ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

Rock Island Planning Commission

Council Chambers (third floor) City Hall
1528 – 3rd Avenue
Regular Meeting
February 3, 2016
5:30 PM

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

2. Approval of Minutes of the regular meeting of December, 2, 2015

3. Procedural Explanation

4. Public Hearing #2016-01: Request from the Rock Island Economic GROWTH Corporation for rezoning from B-3 (community business) district to B-2 (central business) district at 1740 – 5th Avenue.

5. Presentation of Greenbush Neighborhood Plan by Augustana College students Alyssa Clarida and Christian Montbriand.

6. Other Business

7. Adjournment

ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

UNAPPROVED

MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2015
CITY OF ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS

The Rock Island Planning Commission held its regularly scheduled meeting in the City Hall Council Chambers at 1528 – 3rd Avenue, Rock Island, Illinois. The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Levin at 5:31 PM. Present were Commissioners Mike Creger, Andrew Dasso, Ted Johnson, David Levin, Jason Lopez, Bruce Peterson, Lorian Swanson and Berlinda Tyler-Jamison. Commissioners Bruce Harding, Norm Moline and Javier Perez were absent. Also in attendance were Alan Fires and Ben Griffith.

AN ORDER APPROVING THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 7, 2015 MEETING

The Commission considered the matter of approval of the minutes of the October 7, 2015 meeting. After a brief discussion, Commissioner Lopez made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Swanson seconded the motion and the Commissioners unanimously approved said minutes.

PROCEDURAL EXPLANATION

Chairman Levin provided a brief explanation of the public hearing procedures for the benefit of the Planning Commissioners and those in attendance. Commissioner Tyler-Jamison recused herself from the discussion and voting on the public hearing request.

PUBLIC HEARING #2015-07: REQUEST FROM KEN ARNOLD (UNITY POINT HEALTH) FOR A REZONING FROM R-3 (ONE AND TWO FAMILY RESIDENCE) DISTRICT TO B-1 (NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS) DISTRICT AT 921-925 - 27TH AVENUE.

Next there came before the Planning Commission Public Hearing #2015-07, a request from Ken Arnold of Unity Point Health for a rezoning to allow for construction of a parking lot for an adjacent office building.

Mr. Fries presented the staff report, providing a review of the applicant's request, explaining the current site conditions, adjacent land uses and zonings, zoning history of the subject property, and provided a detailed site analysis of the proposed project.

Commissioner Creger asked about the use of invasive "burning bush" plantings in the landscape plan and Commissioner Johnson asked for a definition of "invasive." Commissioner Peterson responded that invasives were non-native species whose seeds are spread by birds over a wide-ranging area which makes them very problematic. He stated they were a big problem in the Black Hawk State Historic Site and that they affect the soil, making it difficult to grow anything else around them.

Chairman Levin noted that the rezoning requested did not match the future land use map designation. Mr. Fries responded that Planning staff was aware of that but reasoned that the proposed parking lot would be next to an existing building occupied by a long-time, well-established corporate citizen, adding that the edges of the future land use map categories are sometimes difficult to define.

Commissioner Dasso asked if a fence would be installed along the western property line to screen and buffer the residential property located there. Mr. Fries replied that the code required a hedge or a fence, that there was an existing chain-link fence on the adjacent property and staff was comfortable with what had been proposed since it would primarily be a daytime use.

Hearing no further questions from the Commissioners for Planning staff, Chairman Levin opened the public hearing and asked the applicant to step forward to address the Commission.

Ms. Maggie Motto of 1717 State Street in Bettendorf, stepped up to the podium and signed in. She identified herself as a professional engineer with Missman, Inc. representing the owner/applicant, and stated that Mr. Fries had covered everything and had nothing else to add. She stated that she would work with the owner and landscape architect to select another shrub type to replace the burning bush.

Hearing no questions from the Commissioners for the applicant, Chairman Levin asked members of the public to step forward and speak.

Ms. Deanna Brumbaugh of 915 – 27th Avenue in Rock Island, stepped up to the podium and signed in. Ms. Brumbaugh expressed concerns with stormwater runoff, snow removal, increased traffic and the condition of the street, which she feared would be worsened due to heavy construction equipment. She stated that she had lived in her home for 15 years and that the homes at the site had been removed around 2003. Ms. Brumbaugh also expressed concerns about who would be responsible for the cost of street repairs after damage by construction equipment, fearing the high cost under the City's street assessment program.

Ms. Motto explained that the sheet flow of the stormwater would be north to south and the design included bio-swales at the south end of the parking lot to catch and treat the runoff before conveying it into the City's underground stormwater drainage system.

Commissioner Johnson stated that the City had recently abandoned the street assessment program for street improvements and that if there was any damage to the street that was not repaired by the applicant, the City would cover the cost of the repairs.

Hearing no further questions from the public, Chairman Levin closed the public hearing and asked the Commissioners if they had any further questions or discussion.

Commissioner Johnson made a motion to recommend approval of the rezoning request to City Council as proposed by the applicant, which was duly seconded by Commissioner Creger. Commissioner Creger stated that he would like to see burning bush removed from the landscape plan. Hearing no further discussion, Chairman Levin called for a vote and the Planning Commission voted 8—0 to recommend approval of the request, with Commissioner Tyler-Jamison abstaining. Chairman Levin stated the item would be placed onto the December 14th City Council agenda for final review and approval.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Griffith stated that no requests had been submitted for public hearing for the January 6th Planning Commission meeting and that the deadline for non-advertised items wasn't until the following week. He stated Planning staff would inform the Commissioners whether or not there would be a meeting as soon as it was confirmed. Mr. Griffith concluded by asking the Commissioners to be mindful of any *ex parte* communications and to contact the Planning Office with any questions regarding any items on upcoming agendas.

ADJOURNMENT

Hearing no other business, Chairman Levin asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Peterson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:53 PM, which was duly seconded by Commissioner Creger. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Planning Commission is Wednesday, January 6, 2016 at 5:30 PM in the City Council Chambers.

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Griffith

Ben Griffith, AICP, Secretary

DRAFT

REPORT

To: Planning Commission

From: Planning and Redevelopment Division
Community and Economic Development Department

Date: January 22, 2016

Subject: Case #2016-01- Request for Rezoning from B-3 (community business) district to B-2 (central business) district at 1740 5th Avenue.

The Rock Island Economic Growth Corporation has filed an application for a rezoning from B-3 (community business) district to B-2 (central business) district at 1740 5th Avenue. The applicant proposes to renovate the first floor commercial space and construct two additional stories for approximately 45 apartments.

Size of Property to be Rezoned:
41' x 120' (4,920 square feet).

Existing Land Use: The site is vacant and was the former showroom for Zimmerman Motors.
North: Special events facility, zoned B-3 and office, zoned B-2.
East: Vacant former bank and church parking lot, zoned B-3.
South: Commercial antique store, zoned B-3.
West: Bank and commercial use, zoned B-3.

Zoning History
None.

Comprehensive Plan Designation:
The Comprehensive Plan identifies urban mixed use land use for the site.

Access:
The site has access to 5th Avenue and 17th and 18th Streets.

Physical Characteristics:
The site is flat and slightly above street level.

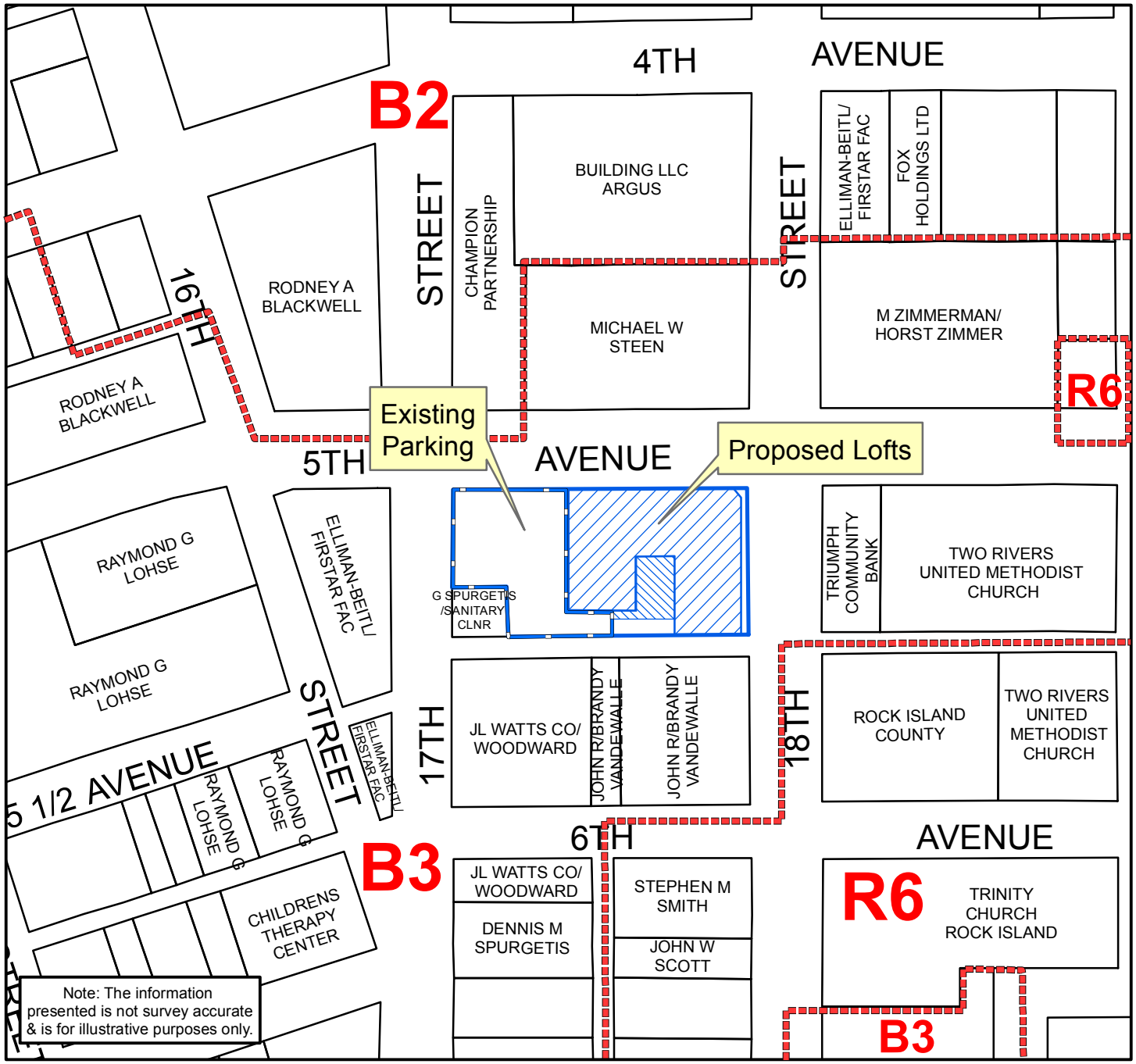
Proposed Improvements:
The renovated first floor commercial space should yield approximately 21,000 square feet for yet unidentified commercial uses. Two additional stories are proposed for construction to accommodate up to 45 dwelling units, which will be a mix of studio, one and two bedroom "urban-style loft" apartments (see attached building elevation). A proposed layout for one of the two floors and a building elevation has been submitted to the City and is also attached. Total project cost is expected to be approximately 11.6 million dollars.

The first floor former vehicle service area is proposed to be used for indoor parking. The surface parking lot to the west of the structure will be stripped for surface parking. A site plan identifying how many parking spaces are proposed is not yet available. It appears that the surface parking lot could yield up to 50 or 60 parking spaces, while maintaining the same access points off of 5th Avenue, 17th Street and the east/west alley to the south of the site.

The applicant is seeking B-2 zoning to fit in with its "urban-style loft" approach. The site is at the edge of current B-2 zoning, but the proposed improvements are similar to other adaptive re-use and new residential construction developments in the downtown. Currently, B-3 zoning would not allow residential uses within that zoning district. The upper story residential use with commercial uses on a ground floor is similar in concept and use to other downtown developments. Finally, the B-2 zoning district does not require off street parking and has a zero lot line setback if adjacent to other business zoning.

Recommendation:
Staff recommends approval of the rezoning because it is proposed to be a mixed commercial and residential use that conforms in concept to the urban mixed use land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan and is a reasonable expansion of the downtown business zoning in the area.

PLANNING COMMISSION



PLANNING COMMISSION

2016-1

Legend

Parcels

Subject Property

DR. BY: K.G.D.

APPR. BY: B.G./A.F.

0 50 100 200 300

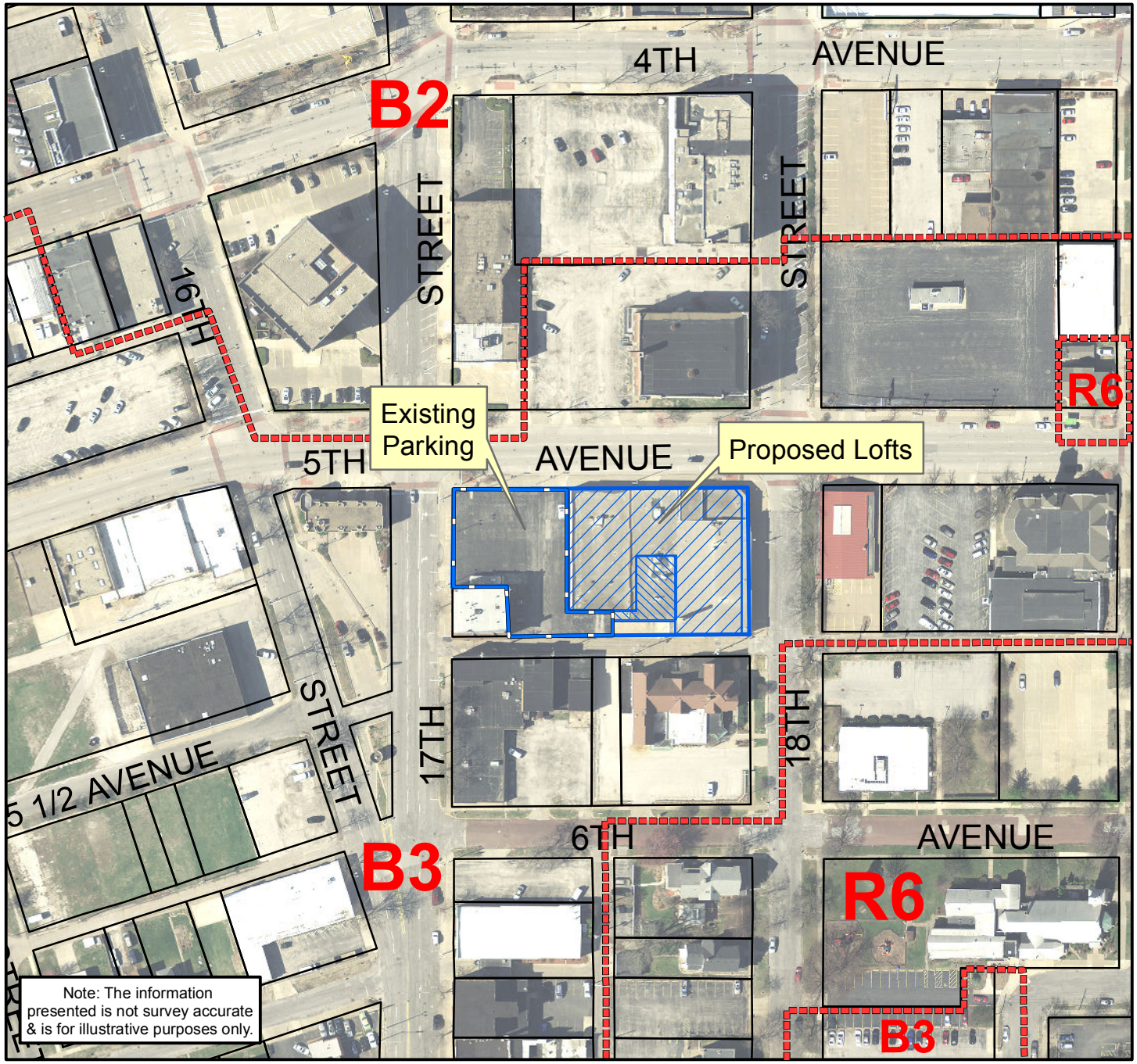
Feet

City of Rock Island

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Planning and Redevelopment

ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

PLANNING COMMISSION



PLANNING COMMISSION

2016-1 Aerial

Legend

Parcels

Subject Property

DR. BY: K.G.D.

APPR. BY: B.G./A.F.

0 50 100 200 300

Feet

City of Rock Island

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Planning and Redevelopment

ROCK ISLAND
ILLINOIS

EXISTING FOOTPRINT = +/- 24,900 sq. ft.
PROPOSED SECOND FLOOR = +/- 21,500 sq. ft.

North

SITE PLAN
SCALE: 1" = 20'-0"

FIELD VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS & EXISTING CONDITIONS, TYP.

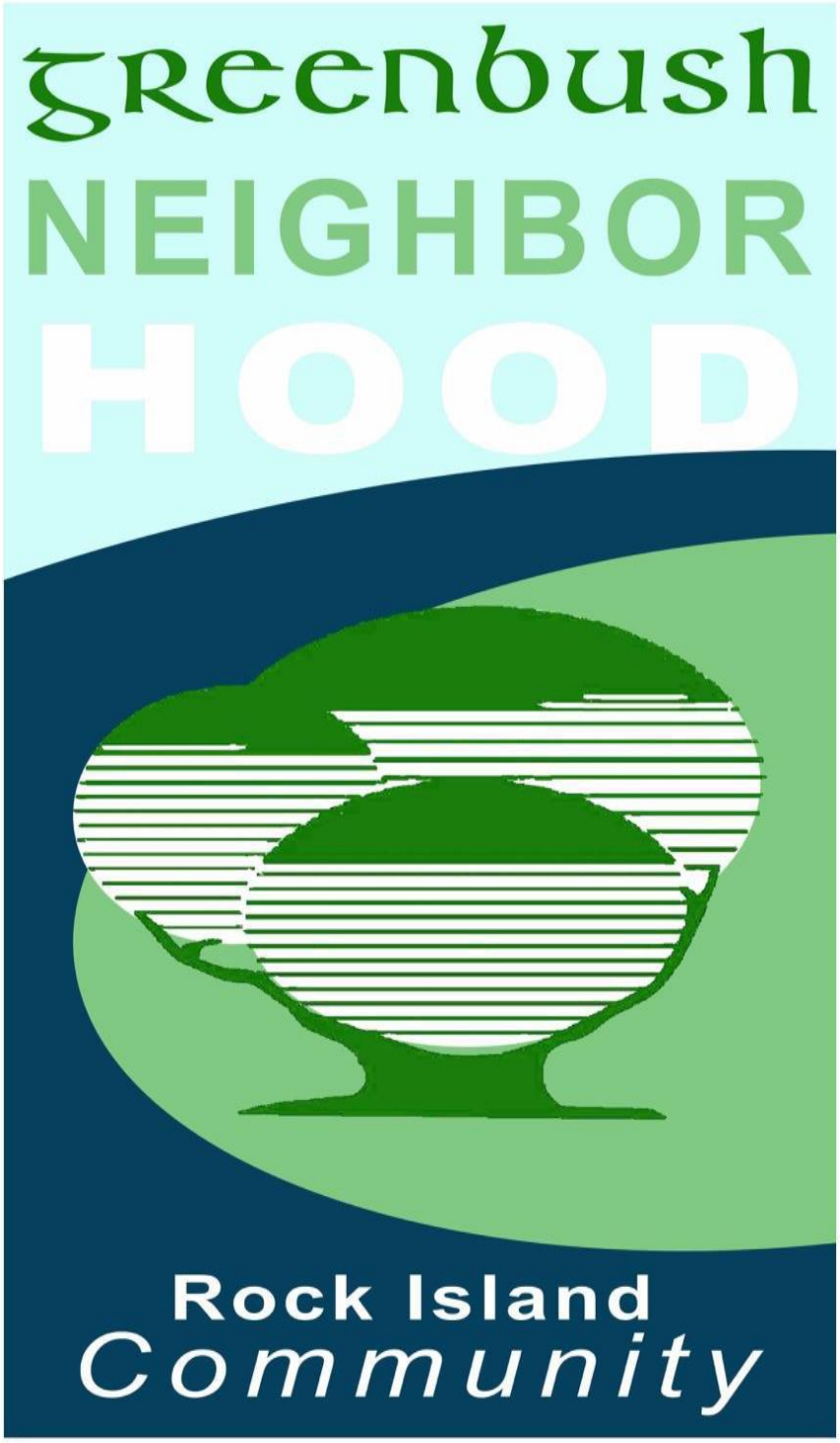
S G G M
ARCHITECTS
& INTERIOR
DESIGNERS, PC
201 W. 2ND ST. (608)
DAVENPORT, IOWA
PH. 563/326-2555
DAV@SGGM.NET

1740 5th. Avenue
ZIMMERMAN LOFTS
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS

ISSUE RECORD
PRELIM. 10/27/15

PROJECT NUMBER
1575

SHEET NUMBER
A0



Greenbush Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhood Participants

A special thanks to the Greenbush neighborhood residents who participated in the neighborhood meetings. The development of this document would not have been possible without you.

Acknowledgements

Greenbush Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee

Michael Markell, Greenbush Neighbors President
Alan Carmen, Rock Island Township Supervisor
Rose Clemens, Neighborhood Resident
Bob Hotle, Neighborhood Resident
Dick Brem, Neighborhood Resident

City of Rock Island City Council

Dennis Pauley, Mayor
Ivory Clark, First Ward
Virgil Mayberry, Second Ward
Paul (P.J.) Foley, Third Ward
Steve Tollenaer, Fourth Ward
Kate Hotle, Fifth Ward
Joshua Schipp, Sixth Ward
Charles Austin, Seventh Ward

City of Rock Island Planning Commission

David Levin, Chairman
Bruce Peterson
Jason Lopez
Ted Johnson
Michael Creger
Norman Moline
Berlinda Tyler-Jamison
Lorian Swanson
Javier Perez
Bruce Harding
Andrew Dasso

Augustana College, Spring 2015 Urban and Regional Planning Class

Alyssa Clarida
Christian Montbriand
Barrie Chileen
Josh Cox
Michael Duy
Emily Haskins
Alex Mahaffey
Ben Payne
Melisa Ribikawskis
Nicolas Riojas
Rosalie Starenko
Daniel Zahn
Christopher Strunk, Professor

Rock Island City Staff

Christian Montbriand, Planning Intern
Brandy Howe, AICP, Urban Planner
Ben Griffith, AICP, Planning & Redevelopment Administrator
Jeff Eder, Assistant City Manager and Community and Economic Development Director

Augustana College, Capstone Project

Alyssa Clarida

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Vision Statement

This vision statement was developed through the community input phase of this planning process and served as a guide to create this Greenbush Neighborhood Plan. This vision will continue to serve as inspiration for the future of the neighborhood.

The community of Greenbush is committed to a neighborhood…

Greenbush is a diverse, family-oriented neighborhood committed to fostering a welcoming, walkable community that attracts businesses, residents, young and old, and offers affordable homes in a safe and active environment.

Where neighbors are encouraged to build relationships with one another, celebrate with each other, and build a community together.

Where people value the safety of every community member and welcome residents of all ages, incomes, and cultures.

Where people can feel safe and comfortable walking, biking, driving, or using public transportation throughout the neighborhood.

Where businesses come to thrive and people come to shop and work locally.

Where residents take pride in their homes and contribute to a beautiful and diverse neighborhood.

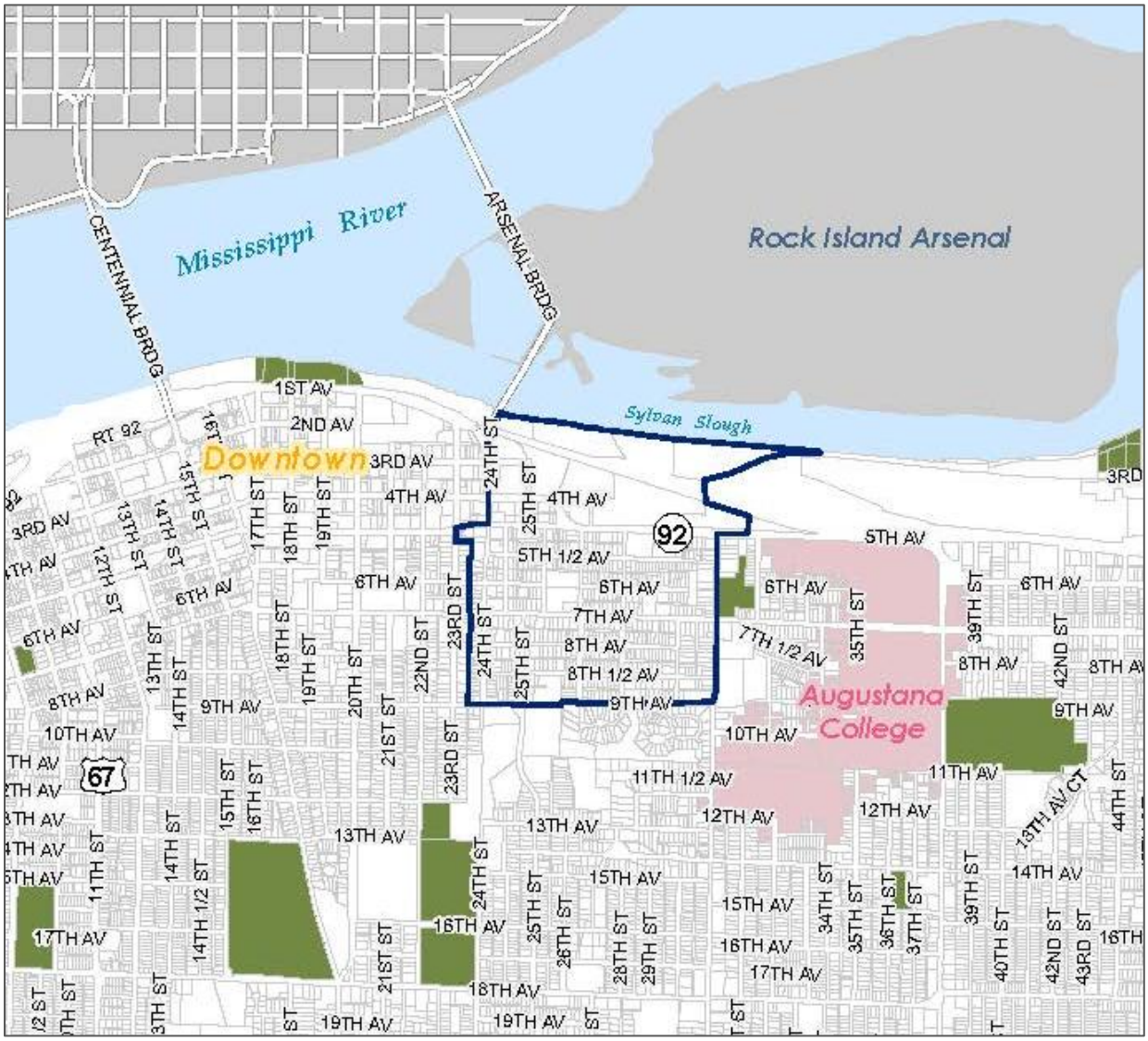
Where people of all ages feel compelled to purchase a home and grow their families.

Greenbush Neighbors' Mission Statement

To promote a spirit of community among residents, property owners, and businesses in the neighborhood. Greenbush Neighbors will work together to strengthen the sense of community by promoting and working for safety and security, beautification, education and training, and participation in neighborhood and civic affairs.

Overview and Purpose

The Greenbush Neighborhood encompasses 198 acres on the north side of Rock Island between Augustana College to the east and downtown Rock Island to the west. The neighborhood is bounded by 30th Street to the east, 24th Street to the west, 9th Avenue on the south, and the Mississippi River to the north. Greenbush has an active neighborhood association, the Greenbush Neighbors, which has been meeting since 2001. Their mission is "to promote a spirit of community among residents, property owners, and businesses in the neighborhood. Greenbush Neighbors will work together to strengthen the sense of community by promoting and working for safety and security, beautification, education and training, and participation in neighborhood and civic affairs." Despite the formation of Greenbush Neighbors, a neighborhood plan had not previously been prepared for Greenbush. This Neighborhood Plan was developed as a partnership between the Greenbush Neighbors, students at Augustana College, and the City of Rock Island to support the Greenbush Neighbors' mission and identify opportunities to address specific challenges in the neighborhood. This Plan was also developed in support of the City's recently adopted Comprehensive Plan which "encourages and supports locally-led neighborhood planning efforts."



Map 1: Planning Area

Planning Process

This Neighborhood Plan was initiated by Urban and Regional Planning (URP) students at Augustana College. The first phase of the planning effort was completed by the spring 2015 URP class. The remainder of the planning process was completed in partnership with the City by Augustana senior, Alyssa Clarida as her senior capstone project, and 2015 Augustana graduate and City of Rock Island intern, Christian Montbriand.

Below is an overview of the primary steps that were taken over the course of the eleven month project to prepare the Greenbush Neighborhood Plan:

- *Project Initiation.* To prepare for the project, URP students spent much of their time learning about the planning process and reviewing neighborhood plans of other communities. Professionals in the planning field were also invited to participate as panelists during a class where they shared their experiences related to long-range planning.
- *Field Analysis.* Students walked the neighborhood and identified data collection needs in order to draft an Existing Conditions Report. Students chose several categories of data to collect, including: demographics, housing, businesses, land use and vacancies, transportation, and topography. A structural conditions survey was conducted to map vacancies in the neighborhood. Structures were deemed vacant if they had a severally unkempt appearance, decaying structure, a for sale sign, or a notice on the door. Using an app called Arc Collector, students were able to record the GPS location of vacant lots and structures and automatically uploaded the findings for future use.
- *Neighborhood Steering Committee Meetings.* A Steering Committee comprised of key stakeholders and Greenbush Neighbors' President, Mike Markell, met several times throughout the planning process. Two meetings were held in April 2015 where input was gathered on the strengths and challenges of the physical, social, and economic aspects of the neighborhood. A participatory-mapping exercise allowed residents to identify sites for potential improvements or desired changes in the neighborhood. In the second phase of the planning process, another Steering Committee meeting was held to update the Committee on the progress of the report and prepare for the September Neighborhood Workshop. A final neighborhood meeting on November 17, 2015 was held to introduce the draft Plan to Greenbush Neighbors.
- *Neighborhood Workshops.* The first neighborhood workshop was held on May 13, 2015. The main objectives of this meeting were to introduce the planning team and discuss issues and opportunities within Greenbush. A second workshop was held on September 8, 2015 where the planning team provided a progress report, presented findings from the Existing Conditions Report, and discussed vision, goals, objectives, and potential actions.
- *Business Survey.* Business owners were sent an online survey to understand the neighborhood's suitability for businesses. To keep the survey brief and encourage open responses, the format was limited to three open-ended questions focused on highlighting the advantages and disadvantages for businesses in the neighborhood and what changes would enhance business. The survey was created by URP students and distributed via email several weeks before the first neighborhood workshop.
- *Resident Interviews.* President and founding member of the Greenbush Neighbors, Mike Markell, was interviewed by URP students in early spring. Mr. Markell has lived in the neighborhood for 38 years and gave an excellent viewpoint of a long-term resident. Two Augustana students currently residing in the neighborhood were also interviewed to gain a student's perspective. Dr. Brian Leech, resident of Jackson Square and Augustana professor, was also interviewed to gain the perspective of someone who lives on the fringe of the neighborhood.

- *Existing Conditions Report.* A Greenbush Existing Conditions Report was drafted by URP students in the spring of 2015. The report analyzed data and assessed the neighborhood's strengths and needs. The report was a springboard for drafting this comprehensive Neighborhood Plan.
- *Planning Commission Review and City Council adoption.* To be completed.

Review of Relevant Plans

As a neighborhood planning process does not happen in a vacuum, the planning team reviewed relevant City plans to gain a firm understanding of prior City initiatives and to ensure that this Neighborhood Plan is consistent with those adopted City policy documents.

City of Rock Island Comprehensive Plan

In 2014, the City adopted a Comprehensive Plan that established a 20+ year vision for the city based on community values. The plan serves as a blueprint for City staff and decision makers in helping them to achieve long-term community objectives for a sustainable future. The plan supports the preparation of neighborhood plans to address specific issues and opportunities at the neighborhood level. One of the policy statements is to "encourage and support the creation of neighborhood associations and locally-led neighborhood planning efforts." More specifically, the plan recommends that the City support land use changes and development projects that enhance and complement the character of existing neighborhoods and the scale of existing homes.

The Comprehensive Plan also suggests that City "be receptive to atypical housing options and configurations to meet diverse housing needs and market desires." For example, while many residents are satisfied with single family homes and more traditional multifamily housing, such as condominiums, downtown lofts, and senior housing, other options could diversify the City's housing stock. Live-work units, accessory dwelling units, and cooperative housing are examples of alternative living arrangements. It is recommended that when developing neighborhood plans, each neighborhood consider how and where such housing options could be accommodated within the neighborhood—the neighborhood plan is the perfect avenue for exploring these options and developing policy statements to guide this type of development in the future.

Arsenal Gateway Plan

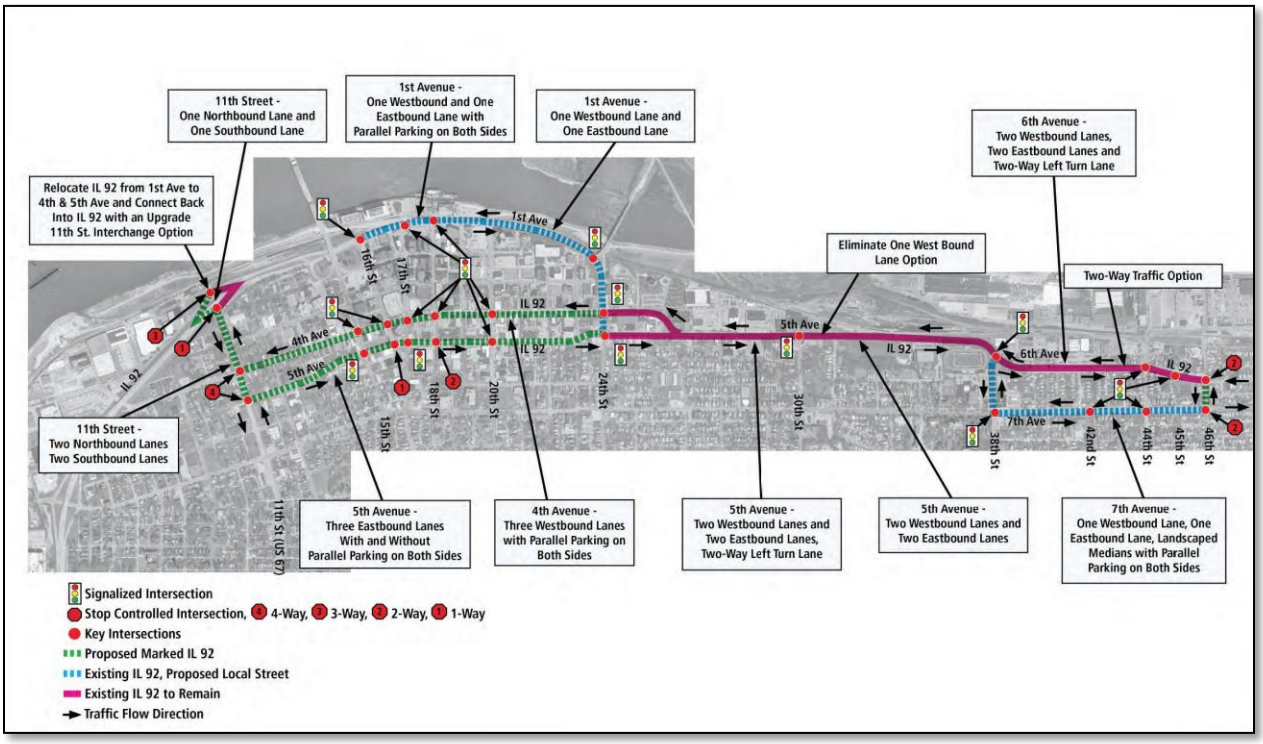
In 2012, the City hired MSA Professional Services to prepare a plan to guide redevelopment in the Arsenal Gateway area, which is generally located between 19th and 31st Streets and from the riverfront south to 5½ and 8th Avenues. This area overlaps with the north end of Greenbush. The overarching goals and priorities of the plan include the following:

- Grow the employment base, with a focus on businesses that are synergistic with the Rock Island Arsenal.
- Direct public investment to achieve new development at high-visibility sites (i.e. intersection of 24th Street with 4th and 5th Avenues).
- Ensure infill development is compatible with the desired neighborhood character.
- Retain older buildings with architectural character and revitalize whenever feasible.

- Grow the population base, including new residents that are diverse in age and ethnicity.
- Ensure walking and biking are safe and viable transportation options at all times of the year, especially crossings of 4th and 5th Avenues and connections to the river.
- Enhance public safety and the perception of safety in the planning area.
- Maintain formal and informal green spaces and public gathering spaces.

IL Route 92 Traffic Engineering Study

A traffic engineering study for Illinois Route 92 was prepared by Stanley Consultants in 2008. The study recommended a conceptual plan that would improve traffic flow and enhance the pedestrian environment. Recommendations impacting Greenbush include reducing the width of 5th Avenue between 27th and 38th Streets to provide two lanes in each direction. This would enhance the roadway character by providing additional separation and screening of the adjacent railroad tracks opposite the athletic fields for Augustana College. West of 30th Street, a two-way left turn lane may be striped to better accommodate left turn traffic onto local streets and commercial/industrial driveways within the corridor.



Neighborhood Outreach Findings

As described above, the planning process included numerous opportunities for neighborhood residents and stakeholders to take a proactive role in determining a vision for their neighborhood and to determine the type of future development and growth that should occur within its boundaries. In creating this vision, residents and business owners identified strengths in their neighborhood in addition to problems they would like to see addressed.

Neighborhood Workshop #1

At a neighborhood workshop on May 13, 2015, approximately 20 residents from the neighborhood were in attendance. They were asked to provide feedback on the following topics about their neighborhood.

When prompted to think about the key characteristics of their neighborhood, residents identified the following words or phrases:

Strengths/Assets

- Diverse
- Mature neighborhood
- Augustana College
- Greenbush Neighbor's (neighborhood association)
- Friendly neighbors
- Access to riverfront and amenities
- Irish heritage
- Railroad

Issues/Concerns

- Rental lots, some rundown
- Unkempt property
- Close to grocery store
- Vacancy
- Home
- Old
- Not historic

When asked to identify which words or phrases come to mind when they think of Greenbush, the following were identified:

Positive Responses

- Friendly neighbors
- Close to grocery
- Home
- Diverse
- Mature neighborhood
- Greenbush Association
- Access to riverfront and amenities
- Irish heritage
- Augustana College

Negative Responses

- Lots rental, some rundown
- Unkempt property
- Dirty
- Drugs
- Vacancy
- Old
- Not historic
- Sexual predators
- Domestic disturbances
- Railroad

When asked to identify favorite aspects of the neighborhood, participants identified:

- Good people
- Grocery store
- Township Hall
- Quiet
- Home
- Close to work
- Older architecture
- Convenient location
- Affordable
- Diversity
- Small
- Sacred Heart Church (empty school)
- Community
- Being left alone
- Involved Greenbush president
- Augie student involvement
- Greek Hell Week

When asked to identify their biggest concerns in the neighborhood, residents identified:

- Streets
- Unkempt yards
- Property maintenance and conditions
- Empty houses and other vacancies
- Drug activity
- Alleys need to be cleaned up
- Limited jobs
- Development
- River access
- Public transportation
- Neighborhood has been ignored
- Absentee landlords
- Parking
- Not enough for youth to be involved
- Language barriers
- Income and family stresses

When asked what they would like to see in Greenbush that isn't currently available:

- Restaurants/eateries
- Play area for kids
- New pavement of 6th Avenue, 27th and 28th Streets
- Clean-up the drugs and fighting people
- Keep bad elements out permanently
- A cleaned-up, better image
- Medical clinic
- Dollar store
- More jobs
- Stronger partnership with the city
- Full-scale civic center
- Youth activity center
- Hydroponic garden
- BBQs
- Trick or Treat
- Adult programs

A few miscellaneous comments about the neighborhood were listed in the comment section. One resident simply wrote "Help!!", indicating that at least one resident believes that there are some aspects of the neighborhood that could be improved. Residents indicated they are open to accepting assistance from outside sources; another resident commented, "(we) are the forgotten neighborhood." Many Greenbush residents feel the neighborhood had been neglected as evidenced by "abandoned businesses...houses in disrepair, and (poor) water mains." Residents also indicated there is an unwarranted perception of high crime rates; a phenomenon commonly experienced throughout Rock Island that drives away potential business patrons and residents.

In general, it was determined that the neighborhood faces a problem of perception. To combat this negative perception, Greenbush could focus on developing a stronger sense of identity which can come from improved neighborhood aesthetics, community strength, and unity. Residents expressed a desire to build on Greenbush's existing assets to construct a welcoming, walkable community that attracts businesses and young people to a neighborhood of well-maintained homes close to downtown Rock Island and Augustana College.

Greenbush Resident Interviews

Resident interviews were conducted in the spring 2015 with Mike Markell, President and founding member of the Greenbush Neighbors, a history professor at Augustana College, and two Augustana students.

When asked about their experience in the neighborhood, both Augustana students mentioned they were unaware they lived within the Greenbush and have little attachment to the area due to lack of neighbor interaction and issues with break-ins. Both students agreed the brick streets add character to the area, but they would like to see them better maintained.

The Augustana professor indicated he resides in the new Jackson Square and has been a neighborhood resident for three years. He indicated that he enjoys Jackson Square's proximity to amenities such as the riverfront trail, Schwiebert Park, the Quad Cities Botanical Center, and downtown. He expressed his concern for himself and his kids over crossing 4th and 5th Avenues on 24th Street as these expansive one-ways funnel heavy, high-speed traffic. He added that these one-ways limit the ability of Jackson Square residents to interact with the rest of the Greenbush neighborhood. He also noted that he does not identify as a Greenbush resident as he has not seen any postings from the Greenbush Neighbors in Jackson Square; he added he is more likely to receive flyers and announcements related to downtown and the Broadway Historic District, which has a more engaged neighborhood association.

Mike Markell indicated he has lived and been an active member of the community for 38 years. He identified the Save-a-Lot store on 7th Avenue and Broadway Presbyterian Church (just outside of the Greenbush neighborhood boundaries) as being key institutions that attract and anchor families to the neighborhood. Other strengths mentioned by Mr. Markell included a very active police department and the walkability of the neighborhood which facilitates neighbor interactions. He also cited the former Greenbush Neighbors Resource Fair as a successful and popular neighborhood event where residents were educated by over 50 agencies or businesses on services and resources available to them. The last fair was held in 2011. Mr. Markell also highlighted the need for safer transportation routes for school children walking to Longfellow Elementary, greater attention towards addressing vacant properties and lots, and improvements to the 5th Avenue business corridor.

Business Survey

An anonymous online survey was emailed to Greenbush businesses in the spring of 2015. The survey was open-ended and solicited responses to the following questions.

What do you like about this neighborhood that makes it worthwhile to conduct business?

- Its home! While it may not be the best area, it consists of faithful customers and its right next by an historic landmark (arsenal) which provides an easier route for people to find us.
- I like that there is a lot of traffic coming through the area which gives our business a lot of exposure. Having the one-ways on both sides makes it easy for customers to find our business and access it. Being near to the bridge is helpful as well.
- Rock Island is a fantastic town - a great mix of people and a dedicated City staff. The repurposing of industrial buildings to residential lofts, the incorporation of small business and arts, and the unified belief in revitalizing the downtown area for the good of the community—this helps make our location great—add the mighty Mississippi River, festivals, and special events, and you have a great climate for business. We add to the allure of the City, we attract individuals and families to the area where dollars are spent on lodging, food, fuel, shopping and other forms of entertainment.

What do you not like about this neighborhood that makes it difficult to conduct business?

- It's not the best looking area. People are extremely stereotypical, and seeing a restaurant in such a low quality neighborhood isn't the best look.
- Restrictions on signage on our property make it more difficult to advertise our business. We specialize in making signs and it would be nice to be able to show our capabilities to people. We tried one time and were told by the City to remove them off of our own private property. There are more abandoned buildings than I'd like to see in the neighborhood as well.
- The one-way avenues make finding us more difficult. There is not a great deal of available land for expansion of our outdoor gardens. Still, we hope to move to the North Levee in future expansion. While our corridor has shown great improvement, there are still some run-down houses and empty storefronts throughout the neighborhood. That may turn off tourists and even members from other cities in the area.

What changes to the neighborhood would enhance your business?

- More sightseeing, along with better quality streets and homes.
- Finding tenants or some use for the empty buildings to bring in more potential customers to the area and allowing us to advertise using different methods on our property.
- Continued work to dispel the idea that Rock Island is not a safe place to be, and more broadly, that the Quad Cities is not a fun and interesting place to be! We need more business expansion radiating out from the downtown district. More value placed on culture, parks, museums and festivals - leaders publicly advocating for patronage and support of these attractions that help make the City a great place to live, work and raise a family.

Neighborhood Workshop #2

A second neighborhood workshop was held on September 8, 2015 to update residents on the progress of the existing conditions report and further examine residents' priorities on current issues in the neighborhood. Twelve residents were in attendance and were asked to fill out a worksheet indicating their goals, desired actions and vision for the future of Greenbush along with ranking concerns and priorities on issues brought forward at the first neighborhood workshop. Residents were then asked to share their ideas with the group. A list was formed based on that discussion where residents were then asked to vote for the top three goals and top three actions that were most significant to them.

Vision

When asked to describe their vision for the future of Greenbush, attendees envisioned a clean, diverse and thriving community that provides social space, shopping and other amenities within a walkable distance for residents and their families.

Goals

When asked to describe their goals for the neighborhood, attendees identified: better landlords, improved street and sewer infrastructure, infill development, increasing the police presence in the neighborhood, attracting new businesses, improving street and alley lighting, address property maintenance, fill or remove vacant housing, and increase employment opportunities. In addition, one resident suggested a desire to see the vacant lot on 25th street (former Valley Homes site just south of the Greenbush boundary), developed into community gathering space with suggestions such as rock climbing, mini golf, or zip lines utilizing the steep slope of the area.

Potential Actions

When asked to identify potential actions to meet the above described goals, a majority of attendees highlighted cleaning up and beautifying the neighborhood as the most realizable and needed action for their community. Complaints of homes (both vacant and occupied) being unkempt and sidewalks overgrown with weeds and tree limbs motivated this call for action and potential solutions may come in the form of increased code enforcement by the city, community yard clean up days, or more focused housing renovation programs. It was also discussed that improving the aesthetics of the neighborhood could improve the negative perception of the neighborhood and attract new families and businesses.

Concerns and Priorities

When residents were asked to rank the list of issues on based on their level of concern, more than half of attendees indicated a high level of concern regarding the number of vacant homes and businesses, unkempt properties, and drugs within Greenbush. The first three correspond with the need for a more attractive and better maintained neighborhood while the final issue is related to the perception of high levels of crime and drug use. When asked to rank potential solutions based on level of priority, the majority of the group identified increased businesses, improved city infrastructure, and increased demolition of vacant buildings in the neighborhood as deserving high priority and attention.

Another issue brought up during the discussion was a general lack of awareness of available programs and services to address existing concerns. For example, the City offers one free special solid waste pickup per calendar year on an appointment basis. Other services ranging from animal control to home improvement programs have already been set in place, but several residents seeking these solutions were unaware of program availability. Increased communication and resident education can increase use of such services and ultimately improve the visual appeal of the neighborhood.

Planning Area Findings

Population and Socio-Economic Information

The Greenbush Neighborhood is located within Census Tracts 233 and 245. Table 1 compares population and age demographics of Greenbush and the City of Rock Island from 2010 and 2013. As indicated, there was a population decline in both the neighborhood and the City itself. While the City's population loss was marginal between 2010 and 2013, Greenbush lost 21.5 percent of its residents during this same period. This may be due to a combination of economic factors and the large proportion of non-permanent rental residents, as discussed in the Housing section (page 15). Another potential cause for this may be the large number of demolitions that have taken place in the neighborhood over the past decade, as illustrated on Map 3.

Table 1 also indicates that Greenbush is an aging neighborhood with the median age on the rise and an increase of 3.8 percent of residents aged 65 and older. This trend may be attributed to the natural aging of the current residents along with the decline in population. However, there was a 4.2 percent increase in children under 5 during this same period. The increase suggests that young families may be moving into the neighborhood, which is an indicator of shifting demographics in Greenbush.

TABLE 1: Population and Age	Greenbush Neighborhood			City of Rock Island		
	2010	2013	Change	2010	2013	Change
Population	2,133	1,674	-21.5%	39,018	38,968	-0.1%
Median Age	32.9	38.6	+5.7 years	37.0	36.6	-0.4 years
Under Age 5	7.0%	11.2%	4.2%	6.7%	6.3%	-0.4%
Under Age 18	24.7%	24.1%	-0.6%	22.4%	23.2%	0.8%
Age 65+	12.0%	15.8%	3.8%	15.5%	16.2%	0.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and American Community Survey, 2009-2013
Note: For the purposes of this Plan, the Greenbush Neighborhood is most closely defined in U.S. Census geography as Block Group 1 of Census Tract 233 and Block Group 2 of Census Tract 245. Note that the Greenbush Neighborhood boundaries do not precisely match with these Census Tract boundaries, however, they are sufficiently similar for purposes of evaluating demographic trends.

Table 2 lays out the racial and ethnic makeup of the Greenbush neighborhood and the City of Rock Island. Compared to the City, Greenbush has lost some of its ethnic and racial diversity over the past few years at the same time there has been a nearly 15 percent increase in the white population. This demographic shift may be attributed to the neighborhood's proximity to Augustana College, which contributes students to the neighborhood who reside in many of the rental units.

TABLE 2: Race and Ethnicity	Greenbush Neighborhood			City of Rock Island		
	2010	2013	Change	2010	2013	Change
White	65.1%	79.8%	14.7%	72.3%	72.7%	0.4%
Black	16.1%	11.3%	-4.8%	18.3%	18.4%	0.1%
Native American	0.5%	0.4%	-0.1%	0.3%	0.4%	0.1%
Asian	1.2%	0.0%	-1.2%	1.8%	1.4%	-0.4%
Native Hawaiian	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%	0.0%	1.4%	1.4%
Some Other Race	11.5%	2.4%	-9.1%	3.6%	3.4%	-0.2%
Two or More Races	5.5%	5.7%	0.2%	3.7%	3.6%	-0.1%
Hispanic/Latino	21.1%	9.0%	-12.1%	9.4%	9.6%	0.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey, 2009-2013
Note: For the purposes of this Plan, the Greenbush Neighborhood is most closely defined in U.S. Census geography as Block Group 1 of Census Tract 233 and Block Group 2 of Census Tract 245. Note that the Greenbush Neighborhood boundaries do not precisely match with these Census Tract boundaries, however, they are sufficiently similar for purposes of evaluating demographic trends.

Housing

Greenbush was developed in the early part of the 20th century; at that time many of the residential structures in the neighborhood were constructed as single family homes. Over the decades, however, many of those structures have since been converted to multifamily units. As indicated in Table 3, the majority (60.7 percent) of housing in Greenbush today is composed of attached or multifamily units. Detached single-family homes now represent just 39.3 percent of the neighborhood's total housing.

Table 3 indicates the majority (48.2 percent) of housing units in the neighborhood are renter occupied, which is consistent with the observation that much of the housing in Greenbush is multifamily. There is also a fairly large share of (22.4%) of vacant housing units within the neighborhood.

Age is one characteristic that often is used to measure the general condition of housing supply as older homes may not meet modern building codes. As illustrated in Table 3, nearly half of the housing in the neighborhood was built before the 1950s. Only five housing units have been constructed in the past 15 years.

TABLE 3: Housing Data	Greenbush Neighborhood	
Housing Type	# of Units	% of Units
Single Family (Detached)	405	39.3%
Single Family (Attached)	94	9.1%
2 units (Two-Family/Duplex)	113	11.0%
3-4 units (Multifamily)	76	7.4%
5+ units(Multifamily)	342	33.2%
Housing Occupancy	# of Units	% of Units
Total Units	1,030	100.0%
Owner Occupied Units	303	29.4%
Renter Occupied Units	496	48.2%
Vacant Units	231	22.4%
Age of Structure	# of Units	% of Units
Built 2000 or later	5	0.5%
Built 1990 to 1999	41	4.0%
Built 1980 to 1989	124	12.0%
Built 1970 to 1979	105	10.2%
Built 1960 to 1969	111	10.8%
Built 1950 to 1959	139	13.5%
Built 1940 to 1949	84	8.2%
Built 1939 or earlier	421	40.9%
Value of Owner-Occupied Housing	# of Units	% of Units
Less than $25,000	20	6.6%
$25,000 to $49,999	39	12.9%
$50,000 to $99,999	124	40.9%
$100,000 to $199,999	77	25.4%
$200,000 or more	43	14.2%
Median Home Value	$78,000	

Source: American Community Survey, 2009-2013
Note: For the purposes of this Plan, the Greenbush Neighborhood is most closely defined in U.S. Census geography as Block Group 1 of Census Tract 233 and Block Group 2 of Census Tract 245. Note that the Greenbush Neighborhood boundaries do not precisely match with these Census Tract boundaries, however, they are sufficiently similar for purposes of evaluating demographic trends.
Note: A housing unit is defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as "a house, an apartment, a mobile home or trailer, a group of rooms, or a single room occupied as separate living quarters."

Housing values in Greenbush are somewhat lower than the City as a whole, which makes the neighborhood affordable for first-time homebuyers. The median value of owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood is $78,000 compared to $98,800 city-wide. The majority of owner-occupied homes fall within the middle range value between $50,000-$99,999 with 39.6 percent valued above $100,000 dollars and 19.5 percent valued below $50,000.

Rental Housing

Map 2 depicts rental properties in Greenbush. Due in part to the neighborhood's close proximity to Augustana College, the share of rental housing in Greenbush is considerably higher than that found in a typical neighborhood. Many of the rental properties on the east side of the neighborhood are occupied by Augustana students, including the Greenbush Condos at 8½ Avenue and 29th Street. Other rental properties throughout the neighborhood cater to the general public, including the newly renovated Jackson Square, which is a recent addition to the neighborhood at the intersection of 4th Avenue and 24th Street.

A significant number of rental properties can negatively impact a neighborhood. It is commonly believed that an increase in the number of renters in an area can push down housing values, decrease property upkeep, and negatively affect community involvement. Unfortunately, many of these issues have cropped in Greenbush over the years, although it is not clear whether this is a direct result of the increasing percentage of rental housing in the neighborhood. Other factors such as economic recession and foreclosures, as discussed below, can also contribute to disinvestment occurring in a neighborhood.

Map 2: Rental Properties; Source: City of Rock Island Building Inspections Division

Neighborhood Investment and Revitalization Efforts

In Rock Island, the economic downturn of the 1980s resulted in the closure of two of the largest regional employers, Farmall and Case I.H. This dramatic loss of employment in Rock Island led to gradual disinvestment throughout much of the community, with Greenbush notably being one of the harder hit neighborhoods. The Great Recession of 2008 resulted in further disinvestment in the city and Greenbush more specifically. These economic realities have forced many families and local businesses out of the neighborhood which has left many structures vacant. Over the years, these vacancies have been a blighting factor on the neighborhood, which has had the perceived effect of attracting crime to the area. To help combat the blight, the City has invested thousands of dollars to acquire vacant properties and demolish blighted structures. Map 3 depicts the locations of vacant parcels and vacant structures throughout in Greenbush.

Map 3: Vacancies, Sources: Augustana College, City of Rock Island Community & Economic Development Department

In addition to demolitions to address blight, the City offers a number of housing and rehabilitation programs to City residents. The programs, listed below, are designed to address property maintenance issues, assist eligible homeowners with home maintenance and emergency home repairs, incentivize new home construction, and incentive business development. Despite the City's efforts, widespread private investment has been slow to return to Greenbush. One of the goals of this Neighborhood Plan is to explore additional programs and opportunities to spur neighborhood reinvestment.

Code Enforcement	**Description**
International Property Maintenance Code	The City's Property Nuisance Abatement Officer responds to property maintenance issues such as: abandoned vehicles, animal nuisances, rubbish/junk, noise, weeds and grass, graffiti, and vacant properties.
Housing Programs	**Description**
Emergency Loans	Loans for emergency repairs to electrical service (outside of the home), exterior accessibility for disabled, faulty furnaces, and water or sewer line breaks.
Roof Loans	Loans for roof replacements to qualified owner-occupied properties with aging or worn roofs.
Non-Emergency Loans	Loans for limited repairs to garages, furnaces, water heaters, gutters, or chimney tuck pointing.
Healthy Homes Lead Program	Assistance to reduce lead hazards in owner or renter-occupied homes. To be eligible the home must have children under the age of six who reside in the home or visit the home on a regular basis.
New Housing Construction Property Tax Incentive	Property tax rebates for on new construction of an owner-occupied single family home or condominium on any undeveloped lot in the City. The program requires owner-occupancy and is limited to the first buyer of the home.
Business Incentive Programs	**Description**
Façade Improvement Program	Rebates are available to commercial property owners or tenants who renovate the exterior of a property. The program is designed as a rebate program with funds disbursed after all of the authorized work has been completed. The maximum rebate amount available through the Facade Improvement Program is $15,000.
Commercial/Industrial Revolving Loan Fund (CIRLF)	Gap financing for business start-ups or for expansion projects. The program offers low-interest loans to industrial, commercial, light manufacturing, retail, and service industries. Funds can be used toward the purchase of fixed assets (land, building, and equipment) and for working capital purposes.
Micro Commercial/ Industrial Revolving Loan Fund	A mini-version of the CIRLF program—gap financing up to $10,000 available for business start-ups or for expansion projects.

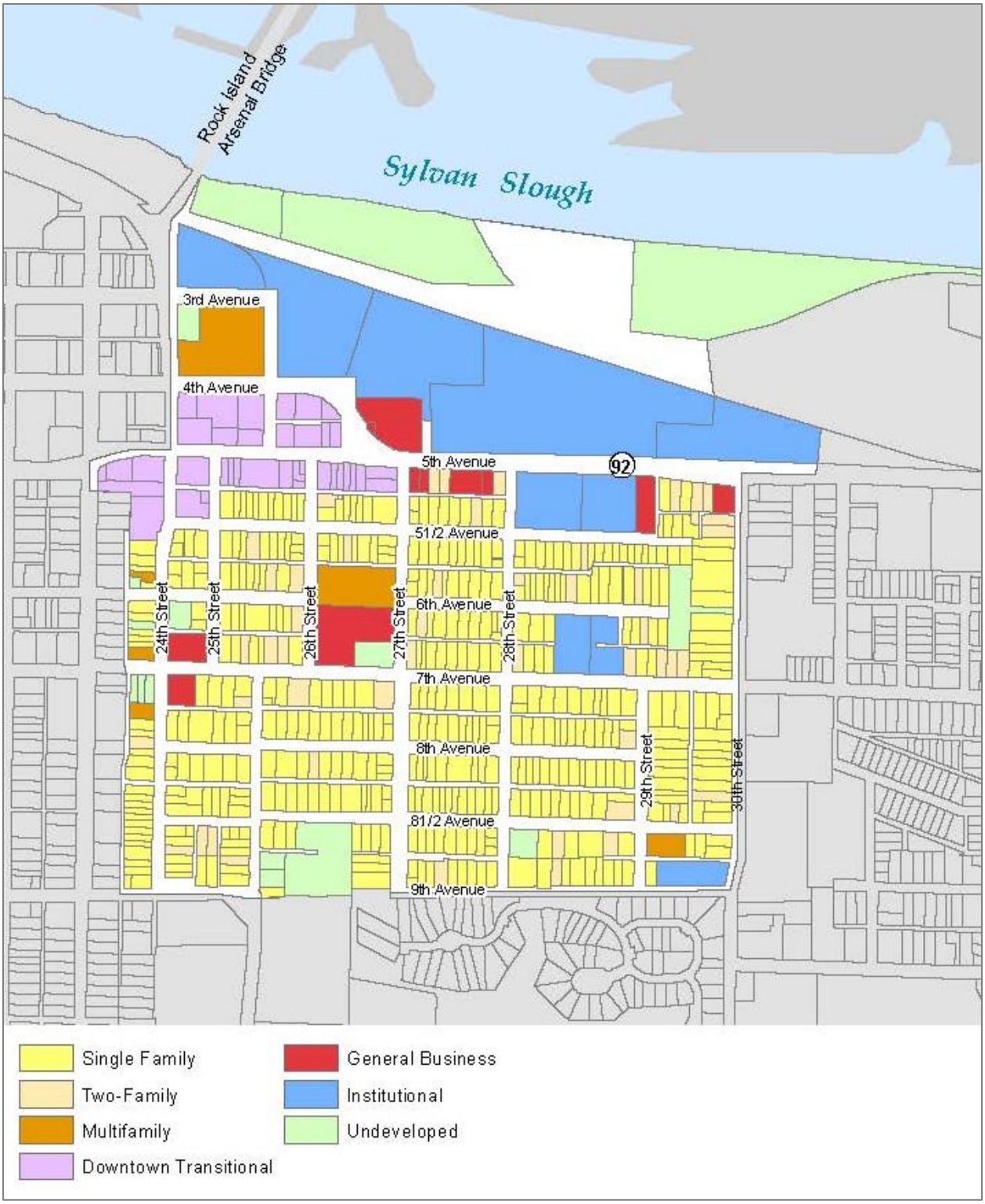
Existing Land Use

The land use categories depicted on Map 4 are listed below. The land use pattern in the neighborhood has been relatively unchanged over the past decades, aside from the intermittent removal of structures by demolition. Residential uses occupy a large majority of Greenbush from about 5½ Avenue to the southern edge of the neighborhood. Institutional uses, such as the MidAmerican Energy, the Quad City Botanical Center, and the Quad City Expo Center are located on the north side of the neighborhood. Other institutional uses in the neighborhood include Sacred Heart Church on 5th Avenue and Rock Island Township Hall on 7th Avenue. Business uses are scattered throughout Greenbush; some have been classified within the Downtown Transitional land use category which is along 4th and 5th Avenue on the east side of the Neighborhood. Undeveloped land abuts the flood levy land and the riverfront.

Land Use Category	Definition
Single Family Residential	Single family residential structures.
Two-Family Residential	Duplexes and attached two-family homes.
Multifamily Residential	Multi-family residential unit with 3+ dwellings per units.
Downtown Transitional	A mix of building characters and land uses, including residential, commercial, industrial, and associated off-street parking. Many structures maintain a traditional downtown character; however, over time, development activities have altered the character of this area, creating a mix development types. In addition, many parcels are now vacant and many buildings are unoccupied indicating this area is ripe for transition.
General Business	Auto-oriented and/or community-serving small to large-scale retail, service and office uses. Such uses are distinguished by parking lots, often placed on the street side of the building.
Institutional	Public land and private civic and institutional uses such as schools, cemeteries, churches, public buildings, hospitals, and public utilities.
Undeveloped	Land is not presently developed with an active land use.

Land Use Conflicts

Land use conflicts commonly arise in areas where diverse but incompatible land uses intersect. In Greenbush, the primary land use conflict is associated with residential uses abutting IL 92, which greatly limits public access to the riverfront and other amenities like the Quad City Botanical Center and Quad City Expo Center. Another potential land use conflict is the dynamic between Augustana student housing and owner-occupied single-family housing. College students do not always make the most peaceful neighbors, and an influx of students may cause issues. While there may not be an easy solution to an influx of college students, increasing the share of owner-occupied housing would be beneficial to the neighborhood.



Map 4: Existing Land Use

Transportation Network

The Greenbush Neighborhood lies at the heart of Rock Island and connects three of its most attractive destinations—the Rock Island Arsenal, Downtown Rock Island, and Augustana College. The transportation network includes major arterials that connect Greenbush to these destinations and countless others for visitors and daily commuters.

Vehicle Routes

Map 5 depicts the average daily traffic count of the most highly traveled routes in the planning area, which are 4th and 5th Avenues (IL 92), 7th Avenue, 24th Street, and the Government Bridge connecting to the Rock Island Arsenal and the State of Iowa. These primary travel routes are used to access employment centers and the above mentioned regional destinations. The majority of other streets within the planning area are local streets used primarily by neighborhood residents.

Roadway Condition

The condition of the roads in Greenbush varies greatly in terms of maintenance. The best maintained roads are the major arterials located near areas of local business activity, which include 4th, 5th, and 7th Avenues and 24th Street. While these roadways are fairly well maintained, the major arterials still contain multiple potholes and other obstructions. Points of trouble can be seen around MidAmerican Energy on 5th Avenue.

Bicycle Routes

Presently, the only bicycle-specific infrastructure within Greenbush is the Great River Trail which, in total, runs for 60 miles along the Mississippi riverfront from Sunset Park on the west side of Rock Island to Savannah, Illinois. The trail is a paved, multiuse path that is used by pedestrians and cyclists of all levels from both the Illinois and Iowa sides of the Quad Cities. However, within the Greenbush Neighborhood, the only available access to the trail is at 24th Street, which is somewhat difficult to access by bicycle for the beginning or average cyclist because it requires on-street cycling and crossing 4th and 5th Avenues. For many residents, especially those with young children, this access point is not an ideal option.

Through previous planning efforts, Rock Island residents and the City have identified bicycling as an important component of the transportation network. The Rock Island Bikeways Plan, adopted in 2009, recommends development of an interconnected bike-route system. Proposed connections within Greenbush include an extension of the 7th Avenue bike lane from 20th Street to the Moline border. The addition of this bike lane would better connect the neighborhood with downtown Rock Island and provide some of the infrastructure needed to improve this alternative form of transportation.

Pedestrian Network

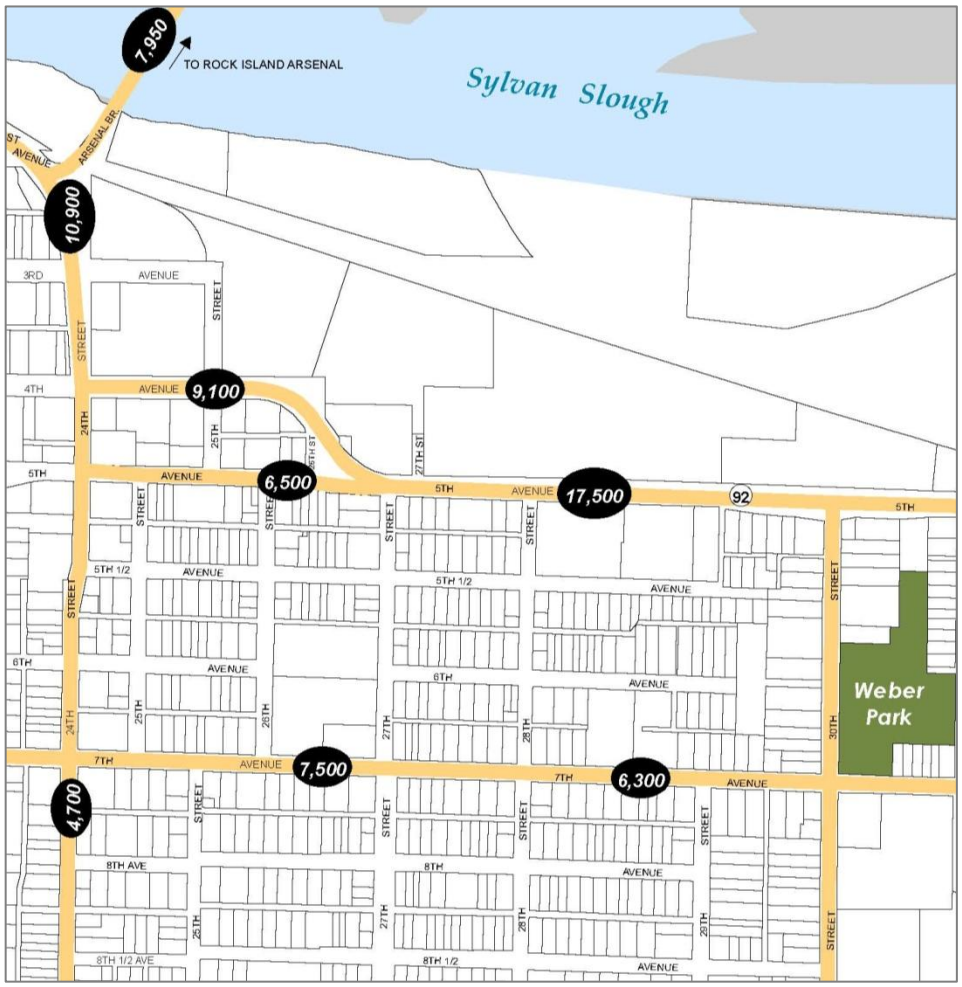
Most streets in the neighborhood have sidewalks on both sides of the street; however, the condition of sidewalks is inconsistent throughout the neighborhood. Most sidewalks are in need of maintenance or replacement which makes pedestrian activity challenging. Pedestrian access is also compromised during winter months as snow removal is not a requirement per City ordinance. This issue is particularly pronounced along bus routes where pedestrians are often forced to wait for the bus in the street as the sidewalks adjacent to bus stops have not been cleared.

Pedestrian connectivity is also an issue in the northern half of the neighborhood. The sidewalks along the 4th and 5th Avenue corridor are narrow, in poor condition, and directly abut to the street. In addition, 4th and 5th Avenues are exceptionally wide, 4-5 lane one-way roads that were created to alleviate heavy morning and

evening commutes. While providing good access for motorists, these one-ways are major barriers for north-south pedestrian movements through the neighborhood. This fast moving vehicular traffic in this area is not conducive to pedestrian activity and disconnects the majority of the neighborhood from accessing the riverfront or utilizing amenities north of these roadways. The current lane widths and one-way configurations may have been warranted in previous decades, but the closure of the region's largest employers in the 1980s (i.e. Farmall and Case I.H.) have significantly reduced average daily traffic counts and the need for 4-5 travel lanes. Along with reduced pedestrian activity, numerous studies also indicate that fast moving one-way designs do not lend to economic opportunities. Easing these roads by restructuring them as two-way roads may prove to be a boon to local businesses and neighborhood activity along these major corridors.

Public Transportation

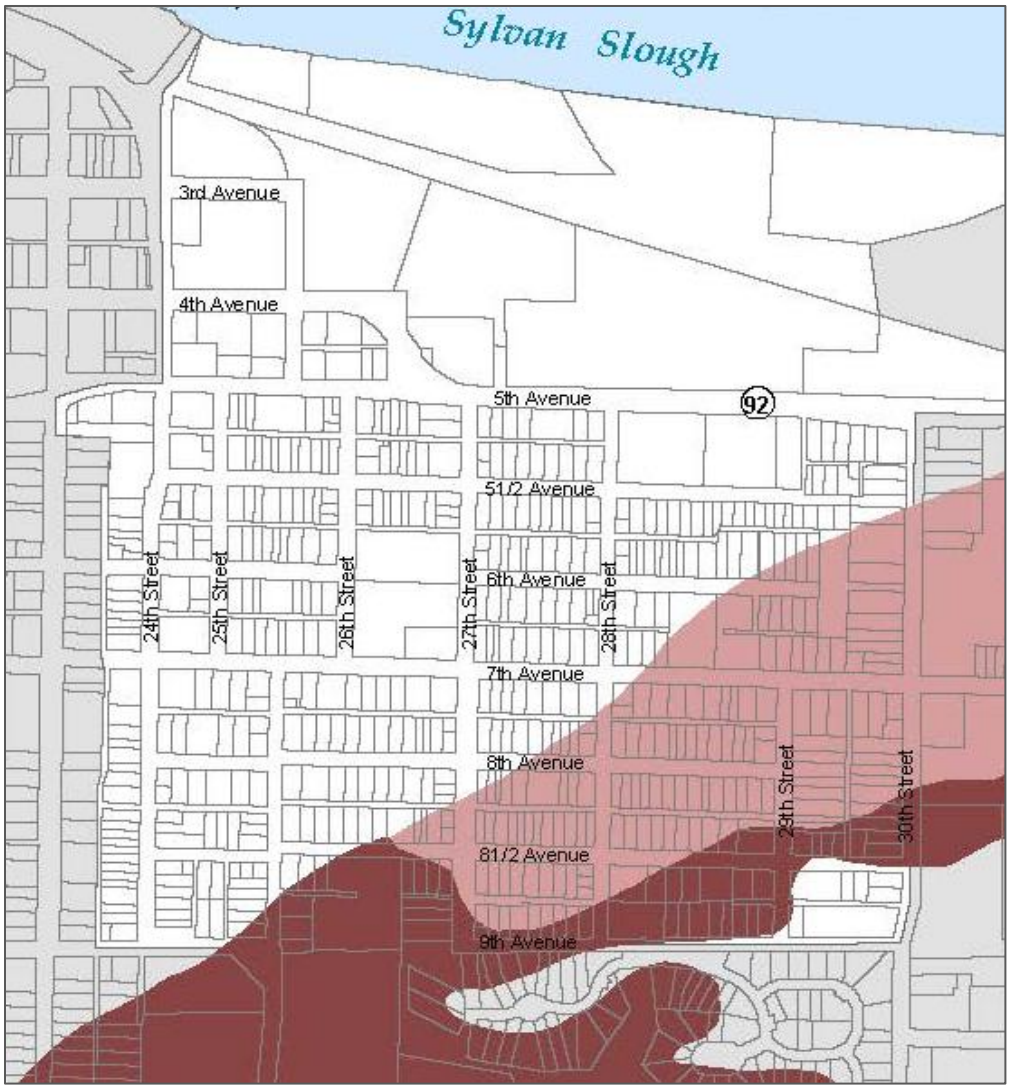
Public transportation in the Greenbush neighborhood is provided by MetroLINK. 5th and 7th Avenues serve as major thoroughfares for bus transit as they connect the Rock Island Metro Transfer Station in downtown Rock Island to Center Station in downtown Moline by the Route 10 and Augustana College and businesses on Blackhawk Road via Route 53. Most residents are within a one-to-two block radius of these bus routes which provide efficient service to most of the neighborhood.



Map 5: Average Daily Traffic; Source: Illinois Department of Transportation

Topography

Slope, or gradient, is the level at which the elevation changes over a lateral range of space. Due to its riverside location, Greenbush is situated below the bluff line of the Mississippi River valley and experiences a considerably large slope gradient as one travels south within the neighborhood. Slope can cause a wide range of issues in terms of construction and road infrastructure. Steep slopes are depicted on Map 6. The lighter shade depicts slopes between 10-18 percent grade; the darker shade depicts slopes with grades of greater than 18 percent. Issues caused by steep slopes can be found throughout the neighborhood. Many retaining walls are either cracked or failing to support the properties housed behind them. There is also a considerable amount of soil and debris covering sidewalks from the storm water run-off issues. Many of the sidewalks and roads are uneven and failing due to the slope. The area most greatly impacted is along 9th Avenue as it cuts into two steep slopes.



Map 6: Steep Slopes

Community Gathering Places

Community gathering places, also sometimes referred to as "third places," are public spaces on neutral ground where people can meet and interact. The term third place describes any location outside the realm of a person's home and work (first and second places) where one goes for recreation or social interactions. Gathering places are open to all regardless of race, ethnicity, or income and allow residents to interact with other members of society in an equal, relaxed venue. Well maintained and frequently visited community spaces create a unique sense of place for a neighborhood, while at the same time also increase a neighborhood's desirability for new residents and businesses.

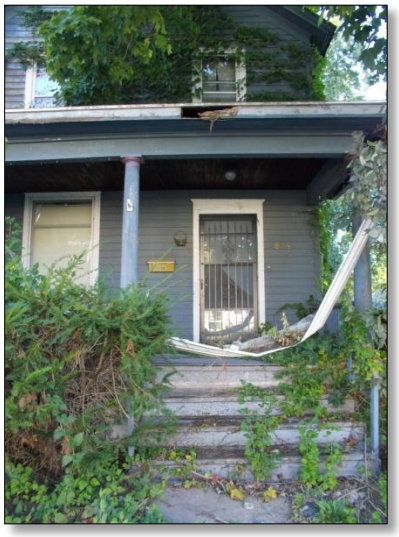
In Greenbush, the most prominent "third place" is the Great River Trail along the Mississippi River. This trail offers health benefits to residents in the form of a walking and biking trail. Greater accessibility and awareness of this asset could dramatically improve trail use by neighborhood residents. Green spaces often serve as community gathering spots. While there are no City parks within Greenbush, Weber Park is located immediately adjacent to the neighborhood along 7th Avenue and 30th Street. In addition, the Greenbush Neighbor's community garden along 7th Avenue is a place where neighbors can gather to garden, recreate, and build community. Through the data collection process, other locations were identified as having the potential to be transformed into appealing green spaces. These locations, in the form of vacant lots, currently are seen as blight on the neighborhood and can be repurposed into a benefit for Greenbush instead of a detriment.

In addition to the above described outdoor spaces, Rock Island Township Hall, the location of many is located at the epicenter of the neighborhood and serves a gathering place for neighborhood residents and is the location of Greenbush Neighbors meetings. The Save-A-Lot is utilized by many members of the Greenbush neighborhood and could be considered a current, if not unconventional, "gathering space" in the neighborhood. The Sacred Heart Church of Rock Island is also considered to be an important meeting place for neighborhood residents, as is the Broadway Presbyterian Church, although it is technically within the Broadway neighborhood.

Top Neighborhood Priorities

The Greenbush Neighborhood Plan is designed to address current issues and guide positive change in the neighborhood over the next 5-10 years. The goals outlined below address the issues and expectations of the community and reflect broad steps to move toward a more whole and vibrant neighborhood. On the following pages, each goal is accompanied by specific objectives (numbered) and actionable items (bulleted). An implementation matrix follows that prioritizes projects. It includes an estimated time frame and provides suggestions on potential partners and cost estimates.

This abandoned single family home was recently purchased by the City via the annual county tax sale; it is slated to be demolished due to neglect.



Private properties that have not been maintained diminish the quality, value, and perception of the neighborhood.

Goal 1: Improve the appearance and quality of the neighborhood by better maintaining and making improvements to private property

Improving the appearance and quality of the neighborhood is a high priority for Greenbush. For many residents, this means improving public infrastructure, such as pavement, alleys, and street lighting. However, the maintenance and upkeep of private property also has a significant impact on the appearance and perception of the neighborhood.

As discussed earlier in this Plan, economic challenges in Rock Island have had negative effects on neighborhoods city-wide, with Greenbush being no exception. Deferred maintenance and deterioration of the housing stock has negatively impacted the appearance of Greenbush, diminished property values and quality of life, and poses health and safety issues for residents. The City has addressed these issues in the best way that it can through code enforcement, rehabilitation programs, and demolition. However, these services increase the overall tax burden for residents city-wide, which also impact the City's ability to provide other municipal services, such as street and sidewalk maintenance. Further, the City's resources are limited and must respond to the entire community, not just one neighborhood. To address property maintenance issues, therefore, Greenbush cannot rely solely on the City. Instead, Greenbush must utilize its greatest asset, Greenbush Neighbors, to employ an action strategy to make improvements to private properties in the neighborhood. Focused, coordinated resident-led programs and initiatives can achieve multiple objectives—improving the perception of the neighborhood, attracting new residents and businesses, and creating an overall more vibrant and pleasant neighborhood.

1. Develop a *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* program where Greenbush Neighbors volunteer time and expertise to assist others in the neighborhood with projects ranging from landscaping to structural repairs. Such a program can foster a sense of community, strengthen feelings of pride of ownership, and ultimately increase property values. This type of program would also provide an opportunity for neighbors to connect with service-oriented

organizations and students from Augustana College. Example projects include:

- Neighborhood or block clean-up days for on alleys or yards.
- Seasonal clean sweeps to remove special and/or bulk waste.
- Mowing and other outdoor maintenance of vacant properties.
- Monthly home improvement work days where neighbors can pool their home repair/improvement expertise to work on projects together. Homeowners can benefit by saving money on contractors and can repay neighbors by participating on other projects.

2. Complete a needs assessment of residents who may require various kinds of assistance to maintain and improve their property.
   - Conduct a door-to-door survey to identify individuals with maintenance needs and residents with special skills or tools that can be utilized in the *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* initiative. This survey would also serve as a way to open the lines of communication between residents and establish a solid foundation for building interest in growing participation in the neighborhood association. Students from Augustana College may be of assistance in conducting such a survey; however, it is essential that neighborhood residents also be involved to invoke a sense of ownership among neighbors for the program.
3. Establish a line of communication with the City to improve response time for code enforcement issues, understanding City limitations with staff and funding.
   - Residents can contact the City directly for emergencies and complaints, or work with the City via Greenbush Neighbors to identify non-emergent issues to be addressed by the City.
4. Approach the City to discuss the possibility of creating mini-grants for neighborhood improvement projects. Dubuque, Iowa and Casselberry, Florida have variations of programs to consider.
   - Dubuque offers large (up to $5,000) and small (up to $750) improvement grants in low/moderate income neighborhoods for eligible projects such as park and streetscape improvements, neighborhood newsletters, tree planting, and out-of-school time programs for neighborhood youth.
   - Casselberry's Neighborhood Improvement Grant program encourages the exterior rehabilitation, renovation and overall neighborhood beautification of owner-occupied single family homes. The City set aside $50,000 for grants ranging from $200-$1,500 for eligible projects. Examples include: exterior renovation or paint, tree plantings, neighborhood entrance beautification, common area lighting.

These 2004 photos depict Greenbush Neighbors helping to install landscaping.

GOAL 2: Improve transportation connectivity and accessibility

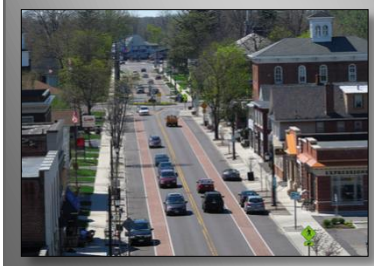
Many streets in Greenbush are designed specifically to accommodate cars at moderate speeds with no consideration for other modes of travel (i.e. 4th and 5th Avenues). As indicated earlier in this document, this poses hazards for cyclists and pedestrians, especially children and persons with disabilities. Transportation systems that provide for choice in mode of travel can significantly enhance quality of life, provide economic benefits to the community, and provide opportunities for a healthier, more social lifestyle for residents. Expanding the range of mobility options also encourages residents to explore their neighborhood and the local businesses and attractions found within.

1. Support pedestrian and bicycle-friendly improvements to roads and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood.
   - Request that future street reconstruction projects align with a "Complete Streets" policy—the development of which is indicated as a priority in both the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and the *Arsenal Gateway Plan*.
   - Promote use of the City's annual sidewalk repair program to neighborhood residents to repair sections of broken sidewalk and complete the sidewalk network where gaps exist.
   - Request that the City extend the existing bicycle lanes on 7th Avenue from 20th Street to the Moline border, as recommended in the *Rock Island Bikeways Plan*.
   - Explore additional options to improve bicycle accessibility in neighborhood.
   - Support the adoption of a snow removal ordinance to improve pedestrian mobility during winter weather events.
   - Support the City's plans to transition the 4th and 5th Avenue one-way pair to two-way roads.
   - Consider traffic calming measures, where warranted, to improve pedestrian activity, as identified in the City's *Comprehensive Plan*.
2. Improve access to and develop a neighborhood gateway/entrance to the Great River Trail. The new Garden District housing development on 3rd Avenue behind the Jackson Square Lofts will spur additional trail usage; improved access to the riverfront trail will directly benefit these future residents and the Greenbush Neighborhood in general.
   - Establish a partnership with the Quad City Botanical Center to promote Greenbush's unique Mississippi River and trail access.
   - Coordinate clean-up and install perennial/local plantings near the 24th Street trail access point.

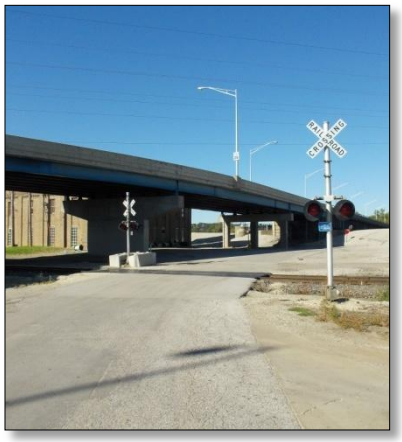
What is a Complete Street?

Complete streets are designed and operated to enable safe, comfortable, and convenient access for all users (i.e. pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit riders of all ages and abilities).

Benefits of complete streets include: improved safety and health for all users (including children, older adults, and disabled individuals); lower transportation costs; and local economic revitalization by spurring private development and increasing property values.



Source: Smart Growth America



The Great River Trail is difficult to access at 24th Street & in need of identification and landscaping.

- Enlist local artists or students from Augustana College to create a mural along the viaduct adjacent to 24th Street.
- Request the City provide wayfinding signage directing bicycles and other trail users to the Great River Trail.

Neighborhood Resources Fair 2005

Greenbush Easter Egg Hunt 2009

GOAL 3: Re-engage the neighborhood via Greenbush Neighbors

The strongest agent of change and support for a neighborhood comes from the residents who reside within it. One of Greenbush's core strengths is its neighborhood association, Greenbush Neighbors, which has been active in the community since 2001. The organization was strong between 2001 and 2011. During that time Greenbush Neighbors hosted numerous activities and events, including monthly meetings, potlucks, annual Easter and Halloween events, service projects, a bi-monthly newsletter, website, and Facebook page. Until 2011, Greenbush Neighbors was also responsible for hosting an annual resource fair where approximately 50 agencies and businesses would provide information to residents on services available to the community. The fair was a very popular event and an effective way to engage the neighborhood. Unfortunately, a significant time commitment and lack of funding has led to its demise. General interest and activity in Greenbush Neighbors has also dropped off in recent years, which have limited the amount of community work that has and can be accomplished. To achieve many of the goals listed below, which were identified by residents during the planning process, neighborhood residents must get involved.

1. Increase interest and participation in Greenbush Neighbors.
   - Establish a Board of Directors, prepare by-laws, and revisit the mission, purpose, goals of Greenbush Neighbors.
   - Hold a Neighborhood Association "re-launch" event to re-engage neighborhood residents.
   - Create a funding source for neighborhood iniviatives and events, such as member dues or an annual neighborhood garage sale.
   - Host block parties, new events (e.g. annual picnic, ice cream socials, neighborhood work days, walkability assessments, Walk for Walkability, etc.), and resuscitate old favorites like the annual resource fair and Trunk-or-Treat.
   - Establish a 'Welcome to the Neighborhood" initiative where new residents are provided information about the neighborhood.
   - Increase community service/involvement to benefit individual residents but Greenbush as a whole (e.g. beautification efforts, block parties, neighborhood watch, tool libraries, etc.).

2. Improve communication within the neighborhood.
    - Create a new website and revive the neighborhood's social media presence via Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or elsewhere.
    - Prepare and annually distribute an information packet including phone/email directory, calendar of events, and an updated index of relevant programs and resources.
    - Create a neighborhood cookbook. A neighborhood cookbook would showcase the diversity and culinary talent of Greenbush's residents. Once compiled, archived, and published, the cookbooks can be sold and the proceeds could go to Greenbush Neighbors and allocated for neighborhood improvement projects.

GOAL 4: Enhance the Relationship between Greenbush, Augustana College, and the Quad Cities Botanical Center

Rock Island is home to many key institutions that have been benefitting the community and residents for generations. Several of these institutions are located in Greenbush and have partnered with Greenbush Neighbors in the past to host local events. The Neighborhood Resources Fair is one such example and has proven to be ideal for residents to network with institutions to learn about their activities, programs, and volunteer opportunities. Enhancing the relationship between the neighborhood and these organizations will provide residents with a new avenue of support while reintroducing these longstanding organizations to the neighborhood.

Augustana College

Augustana College requires its students to complete service learning projects that integrate community service with academic instruction. The outcome is a lesson in civic responsibility and a stronger community. Although the college borders Greenbush on the west side, students residing in neighborhood are not well connected to the neighborhood and many are unaware of the existence Greenbush Neighbors. A significant opportunity exists to strengthen the connection between these students and the neighborhood while integrating service learning projects.

1. Establish a line of communication with faculty at Augustana College to engage students in neighborhood activities and identify opportunities for service learning projects that will enrich the neighborhood and better connect students to the neighborhood.
    - Assist the neighborhood in improving the appearance and quality of the neighborhood (refer to the *Neighbors Helping Neighbors* initiative under goal 1).

- Partner with Augustana College and Quad City Arts to complete art project (e.g. murals, mosaics, etc.) to enhance the beauty of Greenbush.
- Work with Augustana College to identify Senior Inquiry projects or Honors Capstone research to be conducted in the neighborhood.

2. Promote availability of rental homes and apartments within the community for Augustana students.
    - Highlight rental properties that are affordable, close to Augustana, and linked MetroLINK, identified as one of the best bus transit systems in America.
3. Work with Augustana College to host a campus tour where youth residing in Greenbush can learn about higher education / library trips / museum visits.

"The Botanical Center brings nature to the edge of the downtown, a serene spot that has, in the spirit of the City, reclaimed industrial brownfield land for a greater good"

- Local Business Leader

Quad Cities Botanical Center

1. Organize tours of the Mississippi River and the Quad City Botanical Center that allow neighbors to connect with one another and with nature.
2. Invite members of Botanical Center to Greenbush Neighbors meetings for appropriate gardening methods and plants, educating residents on the benefits of local perennial varieties and rain gardens.
3. Suggest the Botanical Center establish an annual Greenbush Day celebrating the neighborhood with free or reduced admission.

Local Businesses

1. Reorganize or establish a neighborhood business association.
    - Help coordinate events and provide a stronger voice of solidarity for improvements.
2. Reach out to existing businesses for event partnerships.
3. Create annual Greenbush Day celebrating the neighborhood with deals to neighbors or percent of profits given to Greenbush Neighbors.
4. Provide Greenbush Neighbors fliers to be displayed in storefronts.

Goal 5: Collaborate to enhance Greenbush's public spaces

An important focus of this Greenbush Plan is to improve the character and physical environment of the neighborhood. While Goal 1 identified opportunities and actions that residents can take to revamp private property, this goal focuses on collaborative efforts between Greenbush and the City to improve and enhance public spaces.

1. Improve public infrastructure such as streets, sidewalks, and street lighting.
    - While public infrastructure in Greenbush is generally in moderate-to-good condition, there are places where maintenance or improvements are needed. Greenbush Neighbors will communicate with the City to identify neighborhood priorities for public infrastructure improvements.
2. Increase code enforcement for building, nuisance, and other violations.
    - Host neighborhood walks with City code enforcement officials to identify properties that are not in compliance with City ordinances. The City could then provide advice and/or take action against identified properties.
    - In cases of abandonment, Greenbush Neighbors will work with the City to identify and prioritize blighted structures in need of demolition.
3. Encourage development and reuse of vacant lots.
    - A number of vacant lots are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Development of vacant lots will help improve the quality, character, and value of the neighborhood. Greenbush Neighbors should consider working with the City to develop a program to reach out to owners of vacant properties and to identify ways that the lots can be used to enhance the community, such as small neighborhood parks, community garden lots, or potentially selling their lots to a developer, such as Habitat for Humanity.
4. Inform Greenbush residents about local programs and resources that can benefit the neighborhood.
    - As mentioned in Goal 3, Greenbush Neighbors will host community events where the City, Township, and other organizations could be invited to disseminate program information to residents.
    - Greenbush Neighbors could develop a welcome kit for new residents to provide information on neighborhood resources and encourage them to volunteer in the neighborhood.

5. Develop a strong sense of neighborhood identify by defining the borders of Greenbush.
    - Install neighborhood identification signs or banners along major corridors similar to those in Broadway, Longview, Old Chicago, and Keystone neighborhoods.
6. Strengthen relationship with the Rock Island Police Department to improve neighborhood safety.

Goal 6: Establish a Greenbush Commercial Corridor

Residents of the Greenbush Neighborhood desire a place where they can shop close to home. A clean, viable and enhanced local commercial corridor would create a more positive image of the area and increase interaction among its residents, thereby creating a greater sense of community. Currently, 4th and 5th Avenues are characterized by large scale vacancy and decrepit street and sidewalk conditions. There are few opportunities for residents and passing drivers to eat a meal, purchase healthy food, or shop for necessities or other goods. In conjunction with City plans to re-establish 4th and 5th Avenues as one way streets, this goal seeks to create a viable commercial corridor within Greenbush along two of the City's heaviest traveled streets.

1. Support the Arsenal Gateway Revitalization Plan recommendations pertaining to Greenbush.
    - The Arsenal Gateway plan encompasses several neighborhoods, including Greenbush. It seeks to facilitate further investment in the area by means of private and public improvements. Fulfilling these goals would directly benefit and improve the Greenbush neighborhood.
2. Reorganize or establish a Greenbush Business Association.
    - Unite the businesses of Greenbush into an official business association.
3. Coordinate neighborhood events with community and Greenbush Neighbors (refer to Goal 3).
4. Improve the streetscapes of major roads.
    - Encourage the City to invest in the streetscapes along 4th and 5th Avenues. For example, improved sidewalks, lighting, commissioned or volunteer artwork along buildings, permeable pavers, landscaping, or other streetscape enhancements create conditions that are more viable and pleasant for pedestrians while also aiding storm water infiltration.
5. Encourage commercial development at entrances or "gateways" of Greenbush to distinguish itself among adjacent neighborhoods.

Implementation Matrix

The following tables are designed to provide a starting point for prioritization and budgeting of actions needed to implement the recommendations outlined in this Plan. The matrix identifies several partners critical in carrying out the goals and activities laid out. The timeframe for each action provides a general schedule for implementation if all partners are engaged and willing to advance the objectives of this plan. The suggested timeframes include continuous, immediate (1 year), short term (2-5 years), long-term (6-10 years). The cost estimates provide a general expectation of the level of investment needed.

Responsible Parties	Table Reference
Augustana College	AC
City of Rock Island	City
Greenbush Neighborhood	GB
Greenbush Neighbors	GBN
Illinois Department of Transportation	IDOT
Local Artists	LA
Local Businesses	LB
Quad City Arts	QCA
Quad City Botanical Center	QCBC
Rock Island Police Department	RIPD

Goal 1: Improve the appearance and quality of the neighborhood by better maintaining and making improvements to private property

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Cost	Timeframe
Develop a "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" program	GBN	$	Ongoing
Complete a needs assessment of neighbors in need of maintenance assistance	GB, GBN, AC	$	Short Term
Improve line of communication with the City	GB, GBN, City	$	Ongoing
Work with the City to establish a mini-grant program	GBN, City	$$-$$$	Short Term

Goal 2: Improve transportation connectivity and accessibility

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Cost	Timeframe
Request street reconstruction projects align with a "Complete Streets" policy	GBN, GB, City	N/A	Long Term
Promote the City's annual sidewalk repair program	GBN, City	$	Ongoing
Request the City extend bike lanes on 7th Avenue from 20th Street to the Moline border	GBN, GB, City	$-$$	Short Term
Support adoption of a snow removal ordinance to improve pedestrian mobility	GBN, GB	$-$$	Short Term
Transition 4th and 5th Avenues to two-way streets	City, IDOT	$$$$	Long Term
Consider traffic calming measures to improve pedestrian activity and safety	City	$$-$$$	Long Term

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Cost	Timeframe
Promote Greenbush access to the Great River Trail	GBN, QCBC, City	$	Long Term
Coordinate clean-up and install landscaping near 24th Street trail access	GB, GBN, QCBC, City	$-$$	Short Term
Create mural along viaduct adjacent to 24th Street	AC, QCA, LA	$	Short Term
Install wayfinding signage to the Great River Trail	City	$	Short Term

Goal 3: Re-engage the neighborhood via Greenbush Neighbors

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Cost	Timeframe
Establish a Board of Directors, prepare by-laws, and revisit the mission, purpose, and goals of Greenbush Neighbors	GBN	N/A	Immediate
Hold a GB Neighbors "re-launch" event	GBN	$	Short Term
Create a funding source for neighborhood activities	GBN, GB	$	Short Term
Host block parties, new events, and resuscitate old events	GBN, GB	$	Ongoing
Establish a "Welcome to the Neighborhood" initiative for new residents	GBN, GB	$	Ongoing
Increase level of community service to benefit individual residents as well as the neighborhood as a whole	GBN, GB	$	Ongoing
Create a new website and revive social media presence	GBN, GB, AC	$	Ongoing
Prepare and distribute information packet and directory	GBN, GB	$	Ongoing
Create a neighborhood cookbook	GBN, GB	S	Short Term

Goal 4: Enhance Relationship between Greenbush, Augustana College, the Quad Cities Botanical Center, and Greenbush Businesses

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Cost	Timeframe
Open the line of communication between Greenbush and Augustana College	GBN, AC	N/A	Ongoing
Promote rental homes and apartments within the community for students	GBN, AC	N/A	Ongoing
Host a campus tour for Greenbush youth interested in higher education / the library / campus museums	GBN, GB, AC	N/A	Ongoing
Host educational tours of the Mississippi River and Botanical Center (for residents)	GBN, GB, QCBC	$	Ongoing
Invite members of QCBC to Greenbush Neighbors meetings for educational events	GBN, GB, QCBC	$	Ongoing
Create annual Greenbush Day celebrating the neighborhood with discounted admission to the QCBC	GBN, GB, QCBC	$	Ongoing
Reorganize or establish neighborhood business association	GBN, LB	$	Short Term
Reach out to existing businesses for event partnerships	GBN, GB, LB, AC	$	Ongoing
Create an annual Greenbush Day that offers deals to residents or donates a percentage of profits to Greenbush Neighbors	GBN, GB, LB	$	Ongoing
Provide Greenbush Neighbors flyers to be displayed in storefronts	GBN, GB, LB	$	Short Term

Goal 5: Collaborate to enhance Greenbush's public spaces

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Cost	Timeframe
Identify priority areas for public infrastructure improvements	City, GBN, GB	$	Short Term
Host neighborhood walks with City code enforcement officials to identify properties that are not in compliance	City, GBN, GB	$	Short Term
In cases of vacancy, identify and prioritize blighted structures in need of demolition	City, GBN, GB	$$	Ongoing
Develop vacant lots: community gardens, parks, selling to developers, etc.	City, GBN, GB	$$$	Ongoing
Host community events to raise awareness about local programs and resources	City, GBN, GB	$$	Ongoing
Install neighborhood identification signs or banners along major corridors	City, GBN	$$	Long Term
Maintain a strong relationship with the Rock Island Police Department to improve neighborhood safety	City, GBN, GB, RIPD	$	Ongoing

Goal 6: Establish a Greenbush Commercial Corridor along 5th Avenue

Strategy	Responsible Parties	Costliness	Timeframe
Support implementation of the Arsenal Gateway Revitalization Plan	City, GBN, Local Businesses	$	Long Term
Establish a Greenbush Business Association	GBN, Local Businesses	$	Short Term
Improve streetscapes along major roads	City, GBN, Local Businesses	$$$	Long Term
Encourage commercial land uses at neighborhood nodes to create gateways to Greenbush	City, GBN, Local Businesses	$$	Long Term