

VIII. Neighborhood Conservation

The older residential neighborhoods are an extremely valuable resource for Sioux Falls. They provide the largest supply of affordable housing stock. Their mix of home sizes, ages, styles, and types offer a wide variety of housing choices and many starter home opportunities for first time homebuyers. These neighborhoods have a dense concentration of centrally located homes which minimizes commuter traffic. They also contain nearly all of the city's historic register homes. The age and diverse architecture of older residential neighborhoods help establish a distinctive and appealing image for the city, defining the character and identity of the community. They serve as physical reminders of the historic growth and evolution of Sioux Falls, and create a unique sense of place.

It is of critical importance for the general well-being of the entire community that the older neighborhoods are conserved, maintained, and improved. The current status of the older residential areas in Sioux Falls is positive and strong, and must remain that way. Not only are the benefits of older neighborhoods lost when they are allowed to slip into a state of deterioration and blight, costly new problems are created which erode the city's overall quality of life.

Blighted neighborhoods tend to grow into adjacent areas and invite additional deterioration. Visual deterioration gives the impression that nobody cares, creating an atmosphere which fosters crime, antisocial activities, and further blight. Declining neighborhoods demand additional health, social, and public safety services, weaken the tax base, and make activities to promote new economic development in the city more difficult.

Strategies to strengthen and preserve the older residential neighborhoods will maintain the supply of safe, decent, affordable homes and limit the need for costly increases in public services and avoid the need for dramatic revitalization programs. The goals of affordability, variety, safety, and preservation are emphasized.

Conservation Activities

Land Use. Zoning changes to allow multifamily or commercial land uses into older neighborhoods should be carefully analyzed. Expansion of existing institutional uses, such as hospitals and colleges continue to impact older neighborhoods and displace single-family homes. Conservation of single-family homes is encouraged. Commercial uses are ideally limited to business which service the neighborhood needs and that have minimal impact on adjacent properties.

Infrastructure. Streets, utilities, and public facilities should be maintained and improved on an ongoing basis. Schools and parks provide both essential services and a sense of identity for neighborhoods, and should set an example for residential areas in terms of maintenance and appearance. Public investments coordinated through the City's Capital Improvement Program can enhance efforts to maintain clean, safe, desirable neighborhoods.

Transportation. The greater density of older neighborhoods makes public transit services more practical. The need to move more traffic through the core of the city as greater growth occurs at the outskirts needs to be balanced with the neighborhood conservation goals. Expansion and extension of major arterial streets which create barriers and cut up neighborhoods should be avoided to the greatest extent practical.

Property Maintenance. Inspections and enforcement of building and zoning codes and effective nuisance abatement activities help prevent neighborhood decline. Other activities include Fire Department inspection of apartment units and enforcement of health code requirements. Legal assistance through the City Attorney's Office is a key component for the effectiveness of these activities.

Assistance Programs. Homeowner and rental rehab assistance programs administered through the Community Development Department are useful tools for maintaining the quality of housing. The historic preservation revolving loan fund and the preservation property tax moratorium provide important incentives for neighborhood revitalization. Continued coordination and collaboration with the Sioux Falls Housing and Redevelopment Commission is needed.

Housing Stock Diversity. New affordable housing stock should be encouraged throughout all quadrants of the city to prevent older neighborhoods—or any other specific area—from having an extreme concentration of rental units and low-income residents. The City maintains a policy of scattered sites for low and moderate income housing projects, including those utilizing low-income housing tax credits. A strong mix of housing types and price ranges in all neighborhoods is encouraged.

Provision of affordable housing in newly developing areas is a challenge, which requires additional encouragement. The land costs and the costs of preparing land for development are two factors that can impact the availability of affordable housing. Actions which restrict the supply of land available for development need to be avoided. Requirements which add unnecessary costs to preparing land for development also makes provision of new affordable housing difficult. Subdivision standards, developer charges and fees, development review processes and requirements, and the timing and adequacy of basic public facilities and services which development depends upon are all components affecting the cost of new housing. The desire of new residential areas to have high-end executive homes in their vicinity and their resistance to having lower cost homes nearby is another barrier to affordable housing in newly developing areas, and also needs to be addressed.

Neighborhood Cultural Diversity. Creation of a uniform, single heritage identity in any specific area should be avoided if the result is an avoidance of a particular neighborhood by the majority of homebuyers. Ideally, the existing and new religious, ethnic, and cultural heritage communities within Sioux Falls can maintain their identities without creating geographically concentrated enclaves. A strong demographic mix in each neighborhood in terms of the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of the residents is preferred.

Special Programs and Needs

The projects of Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit entity working for affordable housing, are generally sited in older areas where land costs are lower. The effect of their program has been a stabilization and strengthening of property values in the immediate vicinity of their specific project sites. The recent formation of the Sioux Empire Housing Partnership program, another nonprofit entity, is primarily a private sector partnership that is another positive step toward provision of affordable housing. Various social service agencies are also involved in many different aspects of housing-related assistance and activities. City activities which support and assist these programs are encouraged.

A public program geared towards neighborhood conservation is the combined Project NICE/Project KEEP. The Neighborhood Improvement, Complaint Easement program called Project NICE utilizes volunteer City personnel and equipment to help maintain environmental conditions and provide assistance in cleaning up targeted older residential areas. Project KEEP stands for “Keep Environmental Enhancement Permanent.” It is the follow-up program whereby enforcement of building, housing, zoning, and health codes is stepped up in previous Project NICE areas to promote further improvement. The programs have been favorably received by the homeowners of past project areas. The Project NICE/KEEP program needs to continue addressing the cleanup needs of older neighborhoods, and move forward on a rotating basis when the needs of all older neighborhoods have been addressed.

In general, the housing stock in Sioux Falls is in good physical condition. A windshield survey of exterior housing conditions in 1994 showed only 564 structures—or less than 2 percent of all

residential buildings—with major or serious deficiencies. These homes were generally widely scattered. No significant concentrations of substandard housing exist in any residential neighborhood.

City neighborhood planning efforts provide long-range goals and specific programs for neighborhood conservation and redevelopment. The 2000 Consolidated Plan identified housing and community development needs in Sioux Falls. One of the major housing problems is lower income family households with a housing cost burden that exceeds 30 percent of their total income. Other groups with identified housing needs are the lower income elderly and persons with disabilities.

In 1999, approximately one-half of all households in the Sioux Falls had incomes at or below 95 percent of the city's median income. In 2002, the median sales price of an existing home was \$111,000 and the median sales price of a new home was \$141,000. The primary objective for the next five years will be to increase the number of affordable housing units and to expand the services and facilities available to low and moderate income households.

Neighborhood redevelopment plans were adopted for the Beadle, Whittier, and Cathedral neighborhoods in the late 70s. These plans recommended infrastructure improvements, incentives to redevelop dilapidated sites, and general enforcement of building, health, housing, and zoning codes. Future updates of these plans and development of similar plans for other targeted neighborhoods will also be prepared.

Neighborhood Conservation Areas

Demographic and socioeconomic data, the 1994 Housing Condition Survey, windshield surveys, and environmental and public facility conditions have been analyzed to identify the following neighborhoods as conservation areas. In general, neighborhoods with concentrations of homes built prior to 1950 and those with below average household income levels are designated for conservation.

Map VIII(a) shows these areas, which are older but presently stable and desirable neighborhoods. The aesthetic and environmental conditions of these have shown recent improvement in many instances. It is anticipated these areas will benefit from a strategy that combines the recommended conservation measures of this plan to ensure they remain at their present level of desirability. Each area has its own challenges and special considerations.

Froehlich Addition

Nonconforming manufactured homes on scattered sites are mixed in with conventional single-family homes. Commercial uses along Benson Road and Cliff Avenue are creating expansion pressure for potential encroachments into the neighborhood. The neighborhood has moderately good separation from major multifamily housing development along North Fourth Avenue. Transition general housing and street conditions are positive. The Sioux Empire Housing Partnership's affordable housing project at Lacey Park encompasses 56 homes. Eleven lots were sold to a private home developer. The development has had three phases: the first phase began in 1999 with the moving of 20 houses from the Avera McKennan Campus. Lacey Park II added nine additional homes from Avera McKennan campus. The final phase is part of a Community Development Block Grant to construct 16 new homes.

Norton Tracts

Future industrial development is likely north of 34th Street North. The neighborhood has some commercial encroachment along Cliff Avenue, and a good transition to a manufactured housing development along its east side. Nonconforming mobile homes are located on scattered sites. A collection of Habitat for Humanity homes have been developed.

Riverside

A transition area between commercial and residential uses is located in the northeast end of the area. Commercial encroachment is found along Cliff Avenue and Rice Street. There is heavy industrial zoning on developable parcels along the east side of the neighborhood. Housing is generally in good condition. Laura B. Anderson Elementary School is a principal public facility anchoring the neighborhood.

Whittier/School for the Deaf

Schools have played an important aspect in the development of this neighborhood. Whittier Middle School underwent a \$3 million capital improvement project expansion prior to the 2002–2003 school year. Franklin Elementary School and Bancroft Elementary School were closed at the end of the 1997–98 school year. In the fall of 1998, students from the two schools were assigned to the new Terry Redlin Elementary School that was built on the old Bancroft School site. The Franklin School building was converted into an alternative high school and opened as Joe Foss School in the fall of 1998. The South Dakota School for the Deaf has also been a principal public facility in the neighborhood. There are some concentrations of subsidized apartment buildings in the east area. Housing conditions range from good to excellent with the south area east of Cliff Avenue in strongest shape. A concentration of commercial uses along Eighth Street from downtown to Cliff Avenue creates a barrier; most residences lie north of Eighth Street. The west side of Weber Avenue between Sixth Street and Falls Park Drive is a transitional area, which will likely see redevelopment activity.

All Saints

Much of the neighborhood is a National Register Historic District. The area is a mix of residential types which serves as a transition between downtown and the McKennan Park neighborhood. Conservation activities are particularly important for the area between 14th Street and the railroad tracks.

Augustana/University of Sioux Falls/Sioux Valley Hospital

Demand for student and employee housing will continue. Housing conditions are good overall with a few scattered units in need of maintenance. Future hospital and campus expansions may impact residential areas. Continued improvements to streets and utilities will be needed. Parking demands will need continued consideration. Lowell Elementary School and the Baptist Seminary are other key facilities integrated into the neighborhood.

North End, West

Minnesota Avenue is in transition from residential uses to a commercial corridor. The neighborhood includes a National Register Historic District and some of the oldest homes in the city. There has been considerable renovation activity, especially in and near the historic district area. Most streets have been recently rebuilt or are scheduled for substantial repairs in the near future. The northern portion of the area includes multifamily housing and commercial development. Hawthorne Elementary School is an important neighborhood facility.

North End, East

The Sioux River is to the east, downtown borders the south, and the Minnesota Avenue and Russell Street corridors define the north and west boundaries of this neighborhood area. Also included is Falls Park and expansion north of Falls Park Drive. The area between Minnesota Avenue and the railroad is primarily housing with some transitional uses along Minnesota Avenue and Russell Street. Maintenance of existing housing will be a primary focus with limited redevelopment activity expected.

Hawthorne Elementary School is a principal public facility that was an important anchor when it was reconstructed in 1984–1985.

West Sioux

Relocation of Western Avenue and completion of the Convention Center are affecting the area. The overall housing stock is in very good condition with little conservation activity needed. Jane Addams Elementary School is a focal point of the neighborhood.

Axtell Park/Lincoln School

This older neighborhood area is generally in good condition and is not targeted for any immediate needs. The area extends from Sixth Street to Tenth Street and from Minnesota to Western Avenues. The primary uses are single-family residential with some scattered apartments. School enrollment levels have been maintained due to the area's role as an available source as affordable housing for younger families. Lincoln Elementary School was converted into the public school system's immersion center and still plays an important public facility role in the neighborhood.

Emerson/West 12th Street

This is a large area with a widely varied assortment of land uses ranging from single-family homes to intensive commercial. It extends from Kiwanis to Grange Avenues and from 9th to 15th Streets. Housing conditions are generally good, and single-family residences predominate. Major impacts include encroachment pressures of commercial uses along 12th Street and Kiwanis Avenue. No major redevelopment sites are presently expected. Emerson Elementary School was closed in 1998; and the building and grounds were redeveloped with the neighborhood's assistance into a neighborhood park.

Folsom's Addition

This neighborhood area lies between 10th and 15th Streets extending from Grange to Minnesota Avenues. There is a transitional area adjacent to the southwest end of downtown. Land uses are primarily single-family residential. Some recent public street and utility improvements have been completed. Housing rehabilitation programs and activities to encourage maintenance of the existing single-family homes is needed.

Beadle Greenway

The neighborhood area became a planned development zoning district in 1981, and development since then has been influenced by the Big Sioux River Greenway plan. The area is bounded by Second and Cliff Avenues and extends from 12th to 14th Streets. Included is a segment of the Sioux River. This area has been redeveloping from industrial to residential, office, and neighborhood services. Multifamily housing and expansion of the Greenway have been primary factors in the area.

McKenna Hospital

Redevelopment pressures near the edges of this older neighborhood are mainly due to the mix of commercial and office uses along Cliff Avenue and the McKenna Hospital campus. The homes are well maintained with few housing rehabilitation needs. Parking demands will need continued consideration. Future expansions of the McKenna Hospital campus, which is presently a PD zone, may affect the tier of blocks immediately south of the existing complex. The hospital campus will continue to be constrained between Seventh and Cliff Avenues. Longfellow Elementary School acts as a community anchor for this neighborhood.

Downtown

Unlike the other neighborhoods in this chapter, the downtown area is not dominated by residential uses. It is nonetheless considered a special older neighborhood that can benefit from conservation measures. The Downtown Development Plan proposes to expand the employment and service base of downtown Sioux Falls while improving its visual and functional quality. The goal of the plan is to identify and integrate the transportation, land use, and social elements of the downtown area. The following are among the key issues addressed in the Downtown Development Plan:

- Maintain the strong urban center identity of downtown.
- Encourage a mix of uses and activities, including housing, retail, civic, financial, and entertainment throughout the district. Encourage housing as a stronger component of the future land use mix.
- Utilize the design review overlay district standards for new construction and exterior remodeling to preserve the downtown image and existing historic and aesthetic resources.
- Develop and promote the economic potential of the heritage tourism trend, capitalizing on the historic character and image of downtown.
- Build and enhance downtown's role as a community arts and cultural center; e.g., incorporate outdoor public art into the streetscape.
- Create public open areas for passive use, events, and activities to enhance environmental quality and to link spaces to the Sioux River Greenway.
- Maintain a transportation system that accommodates bicycle and pedestrian travel, encourages use of the public transit system, addresses traffic and parking needs, and reduces rail and vehicular conflicts.
- Use public and private involvement to identify land parcels and existing buildings for redevelopment sites and expansion of uses.
- Address other development issues including infrastructure, maintenance, and public safety.

Map VIII(a) Neighborhood Conservation Areas

