. Parks and other open spaces are fully utilized by neighborhood residents who take an advantage of the full range of programming available through the Parks and Recreation Department. Increased boulevard tree plantings and streetscaping projects have helped beautify the major corridors in the neighborhood.

**GOAL 1: Encourage improvement of the neighborhood's alleys.**

### ACTIONS

1. Increase code compliance and enforcement efforts in alleys. Alleys are often the most rundown looking parts of a neighborhood and this neighborhood is no exception. Often trash or abandoned property is left out for extended periods of time. Under a resolution passed in December, 1997, the Board of Public Works is authorized to remove abandoned vehicles and other abandoned property fourteen days after a notice has been given to the real estate property owner. There are also ordinances against leaving trash out for extended periods of time as well as requirements that any multiple family dwelling of four or more units provide a dumpster for trash. In December, 1997, the dumpster requirements were extended to authorize the Inspection Department to order the relocation and/or screening or enclosure of any required dumpster in order to eliminate nuisance. All of these regulations should be employed to help cleanup alleys and promote compliance with city codes. Requirements could be expanded to also require dumpsters for any dwelling with more than 10 bedrooms (as opposed to basing the requirement on the number of units), and to also require that all buildings with dumpsters have screening for them.

**Responsibility:** Inspection Department, Board of Public Works, code enforcement committee

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

**GOAL:** Encourage improvement of the neighborhood's alleys.

**ACTIONS: (con't)**

2. Encourage the Common Council to adopt a resolution allowing Council members to request alley pavings in any alley for which at least 60 percent of the surrounding property is residential rental property. In June, 1992, the Council passed a resolution allowing for Council members to request such alley pavings in alleys in *Multiple Dwelling zoning areas* only. The distinction restricting Council member requests to alleys in Multiple Dwelling areas should be removed. In 1995 and 1997, as part of Southside and Northside Comprehensive Rezoning, the zoning of many rental properties was downzoned to lower density. Many of the residential areas with high proportions both of renters and of unpaved alleys are no longer zoned Multiple Dwelling. The original resolution should be amended to allow Council members to request alley pavings of alleys within any residentially zoned areas when 60 percent or more of the property bordering the alleys is residential rental property. In the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton neighborhood, only 13 alleys are paved and 32 alleys are unpaved. The paved and unpaved alleys are shown on Map K (page 33). Approximately 8 to 10 of the unpaved alleys could be requested for paving if the resolution was changed.

**Responsibility:** District Council members, neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** 1998

3. Consider the use of Community Development Block Grant monies to fund or subsidize alley pavings in parts of the City with slum and blight. A memo issued by the Planning Department earlier this year (Appendix B) suggested that CDBG funds might be able to be used for alley paving in blighted areas. Funding alley pavings with CDBG funds could be a better use of the funds than sewer projects since the Sewer Utility is "flush" with money. The possibility of funding alley paving with CDBG funds should be pursued further, and if appropriate, an application should be submitted to the CDBG Committee to use CDBG funds for this purpose.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, CDBG Committee

**Timeline:** 1998-1999, ongoing

4. Investigate the feasibility of amortizing property owners' costs of alley pavings over a longer period of time than 10 years for low-income owners. Sometimes property owners with small fixed incomes -- often elderly people -- have trouble paying the temporary increase in their property tax assessments due to the cost of an alley paving. Alley paving costs are typically amortized to the property owners over a ten-year period. Perhaps it would be possible for qualifying low-income individuals to amortize the payments over a longer period of time, for example, 15 or 20 years.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, Finance Department

**Timeline:** 1998-1999

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

**GOAL:** Encourage improvement of the neighborhood's alleys.

**ACTIONS: (con't)**

5. Encourage better lighting of alleys. Better lighting of alleys helps reduce vandalism and other crime. As mentioned previously, individual residents could provide better lighting themselves on the alley side of their properties or they could work with NSP as a group and request that an alley light be installed.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**GOAL 2:** Encourage beautification of neighborhood with streetscaping and the planting of boulevard trees.

**ACTIONS**

1. Plant additional boulevard trees in the neighborhood. Promote the City's existing tree planting program among neighborhood residents. Distribute brochures on the program. Each year, the City Forester plants approximately 150 trees under the program. In this neighborhood, the City Forester would also like to replace the boulevard trees that were removed from Farnam Street as part of the NSP project. Twenty-five trees were removed and 33 will be planted to replace them. The City Forester is not yet sure where the new trees will be placed and he has been encouraging suggestions from neighborhood residents.

**Responsibility:** City Forester, neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Target the major streets for streetscaping improvements. The major roadways - Farnam Street, Jackson Street, 7th Street, South Avenue, West Avenue, and 3rd and 4th Streets - have the highest traffic volumes and could consequently benefit the most from projects to beautify them and make them more pedestrian friendly.

**Responsibility:** Public Works

**Timeline:** Ongoing



## PUBLIC FACILITIES

**GOAL 3: Maintain and improve the existing neighborhood parks.**

### ACTIONS

1. Give parks a major makeover (complete overhaul) on a regular 10-15 year cycle. Over time, park equipment becomes outdated and the primary uses of the park for both children and adults shift. The idea here is to target a few parks city-wide each year and work to redesign them to meet changing standards and interests. As part of the makeover, new equipment would be added, major work done on park shelters and existing equipment, and improvements made to the boulevard areas. Neighborhood residents could be organized to do smaller updates or make-overs on an annual or biannual basis.

For the parks within the neighborhood, A few suggested updates are: (1) upgrade and expand the Hood Park shelter to better accommodate the needs of the Skates for Kids program. Many times during the winter, the shelter is packed with kids and there is little place for them to play or even sit; (2) redesign one or both of the tennis courts at Farnam and 7th Streets for different uses. These courts are underutilized and rarely, if ever, are both being used simultaneously. Maybe one of the courts could be redeveloped to provide a place for skateboarding or basketball; (3) add more picnic tables at Hood and Powell Parks.

**Responsibility:** Parks and Recreation Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Continue funding the Skates for Kids program. The CDBG Committee gave the Skates for Kids program \$6,000 in 1998. Funding for Skates for Kids should be continued, and increased if necessary in future years.

**Responsibility:** Parks and Recreation Department, CDBG Committee

**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Increase the amount of night lighting at Hood and Powell Parks. There are few lights in the parks during non-game nights. Adding more regular lighting would discourage youth from congregating in the dark areas, such as at the end of Johnson Street near the bleachers in Powell Park, and would also provide them with nighttime recreational space. Lights could be turned off at a reasonable hour if the increased activity was found to be disturbing the neighbors.

**Responsibility:** Parks and Recreation Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## PUBLIC FACILITIES

**GOAL:** Maintain and improve the existing neighborhood parks.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

4. Develop a skateboarding area or other specific play space within the neighborhood for older youth. Older youth have few recreation options within the neighborhood and the neighborhood steering committee would like to see something developed for them. Many youth use the Walgreen's parking lot for skateboarding. One idea is to build a small facility at Powell Park for them to use instead, or to redevelop one of the tennis courts. Another idea is to provide space for youth at the new neighborhood center and allow them to use the under-utilized sections of the parking lot for basketball, skateboarding, and other activities.

**Responsibility:** Parks and Recreation Department, neighborhood groups  
**Timeline:** Ongoing

5. Work to make the parks safer for children. Some children find Hood and Powell Parks, as well as some of the other city parks, to be unfriendly places to play; bullies and groups of elder youth make them afraid for their safety. Volunteers could patrol the parks and report suspicious activities and problems to the police.

**Responsibility:** Parks and Recreation Department, neighborhood groups and community organizations provide volunteers  
**Timeline:** Ongoing

**GOAL 4:** Increase night time lighting around Hamilton School to increase safety for neighborhood children.

**ACTION**

1. Encourage the School District to install additional night lighting at Hamilton School. The Boys' and Girls' Club uses Hamilton School for after school programs. Sometimes, kids affiliated with the Boys' and Girls' Club are out playing on the playground after dark and there is little lighting for the area. Also, although the School District increased the amount of lighting outside the school in the past few years, there is still only a dim level of light even at the school's main entrance. With so many children coming and going into the school after hours for Boys' and Girls' Club activities, it would be beneficial to increase the level of lighting outside the school to help make it safer for the kids, as well as for residents in the neighborhood. Lighting should be increased both around the perimeter of the school and on the playground.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Boys' and Girls' Club, School District  
**Timeline:** 1998

# REDEVELOPMENT

## VISION

Vacant and underutilized lots and buildings in the neighborhood will be redeveloped in ways that benefit the neighborhood overall. Standards will be developed to minimize future parking lot encroachment into the neighborhood by institutions. A community development corporation or other neighborhood organization will be developed to help independently fund redevelopment projects and other initiatives designed to strengthen the neighborhood.

**GOAL 1: Positively redevelop vacant and underutilized lots and buildings in the neighborhood.**

## ACTIONS

1. Promote the redevelopment of vacant lots for single-family housing. One option would be to encourage the City to purchase vacant lots for the Housing Replacement program, and to fund the purchases with CDBG funds. Another option would be to support the private redevelopment of the sites. Neighborhood groups could help publicize the existence of vacant lots which are available for purchase. Neighborhood groups could also contact the owners of vacant lots and notify them of the neighborhood's interest in encouraging the positive redevelopment of the properties.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Planning Department, community development corporation

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Encourage the reuse of vacant buildings that used to house neighborhood businesses for new neighborhood-scale businesses. Many of the businesses existing in the neighborhood are taverns or speciality shops -- clothing resale, and arts and crafts. Attempt to bring back more neighborhood-oriented retail establishments into the area.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Planning Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Consider using on-going vacant space not suitable for residential development for neighborhood spaces. The neighborhood could use vacant lots to establish a community garden, small park, or other neighborhood space.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Planning Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## REDEVELOPMENT

**GOAL:** Positive redevelopment of vacant and underutilized lots and buildings in the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

2. Consider the development of a neighborhood business zone Some of the steering committee members expressed interest in the development of such a neighborhood business zone, and feel that such an area could act as a buffer between neighborhood residents and Gundersen Lutheran. The zone could serve both neighborhood residents and clients and visitors to Gundersen Lutheran. To develop the zone, zoning changes would be needed to allow new businesses and businesses would have to be found to go into the project.

Another similar idea is to develop a small business incubator in the neighborhood. The building that currently houses Abraham and Zahn Roofing and Sheet Metal could be one potential site for an incubator should the business ever decide to relocate.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**GOAL 2:** Minimize future parking lot encroachment into the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS**

1. Encourage institutions and other large employers to develop alternatives to large surface parking lots in residential neighborhoods. Encourage employers to consider charging their employees for parking (or cashing out free parking -- that is, allowing employees to have free parking or take the cash equivalent) or taking other initiatives to encourage employees to use alternative modes of transportation. Such initiatives could include providing accommodations to bicycle commuters, providing preferential parking to those who rideshare, or partially subsidizing transit passes for their employees. Other potential initiatives include incentives to encourage employees to live closer to work, so that they do not feel they need to drive. As a last resort, the institutions and other large employers should be encouraged to develop parking ramps to meet parking demand. This is one of the least favorable options because of the high costs involved -- typically \$7,000 to \$8,000 a parking space. However the cost of a parking ramp probably could eventually be recouped if those people who parked in the ramp had to pay to do so.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, area Transportation Management Association (TMA), neighborhood groups and community organizations

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## REDEVELOPMENT

**GOAL:** Minimize future parking lot encroachment into the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

2. Encourage employers with large parking lots in the neighborhood to landscape them to reduce their visual impact and increase the amount of green space.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

3. Develop stricter master plan requirements for institutions. Develop an institutional zoning district which requires institutions to submit a master plan for Plan Commission and Council approval. Develop a process for approving and updating institution master plans and require institutions to remain within the physical boundaries shown on the adopted plans. The master plan approval process for the institutional zoning district would be similar to that required for planned unit developments.

A few years ago, the Common Council adopted a resolution requiring institutions to submit master plans to the City; however, the plans were primarily for information purposes and they never went through an approval process. For the most part, the Council chose merely to receive and file the plans the institutions submitted.

The consultant hired to revise the City's current codes and formulate a Unified Land Development Ordinance is looking at the idea of institutional zoning and plans to incorporate institutional master plan review and conformance requirements as part of the code revision process. The institutional zoning district and master plan requirements should be developed with input from the City's five major health and educational institutions as well as the Diocese of La Crosse and the School District of La Crosse. The City has been looking at the institutional zoning district created in Rochester, Minnesota to accommodate the Mayo Clinic and other institutions, and intends to use the same approach for the La Crosse zoning regulations and restrictions.

**Responsibility:** Unified Land Development Ordinance consultant, Planning Department, Common Council

**Timeline:** New code introduced to Council in 1998-1999

## REDEVELOPMENT

**GOAL:** Minimize future parking lot encroachment into the neighborhood.

**ACTIONS (con't)**

4. Develop higher design standards for parking lots. The City currently has few design requirements for parking lots. As a result, in some sections of the city, large swaths of asphalt off-street parking lots create a tremendous visual impact and adversely effect the surrounding neighborhoods. Higher design standards for parking lots should be developed. The standards should include landscaping requirements, including islands of vegetation and the preservation of green space for all parking lots over a certain size. Parking lots should also incorporate crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) standards. All parking lots except in areas with industrial or conservancy zoning should be required to be paved, with adequate drainage, within a certain period of time -- for example, one year.

The consultant for the Unified Land Development Ordinance is currently working with staff and developing design standards for parking lots.

**Responsibility:** Land Development Ordinance consultant, Planning Department, Public Works, Common Council

**Timeline:** New code introduced to Council in 1998-1999

**GOAL 3: Raise independent funds for neighborhood redevelopment projects.**

**ACTION**

1. Consider establishing a Community Development Corporation (CDC). The CDC could be used to help fund independent neighborhood projects and revitalization efforts.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups

**Timeline:** Ongoing

# TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

## VISION

Automobile traffic through the neighborhood has been calmed and proceeds at levels which do not exceed the speed limits. Residents feel comfortable walking and bicycling around the neighborhood. The neighborhood has become less isolated from the areas around it, from which it is somewhat separated due to the volumes of traffic on South Avenue, Jackson Street, Green Bay Street, and West Avenue. Large employers prohibit their employees from parking on-street in areas where there is a shortage of parking spaces for residents and small employers also encourage their employees not to do so. In addition, most of the employers in the vicinity of the neighborhood, particularly the larger ones, have developed incentive programs to encourage their employees to try alternative means of commuting to work, as opposed to driving single occupancy vehicles.

## GOAL 1: Increase availability of on-street parking for neighborhood residents.

### ACTIONS

1. Encourage institutions and other large employers to have their employees park on-site instead of on neighborhood streets or chose another mode to travel to work. Gundersen Lutheran has already mandated that its staff park on-site and has recently increased enforcement efforts. Other large employers, such as Viterbo and Franciscan Skemp, should encourage their employees to do the same. The neighborhood groups should contact the institutions and other large employers to ask that they discourage their employees from parking on-street in residential areas. In addition to encouraging or mandating that employees park on-site, the institutions and other large employers should also promote alternative methods -- as opposed to single-occupancy vehicle travel -- for employees' commuting trips. Alternatives include ride sharing, taking the bus, or walking or bicycling to work.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, large employers

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Promote the existing residential parking permit program. The residential parking permit program exempts residents from two hour parking restrictions in their neighborhood. The program is free; all that is required is that residents register for the program. Registration is done through the Police Department.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Police Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

**GOAL:** Increase availability of on-street parking for neighborhood residents.

### **ACTIONS**

3. Study the current blocks with two-hour and or other timed on-street parking arrangements to see if additional blocks should have time restrictions. Map I (page 27) shows the current location of two-hour parking and no parking restrictions. Neighborhood groups and residents as well as the Police Department could more closely monitor the current on-street parking situation and make recommendations as to whether additional blocks should have two-hour parking limits imposed.

**Responsibility:** Neighborhood groups, Police Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

**GOAL 2:** Minimize problems on neighborhood streets.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Monitor traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and accident rates along neighborhood streets to ensure the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Streets within the neighborhood have a mix of pedestrian, bicycle, and motorized traffic, and all the modes should be reasonably accommodated. Some neighborhood residents are particularly concerned about the vehicles speeding and cutting through the neighborhood and through neighborhood alleys. Corrective measures should be considered to address speeding and other traffic issues as they arise. In some places, it may be appropriate to alter street designs to promote traffic calming through the neighborhood.

**Responsibility:** Traffic Engineer, Police Department

**Timeline:** Ongoing

2. Improve problem on-street parking spots where potential conflicts exist. Examine the neighborhood for areas where problems currently exist. One example is the diagonal parking on the east side of 10th Street south of Jackson Street. 10th and Jackson is a busy intersection and the diagonal parking, especially the section near the crossing at Jackson Street, makes it more difficult to see oncoming cars and move through the intersection. One potential solution would be to restrict some of the diagonal parking in that area or to consider adding curb and gutter so that diagonal parking would no longer be possible.

**Responsibility:** Traffic Engineer, Public Works

**Timeline:** Ongoing



## TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING

**GOAL 3: Increase the pedestrian friendliness of the neighborhood.**

**ACTIONS**

1. Install a sidewalk along the south side of Green Bay Street between 9<sup>th</sup> Street and West Avenue. There is currently a big section on the southside of the street with no sidewalk. This street has fairly high levels of pedestrian traffic, including numerous Riverfront clients who walk to the Green Bay Street bus stop. As it stands now, pedestrians on the south side of the street either need to cross the street and walk on the north side of the sidewalk and then cross back, or walk in the roadway. Green Bay Street is one of the busiest streets in the neighborhood, with an average of approximately 8,700 vehicles per day (1996, WisDOT). A sidewalk along the south side of the street would provide a safer alternative to walking in the roadway and would improve pedestrian travel along this corridor.

**Responsibility:** Public Works

**Timeline:** 1998-1999

2. Improve intersections and crossings as necessary to make them more pedestrian friendly. Steps should be taken to improve the crossing on South Avenue near Gundersen Lutheran and make it safer. The crossing will improve after the Sims Place and 7th Street realignments are completed. Steps should also be taken to improve the crossing across West Avenue to the Quillin's IGA store. Quillin's is the only grocery store in the vicinity of the neighborhood and many residents rely on it for their primary food shopping. It can be difficult to cross West Avenue to reach Quillin's especially during the main commuting hours.

**Responsibility:** Public Works, City Traffic Engineer

**Timeline:** 1998-1999, ongoing

**GOAL 4: Keep neighbors informed about transportation projects that could affect the neighborhood.**

**ACTION**

1. Have meetings in the neighborhood to inform the residents about such projects. When reconstruction first started on the Sims Places and Green Bay Street intersection, many neighborhood residents were unaware of what the project would mean in terms of traffic on Green Bay Street and other neighborhood streets until they experienced the increased traffic firsthand. It is important prior to both small and large transportation projects near or in the neighborhood to hold meetings and take other efforts to inform as many residents as possible know about the projects and the potential impacts ahead of time and to hear residents' comments. Residents are interested in knowing more about the North-South Corridor project and specifically how it will affect the neighborhood. Neighborhood groups could help inform neighborhood residents about the projects themselves and about public meetings on the projects.

**Responsibility:** Planning Department, Public Works

**Timeline:** Ongoing

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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The neighborhood steering committee members are happy that the months of committee meetings have finally culminated into the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton Neighborhood Plan. The plan is comprehensive, containing both a general vision for the neighborhood as well as specific recommendations. The committee sees the plan and its recommendations as a blueprint for how to significantly improve the neighborhood. Additionally some of the recommendations are such that if they are adopted, they will translate into a higher quality of life for neighborhoods throughout the City of La Crosse, not just the Powell-Hood Park-Hamilton area.

The steering committee realizes that despite the strengths of the plan itself, the hardest work of the neighborhood planning process is still ahead. Implementation is the key to helping the visions set out in the plan become realities. The committee is determined to see the implementation of the specific actions called for in the plan, and not allow the plan to sit on a shelf somewhere gathering dust once the Common Council has reviewed it.

The plan recommends dozens of specific actions to be undertaken or at least considered. Each of them is discussed in some detail in the "Neighborhood Improvement Goals and Strategies" section of the plan. For each action, there is a listing of who -- be it City staff, neighborhood groups, community agencies -- is responsible to assist with implementation. With each action is also given a proposed timeline for implementation.

### ***PRIORITY ACTIONS***

Below is a summary of the actions the committee feels are the most important. These items are what the committee would like the Council and City staff and other parties involved with implementation to focus on first. The actions have been separated into the same main categories (Housing, Strength of Community, Public Facilities, Redevelopment, and Transportation and Parking) as the previous section of the plan.

#### **Housing:**

- Inspection Department works with neighborhood organizations to eliminate problems regarding the maintenance of neighborhood properties.
- Improve follow-up on properties with ongoing code violations.
- Develop brochure on the primary and zoning dwelling code regulations and violations.
- Develop basic computer file to track code violations and warnings.
- Continue funding for existing housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs continued.
- Develop additional programs to encourage home ownership and owner-occupancy.
- Implement recommendations of the Code Enforcement Review Committee.
- Develop programs to recognize home owners who fix up or maintain their properties.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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### **Strength of Community:**

- Establish community center for neighborhood activities.
- Continue Boys' and Girls' Club program at Hamilton School.
- Increase number of neighborhood blocks with neighborhood watches.
- Increase community policing presence in neighborhood.
- Combine existing neighborhood groups into a larger organization for some functions.
- Convince more residents to leave outside lights on at night.
- Develop additional neighborhood-wide programs and activities.

### **Public Facilities:**

- Increase code enforcement efforts in alleys.
- Pave more unpaved alleys in neighborhood.
- Increase level of night lighting at Hamilton School.
- Increase level of regular night lighting at Hood and Powell Parks.
- Use volunteers to make parks safer for children.
- Makeover and upgrade parks on regular 10-15 year cycle.
- Develop skateboard area or other play space for older youth.
- Plant additional boulevard trees.

### **Redevelopment:**

- Promote the redevelopment of vacant lots for single-family housing.
- Reuse vacant commercial buildings for new neighborhood-scale businesses.
- Encourage large employers to consider alternatives to developing large surface parking lots in residential areas.
- Encourage employers with large parking lots in the neighborhood to landscape them to reduce their visual impact and increase the amount of green space.
- Consider using on-going vacant space not suitable for residential development for neighborhood spaces such as a community garden or a site commemorating the neighborhood's history.

### **Transportation and Parking:**

- Keep neighborhood residents informed about transportation projects that could have an impact on the neighborhood.
- Add sidewalk to the southside of Green Bay Street from 9th St. to West Ave.
- Improve problem intersections and crossings including the crossing near the Quillin's IGA store on West Avenue and the 10<sup>th</sup> Street-Jackson Street intersection, where diagonal parking can obstruct drivers' views.
- Large employers encourage their employees to either park on-site instead of on neighborhood streets or chose another mode to travel to work.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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### ***RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION***

Many parties are given responsibility in the plan to assist with implementing its recommendations. This section of the document summarizes the responsibilities assigned in the "Neighborhood Improvement Goals and Strategies" section and lists each party's implementation role for the various recommendations. One overriding factor in implementation is that the fact that many of the proposed actions would require Common Council approval and/or funding. City departments and neighborhood organizations should therefore seek Council approval where appropriate as they work to implement these items.

### ***CITY STAFF***

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#### **PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

##### ***Housing***

- Continue existing housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs.
- Working with the neighborhood groups and organizations such as CAP, identify and prioritize target areas to concentrate owner-occupancy objectives.
- Encourage and participate in efforts to foster neighborhood diversity and eliminate unlawful housing discrimination.
- Establish new higher minimum standards for new housing construction and major renovations as part of the new Unified Land Development Ordinance.
- Have Housing Rehabilitation staff members expand marketing efforts for existing housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs.
- Develop additional programs to encourage home ownership and owner-occupancy within the neighborhood.
- Inform neighborhood residents about lead paint and asbestos hazards.
- Working with the neighborhood committee, develop a brochure on the neighborhood's history and its historical properties.

##### ***Strength of Community***

- Help determine a location for the neighborhood center and assist with site acquisition.
- Complete the *Guide to City Services* and distribute.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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### **PLANNING DEPARTMENT (con't)**

#### ***Public Facilities***

- Consider the use of Community Development Block Grant monies to fund or subsidize alley pavings in parts of the City with slum and blight.
- Investigate the feasibility of amortizing property owners' costs of alley pavings over a longer period of time than 10 years for low-income owners.
- 

#### ***Redevelopment***

- Promote the redevelopment of vacant lots for single family housing.
- Encourage institutions and other large employers to develop alternatives to large surface parking lots in residential neighborhoods.
- Work with the neighborhood groups to encourage the reuse of vacant buildings that used to house neighborhood businesses for new neighborhood-scale businesses.
- Establish stricter master plan requirements for institutions as part of the new Unified Land Development Ordinance.
- Work with Public Works and the Engineering Department to develop higher design standards for parking lots.
- Encourage employers with large parking lots in the neighborhood to landscape them to reduce their visual impact and increase the amount of green space.
- Consider promoting on-going vacant space not suitable for residential development for neighborhood spaces such as a community garden or a site commemorating the neighborhood's history.

#### ***Transportation and Parking***

- Work to keep residents informed about transportation projects that could affect the neighborhood.

#### ***General***

- Coordinate with other city staff to hold educational sessions on issues of importance to neighborhood -- including home buyer and housing rehabilitation programs, other resources new planning initiatives -- and answer residents' questions.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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### **INSPECTION DEPARTMENT**

- Work with neighborhood groups to eliminate problems regarding the maintenance and appearance of neighborhood properties.
- Develop computer-based method to track code violations and warnings.
- Improve follow-up on properties with ongoing code violations.
- Develop a brochure on the primary dwelling and zoning code regulations and violations.
- Increase code compliance and enforcement efforts in alleys.
- Implement the suggestions put forth by the current code enforcement review committee.
- Coordinate with other city staff to hold educational sessions on issues of importance to neighborhood, including dwelling code compliance and enforcement.
- Investigate the possibility of adding an additional housing inspector or reorganizing the Inspection Department.
- Consider developing a licensing program for rental properties.

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- Increase community policing presence in the neighborhood.
- Work to increase the number of neighborhood blocks with neighborhood watches.
- Educate residents about the correlation between good night lighting and reductions in crimes at night.
- Work with the Traffic Engineer to monitor traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and accident rates along neighborhood streets to ensure the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- Encourage participation of neighborhood watch blocks in National Night Out.
- Work with neighborhood groups to promote the existing residential parking permit program and to assess whether additional blocks should have timed parking restrictions.
- Coordinate with other city staff to hold educational sessions on issues of importance to neighborhood, including crime stats, neighborhood watches, etc.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### PARKS DEPARTMENT

- Makeover and upgrade parks (both within the neighborhood and throughout the City) -- redesigning them to meet changing standards and interests -- on a regular 10-15 year cycle.
- City Forester should work to plant additional boulevard trees in the neighborhood, especially along Farnam Street, where trees were removed as part of the NSP line project, and the other major thoroughfares: Jackson Street, 7th Street, South Avenue, West Avenue, and 3rd and 4th Streets.
- Develop a skateboarding area or other specific play space within the neighborhood for older youth.
- Increase the amount of regular night lighting at Hood and Powell Parks.
- Work to insure adequate funding for the Skates for Kids program.

### PUBLIC WORKS

- Assist with increased code compliance and enforcement efforts for dwellings and alleys. Through the Board of Public Works, authorize removal of abandoned vehicles and other abandoned property.
- Work with the Planning Department to develop higher design standards for parking lots.
- Install a sidewalk along the south side of Green Bay Street between 9th Street and West Avenue.
- Improve problem on-street parking spots where potential conflicts exist. One example is the intersection of 10th and Jackson Streets.
- Improve intersections and crossings as necessary to make them more pedestrian friendly. One example is the West Avenue crossing near the Quillin's IGA store.
- Work to keep neighbors informed about transportation projects that could affect the neighborhood.
- Target the major roadways in the neighborhood for streetscaping improvements.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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### **TRAFFIC ENGINEER**

- Work with the Police Department to monitor traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and accident rates along neighborhood streets to ensure the safety of motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- Investigate ways to improve problem on-street parking spots where potential conflicts exist. One example is the intersection of 10th and Jackson Streets.
- Investigate ways to improve intersections and crossings as necessary to make them more pedestrian friendly. One example is the West Avenue crossing near the Quillin's IGA store.

### **FINANCE DEPARTMENT**

- Investigate the feasibility of amortizing property owners' costs of alley pavings over a longer period of time than 10 years for low-income owners.



## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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### ***COUNCIL COMMITTEES***

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#### **COUNCIL CODE ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE**

- Investigate the possibility of adding an additional housing inspector or reorganizing the Inspection Department.
- Consider developing a licensing program for rental properties.
- Develop ways to increase code compliance and enforcement efforts in alleys.

#### **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) COMMITTEE**

- Consider using CDBG funds for an additional housing inspector position.
- Continue funding existing housing rehabilitation and home ownership programs.
- Approve the acquisition of a site for the neighborhood center and provide funds for any remaining shortfall for the neighborhood center construction.
- Consider using CDBG funds to fund or subsidize alley pavings in parts of the City with slum and blight.
- Continue funding the Skates for Kids program.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

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#### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE AND NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS**

##### ***Housing***

- Work with Inspection Department to eliminate problems regarding the maintenance and appearance of neighborhood properties.
- Make suggestions to the current Council code enforcement review committee and help to implement its recommendations.
- Develop a new resident/new home owner mentoring program.
- Help develop a program to recognize home owners who maintain and/or rehabilitate their properties.
- Working with the City Planning Department and organizations such as CAP, identify and prioritize target areas to concentrate owner-occupancy objectives.
- Notify absentee property owners and realtors that the neighborhood groups are working to promote owner-occupancy within the neighborhood.
- Encourage and participate in efforts to foster neighborhood diversity and eliminate unlawful housing discrimination.
- Inform neighborhood residents about lead paint and asbestos hazards.
- Working with the Planning Department, develop a brochure on the neighborhood's history and its historical properties.
- Organize walking tours of the neighborhood.

##### ***Strength of Community***

- Support the Boys' and Girls' Club Program at Hamilton School and encourage its expansion to another school.
- Work with Police Department to increase the number of neighborhood blocks with neighborhood watches.
- Combine existing neighborhood groups into a larger area organization at least for some functions.
- Start a neighborhood-wide newsletter.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE AND NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS (con't)**

#### ***Strength of Community***

- Develop additional neighborhood-wide programs and activities for residents.
- Work to link neighborhood volunteers with neighborhood residents needing assistance.
- Work to insure neighborhood residents have adequate access to basic food supplies.
- Develop programs and spaces to celebrate the diversity of neighborhood residents.
- Develop a welcome program for new residents.
- Work with residents to develop an official name for the neighborhood.

#### ***Public Facilities***

- Encourage the Common Council to adopt a resolution allowing Council members to request alley pavings in any alley for which at least 60 percent of the surrounding property is residential rental property.
- Encourage the La Crosse School District to install additional night lighting at Hamilton School.
- Encourage better lighting of alleys.
- Work with City Forester to plant additional boulevard trees in the neighborhood.
- Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to develop a skateboarding area or other specific play space within the neighborhood for older youth.
- Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to make neighborhood parks safer for children.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

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### **NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEE AND NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS (con't)**

#### ***Redevelopment***

- Work with the Planning Department to promote the redevelopment of vacant lots for single-family housing.
- Encourage institutions and other large employers to develop alternatives to large surface parking lots in residential neighborhoods.
- Work with the Planning Department to encourage the reuse of vacant buildings that used to house neighborhood businesses for new neighborhood-scale businesses.
- Work with the Planning Department to encourage institutions and other large employers to develop alternatives to large surface parking lots in residential neighborhoods.
- Consider using on-going vacant space not suitable for residential development for neighborhood spaces such as a community garden or a site commemorating the neighborhood's history.
- Consider the development of a neighborhood business zone.
- Consider establishing a Community Development Corporation to fund independent neighborhood projects and revitalization efforts.

#### ***Transportation and Parking***

- Encourage institutions and other larger employers to have their employees park on-site instead of on neighborhood streets or chose another mode to travel to work.
- Promote the existing residential parking permit program.
- Work with the Police Department to assess whether additional blocks should have timed parking restrictions.

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

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### SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LA CROSSE

- Consider installing additional night lighting around Hamilton School

### BOYS' AND GIRLS' CLUB

- Continue the existing program at Hamilton School and expand to another school if possible.
- Encourage the La Crosse School District to install additional night lighting around Hamilton School.

### LA CROSSE AREA TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

- Encourage institutions and other large employers to develop alternatives to large surface parking lots in residential neighborhoods.

### COMMUNITY-WIDE ORGANIZATIONS

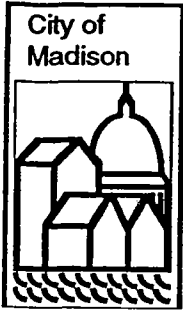
- Work to insure neighborhood residents have adequate access to basic food supplies.
- Encourage institutions and other large employers to develop alternatives to large surface parking lots in residential neighborhoods.
- Help create a program to recognize home owners who maintain and/or rehabilitate their properties.
- Provide volunteers to help parole city parks where there are or have been problems and help make the parks safer for children.
- Assist with fund raising for the southside Neighborhood Center.

### AREA EMPLOYERS

- Consider developing incentive programs to encourage employees to live within the neighborhood.
- Encourage employees park on-site instead of on neighborhood streets.
- Develop incentives to encourage employees to use alternative means of commuting to work, as opposed to driving single occupancy vehicles.

**POWELL-HOOD PARK-  
HAMILTON  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

**APPENDICES**



## NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION EXTERIOR INSPECTION CHECK LIST\*

Property Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Submitted by: Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Association \_\_\_\_\_

### *MAJOR*

- PAINTING: All observable sides of the house flaking or peeling or serious peeling one or more sides due to weather or water damage.
- CHIMNEY: Bricks missing, loose or falling out.
- ROOF: 25% of shingles curling at the edges or grit missing from 25% of the shingles, hole on roof or large patch of shingles missing.
- PORCH:  handrail missing 6 riser+ stair;  guardrail missing on porch 4'+ from grade;  support columns damaged or rotten;  support beams sagging;  stair treads damaged or missing;  hole in porch decking.
- OTHER: (Including major repairs on garages or sheds) List: \_\_\_\_\_

### *MINOR*

- INOPERABLE CARS
- TALL GRASS AND WEEDS (over 8")
- JUNK, TRASH, AND DEBRIS
- PAINTING (trim)
- CHIMNEY (tuckpoint)
- GUTTERS/DOWNSPOUTS (deteriorated)
- SOFFITS/FASCIA (holes)
- SIDING (missing, damaged)
- WINDOWS (broken)
- FOUNDATION (cracks, tuckpointing)
- PORCH REPAIRS: List: \_\_\_\_\_
- OTHER: (Including minor repairs to garages or sheds) List: \_\_\_\_\_

\* For use from the public sidewalk, alley, or street without trespass on individual properties.

**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** Mayor Medinger, Members of the Common Council

**FROM:** Director of Planning, City Finance Director, City Attorney, and City Assessor

**DATE:** January 15, 1998

**SUBJECT:** Feasibility of providing incentives to owner occupants who demolish or renovate homes in declining or blighted areas

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In accordance with the attached resolution, the Planning Department, with input from the Assessor's Office and City Attorney's Office identified the following possible incentives and suggested funding sources:

1. Existing Housing Rehabilitation Program offers 3% loans to owner occupants to make home repairs. With support of the Housing Rehabilitation Review Board, make modifications to locally established rules referenced below to make the program available to more homeowners. (CDBG funded, low/mod benefit).
  - a. soften the equity requirement. current requirement is (assessed value & 50% of Rehab cost  $\leq$  existing debt & Rehab loan).
  - b. soften the one year residency requirement.
  - c. redefine the spending limit to "meet the need" of the dwelling.
2. Existing Replacement Housing Program allows the City to acquire and demolish blighted properties to facilitate owner-occupied housing development. (CDBG funded, low/mod benefit or elimination of Slum and Blight.) Cost of site clearance is not passed on to the builder.
  - a. program activity could be modified to assist owners who wish to demolish their existing homes to build new ones. Cost of demolition and related costs could be covered in the form of a grant or low interest loan. (CDBG funded, elimination of Slum and Blight)
3. Create a "Demolition Program" to cover demolition, archaeology, asbestos, and soft costs to facilitate removal of slum and blighted conditions in the target neighborhoods. This would serve the same function as 2.a. (CDBG funded, elimination of Slum and Blight)
4. Use CDBG funds to pave alleys in low/moderate income neighborhoods. (CDBG funded, low/mod benefit)



5. Undertake a vigorous code enforcement/apartment inspection program (and possible licensing program) to clean up unsightly and hazardous properties. This activity would remove the deteriorating conditions that devalue neighborhoods and discourage owner-occupant investment in real estate. Salary costs could be covered by CDBG. (CDBG funded, elimination of Slum and Blight)
  - a. annual/bi-annual apartment inspections by Inspection and Fire Departments
  - b. landlord licensing program
6. Develop residential TIF districts to cover the costs of street improvements, streetscaping, lighting, alley and sidewalk upgrades, park improvements, and general public works projects. (TIF funding)
7. Develop a "dumpster program" to cover demolition costs associated with full or partial demolition of dwellings or general clean-up in target areas. Use commercial dumpsters or municipal vehicles to pick up material. (CDBG funded, Slum and Blight removal)
8. Expand community policing and related programs to make the police presence more conspicuous as a crime deterrent. Issues such as crime and vandalism act as deterrents to investment. Removal of these deterrents creates an environment that encourages housing investment.
9. Develop Community-Based Development Organizations to coordinate neighborhood revitalization activities that focus on housing and neighborhood cleanup (CDBG funded, low/mod benefit).
10. Expand City and Community Action Program Housing Programs to increase capacity to develop more new, owner-occupied housing for persons below 80% median family income. Enough funding is included in the 1998 HOME Program to develop 3-4 new homes. (HOME Program)
11. Continue or expand funding for the CAP-operated Homebuyer Assistance Program to assure that opportunities for homebuyers remain in place. (HOME Program)
12. This report is to be referred to the appropriate implementing committees.
13. Staff is to investigate whether the Federal Housing and Urban Development's "officer next door" program would be available to City police officers using the City's entitlement CDBG funds.

Staff will be available at the various committee meeting to discuss and refine these suggestions.  
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# CITY OF LA CROSSE COUNCIL LEGISLATION

FILE #  
98-2-61

**CAPTION:**

*Amended*

Report from the City Planning Department regarding amended resolution authorizing feasibility study of providing temporary property tax relief to owner occupants who demolish and rebuild or do major renovations to homes in declining and/or blighted neighborhoods.

**REFERRAL ROUTE:**

Introduced January 15, 1998  
  
J & A Committee  
F & P Committee

**ACTIONS AND DATES:**

REPORT ADOPTED  
FEB 12 1998  
  
BY COUNCIL

REQUESTED BY:

*PLANNING DEPT.*

INTRODUCED BY:

# Property Maintenance & Code Enforcement Guide

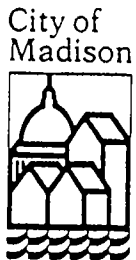
## BURNING:

OPEN BURNING IS PROHIBITED in the City of Madison!

## LAWN FERTILIZER:

Lawn fertilizer is a lake weed nutrient — don't let it stray from your yard!

Any person who violates any provisions of any Ordinance or fails to comply with any of its requirements, shall upon conviction thereof, forfeit not more than two hundred dollars (\$200.00) and in addition shall pay all costs and expenses involved in the case. Each day such violation continues shall be considered a separate offense.



*Your cooperation in providing an attractive and well maintained property will enhance your City, your neighborhood and yourself.*

### Message from the TENANT RESOURCE CENTER and the MADISON APARTMENT ASSOCIATION:

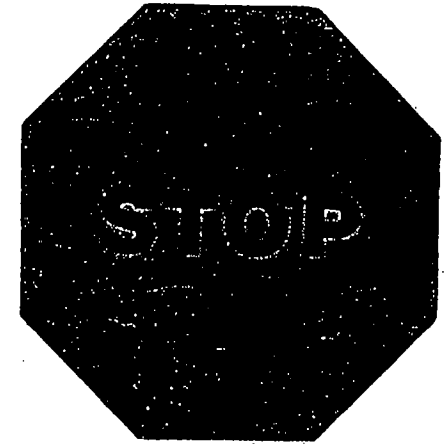
Working together — we can keep your home clean and livable. Tenants and landlords both have a role.

Property owners have a duty and an obligation to see to it that local trash storage and removal ordinances are adhered to. This means being aware of the trash pick-up day in the area, the day and time garbage may be left at the curb and the time that cans must be removed from curbside for storage.

Tenants need to take on some responsibility as well. On some leases tenants contract out for specific duties in keeping yards and sidewalks clean or snow-free. In such cases where tenants are fully or partially responsible for trash storage and removal, property owners should advise their residents as to the proper procedures at THE BEGINNING OF THE LEASE TERM. All rules and responsibilities should be spelled out in writing and signed by both parties at the time of "check-in".

Where tenants and owners can help most is by properly packaging garbage, getting it out on the right day and removing trash containers within the allotted time frame. Don't let your garbage become your neighbor's problem.

We're all working together to make downtown neighborhoods a great place to live. With your help, we can keep it that way all year long.



# MADISON

## What a place!

*Few cities can compare with Madison. We can all take pride in our lakes, parks, the rich diversity of our neighborhoods and the spirit of community we all share. With each of us following the procedures and regulations of this publication and using the other information herein, Madison will be an ever better place to live!*

### GARBAGE AND TRASH REMOVAL AND STORAGE: (7.36, 27.04)

- (a) The owner of every building shall be responsible for supplying adequate garbage and refuse storage facilities.
- (b) Food waste must be drained and wrapped before being placed in containers.
- (c) Trash cans shall be placed at the rear of, or in the building except when they are at the curb for pickup.
- (d) Trash cans shall not be placed at the curb sooner than 12 hours before the pickup day.
- (e) Trash cans shall be removed from the curb within 24 hours after pickup.
- (f) Newspapers (for recycling) shall be tied securely in bundles 8 inches thick or less and placed next to your refuse containers weekly (no magazines or telephone books).
- (g) Large items are collected by a separate truck. Place at curb on your regular collection day. Please call the Streets Division for schedule information (266-4681).
- (h) For information concerning grass clippings, leaves and brush call Streets (East: 246-4532 or West: 266-4681).

### LAWNS: 27.05(2)(f)

- (a) Grass shall be maintained to a height not to exceed 8 inches in length; this includes the terrace.
- (b) All exterior property areas shall be kept free of weeds, including terraces.

### EXTERIOR PROPERTY AREAS: 27.05(s)(c)

All exterior property areas shall be properly maintained in a clean and sanitary condition free from debris, rubbish or garbage, physical hazards, rodent harborage and infestation.

### PARKING: 28.11(3)(a)3, 28.11(3)(a)4

- (a) All vehicles MUST have current licensed plates and be operable.
- (b) Abandoned vehicle(s) must be removed by the owner; if this is not possible, then the owner of the property where abandoned vehicle(s) is parked must call the Police (266-4275) to have vehicle removed.

### VISION CLEARANCE: 28.04(12)(e)1

- (a) No structure, screening, bush, tree, branches or embankment of any kind shall be erected, placed, maintained or grown that shall not provide adequate vehicle vision clearance.
- (b) Maintain all plantings so as not to present hazards to adjoining properties or to persons or vehicles traveling on public ways.

### FECES: 27.05(2)(c)

All animal feces shall be removed within 24 hours. Animal droppings should be deposited in sanitary sewer or buried.

### SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL: 10.28(1)

The owner of each lot or part of lot shall, before 12:00 noon of each day, remove all snow and ice which may have fallen or accumulated upon their sidewalk. If ice cannot be removed, then the owner shall keep the same effectively sprinkled with sand, salt or other suitable substance until ice and/or snow can be removed.

### FENCES, WALKS, ETC.: 27.05(2)(d), 27.05(2)(f)

Fences, walks, driveways, parking areas, other minor construction, etc., shall be properly maintained in a safe, sanitary and substantial condition.

### PLANTING ON TERRACE: 10.25(3)

No planting(s) on the terrace may be in excess of twenty-four (24) inches in height or within a distance of twenty-four (24) inches from back of curb.

### EROSION CONTROL: 37.06, 37.08(5)(g), 37.08(5)(f)

It is in violation of City Ordinance and subject to penalties for any person, firm or corporation to cause or permit erosion. The tracking or dropping of dirt on adjacent land, public streets or bodies of water is considered a form of erosion.

### RECYCLING:

Madison operates a recycling plant to retrieve iron and steel. Newspapers are also collected for recycling (see garbage section). There are also used motor oil recycling locations. For information call: 266-4092.

### COMPOST:

Call the County Agent for information on composting: 266-4271.