

City of New Bern
Redevelopment Commission Meeting

July 24, 2019- 6:00 P.M.

Development Services Conference Room
303 First Street

Members Present: Maria Cho, Chair Theresa Lee, Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley, Steve Strickland, Kip Peregoy, Leander “Robbie” Morgan, Tabari Wallace

Ex-Officio Members Present: None

Members Excused (E)/Absent (A): John Young (E)

Staff Present: Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services; Amanda Ohlensehlen, Community and Economic Development Manager; Nadia Abdul-Hadi, Planner II; D’Aja Fulmore, Community Development Coordinator; and Alice Wilson, GIS Manager.

1. Welcome and Call To Order

Chair Theresa Lee called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. A roll call was not delivered. Chair Theresa Lee told commissioners that she would have to leave the meeting early and Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley would preside over the remainder of the meeting.

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of June 22, 2019 Redevelopment Commission Meeting were not presented for review and approval. Chair Theresa Lee told commissioners that minutes are still being prepared by staff.

3. Public Comment

Chair Theresa Lee opened the floor for public comments. Dr. Catherine Adolph stood up to extend her appreciation to the Commission. Dr. Adolph then began discussing the current community frustration regarding the Stanley White Recreation Center. Dr. Adolf proposed that the current Stanley White center be used for outdoor recreation and mentioning creating a state of the art African American Heritage Center. Dr. Adolph also suggested Kafer Park undergoing changes that would be called Kafer Neighborhood to become a residential area, divided into 3 phases of construction. Dr. Adolph provided handouts to support her suggestions. The Commission thanked Dr. Adolph for her attendance.

4. Review Draft Redevelopment Plan: Jeff Ruggieri, City of New Bern

Jeff Ruggieri, Director of Development Services for the City of New Bern, began a review of the draft Redevelopment Plan for the Redevelopment Commission, with handouts included. Mr.

Ruggieri began the review by telling commissioners that he is looking for guidance from the Commission to complete edits to the plan by the end of the next meeting. In regard to time, Mr. Ruggieri told the commissioners that it would be best to bypass the background information for the plan so there would be time to discuss the meat of the plan. Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley asked Mr. Ruggieri if it would be okay for members to email any questions on the background component of the plan. Mr. Ruggieri answered that he would be happy to receive emails and will clarify any questions.

Mr. Ruggieri began discussing the Redevelopment Plan Guiding Principles. Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley proposed adding “public wealth” to line 10 on page 14 of the draft plan. Additionally, Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley suggested adding a public health component to the paragraph starting at line 14 of the draft. Commissioner Maria Cho provided input and it was determined that the statements are to be kept broad because they are guiding principles, not intended to give much detail. Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that portions of the plan are more specific, with the discussion of goals. Mr. Ruggieri also told the Commission that he is open to any feedback and reworking the language of the plan.

Moving further into the details of the plan, Mr. Ruggieri guided the commissioners to the discussion of plan goals. As an example of an item that sparked consideration for the plan, Mr. Ruggieri stated that he had seen a parcel on First Street that had a tree with extreme overgrowth on the property, raising concerns about safety and code enforcement. Mr. Ruggieri opened the floor to receive insight regarding policy changes to increase code enforcement efforts. Mr. Ruggieri asked the commissioners if the plan should include a clearance statement to prevent extreme vegetation on properties.

Commissioner Kip Peregoy stated that it is easier for the City of New Bern to do cleaning and enforce codes. Commissioner Robbie Morgan stated that this problem is getting worse and language in the plan should be changed. Commissioner Steve Strickland questioned if there would need to be an ordinance change. Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that there would be no need for an ordinance change but there should be a statement added to the plan regarding code enforcement.

Commissioner Cho asked how the City would be able to enforce codes without being overwhelmed with the amount of lots to oversee. Mr. Ruggieri responded to Commissioner Cho stating that enforcement will be done street by street and case by case. Mr. Ruggieri mentioned the addition of another staff member in Development Services to aid in the City’s efforts to address and solve these problems. Commissioner Tabari Wallace asked Mr. Ruggieri if the current language in the plan works for what the Commission is trying to convey. Mr. Ruggieri replied stating that the language is appropriate to complete the work and the Commission agreed that it should remain as is.

The Commission began looking at Policy 2.1.2 on page 15 of the draft plan. Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley stated that the plan should clearly define the inspection program. Mr. Ruggieri told Co-Chair Bullock-Mosley that he would add the necessary language, and define the terms of the program, listed under a goal.

76 Discussion moved to Policy 2.2.2 of the draft plan. Commissioners began discussing their ability
77 to act as a landlord and purchase existing residential structures within the redevelopment
78 boundary. Co-Chair Bullock-Mosely asked what would be done in the case that someone is
79 unwilling to sell property. Mr. Ruggieri responded by stating that if a property is labeled
80 blighted, the Commission has the authority under eminent domain to purchase the property.
81 Commissioners further discussed the possibility of having to handle relocation when purchasing
82 property. Mr. Ruggieri mentioned adding verbiage about a relocation plan, as details are clearly
83 outlined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

84 Commissioners also began discussing maintaining the character of neighborhoods while making
85 rehabilitation efforts. This became a major part of the discussion, as Commissioner Cho inquired
86 about ways to respect what communities already have but also have an ability to be creative in
87 what is newly introduced to these communities. Chair Theresa Lee stated that it is important to
88 not get “too creative” and expressed the need to work within the parameters of what the
89 communities said they want. Chair Lee emphasized the importance of not having major
90 pushback from the community and incorporating their desires. Commissioner Peregoy asked if
91 the focus should be on what the community says they want or what the market wants. Co-Chair
92 Bullock-Mosely emphasized that too much creativity could cause problems and cause
93 neighborhoods to lose their historic value. Consensus was met amongst the commissioners to
94 retain the current language of Policy 2.2.2, as the statement provides a great general language
95 related to this matter.

96 For Policy 2.3.1 on page 16 of the draft plan, Mr. Ruggieri stated that he will remove “detached
97 single family” from line 35. This statement raised concern for Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosely,
98 who expressed the need for character preservation of neighborhoods. Chair Theresa Lee
99 announced that she had to excuse herself from the remainder of the meeting but told
100 commissioners to be thinking about talking with the Board of Aldermen regarding funding for
101 the plan. Co-Chair Theresa stated that funding is extremely important for such a major plan for
102 the redevelopment area.

103 The meeting continued with a closer look back at Policy 2.2.3, line 26, on page 16. Co-Chair
104 Bullock-Mosley suggested that other potential providers be added along with Twin Rivers
105 Opportunities. Commissioner Strickland agreed with this and suggested making the language
106 reflect the opportunity to work with other organizations, if the opportunity presents itself in the
107 future. Mr. Ruggieri responded telling the Commission that he would work on fixing the draft
108 plan to reflect recommendations. Additionally, Mr. Ruggieri stated that he would add an
109 appendix for the plan.

110 The Commission began closing the draft plan review with a discussion of geographic Focus Area
111 3 of the map handouts given by Mr. Ruggieri. The commissioners listened to Mr. Ruggieri
112 explain the future plan to extend 3rd Avenue to connect to Main Street. Commissioner Robbie
113 Morgan stressed the importance of receiving an update on Stanley White Recreation Center to
114 see if this road will be the best option is the center is kept in the same location.

115 **Copy of Draft Plan Reviewed:**

I. Introduction

The Greater Five Points Area, has been subjected to adversity for over a century. The City of New Bern adopted its most recent redevelopment plan in February 2016, this plan is more commonly known as 'The Greater Five Points Transformation Plan'. Prior to this, in 2014, a plan called 'The New Bern Gateway Renaissance Plan' was established. While the 2014 plan was commended for its idealism, the further 2016 plan was established as a more appropriate plan in terms of execution. In 2018 the Redevelopment Commission was established to create and deliver a plan that combines the idealism of 'The New Bern Gateway Renaissance Plan' with the execution of 'The Greater Five Points Transformation Plan'. Additionally the Redevelopment Commission aims to work with the community and City of New Bern officials to identify any subsequent goals and objectives that will address the issues faced by community in The Greater Five Points Area.

History of the area

The Greater Five Points Redevelopment Area is a historically African-American community located directly west of historic downtown New Bern and encompasses the neighborhoods of Greater Duffyfield, Dryborough, Walt Bellamy, Trent Court, and Craven Terrace. The area is home to over 3,300 residents, 89% of which are African-American.

Due to the prevalence of cotton and tobacco production in Craven County, the population of New Bern was primarily African-American prior to the Civil War. In the book "Crafting Lives: African American Artisans in New Bern, North Carolina, 1770-1900", Caroline Bishir notes a unique period history in the years following the American Revolution where New Bern became somewhat of a haven for talented African-American artisans to cultivate their skills; something uncommon for the antebellum South. Even during the Civil War New Bern became an urban refuge for hundreds of slaves, and African-Americans made up the majority of the City's residents. As a result Africans-Americans played a vital role in the political and economic landscape until the Disenfranchisement Law in 1900. With the onset of Jim Crow laws and political disenfranchisement, the African-American community in New Bern maintained their own thriving commercial and cultural district – Five Points. Five Points was a "separate but equal" community with many thriving black-owned businesses and churches.

A major disaster that forever changed for the community came in 1922, when a fire started in a chimney in an area known today as Craven Terrace, this event is more commonly known as the Great Fire. This fire swept across the City of New Bern, and by the time it was finally extinguished, 25% of the City had been burned down. Over 1000 homes were destroyed in the fire, leaving 3000 citizens homeless (a quarter of the city's population at that point in time), the majority of these citizens were African-American. This fire permanently change the local landscape of the Five Points area, as in many cases the reconstruction of burned homes was disallowed. Due the lack of housing and jobs in the area many of the African-American families that had previously resided in the area, were forced to move. (began) New Bern had shifted from a predominantly African-American population, to a predominantly white population between 1920 and 1940.

With the events of World War II and the subsequent construction of military bases in eastern North Carolina, there was another economic boom for African-Americans living in New Bern and Craven County. With the creation of more jobs and the subsequent increases in wealth that come with those jobs, there was a resurgence of African-American owned businesses, and once again the vibrancy of the

1 Five Points area had returned; further fueled by the return of African-American veterans. Unfortunately
2 this success was not long-term, largely a result of the early 1950s project of widening Broad Street which
3 negatively impacted the commercial business taking place in Five Points and Downtown New Bern. The
4 continued inequities between African-Americans and whites in New Bern, despite the dismantling of Jim
5 Crow laws, prompted many African-Americans to move to other cities in search of a better standard of
6 living, to include better jobs, schools and race relations.

7 In the present day, despite the presence of African-Americans in the local political structure, after
8 decades of disinvestment, Greater Five Points continues to struggle. With few opportunities for its
9 residents, the area now suffers from elevated crime levels, dilapidated housing, minimal public transit,
10 higher incidents of chronic health conditions, and poor educational attainment. While property values
11 are rising in the City of New Bern as a whole, in The Greater Five Points area home values are less than
12 two-thirds of the city average. With this in mind the Redevelopment Commission aims to build off the
13 previous 'Greater Five Points Transformation Plan' (2016) and 'The New Bern Gateway Renaissance
14 Plan' (2014) in order to establish and implement a plan that empowers both current and future
15 residents of The Greater Five Points area, through the creation of an attractive, safe, and vibrant
16 environment in which the community can live, work, play and create.

17 The following redevelopment plan will rebuild and rehabilitate the community in its own unique way
18 that celebrates and honors its rich African-American heritage, and ultimately provides residents and the
19 community with an area that cultivates creativity and entrepreneurship, fosters diversity, and promotes
20 growth and wellness.

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II.Existing Conditions

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The Redevelopment Commission boundary encompasses a total of 1899 parcels over a total 474 acres of

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land. This boundary can be seen on the map below:



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A breakdown of the total parcels/acreage (by use) can be seen in Table A:

Existing Land Use	Parcels	Acres	% of Total Parcels
Commercial	66	21.1	3.5%
Duplex	47	6.0	2.5%
Industrial	6	4.6	0.3%
Institutional	58	41.9	3.1%
Multi-Family	24	58.5	1.2%
Office	13	6.6	0.7%
Recreation	4	16.7	0.2%
Single-Family	670	80.6	35.3%
Trailer Residential	118	18.8	6.2%
Vacant	893	124.7	47.0%
Total	1899	379.5	100.0%

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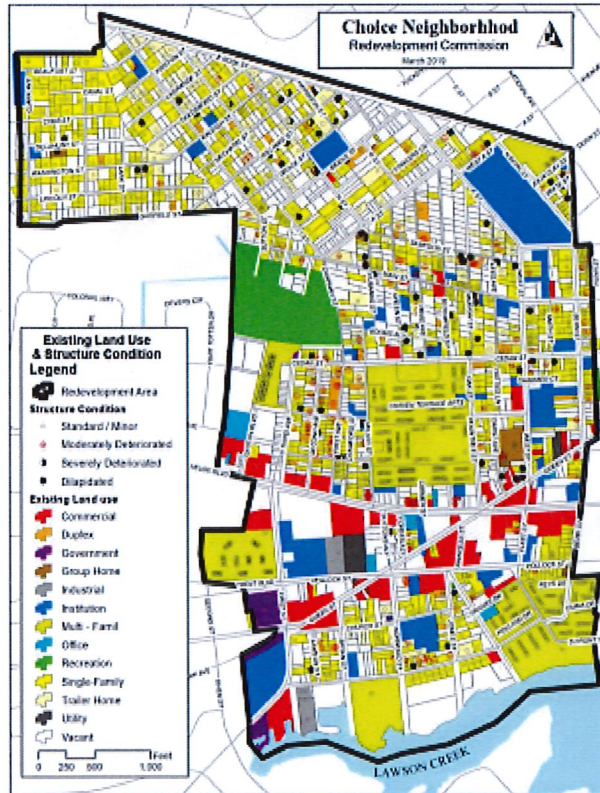
(Table A – Total Acreage excludes roadways)

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1 **Existing Land Use in the Redevelopment Area**

2 Of the 1,899 parcels in the Redevelopment Area, a mere 1,006 are developed, the remainder are vacant
3 lots. This is an astonishing **47% vacancy rate** for a once fully developed area; a 5% increase since the
4 Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) in 2016, where vacant lots made up 42% of the total number of
5 parcels. The considerable amount of vacancy within the Redevelopment Area is a result of both the
6 flood-prone nature of the neighborhood, and the long-term disinvestment. The vacant land in the
7 Redevelopment Area is both a challenge and an opportunity. In some areas outside of the floodplain,
8 vacant land offers potential sites for infill development like new housing. In flood prone areas, vacant
9 land offers opportunities for natural stormwater management, improved open space or recreation, local
10 food production, and/or housing that meets FEMA standards for flood plains. A visual of this data can be
11 seen in the map below:

12 **Map: Existing Land-Use/Structure Condition in the Redevelopment Area**



- 1
- 2 Commercial Zoning
- 3 (INSERT POTENTIAL COMMERCIAL SPACE DATA)

DRAFT

1 **Demographics**

2 The Redevelopment Area represents about 11 percent of the city's total population. It is predominantly
 3 African American in a city that is only one-third African American overall. Just over one-third of
 4 households in the redevelopment area are female-headed, twice the proportion found in the city as a
 5 whole. A further breakdown of the demographics in the Redevelopment area can be seen in the table
 6 below:

	Trent Court/Craven Terrace	Greater Five Points	City of New Bern
Total Population	1,181	3,343	29,524
Race			
White	4%	7%	58%
African American	95%	89%	33%
Other	1%	4%	9%
Hispanic/Latino	0%	2%	6%
Age			
Under age 17	38%	28%	23%
Above age 55	17%	23%	31%
Total Households	522	1,501	12,770
Average Household Size	2.26	2.30	2.25
Household Type			
Male & Female Householder	8%	13%	41%
Female Householder	75%	34%	16%
Median Household Income	\$8,652	\$29,026	\$37,180
Poverty Rate	83%	36%*	24%
Educational Attainment (25+)			
High School Diploma or Higher	80%	80%	84%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	2%	19%	24%

* Census tract level

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2010, American Community Survey 2008-2012 (block group level), New Bern Housing Authority

7 Trent Court and Craven Terrace comprise one-third of the households and population in the area. This
 8 public housing population is in general much younger than the neighborhood and city population, with
 9 more children under 17 years of age and fewer persons over 55 years of age. The public housing
 10 population is also more economically disadvantaged. The median income for public housing households
 11 is only \$8,652, less than one-quarter of the City of New Bern's median household income of \$37,180.
 12 The Redevelopment Area has a 50 percent higher poverty level than the city (36 percent compared to 24
 13 percent), but both stand in stark contrast to the public housing poverty rate of 83 percent.

14 This data reflects the fact that socio-economic conditions of the Redevelopment Area residents today
 15 are different in many ways from the city, with more residents suffering from poverty and lack of
 16 opportunity. Within the neighborhood itself, the public housing residents face even more challenging
 17 socio-economic conditions.

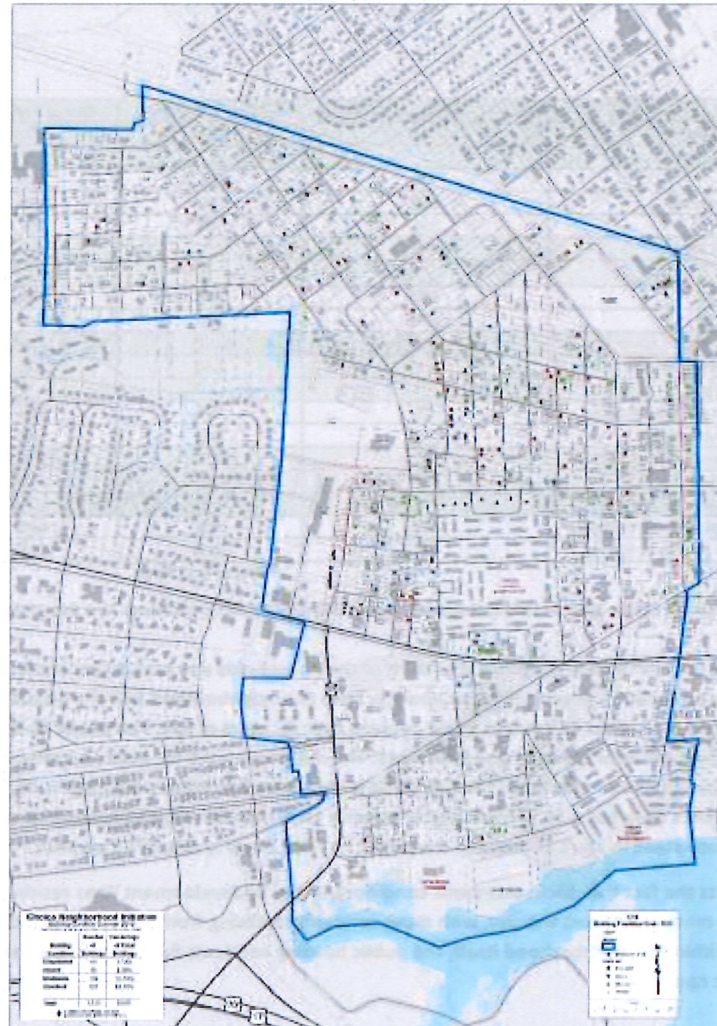
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1 **Existing Housing Conditions**

- 2 The map below shows the conditions of the structures located within the Redevelopment Area
3 boundary. Within the area, building conditions are variable, ranging from those with a standard/minor
4 level of deterioration to entirely dilapidated structures.



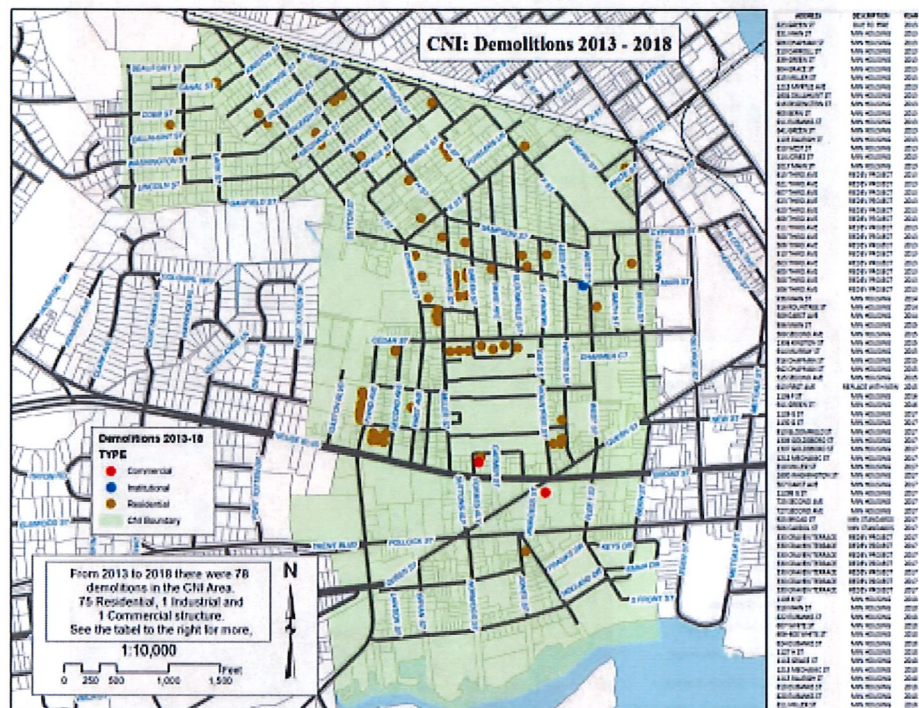
- 5
6 There are 96 active minimum building cases in the area. Contrast that to around 70 for the City at large.

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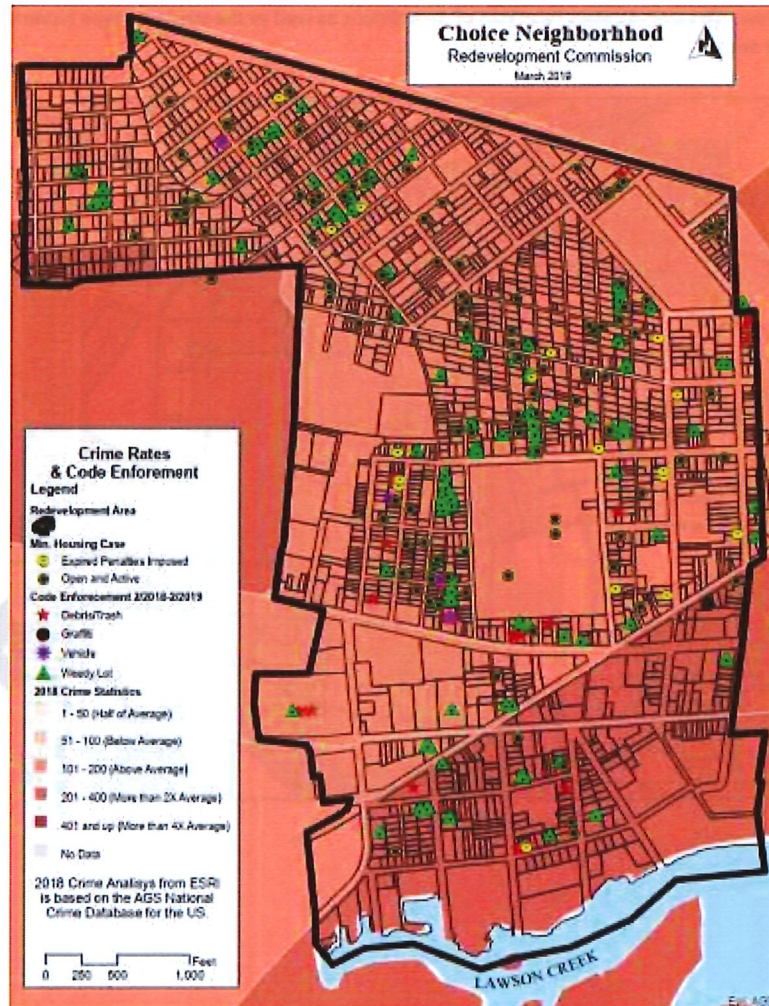
1 Demolitions

2 It should be noted that substantial progress has been made in the Redevelopment area to rid the
3 neighborhood of dilapidated housing. This effort though successful has created a plague of vacant lots
4 throughout the community. By removing one problem, the city has created another. Neighborhoods
5 and streets once populated with homes are now a vast landscape of vacant lots, overgrowth, trash and
6 debris. Demolitions that have taken place within the Redevelopment Area between 2013-2018 are
7 shown below. The map displays locations of demolitions as well as the structure type (commercial,
8 residential etc.)



1 **Crime & Code Enforcement**

2 Historically, within the Redevelopment Boundary, Violent Crimes per 1000 residents, has been
3 approximately three times that of the average of the City as a whole. The 'Crime Rates & Code
4 Enforcement' map displayed below presents the 2018 crime statistics for the area, as well as the lots
5 that have had either an active code enforcement or minimum housing case between 02/2018-02/2019.



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1 Between February 2018 and February 2019 there were a total of 166 code enforcement cases, a
2 breakdown of these cases by, type is displayed below:

Nuisance Type	Number of Cases
Trash	19
Overgrowth	120
Debris	12
Vehicles	4
Trees	7
Graffiti	3
Road/Sidewalk	1
Total	166

10 **Summary of Data**

- 11 • The Redevelopment Area consists of 1,888 parcels, 1,047 of which are developed. This is an
12 astonishing 45.54% vacancy rate for a once fully developed area.
- 13 • Building conditions are variable. There are 96 active minimum building cases in the area.
14 Contrast that to around 70 for the City at large.
- 15 • Over a 1 year period we received 166 nuisance abatement complaints. This compares to 286 for
16 the rest of the city. (35%)
- 17 • 20.49% of all police incident reports generated in last 5 years have occurred within proposed
18 boundary
- 19 • All of this takes place in an area that constitutes only 2.1% of the total land area and 10.1% of
20 the population of the City.

22 **Redevelopment Commission Statutory Authority and Area Determination**

23 A redevelopment area, according to the NC General Statutes, is comprised of any defined area within a
24 city's corporate limits that meets the statutory definition of either a "blighted area," a "non-residential
25 redevelopment area," or a "rehabilitation, conservation, and reconditioning area." Once a zone is
26 determined to be a redevelopment area, the Redevelopment Commission may proceed in exercising
27 their power of eminent domain within that zone. The authority of the Redevelopment Commission with
28 respect to eminent domain is outlined under NCGS 160A-512. The following provides a summary of
29 these responsibilities.

30 Eminent Domain is the power of government to take private property for public use upon the payment
31 of just compensation.

32 Condemnation is the procedure used to take the property without the owner's consent.

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1 NCGS 160A-512 lists the powers of redevelopment commissions. One of the powers is:

2 Within its area of operation to purchase, obtain options on, acquire by gift, grant, bequest, devise,
3 eminent domain or otherwise, any real or personal property or any interest thereon, necessary or
4 incidental to a redevelopment project.

5 Additionally, NCGS 40A-3 provides that a redevelopment commission is a public condemner that has the
6 power of eminent domain and the ability to acquire property by purchase, gift, or condemnation.

7 The procedure for exercising the power of eminent domain is provided by Article 3 of Chapter 40A of
8 the North Carolina General Statutes.

9 The amount of just compensation to be paid to the owner is determined in accordance with the
10 provisions of Article 4 of Chapter 40A of the North Carolina General Statutes. The measure is the fair
11 market value. This amount is determined either by a judge, jury, or commissioners appointed by the
12 Clerk or Court pursuant to a request by either the condemner or the property owner.

13 The philosophy should be that the power of eminent domain is used after all reasonable efforts of
14 negotiation to acquire the property by voluntary agreement have failed.

15 The requirements for each of the potential redevelopment zones listed are as follows:

16 "Blighted Area" shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements (or
17 which is predominantly residential in character), and which, by reason of dilapidation, deterioration, age
18 or obsolescence, inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces, high density
19 of population and overcrowding, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, or the existence of conditions which
20 endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or any combination of such factors, substantially
21 impairs the sound growth of the community, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant
22 mortality, juvenile delinquency and crime, is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or
23 welfare; provided, no area shall be considered a blighted area nor, subject to the power of eminent
24 domain, within the meaning of this Article, unless it is determined by the planning commission that at
25 least two thirds of the number of buildings in the area are of the character described in this subdivision
26 and substantially contribute to the conditions making such a blighted area; provided that if the power of
27 eminent domain shall be exercised under the provisions of this Article, the property owner or owners or
28 persons having an interest in property shall be entitled to be represented by counsel of their own
29 selection and their reasonable counsel fees fixed by the court, taxed as a part of the costs and paid by
30 the petitioners.

31 "Nonresidential redevelopment area" shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings
32 or improvements, whose use is predominantly nonresidential, and which, by reason of:

- 33 a. Dilapidation, deterioration, age or obsolescence of buildings and other structures,
- 34 b. Inadequate provisions for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces,
- 35 c. Defective or inadequate street layout,
- 36 d. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness,
- 37 e. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the property,
- 38 f. Unsanitary or unsafe conditions,
- 39 g. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, or

- 1 h. Any combination of such factors that:
- 2 1. Substantially impairs the sound growth of the community,
- 3 2. Has seriously adverse effects on surrounding development, and
- 4 3. Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare; provided, no such
- 5 area shall be considered a nonresidential redevelopment area nor subject to the
- 6 power of eminent domain, within the meaning of this Article, unless it is
- 7 determined by the planning commission that at least one half of the number of
- 8 buildings within the area are of the character described in this subdivision and
- 9 substantially contribute to the conditions making such area a nonresidential
- 10 redevelopment area; provided that if the power of eminent domain shall be
- 11 exercised under the provisions of this Article, the property owner or owners or
- 12 persons having an interest in property shall be entitled to be represented by
- 13 counsel fees fixed by the court, taxed as a part of the costs and paid by the
- 14 petitioners.

15 "Rehabilitation, conservation, and reconditioning area" shall mean any area which the planning

16 commission shall find, by reason of factors listed in the above definitions, to be subject to a clear and

17 present danger that, in the absence of municipal action to rehabilitate, conserve, and recondition the

18 area, it will become in the reasonably foreseeable future a blighted area or a nonresidential

19 redevelopment area as defined herein. In such an area, no individual tract, building, or improvement

20 shall be subject to the power of eminent domain, within the meaning of this Article, unless it is of the

21 character described in the definitions listed above and substantially contributes to the conditions

22 endangering the area; provided that if the power of eminent domain shall be exercised under the

23 provisions of this Article, the respondent or respondents shall be entitled to be represented by counsel

24 of their own selection and their reasonable counsel fees fixed by the court, taxed as part of the costs

25 and paid by the petitioners.

26

27 **Conclusion**

28 On April 2, 2019 the City of New Bern Planning and Zoning Commission voted unanimously to declare

29 the Redevelopment Area (Map A) a "rehabilitation, conservation, and reconditioning area" under the

30 North Carolina Redevelopment Law (NCCGS 160A-500). Such area will be referred to as the

31 "Redevelopment District Boundary Area" (RDBA) here in.

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2 **Redevelopment Commission of New Bern Mission Statement**

3 "The New Bern Redevelopment Commission: Leading the way for community transformation and
4 improvement by directly addressing community needs in the vital areas of public health,
5 infrastructure, housing and economic development. The Commission is committed to an
6 accountable, transparent and publicly driven process"

7

8 **III. Redevelopment Plan Guiding Principles**

9 The Redevelopment Plan and program activities herein are designed to reverse the overall decline of
10 neighborhood character and create a functional transportation network that supports economic growth
11 through the following objectives:

- 12 1. Take proactive measures to eliminate existing blight and stop further degradation of the
13 community
- 14 2. Mitigate the impact of localized flooding
- 15 3. Improve the quality, quantity, and appearance of housing stock in the community
- 16 4. Increase enforcement of building and nuisance codes
- 17 5. Create a functional transportation network to enhance health, safety, economic development
18 and access to amenities and services
- 19 6. Utilize city owned property within the redevelopment boundary to create new development
20 opportunities
- 21 7. Acquisition of blighted parcels to assemble land for suitable development sites
- 22 8. Implement policy recommendations identified in the Choice Neighborhoods Greater Five Points
23 Transformation Plan (2016) and New Bern Gateway Renaissance Plan (2014)

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25 **Goal 1:** Improve overall appearance of redevelopment area community.

26 Overgrown lots both vacant and occupied are a major contributor to the visual blight of the
27 redevelopment area. Additionally, overgrowth invites litter, debris and illegal dumping. The
28 Redevelopment Commission will improve the overall appearance and aesthetic of properties within the
29 RDBA through:

30 **Objective 1.1:** Increase Nuisance Abatement Code Enforcement Efforts on privately owned and
31 city owned lots.

32 **Policy 1.1.1:** Instruct City Code Enforcement Officer to be proactive in enforcing
33 minimum nuisance standards in the Redevelopment Area.

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- 1 **Policy 1.1.2:** End city policy of not enforcing nuisance standards for weedy and
2 overgrown lots for properties that appear to have "old growth" or have not been
3 previously cleared.
- 4 I. Recommend keeping up to two (2) trees on site that exceed
5 2" caliper width per 5,000 square feet of land area. Preserved trees
6 must be at least 15 feet apart.
- 7 **Policy 1.1.3:** Coordinate with City of New Bern Public Works and Parks and Recreation
8 Departments to create semi-annual neighborhood clean up activities.
- 9
- 10 **Goal 2:** Improve appearance and quality of Housing stock in redevelopment district boundary area
- 11 The redevelopment area has 1,790 housing units, of which 79% are renter occupied. Housing
12 affordability, housing conditions, housing availability, and irresponsible landlords are significant issues
13 facing the redevelopment area community. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey
14 data, an estimated 47.9% of all renter households in New Bern are cost overburdened by 30% or more.
- 15 The lack of safe, code compliant, affordable housing (rental and owner occupied) for the residents of the
16 redevelopment area are serious problems. The deficient in housing was only exacerbated by Hurricane
17 Florence, which damaged many rental and owner-occupied housing units to the point of being
18 uninhabitable. Many property owners and landlords were required to make costly repairs to their
19 houses which exceed the overall value of the property. Many residents, community leaders, housing
20 agencies, homeless providers, and city officials have stressed the impact of the damage from Hurricane
21 Florence on the older housing stock of the redevelopment area and the need to make either costly
22 repairs or construct new housing.
- 23 Much of the existing housing stock in the redevelopment area is old and inefficient. Utility costs are
24 high because poor or absent insulation and outdated inefficient HVAC systems. Similar to other
25 problems mentioned these issues were increased because of Hurricane Florence. Houses that were
26 previously in need of rehabilitation now also require repairs from flood and wind damage.
- 27 The Redevelopment commission will address the need for modernization, rehabilitation and new
28 housing in the RDBA through improving the overall appearance and quality of existing housing and
29 building new energy efficient housing.
- 30 **Objective: 2.1: Minimum Housing and Non Residential Structures Enforcement**
- 31 **Policy 2.1.1:** Instruct code enforcement staff to be proactive in enforcing minimum
32 building code standards for both residential and non-residential structures.
- 33 **Policy 2.1.2:** Create Residential Property Periodic Inspection Program
- 34 I. Create a program for the periodic inspection of residential
35 structures
- 36 a. Hold a properly noticed public hearing about the proposed
37 periodic inspections plan.

- 1 b. Develop a plan to address the ability of low-income
2 residential property owners to comply with minimum
3 housing code standards.
- 4 **Policy 2.1.3: Create Permit and Registration program for residential rental property**
- 5 I. Identify properties with crime and disorder problems.
- 6 a. Create ordinance language for Board of Alderman approval that
7 establishes process for determining the top 10% of properties with
8 crime and disorder problems.
- 9 b. Registration shall include; owners address, owner's name, and property
10 manager's 24-hour contact information if appropriate.
- 11 c. Establish fee for registration not to exceed \$500 for any 12 month
12 period.
- 13 **Objective 2.2: Increase supply of energy efficient code compliance housing within in the**
14 **redevelopment district boundary area**
- 15 **Policy 2.2.1: Improve the quality of existing housing stock through selective purchase**
16 **and rehabilitation of existing residential structures.**
- 17 **Policy 2.2.2: Utilized CDBG and other funding sources to purchase existing residential**
18 **structures within the redevelopment boundary for rehabilitation**
- 19 I. To maximum extent possible, all rehabilitations shall be Energy Star®
20 qualified and incorporate energy efficiency into design and
21 construction.
- 22 II. Any external modifications conducted as a result of rehabilitation
23 efforts should be similar in appearance to adjacent residential
24 development to maintain the character of an individual street or
25 neighborhood.
- 26 **Policy 2.2.3: Partner with Twin rivers opportunities to create rental program for**
27 **residential structures owned by the Redevelopment Commission utilizing section 8**
28 **vouchers in redevelopment area.**
- 29 **Objective 2.3: Improve the quality of existing housing stock through construction of new**
30 **residential structures.**
- 31 **Policy 2.3.1: Utilized CDBG and other funding sources to construct new residential**
32 **structures within the RDBA.**
- 33 I. All new construction shall be Energy Star® qualified and incorporate
34 energy efficiency into design and construction.
- 35 II. All new detached single family residential construction should be similar
36 in appearance to adjacent residential development to maintain the
37 character of an individual street or neighborhood.

- 1 **Goal 3: Explore flood mitigation alternatives within the redevelopment district boundary area**
- 2 Periodic flooding continues to be a major issue for the redevelopment area community. Beyond major
 3 declared events such as Hurricane Florence (09/2018) that inundated the community under 2-4' of flood
 4 water for 3-6 days, periodic flooding during light rain events remains a serious issue. Standing water
 5 from light rain events will remain on lots and streets for days creating breeding grounds for mosquitos,
 6 other health hazards and overall visual blight.
- 7 **Objective 3.1: Reduce impact and frequency from periodic flooding in the redevelopment area**
- 8 **Policy 3.1.1: Commission basin wide flood study of redevelopment area to recommend**
 9 **storm water infrastructure improvements that will reduce or eliminate the occurrence**
 10 **of standing water after routine rain events.**
- 11 **Goal 4: Acquisition of blighted parcels to assemble land for suitable development sites**
- 12 **Objective 4.1: Utilize city owned, vacant, and blighted parcels to create larger scale unified**
 13 **development sites for use in housing, storm water control, economic development, recreation,**
 14 **and community health and welfare opportunities.**
- 15 **Policy 4.1.1: Concentrate housing and economic development related redevelopment**
 16 **efforts in three Focus Areas**
- 17 **Goal 5: Encourage Community Health and Wellness**
- 18 Continuous and coordinated medical care that serves the community where they live will increase
 19 overall health outcomes for citizens of the Redevelopment Area. Survey data taken during the CNI
 20 Transformation Plan effort found more than one-third of public housing residents report using the
 21 Carolina East Health Emergency Room, most often when they are sick or in need of medical advice,
 22 rather than more cost-effective alternatives. In addition, a disproportionately high number of public
 23 housing residents are disabled and/or struggling with a chronic health issue like asthma, diabetes and
 24 hypertension compared to North Carolina residents generally. As a result, access to medical services is a
 25 critical issue for the citizens of the Redevelopment Area.
- 26 **Objective 5.1: Increase the number of healthcare options in the redevelopment district**
 27 **boundary area.**
- 28 **Policy 5.1.1: Work with Craven County Health Department to locate a Federally**
 29 **Qualified Health Center in Redevelopment Area.**
- 30
- 31 **New Bern Redevelopment Commission Transportation Plan**
- 32 The Greater Duffyfield Area is in many ways isolated from the rest of the city due to historical roadway
 33 development patterns. Motorists will often take longer trips to avoid a confusing street network
 34 comprised of narrow and poorly maintained roads. Compounding this is a low rate of vehicle ownership
 35 and neglected or nonexistent pedestrian infrastructure. As attempts to revitalize the area are made
 36 reconfiguring and upgrading transportation related infrastructure is a critical component of success.
- 37 The goals for transportation related infrastructure in the area are as follows:

- 1 • Promote health and safety
- 2 • Facilitate economic development
- 3 • Roadway realignment and improvement
- 4 • Enhancing access to transit
- 5 • Supporting cultural heritage

6

7 The transportation plan will focus on the following three objectives:

- 8 1. Connecting the community with the broader City of New Bern
- 9 2. Enhancing pedestrian trails and infrastructure.
- 10 3. Frequent, Reliable Access to Transit

11

12 There are ten policy points that will accomplish the objectives listed above:

- 13 1. Extend third avenue to connect up to Main Street.
 - 14 2. Designate Main Street as a one way.
 - 15 3. Adopt a new street classification structure for the area.
 - 16 4. Tie road improvements to already existing city street resurfacing schedules.
 - 17 5. Creating neighborhood entryway signs at strategic locations.
 - 18 6. Construct raised crosswalk at street intersections.
 - 19 7. Creating greenways and trails to serve the community.
 - 20 8. Improve the right of way next to the senior towers.
 - 21 9. Creation of a heritage trail to highlight places and amenities of importance.
 - 22 10. Partnership with CARTS.
- 23

24 **Objective T1: Connecting the community with the broader City of New Bern**

25 The neighborhood faces the challenge of illegibility. When an area does not make mental sense
26 to a person (i.e. how to navigate and move through it) they will tend to avoid that area. To that
27 end obvious entry points and throughways must be established.

28 **Policy T1.1** The most effective way to establish a new through way is to continue 3rd
29 Avenue up through the previous site of Stanley White Recreation center in order for
30 both neighborhood and through traffic to avoid the confusing warren of streets that
31 characterize much of the area. One means to do this is to realign and improve Main and
32 Sampson streets to make travel into and around the neighborhood easy.

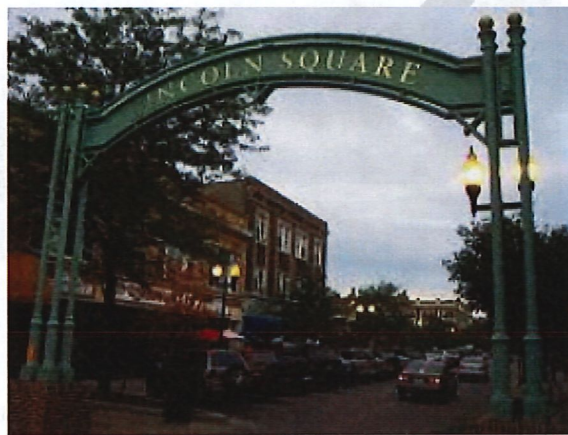
33 **Policy T1.2** Main Street will also be designated as a one way street running along a west
34 to east axis.

35 **Policy T1.3** Adopt a new street classification structure. The specifics and which streets
36 will be designated can be found in Appendix A.

37 These designations will create a coherent look and feel and make the neighborhoods easy to
38 understand and navigate. The feature changes required by this reclassification should be
39 accomplished over time. The New Bern Public Works Department has an existing resurfacing
40 schedule for maintaining roads.

1 **Policy T1.4** Improvements to streets should be looked at when they come up for resurfacing. For
2 example if a street requires a raised crosswalk it should be constructed at the same time.

3 **Policy T1.5** Part of connecting the neighborhood to the city at large is creating a sense of
4 identify for the space. Neighborhood gateway signs should be erected wherever a collector
5 street intersects with Broad or Queen Streets as well as at the intersection of Cedar and Bern.
6 An archway would create a prominent look that would be hard to ignore and draw attention to
7 the area.



Objective T2: Pedestrian Trails and Infrastructure

According to research done for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative about half of the boundary area does not have access to a vehicle. This complicates transit needs immensely. As described earlier reclassifying and modifying the street network with minor and local streets that are more pedestrian friendly will have an impact but physical infrastructure changes must be made too.



Policy T2.1 Raised crosswalks like the one shown in the picture on this page at intersections will help to minimize risk to pedestrian traffic and calm traffic in the neighborhood. This paired with the creation of one way minor streets will allow free flow of pedestrian traffic in relative safety throughout the neighborhood.

Policy T2.2 Create a greenway along the canal. The canal greenway was called to be established in the area by previous plans. Greenways have been proven to increase property values as well as have an indirect impact on overall health of a community even among members who do not utilize the trail. Additionally a pedestrian connection to the rear of the hospital must be made. There are some land acquisition needs for that project but it is a top priority for the area.

Policy T2.3 Improve the unimproved right of way next to senior towers

1



Policy T2.4 Heritage Walking Trail

The cultural heritage of the area is of great importance to the city and the history of how New Bern has developed and been experienced by its residents. To that end a walking trail shall be established to highlight various locations of historical and cultural importance. A good example of this that has been constructed elsewhere is the Freedom Trail in Boston, MA. The trail is marked out by a line either in brick or painted on so that visitors can follow their feet to the various destinations. A historical sign and marker project should also be created at the selected locations. Logos, color selection and branding will be selected via a public process involving local community groups who have some level of commitment to the project and the area. There are already ongoing efforts in this

15 direction. The map below details some already selected locations that the trail should highlight.



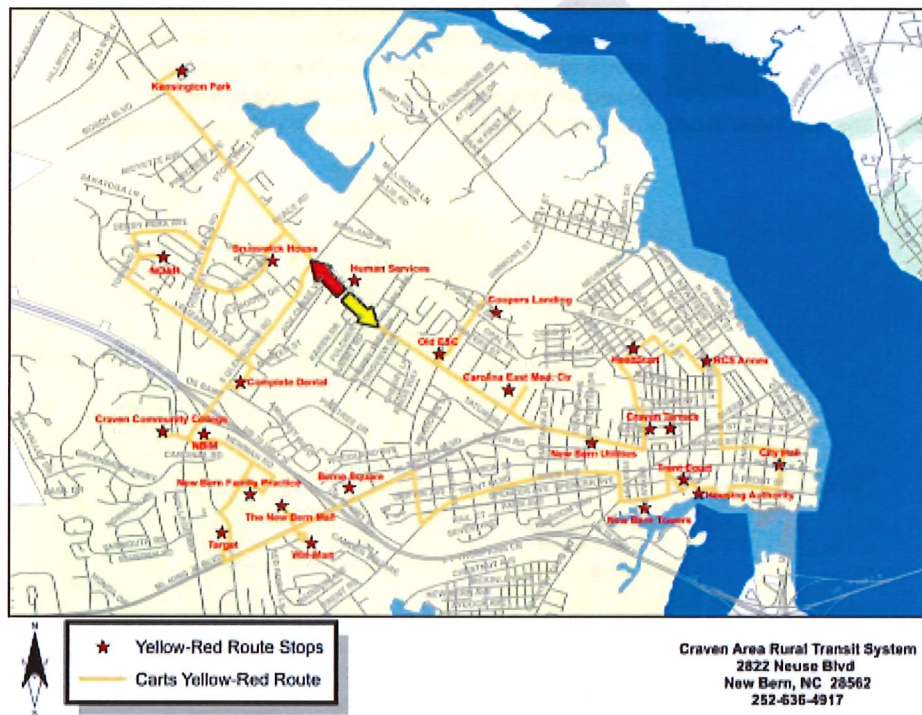
21

1 **Objective T3: Frequent, Reliable Access to Transit**

2 The only option locally in terms of mass transit is CARTS. This service has limited operational
3 hours and routes. The Redevelopment area has several sub-optimal bus stops in the area. Bus
4 stop locations should be improved and where possible bus shelters should be erected using
5 CDBG funding. Due to the limited nature of the service CARTS will not fully supply the transport
6 needs for the area but improvements can be made.

7 **Policy T3.1** The Redevelopment commission will form a partnership with CARTS to
8 expand service.

9



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1 Appendix A

2

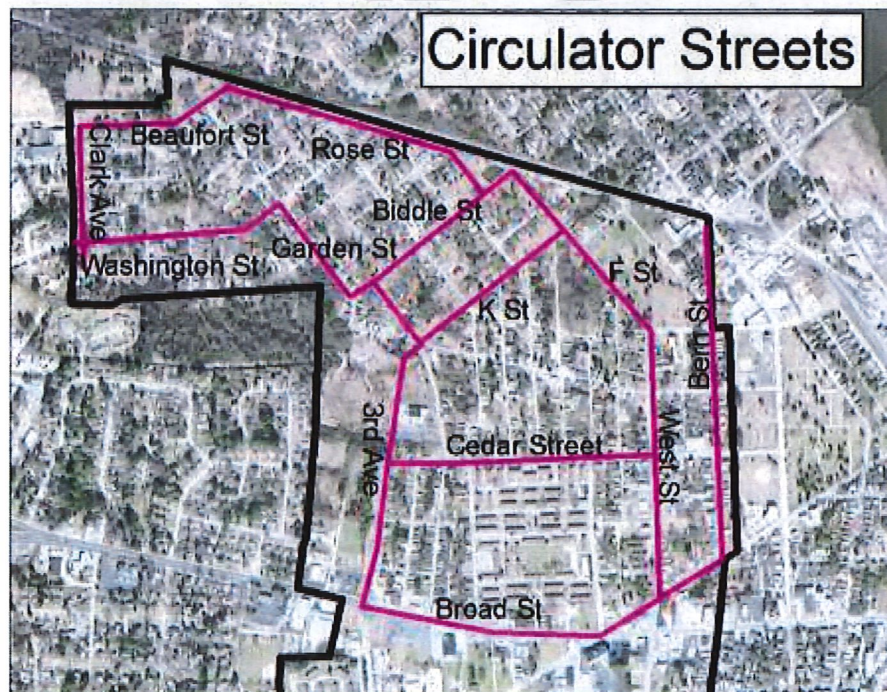
3 (1) *Minor*. A street whose sole function is to provide access to abutting properties. It is designed
4 to limit non-resident vehicular traffic. Minor streets are one way and not wide enough to have
5 a travel lane as well as pedestrian amenities. Minor streets should have markings on the road
6 indicating pedestrian traffic will be present as well as employ various traffic calming measures.

7 (2) *Local*. A street whose sole function is to provide access to abutting properties. It is designed
8 to be a one way street with one travel lane. Local streets also have sidewalks and where space
9 permits protected bike lanes. Local Streets alternate which direction is one way.

10 (3) *Circulator*. A street whose principal function is to carry traffic between minor streets, local
11 streets, Broad Street and the surrounding community but that may also provide direct access to
12 abutting properties. It is designed to have a minimum of two lanes of traffic as well as a sidewalk
13 on one or more sides of the street.

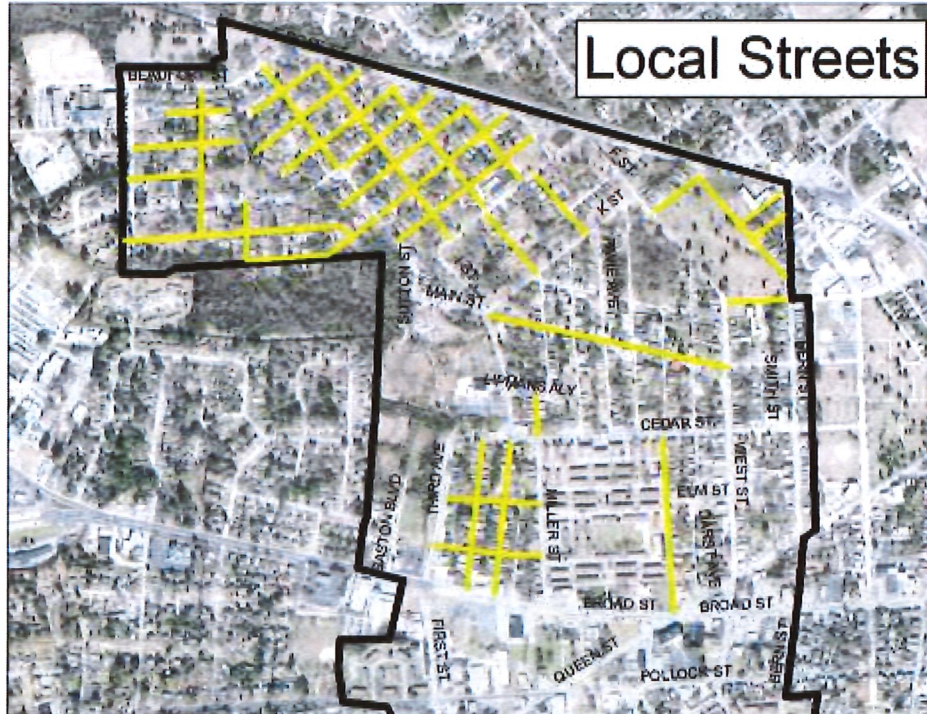
14 (4) *Cul-de-sac*. A street that terminates in a vehicular turnaround. Cul-de-sacs may not be in
15 excess of 800 feet. Cul-de-sacs should only be implemented on a limited basis and inasmuch as
16 possible not break up the existing grid-network of the area.

17 The streets designated for those certain classifications are shown on the maps below.



18

23



1
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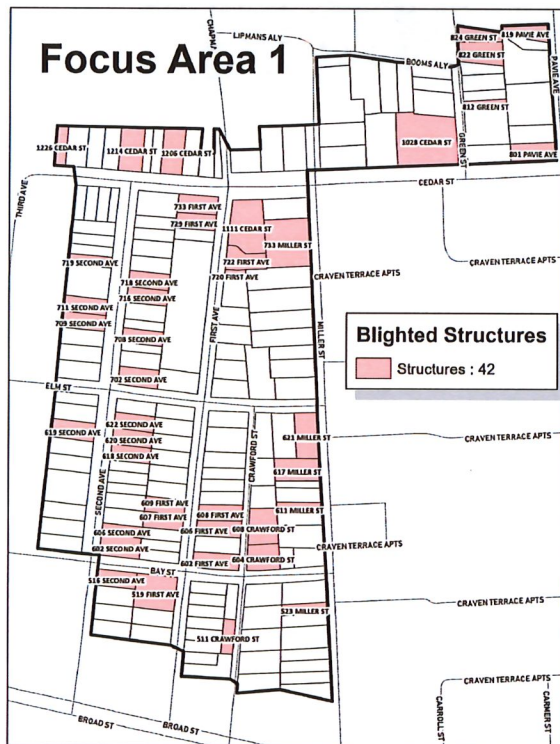
Minor Streets

- 1
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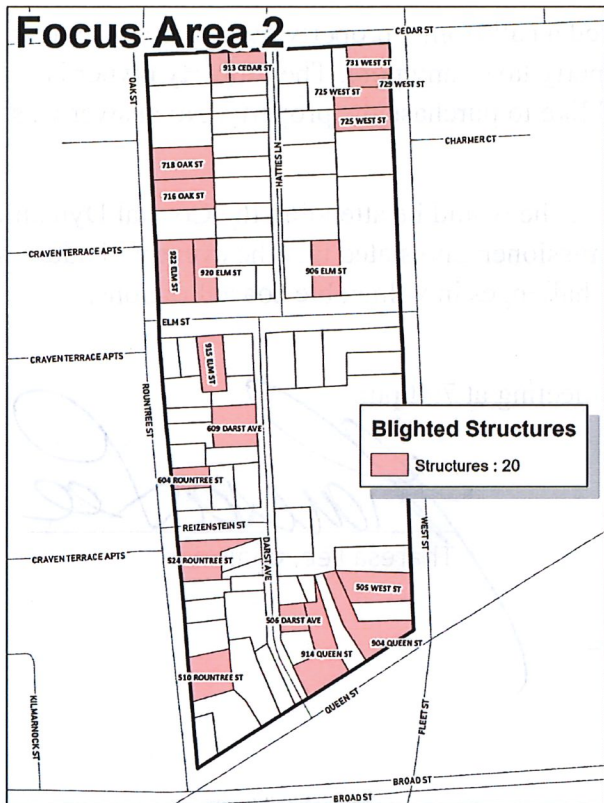
Redevelopment Plan Implementation Timeline

Policy	Description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Year 14	Year 15	Year 16	Year 17	Year 18	Year 19	Year 20
1.1.1	Proactive Code Enforcement																				
1.1.2	Enforce "old growth" overgrowth																				
1.1.3	semi-annual neighborhood cleanup																				
2.1.1	Proactive min housing/commercial enforcement																				
2.1.2	Create Periodic Inspection Program																				
2.1.3	Permit and Registration program for rental property																				
2.2.1-3	Housing Rehabilitation																				
2.3.1	Construct New Housing																				
3.1.1	Basin Flood Study																				
4.1.1	Lot assemblage for development																				
5.1.1	Locate a Federally Qualified Health Center																				
Zoning	Recommended Zoning Changes Implementation																				
T.1.1	3rd Avenue Extension to Main Street																				
T.1.2	One-Way Main Street and improvements																				
T.1.3	Street Classification																				
T.1.4	Coordinate paving schedule with improvements																				
T.1.5	Gateway signs																				
T.2.1	Raises crosswalks																				
T.2.2	greenway along canal																				
T.2.3	improve unnamed right of way adjacent to Towers																				
T.2.4	Heritage walking trail markers																				
T.3.1	Expand CARTS Service																				

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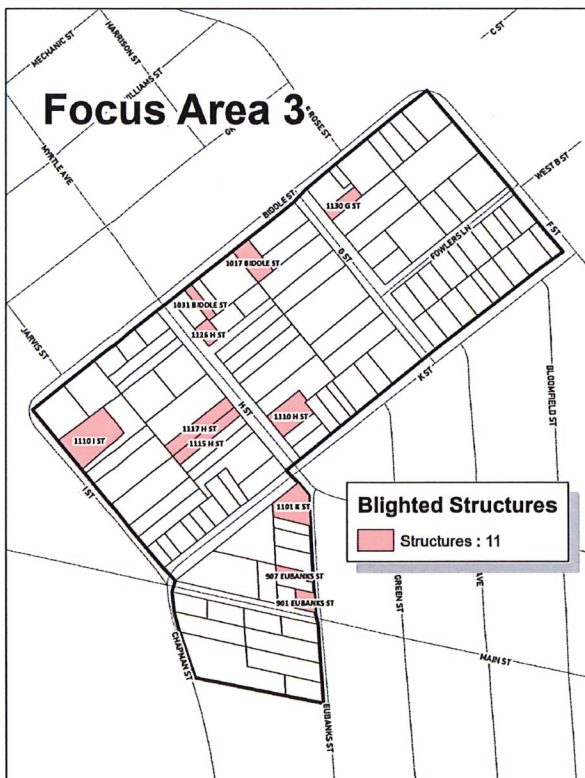
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Handwritten notes on page 143:

- 8/14/18
- 2000-2018
- 2000-2018

143



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145 **5. New Business**

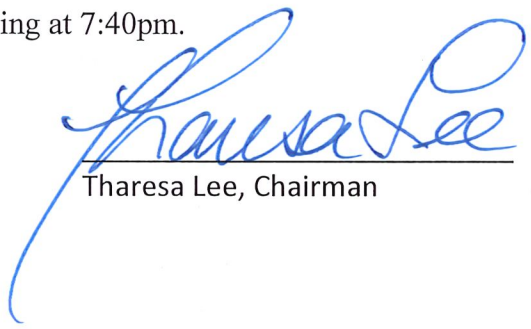
146 Mr. Ruggieri told the Commission that he received a call from a property owner, near G Street
147 and Biddle Street, who does not want to pay property taxes anymore. The property owner is
148 asking if the Redevelopment Commission would like to purchase the property. No answer was
149 determined by the Commission.

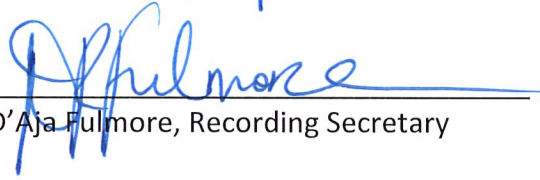
150 Commissioner Cho told fellow commissioners that she would be attending the Coastal Dynamics
151 Design Lab on August 13th in Fayetteville. Commissioner Cho stated that the event will address
152 critical ecological and community development challenges in vulnerable coastal regions.

153 **6. Adjournment**

154 Co-Chair Jaimee Bullock-Mosley adjourned the meeting at 7:40pm.

155
156 Date approved: 8/14/19


Theresa Lee, Chairman

157
158
159 Attest: 
160 D'Aja Fulmore, Recording Secretary
161
162