

# A Neighborhood Strategic Plan for **Southside Racine**

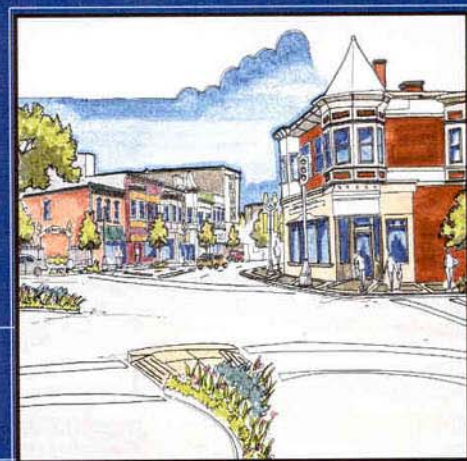
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**Sustainable Racine and  
its Partners**



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We also appreciate the involvement of the many community residents, business owners, organizational representatives and City officials who participated in focus groups, community forums and the community workshop during this planning process.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the Southside Neighborhood Strategic Plan Steering Committee regarding the future of the Southside Neighborhood of Racine. The preparation of this plan was coordinated by Sustainable Racine along with its many partners. Because it was derived through a community-centered process involving representatives from all facets of the community, the goals and strategies contained in this plan reflect the traditions, values and desires of the varied stakeholders who have a vested interest in the future of the Southside.

The vision for the Southside Neighborhood presented in this strategic plan reflects the best thinking of the Steering Committee. This plan will serve many, including not just public sector agencies but also representatives of business and industry, and non-profit human service and community development agencies. During the course of their work, Steering Committee members agreed that the Southside Neighborhood must reinvent itself in the years ahead. The committee also agreed that significant community assets — physical, economic or social — must remain strong as new residents and businesses are attracted, adding to the economic base and vitality of the Southside.

The Southside Neighborhood occupies the southeast third of the City of Racine, includes a small portion of the Town of Mt. Pleasant, and is located directly south of downtown. Southside Racine is truly a diverse neighborhood in terms of population, income, housing types, businesses, institutions, and employment opportunities. The location of the neighborhood is, and continues to be, a primary asset. It contains, or directly abuts, the key recreation and business resources of Racine. The substantial business presence within the neighborhood, primarily industrial and office concentrations, not only provides employment opportunities for the residents of the neighborhood, but also deepens the commitment of the neighborhood to the maintenance of its long-term strength and viability.

The legacy of the Southside Neighborhood's earlier residents can be seen in some of the significant architectural and historic structures of the community. Many are found in the Southside Historic District. The neighborhood is also fortunate enough to have three buildings designed by the internationally renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright - two industrial and one residential. The neighborhood is home to several major manufacturing firms and too many smaller businesses which, together, make the neighborhood the major industrial center within the City. As an older neighborhood, conditions vary with the degree of upkeep provided. Portions of the neighborhood present a very stable and high quality appearance, while other areas exhibit significant deterioration.

The challenge is to organize a program to guide the future of the Southside Neighborhood in a manner that builds upon its strengths and organizes the resources and efforts of the residents, businesses and government to realize a common vision. Such a vision has evolved through the planning process. Representatives of the community, business sector and local government concur that:

**“Southside Racine should be a diverse, in-city community which is a haven for its residents, a viable workplace for its businesses and an attractive resource for all of Racine.”**

To achieve this vision, community representatives further agree that it is critical to develop a set of coordinated strategies and projects which work to achieve seven key objectives:

1. **Maintain and strengthen the diversity of the neighborhood.**
2. **Increase community participation in addressing neighborhood issues.**
3. **Build upon existing community advantages.**
4. **Improve the physical image of the Southside.**
5. **Improve the quality and stability of Southside housing, for both rental and purchase.**
6. **Increase the rate of homeownership on the Southside.**
7. **Increase access to commercial goods and services.**

Recognizing that the area is, on the whole, fully developed, the plan suggests a series of evolutionary changes to strengthen viable districts and attract new investment. Key aspects of the plan are:

- A focused effort on housing improvement and targeted new construction in identified “Housing Redevelopment Areas.” This focused effort should also be complemented by selected actions to assure the long-term viability of the remainder of the neighborhood’s housing stock (within “Housing Stabilization Areas”).
- Revitalization of the industrial area through a program which encourages: new investment on vacant, under-utilized and isolated sites; rehabilitation of sound and marketable industrial properties; and enhancement of existing viable industrial businesses.
- Improvement of Racine Street/Highway 32 as a major Southside entry and a separator of industrial and residential districts.
- Improvement and repositioning of the Uptown commercial area to better serve Southside residents and employees, and reduction of scattered and isolated commercial uses over the long-term.

These broad actions, and a host of related projects, are further outlined and discussed in terms of four strategic initiatives which organize the details of this plan: Quality of Life, Housing, Industrial and Commercial. Each of these strategy areas addresses not only the *physical* revitalization of the Southside Neighborhood, but also the more *intangible* aspects of neighborhood revitalization: re-establishing a community identity, re-building community pride, effectively investing the “human capital” of the neighborhood, and fostering economic development. A key element of the plan strategies in this document is that they seek to build upon, and coordinate the efforts of, a strong foundation of existing Southside community organizations and institutions that are currently undertaking important projects and initiatives on the Southside.

#### **THE QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVE**

The Quality of Life strategies touch upon the often intangible aspects of community building which create a positive image for the area and its residents. These include: building a shared sense of community pride and concern; re-establishing a neighborhood identity; increasing opportunities for social interaction and community involvement; leveraging individual efforts by working together with a common purpose; and improving the physical condition of the public realm. The five strategies are:

- A. Organize Community Leadership Structure**
- B. Make the Southside a Safe Place to Live, Work and Play**
- C. Beautify the Neighborhood**
- D. Keep Southside Stakeholders Informed About Key Issues**
- E. Provide Amenities for Residents and Employees**

#### **THE HOUSING INITIATIVE**

The Housing Improvement strategies address the need to: increase the rate of homeownership in Southside Racine; raise the level of vested interest and stewardship of the private realm in the neighborhood; decrease the overall number of deteriorated properties; facilitate home purchases by qualified buyers of all income levels; increase the stock of well-managed rental properties that will continue to fill a critical need for affordable housing in the City of Racine; and maintain the neighborhood’s desirable and unique diversity by maintaining housing options that serve all income levels. The three strategies are:

- A. Increase Neighborhood Reinvestment**
- B. Stabilize and Rehabilitate Southside Housing**
- C. Undertake Targeted Housing Redevelopment Projects**

#### **THE INDUSTRIAL INITIATIVE**

The Industrial strategies address the need to: revitalize existing facilities; find opportunities to bring in new industrial businesses; make physical improvements to the industrial area; and connect Southside residents to industrial job opportunities. The four strategies are:

- A. Establish an “In-City” Business Park**
- B. Improve Unsightly Industrial Areas**
- C. Redevelop Underutilized Industrial Property**
- D. Connect Southside Residents to Living Wage Jobs**

## THE COMMERCIAL INITIATIVE

The Commercial Development strategies address the need to: increase the retail mix in Uptown to create synergy and draw in both residents and employees; improve the physical conditions of the public rights-of-way and commercial structures in Uptown; and strengthen existing businesses. The three strategies are:

**A. Establish Uptown as the Southside Commercial District**

**B. Redevelop Underutilized Commercial Property**

**C. Improve Unsightly Commercial Areas**

As a guide to implementation of the many aspects of this strategic plan, the last chapter of the plan document contains a detailed “Implementation Work Program” that outlines all strategies and their related projects, and indicates a timeline and responsible entity or entities for each project. Several projects have been highlighted as “Priority Projects” that will be pursued immediately. For some of these projects, in fact, the groundwork has already been laid. They fall within each of the four strategy areas, and can be described as “Catalyst Projects” and “Symbolic Projects.” Catalyst Projects are major undertakings with a potentially significant cost (in dollars and/or staff time), and are key to ensuring a strong start in each of the strategy areas. Symbolic Projects, by contrast, do not require the same funding and/or staff commitment, but are also key to generating interest and excitement in the plan among residents and businesspersons. While relatively simple and finite, they will “symbolize” the future revitalization of the Southside in a tangible way.

The **Catalyst Projects** are as follows:

- Establish the Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership (*Quality of Life*)
- Create a mechanism to assemble and hold redevelopment sites (*Housing*)
- Pursue City designation and acquisition of underutilized property (*Industrial*)
- Develop a reuse/marketing strategy for the Jacobsen/Textron site (*Industrial*)
- Bring an “anchor” use to Uptown (*Commercial*)

The **Symbolic Projects** are as follows:

- Install night lighting improvements (*Quality of Life*)
- Host a Housing Fair to market housing programs (*Housing*)
- Install banners with a new “Business Park” logo (*Industrial*)
- Incorporate landscape improvements into Washington Avenue intersection upgrades (*Commercial*)
- Install banners with a new “Uptown” logo on repainted street lights (*Commercial*)

The Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership’s role, in addition to taking prime responsibility for overall plan coordination and related projects, will be to encourage a community-wide effort to coordinate the efforts of interested parties, seek investment from both within and beyond the Southside community, and act as a rallying point for all in the community to get involved in the revitalization of the Southside Neighborhood.

The Steering Committee recognizes that no single entity can carry out these strategies and related projects alone. Implementation of this ambitious plan will require the involvement of the City of Racine, the Town of Mt. Pleasant, other local groups, private businesses and local institutions. Key next steps to be undertaken will include encouraging the City of Racine and the Town of Mt. Pleasant to adopt aspects of the strategic plan as public policy, including the land use recommendations, and developing cost estimates for proposed capital improvements to facilitate their inclusion in the capital improvement plans of city, county and state agencies.

Working in coordination with one another, the many committed stakeholders of the Southside are confident that the shared vision of the future for the Southside can be achieved. The Neighborhood Strategic Plan will serve as their guide in the years to come.



## I. INTRODUCTION

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This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the Southside Neighborhood Strategic Plan Steering Committee regarding the future of the Southside Neighborhood of Racine. The preparation of this plan was coordinated by Sustainable Racine along with its partners the City of Racine; Racine County; Racine County Economic Development Corporation; SC Johnson, A Family Company; CNH Global; Twin Disc; All Saints Healthcare System; Modine Manufacturing; Southside Revitalization Corporation; Racine Dominicans; Searching Together Baptist Church; and Qualtech.

### PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Southside Neighborhood is a microcosm of Greater Racine, and has a population of about 12,000 and an employment base of approximately 4,500 persons. An older neighborhood containing a wide range of land uses, it is constantly evolving through reinvestment and redevelopment actions by existing and new property owners. Often, these investments are made without a clear understanding of what the future may hold for the area. Some parties make their investments with the belief that their actions will not be affected by the conditions or future of the neighborhood. Others may hold back due to concerns regarding long-term neighborhood stability.

Sustainable Racine and its partners believe that a coordinated vision of the neighborhood's future can help to provide more surety for these investments. They have concluded that this can be provided by a neighborhood plan which provides an image of the future and a mechanism to coordinate and guide both *public* and *private* investment within the neighborhood. This resulting neighborhood strategic plan, especially if adopted by the City, can help to assure present and future residents and businesses that this diverse area is a good place to raise a family, build a business, or earn a living. Because it was derived through a community-centered process involving representatives from all facets of the community, the goals and strategies contained in this plan reflect the traditions, values and desires of the varied stakeholders who have a vested interest in the future of the Southside.

The vision for the Southside Neighborhood presented in this strategic plan reflects the best thinking of our Steering Committee. This plan will serve many, including not just public sector agencies but also representatives of business and industry and non-profit human service and community development agencies. During the course of their work, Steering Committee members agreed that the Southside Neighborhood must reinvent itself in the years ahead. The committee also agreed that significant community assets — physical, economic or social — must remain strong as new residents and businesses are attracted, adding to the economic base and vitality of the Southside.

### THE PLANNING PROCESS

This report is the final product of the neighborhood strategic planning process. It builds upon the background information presented in the State of the Neighborhood Report (July 2000), a culmination of the first phase of the process. The first report summarized data on existing conditions in the neighborhood, as well as the results of several focus groups held to discuss concerns about, and opportunities for, the Southside. Twelve community stakeholders participated in these focus groups, focusing on housing, industrial and institutional issues. After the report was completed, two “community forums” were held in August 2000, at which the findings were presented and initial planning directions were presented for discussion.



*A community workshop was held in October 2000 at St. Paul's Baptist Church to discuss potential plan strategies.*



*Community workshop participants provided feedback on “dot maps” to aid the Steering Committee in plan development.*

Twenty-four community stakeholders participated in these forums, representing Southside residents, businesses, institutions, non-profit groups, social service organizations and public agencies. After the forums, the Steering Committee worked with its planning consultant, Camiros, Ltd., to develop more detailed planning recommendations addressing issues of quality of life, housing, and industrial and commercial development. These planning ideas were presented for discussion at a two-day “community workshop” held in October 2000. This workshop included focus group sessions, two open house sessions to generate wider community feedback, and a closing session with the Steering Committee to review the feedback received.

Approximately forty-five community stakeholders were involved during the two-day workshop, again representing Southside residents, businesses, institutions, non-profit groups, social service organizations and public agencies. Finally, the plan recommendations were revised, expanded and presented to the Steering Committee for final review prior to the creation of this document.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN DOCUMENT

The final goals, strategies and key projects are summarized in this document as follows:

- A brief summary of the existing conditions on the Southside is provided in Chapter II: the Southside Neighborhood, along with a compendium of “existing initiatives and projects” upon which the plan builds. This chapter concludes with a “functional analysis” of the Southside Neighborhood, summarizing the key existing factors impacting upon the plan recommendations.
- Chapter III: A Vision for Southside Racine presents the vision statement and plan goals developed as a result of the community input provided at the focus groups and community forums, and present the “key plan concepts” discussed at the community workshop.
- The four key strategies of the plan — Quality of Life, Housing Improvement, Industrial Development and Commercial Development — are discussed in Chapter IV: Strategies to Implement the Vision. Key projects are outlined under each strategy area.
- Chapter V: Implementing the Vision presents the “implementation work program” that assigns a priority and responsible stakeholder to each project, to facilitate coordinated implementation of the four strategies.
- The Appendix contains a summary of contact information for existing initiatives, a summary of the existing housing assistance programs currently offered by the City of Racine, and maps depicting community input on several topics from the community workshops.



## II. THE SOUTHSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD\*

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Southside Racine is truly a diverse neighborhood in terms of population, income, housing types, businesses, institutions, and employment opportunities. Housing types range from 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century mansions to modest single-story residences. The housing is occupied by persons whose income ranges from the highest within the community to the lowest. Representing a mix of white, African-American and Hispanic populations, the residents of this community have access to a host of public and private institutions which serve the community and larger Racine.

The location of the neighborhood is, and continues to be, a primary asset. It contains, or directly abuts, the key recreation and business resources of Racine. The substantial business presence within the neighborhood, primarily industrial and office concentrations, not only provides employment opportunities for the residents of the neighborhood, but also deepens the commitment of the neighborhood to the maintenance of its long-term strength and viability.

The Southside Neighborhood occupies the southeast third of the City of Racine, includes a small portion of the Town of Mt. Pleasant, and is located directly south of downtown (see [Figure 1: Location Map](#)). The neighborhood has a north-south length of about two miles and covers 1,052 acres. It has an irregular shape and extends north to 8<sup>th</sup> Street, south to 25<sup>th</sup> Street, and west to Washington Avenue, Taylor Avenue and Memorial Drive. The eastern boundary is Lake Michigan. Main access to the neighborhood is via Racine Street (Highway 32), Washington Avenue (Highway 20), and State Highway 11.



*Lake Michigan forms the eastern boundary of the Southside neighborhood, providing an attractive amenity for residents, employees and visitors.*

The neighborhood has long been part of Racine. Before it was bridged, the Root River divided Racine into three distinct sections. The north side was called “Canada,” the south section the “School Section” and the west section “Sage Town.” During the early nineteenth century, the first settlers primarily located south of the downtown area in the School Section. Today many of the homes built during this time in the Southside Neighborhood remain examples of Racine’s fine architectural heritage. South Main Street and College Avenue are lined with buildings that reflect the popular building styles of the time, including Greek revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Classical Revival and Carpenter Eclectic.

During the late nineteenth century, a wave of immigration brought Italians to Racine who established communities south of the downtown. Eastern Europeans, including Lithuanians, Poles, Slovaks, and Hungarians, also settled in

the Southside Neighborhood. As has been the history of American cities, as newer waves of immigrants entered the city, the older settlers moved out. Their former residences were then occupied by African-Americans and Hispanics who were migrating to the City in greater numbers.

The legacy of the Southside Neighborhood’s earlier residents can be seen in some of the significant architectural and historic structures of the community. Many are found in the Southside Historic District. Local entrepreneurs built substantial residences in this district from the 1850s to the 1920s. At that time, it was the most fashionable place to live in Racine.

*\* This chapter provides a brief summary description of the Southside Neighborhood. A more detailed description along with extensive supporting data is available in the [State of the Neighborhood Report](#) (July 2000), the first product of this strategic planning process.*

Figure 1: location map

The neighborhood is also fortunate enough to have three buildings designed by the internationally renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright - two industrial and one residential. The influence of Frank Lloyd Wright and the Prairie Style architecture is also witnessed in other Southside Neighborhood buildings. While these buildings may represent some of the most distinguished industrial architecture, they are only part of a substantial industrial complex found in the neighborhood. In addition to SC Johnson, A Family Company, the neighborhood is home to other major manufacturing firms such as CNH Global (Case), Modine Manufacturing, Jacobson/Textron, and Twin Disc. It is also home to much smaller business which, together, makes the neighborhood the major industrial center within the city, creating a major tax base resource as well as a source of area-wide employment.



*The Golden Rondelle Theater on the campus of SC Johnson, a Family Company, is one of Frank Lloyd Wright's internationally famous designs.*

## EXISTING INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

A key element of the plan strategies to be outlined later in this document is that they seek to build upon, and coordinate the efforts of, a strong foundation of existing Southside community organizations and institutions that are currently undertaking important projects and initiatives on the Southside. Figure 2: Existing Initiatives and Projects depicts the locations of key institutions, churches and other organizations that are already active in community-building activities on the Southside, and the geographic focus areas of some of the programs. More information about these programs, including contact information, is included in Appendix A of this document.



*Modine Manufacturing Company is another major employer and landowner on the Southside, with a high quality facility in the industrial area west of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks.*

## RESIDENTS OF THE SOUTHSIDE\*\*

Southside Racine today is a heterogeneous community containing residents of all races and incomes. The most recent data for the neighborhood show that in 1999 the population was estimated at 11,680. Projections indicate that it will probably remain stable in size — 2004 estimates are for a population of 11,728. The community is quite young — 45% of the population is estimated to be below 25 years of age. The median age is 29 years, and households in the neighborhood average 2.85 persons in size. In 1999, more than half (51.9%) of all households had incomes of less than \$25,000.

Residents of the Southside Neighborhood work relatively close to home. Almost half (47%) of total residents of the neighborhood take less than 15 minutes to commute from home to work. In fact, the majority of them (81%) travel less than 30 minutes to get to work.

Southside Racine contains a substantial racial mix. The present population is predominantly African American (60%) with an increasing Hispanic (20%) and a declining white (20%) population. If the present trend continues, projections for 2004 show that approximately 87% of the population may be African American and Hispanic.

## SOUTHSIDE LAND USE\*\*

Land use distribution within the study area is typical of an older “in-town” neighborhood, as shown in Figure 3: Existing Land Use. Residential uses predominate on the east side while industrial uses occupy the west side of the study area and include single-family, two-family and multi-family structures. Overall, residential uses account for 37% of the net area of the Southside.

**\*\* Unless noted otherwise, data in these sections are from the 1990 Census.**

Figure 2: existing projects and initiatives

Figure 3: existing land use

The majority of Southside housing was built before 1940 (73%), and only 7% was built since 1960. Single family homes comprise 37% of the housing stock. Duplex housing accounts for approximately 32%, and multi-family units represent approximately 28%, of the units within the neighborhood. Fifty-five percent of housing units are occupied by renters and 37% occupied by homeowners. The majority of owner occupied housing is single family (73%). The Southside population has also been transient in nature — 61% of households moved into their Southside dwelling units between 1985 and 1990.

The value of housing and the rate of homeownership tend to be highest along Lake Michigan, and drop off to the west. In 1999 the majority of residential structures (45%) were estimated to be valued between \$20,000 and \$50,000. Approximately 22% of residential structures were estimated to be valued between \$50,000 and \$75,000, while 22% of residential structures had an estimated value of \$75,000 or more. Between 1986 and 1996, housing along the lakefront increased in assessed value ten-fold (203%) relative to housing in areas adjacent to the industrial area (20%).

Originally, manufacturers established businesses along the railroad tracks with worker's homes located at the fringe of industrial areas. Industrial and manufacturing uses occupy 32% of the net area of the Southside, and are generally located south of 16<sup>th</sup> Street and west of Racine Street. An important cluster of research/office use outside this area is the SC Johnson campus. The railroad serving this industrial area was the reason for its initial development. Today, the rail line is still in operation but not as many industries make use of it. In fact, various railroad right-of-ways were abandoned in recent years and replaced by parks, open space, landscaped areas, new industries or other land uses.



*The DeKoven Center is a key Southside institution that draws visitors to the neighborhood from all over Racine.*

Commercial uses occupy only 6% of the net area of the Southside Neighborhood. As the neighborhood developed, the “Uptown” node emerged along Washington Avenue (Highway 20). Various convenience stores also established themselves on street corners throughout the Southside to serve residents’ needs. Although many of these stores have been transformed into dwelling units, some remain. Commercial and office uses also exist along Main Street just south of 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and are more properly thought of as an extension of the downtown rather than part of the neighborhood.

Institutional uses consist of a major hospital, many churches, schools and parks. They are found throughout the neighborhood, with a concentration in the northeast and southeast areas. Certain institutions serve the entire city, most notably St. Luke’s Hospital, Gateway Technical College, and the DeKoven Center. Several schools, most notably St. Catherine’s, Walden and the Fine Arts Magnet Schools serve a citywide population. Other anchors include the City Hall Annex located on Center Street, just south of 8<sup>th</sup> Street, and the Safety Building just north of 8<sup>th</sup> Street at the north fringe of the neighborhood. Parks tend to be well distributed throughout the neighborhood, especially along the lakefront. However, there appears to be a gap in public open space within the central portions of the neighborhood and in the Uptown area.



*St. Luke’s Hospital is both a key physical anchor on the Southside and one of the twenty largest employers in Racine County.*

## **SOUTHSIDE TRANSPORTATION**

The area is served by a series of north-south and east-west arterials. North-south access is provided by Taylor Avenue, Memorial Drive, Racine Street and portions of Washington Avenue (Highway 20). East-west access is provided by Washington Avenue (Highway 20) and Highway 11 to the south. Additional east-west movement across the Union Pacific Railroad tracks is accommodated by 14<sup>th</sup> Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and DeKoven Avenue.



Access to the Southside Neighborhood is also available via public transit. Many bus routes traverse the neighborhood. The Belle Urban System (BUS) provides an economical and safe means of public transportation for residents of the neighborhood and beyond. The public transit system links the neighborhood to the Downtown, Uptown, and West Racine, but it is not considered ideal for Southside residents trying to get to work in areas other than the downtown.

## **PHYSICAL CONDITIONS ON THE SOUTHSIDE**

As an older neighborhood, conditions vary with the degree of upkeep provided. Portions of the neighborhood present a very stable and high quality appearance. Other portions present the opposite.

The majority of homes present in the Southside Neighborhood are considered to be in fair condition and suffer only minor deterioration. Homes in sound condition are generally located close to Lake Michigan. Buildings that exhibit signs of minor deterioration are scattered throughout the study area. Concentrations of highly deteriorated homes are observed in the middle and the northern part of the study area. Generally, the age of structures is not the main reason why many homes in the Southside Neighborhood need repair. In fact, most homes in good condition are located in the Southside Historic District, where the average age of homes is older. Homes suffering deterioration in some areas are more likely due to a lack of regular maintenance and ownership status.

Most commercial structures within the Southside Neighborhood are located along Washington Avenue and are in fair condition. Generally, structures along this thoroughfare experience a lack of maintenance that can be easily fixed, with a few exceptions (including the theater building). Other commercial structures are located along Racine Street or scattered among the neighborhood, often on street corners. Generally, these structures are not in good condition and exhibit a lack of ongoing maintenance.

Industrial building conditions vary greatly within the Southside Neighborhood. Most industrial structures are in fair condition and need basic maintenance. Given the age of the neighborhood, this situation can be expected. Two pockets of industrial structures are in very poor condition and show major deterioration problems. One area is located west of Racine Street, between 21<sup>st</sup> Street and 24<sup>th</sup> Street. The second is also located west of Racine Street, between 17<sup>th</sup> Street and 18<sup>th</sup> Street. Third, buildings located in the area between 15<sup>th</sup> Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Street, west of Racine Street, also show signs of deterioration. By contrast, the campuses of SC Johnson, A Family Company, and Modine Manufacturing Company are in particularly good condition.

## **FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS**

Taken together, the many interrelated physical, economic and social factors that have been discussed in this chapter suggest certain areas of emphasis or particular strategies that will be effective in efforts to revitalize the Southside neighborhood. Figure 4: Functional Analysis summarizes many of these factors to illustrate the areas that require particular planning emphasis and that are addressed in detail later in this plan.

Figure 4: functional analysis

### III. A VISION FOR SOUTHSIDE RACINE

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It is clear from the conditions presented in the previous chapter, and the material contained in the companion State of the Neighborhood Report (July 2000) that the Southside Neighborhood is in flux. If trends continue, the diversity of population and housing found in the neighborhood may be challenged, and the continued growth of absentee landlord and rental-based housing may affect the Southside's long-term stability. The continued aging of the industrial base may encourage further migration of existing industries to suburban locations and lead to a lack of reinvestment in neighborhood facilities.

However, all trends are not pointed in a negative direction — strong positives also abound. For example, the neighborhood still contains some of the finest housing stock in the city, and it remains home to major and stable employers and institutions. The recent Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) commitment to rehabilitate housing and foster homeownership, as well as an ongoing commitment by the City of Racine to code inspection, housing rehab support and infrastructure improvements, all point to the great opportunities and potential for this neighborhood. The challenge is to organize a program to guide the future of the Southside Neighborhood in a manner that builds upon its strengths and organizes the resources and efforts of the residents, businesses and government to realize a common vision.

Such a vision has evolved through the planning process sponsored by Sustainable Racine. Representatives of the community, business sector and local government concur that:

**“Southside Racine should be a diverse, in-city community which is a haven for its residents, a viable workplace for its businesses and an attractive resource for all of Racine.”**

To achieve this vision, community representatives further agree that it is critical to develop a set of coordinated strategies and projects which work to achieve seven key objectives:

1. **Maintain and strengthen the diversity of the neighborhood.**
2. **Increase community participation in addressing neighborhood issues.**
3. **Build upon existing community advantages.**
4. **Improve the physical image of the Southside.**
5. **Improve the quality and stability of Southside housing, for both rental and purchase.**
6. **Increase the rate of homeownership on the Southside.**
7. **Increase access to commercial goods and services.**

The neighborhood revitalization plan shown in Figure 5 suggests a basis for this effort. Recognizing that the area is, on the whole, fully developed, it suggests a series of evolutionary changes to strengthen viable districts and attract new investment. Key aspects of this plan are:

1. A focused effort on housing improvement and targeted new construction in identified “Housing Redevelopment Areas.” This focused effort should also be complemented by selected actions to assure the long-term viability of the remainder of the neighborhood’s housing stock (“Housing Stabilization Areas”).
2. Revitalization of the industrial area through a program which encourages: new investment on vacant, under-utilized and isolated sites; rehabilitation of sound and marketable industrial properties; and enhancement of existing viable industrial businesses.
3. Improvement of Racine Street/Highway 32 as a major Southside entry and a separator of industrial and residential districts.
4. Improvement and repositioning of the Uptown commercial area to better serve Southside residents and employees, and reduction of scattered and isolated commercial uses over the long term.

These broad actions and a host of related projects are further outlined and discussed in terms of four strategic initiatives which organize the details of this plan. These initiatives are outlined in the following chapter.

Figure 5: neighborhood revitalization plan

## IV. STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT THE VISION

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The vision and plan for Southside Racine can be achieved through actions in four strategic initiative areas: Quality of Life, Housing, Industrial and Commercial. Each of these strategy areas addresses not only the *physical* revitalization of the Southside Neighborhood, but also the more *intangible* aspects of neighborhood revitalization: re-establishing a community identity, re-building community pride, effectively investing the “human capital” of the neighborhood, and fostering economic development. Moreover, they are designed to incorporate and build upon ongoing Southside initiatives (as outlined in [Figure 2](#) and [Appendix A](#)).

### THE QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVE

There are perceptions of the Southside neighborhood that are unfairly negative, such as those involving perceived levels of overall criminal activity. However, very real concerns exist in some parts of the neighborhood about open drug-related activity and a lack of sufficient property maintenance by absentee owners of rental properties. In addition, the aging and run-down appearance of the infrastructure in the area, especially the key thoroughfares through the neighborhood, results in negative reactions from passersby who do not venture off of main streets to get a full picture of the Southside.

There is a strong physical structure upon which to base revitalization efforts, most importantly the stabilizing influence of the many institutions in the neighborhood and a well-organized circulation pattern. In addition, there are crime prevention efforts and dedicated community organizations already in place that, if supplemented, will have a more significant impact.

The Quality of Life strategies described below touch upon the often intangible aspects of community building which create a positive image for the area and its residents. These include: building a shared sense of community pride and concern; re-establishing a neighborhood identity; increasing opportunities for social interaction and community involvement; leveraging individual efforts by working together with a common purpose; and improving the physical condition of the public realm.

The Quality of Life strategies and their related projects are as follows:

#### **A. Organize Community Leadership Structure**

1. Establish a Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership
2. Expand block club coverage and involvement
3. Undertake community leadership training programs
4. Host community-wide Southside events

#### **B. Make Southside a Safe Place to Live, Work and Play**

1. Strengthen and aggressively enforce health and sanitation codes
2. Install night lighting improvements
3. Increase neighborhood-based crime prevention and police presence
4. Maintain all railroad crossings and advocate for commuter rail service

#### **C. Beautify the Neighborhood**

1. Undertake community-based beautification/improvements projects
2. Establish a tree maintenance/replacement program
3. Upgrade the condition of key corridors
4. Bury utilities along key corridors

#### **D. Keep Southside Stakeholders Informed About Key Issues**

1. Establish a locally-oriented publication or newspaper column
2. Establish a feedback mechanism

#### **E. Provide Amenities for Residents and Employees**

1. Reassess the 18th Street Mall

2. Install park signage and information kiosks
3. Install bike paths, marked on-street routes and bike racks
4. Create additional usable green space
5. Improve public access to the lakefront
6. Build a public pool facility on the Southside
7. Increase library services for the Southside

These strategies and projects are described in detail below:

#### **A. ORGANIZE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE**

The lack of formal or informal organizations that represent the Southside overall may contribute to the weakness of the neighborhood in terms of securing public or private reinvestment. A neighborhood needs committed advocates, especially a grassroots organization, to focus concerns on elements of neighborhood weakness, potential or needs. This will ensure that a strong and unified Southside voice can be heard regarding important community issues. Four projects are proposed for this purpose:

##### **1. Establish a Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership**

A Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership (SNP) should be established to include representatives of all constituencies that have a stake in the success of the revitalization of Southside Racine. Through regular meetings to discuss neighborhood issues and coordinate implementation efforts, the SNP will serve to break down cultural and language barriers between key stakeholders, and will encourage a shared effort toward solving common problems and achieving mutually desired outcomes. Most importantly, the SNP will allow Southside Racine to speak in the political arena with a common voice and ensure that projects undertaken in the neighborhood build upon the overall vision for the community. Many of the initiatives the SNP could undertake are described later in this Chapter. It should be noted that the SNP is not anticipated to have dedicated, paid staff or offices of its own. The SNP's organizing efforts will be facilitated by Sustainable Racine and its partners, utilizing existing staff and facilities.

The SNP might include representatives of the following:

- Southside Block Clubs
- Neighborhood Watch and Safe & Sound
- Uptown Business Association members and Business Park Association members (*these organizations are described later in this Chapter*)
- Racine Housing Coalition members (*listed in Appendix B*)
- District Associations (*existing*)
- Community service/outreach organizations (*such as Family Service and the Hispanic Roundtable*)
- Sustainable Racine
- Aldermen
- City departments (*such as City Development and the Park District*)
- Southside businesses
- Southside institutions (*such as the Workforce Development/Human Services Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Gateway College and St. Catherine's*)
- Young members of the Southside community and youth-oriented organizations (*groups who are active in providing after-school and mentoring programs for youth*)
- Southside clergy organizations (*representatives of area churches who undertake outreach, such as homeless support services*)
- Tenants organization (*representatives of groups who work with — and advocate for — tenants in the area, such as UW-Parkside's Conflict Resolution Center*)

##### **2. Expand block club coverage and involvement**

Several areas within the Southside have active block clubs, which have a positive influence by encouraging interaction between neighbors and fostering common improvement efforts. As an ideal model for grass-roots level community involvement, block club formation and activity should be encouraged and facilitated throughout Southside Racine so that more Southside residents have an avenue through which to receive information and get involved in its revitalization.



### **3. Undertake community leadership training programs**

The SNP should initially undertake a training program for community leaders, working with Sustainable Racine and using one of several established training models. The program should involve both *adult* members of the community who are active in their churches or block clubs and who have the energy and commitment to work actively toward community improvement, and *youth* from the community who are interested in taking an active role in community improvement and learning valuable leadership skills.

### **4. Host community-wide Southside events**

The SNP should host events designed to bring various stakeholder groups in the community together and foster interaction. Events that educate about, and celebrate, the history of Southside Racine will help to draw people together by establishing a common interest in our community and its welfare. Larger events, such as a music festival or antique fair, might also draw others into the Southside neighborhood, increasing neighborhood exposure and breaking through negative perceptions about the area.

## **B. MAKE THE SOUTHSIDE A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY**

Though the perception of crime problems seems to overshadow the reality in the neighborhood, there are several mechanisms available to improve both perception and reality. Other issues involve basic City code enforcement and maintaining access to the area as redevelopment occurs. Four projects are proposed:

### **1. Strengthen and aggressively enforce health and sanitation codes**

The City of Racine has made great strides recently in stepping up enforcement of health and sanitation codes in Southside Racine, and these efforts should continue. The key to the success of these efforts will be aggressive follow-up, so that some property owners who are repeat offenders cannot continue to allow their buildings to deteriorate. Code enforcement and follow-up should also be increased in the Town of Mt. Pleasant, which enforces codes in the southernmost sections of the Southside Neighborhood. Codes should be strengthened to include, at a minimum, requiring adequate garbage containment for multi-tenant properties, prohibiting the bricking-in of windows, and restricting outdoor storage in residential areas.

### **2. Install night lighting improvements**

As one of its initial projects, the Safe & Sound program should work with Neighborhood Watch and area block clubs to identify areas needing increased nighttime lighting for resident security. In these areas, CDBG or other funding sources should be used to provide motion-sensor lights to residents for installation in rear yards and near alleys, to supplement existing street lights.

### **3. Increase neighborhood-based crime prevention and police presence**

The Safe & Sound program should work with Neighborhood Watch and Southside block clubs to expand current efforts to reduce neighborhood crime. New funds should be used to increase bike and foot patrols, facilitate the sharing of information about recent crime activity with block club leaders, and establish mechanisms for anonymous reporting of drug-related criminal activity to the police.

The Police Departments of Racine and Mount Pleasant should provide frequent and highly visible visits by law enforcement personnel to areas identified by Neighborhood Watch and block clubs as recurring crime areas. Figure 6: Workshop Map indicates several areas identified by residents as recurring problem areas. Additionally, a new “cop house” should be placed in the vicinity of 16th and Packard, and the feasibility of establishing a police outpost in the Uptown area should be investigated as part of any new commercial development.

### **4. Maintain all railroad crossings and advocate for commuter rail service**

In order to maintain adequate accessibility into and out of the Southside Neighborhood, it is vitally important that all existing access points be maintained, including all at-grade rail crossings. This is critical for the long-term viability of industrial areas east of the Union Pacific railroad, as well as the Uptown commercial area. Reducing at-grade rail crossings in the future would have a negative impact on both of these areas, while also further physically isolating the Southside from the rest of Racine. Moreover, a commuter rail station should be provided near 14th and Washington as part of the future expansion of Metra service to

figure 6: workshop map

Milwaukee, since this location can effectively serve both outgoing commuters from the Southside neighborhood and incoming employees of area businesses.

### **C. BEAUTIFY THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

An older neighborhood of mixed uses, as well as underutilized property, the Southside contains a number of areas which are unsightly and create a negative image. Whether the result of age, lack of maintenance, incomplete or inappropriate development, and these areas unfortunately reinforce a commonly held — and very limiting — image that old is bad and new is good, further encouraging workplace and residence choices on “greenfield” sites. Key among such areas is vacant lands or buildings in significant need of maintenance which are located along the key entryways to the neighborhood and are visible from the major corridors through the neighborhood. This image is very detrimental to the neighborhood, but can be counteracted through carefully chosen physical improvements.

Physical improvements within the public realm can improve this image. These will also foster a renewed interest by the private sector in investing in improvements to private property. Four projects are proposed to help establish a recurring and identifiable community image throughout the neighborhood:

#### **1. Undertake community-based beautification/improvement projects**

The SNP should spearhead the implementation of beautification projects throughout the Southside, such as planting flowers and landscaping at key intersections, improving parkway plantings (i.e.: resodding bare areas), creating pocket parks and/or community gardens on vacant lots, and Adopt-A-Park efforts to be undertaken at each public park. Additionally, partnerships could be formed between residents and Uptown businesses to add attractive landscaping to the Uptown area. To implement these projects, the SNP should seek cooperation from the City and the County to gain permission to use vacant land for community purposes, and to provide areas for median and parkway plantings as streets are upgraded. Organizing for these efforts should be accomplished through established community centers, and should directly involve neighborhood residents.

Regular community clean-ups are proposed, focusing on particular areas or lots that block clubs identify as problematic, utilizing both volunteers and community service workers. Local youth should be hired by the City of Racine or Sustainable Racine to assist in these efforts during the summer months.

#### **2. Establish a tree maintenance/replacement program**

The City of Racine has an existing program to provide street trees in public parkways in front of residences, but there has been little interest in the program. The SNP could organize an educational effort to alert residents and block clubs to this program, educate residents about the care of new trees and the positive impact of parkway trees on property values, and encourage entire blocks to request trees to fill in gaps along parkways. In addition, the City of Racine and Town of Mount Pleasant should work closely with local



*The images above contrast two residential streets on the Southside—one without parkway trees and one with mature parkway trees. Because the building setbacks and quality of private landscaping do not differ significantly between the two examples, it is clear that mature and healthy parkway trees greatly improve the character and pedestrian friendliness of the street in the image on the right.*

utilities to minimize damage to established trees through careless pruning procedures, and to minimize the outright and unnecessary removal of mature trees.

### **3. Upgrade the condition of key corridors**

The poor condition of the streets and rights-of-way along the key corridors of the Southside has a significant negative impact on perceptions of the area. While most local streets are in good condition, the appearance of key thoroughfares as seen by passers-by and visitors are a very real detriment to the community. These major corridors include: Racine Street/Highway 32, Washington Avenue/Highway 20, Memorial Drive, DeKoven Avenue, and Taylor Avenue. The City of Racine, in coordination with the Town of Mt. Pleasant, should implement a phased program to resurface major corridors and upgrade sidewalks and parkway conditions (including the proposed restructuring of Racine Street/Highway 32 included in this plan as Industrial Strategy 2, Project b). Secondly, minor improvements and additional parkway plantings should be undertaken on 14th Street, 16th Street and 18th Street.

### **4. Bury utilities along key corridors**

Over the long term, provisions should be made to bury utilities along major corridors, possibly in conjunction with future utility service upgrades to the industrial area. Even with good quality paving and parkway plantings, the overall attractiveness of streets is severely hampered by unattractive, leaning utility poles and numerous overhead wires. In addition, a long-term program to bury utilities will allow for parkway trees to thrive, unencumbered by severe pruning to accommodate utility wires.

## **D. KEEP SOUTHSIDE STAKEHOLDERS INFORMED ABOUT KEY ISSUES**

The proposed SNP will need to establish an efficient mechanism to alert Southside residents to issues impacting the neighborhood, and to get responses from stakeholders in the area. Two projects are proposed:

### **1. Establish a locally-oriented publication or newspaper column**

The SNP could share information with member groups and area residents and business owners through either a dedicated newsletter (perhaps bi-lingual) or a regular column in a general circulation newspaper. The publication or column could alert the neighborhood about current planning issues, publicize opportunities for community involvement, recognize volunteers and financial supporters, and announce upcoming events.

### **2. Establish a feedback mechanism**

The SNP should establish mechanisms for regular input and feedback on issues affecting the Southside. These might include a website, suggestion boxes at area churches and institutions, and hosting regular forums to discuss issues potentially impacting the Southside. It will be important to address and accommodate any language barriers in these outreach efforts.

## **E. PROVIDE AMENITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND EMPLOYEES**

It is also important to address the amenities that have a *functional* impact on the Quality of Life in the neighborhood. The following seven proposals focus primarily on improving existing community anchors and/or programs:

### **1. Reassess the 18th Street Mall**

The City of Racine should reassess the functionality and desirability of the 18th Street Mall in discussions with area neighbors. With assistance from volunteers from the SNP, the City should remove existing planters along the 18th Street Mall, reopen the street to traffic and on-street parking, and install new sod and trees in the parkways on both sides of the street in blocks where the mall is no longer desired. The SNP, working with nearby block clubs, might add additional plantings at key corners to further enhance the area. Note that mall areas that are removed will need to be replaced with new



*The 18<sup>th</sup> Street Mall, while installed with good intentions, has created maintenance problems for the City of Racine, and has not significantly increased traffic safety near the 18<sup>th</sup> St. Park.*

green space elsewhere within the neighborhood (to be addressed as part of Project 4 below).

**2. Install park signage and information kiosks**

The existing parks in the area need prominent identity signage at key entrance points, and should also serve as locations for information kiosks to be used to share community announcements. These signs and kiosks could be “adopted” by area block clubs for maintenance purposes to minimize the additional burden on the Park District.

**3. Install bike paths, marked on-street routes and bike racks**

A system of on-street bike routes and bike paths along the lakefront should be installed to provide a continuous and safe bike route from downtown to both Roosevelt Park and the SC Johnson campus area. Bike racks should be installed in all public parks and in Uptown.

**4. Create additional usable green space**

In addition to the large green spaces provided by the existing City parks for active, youth-oriented recreation, provisions should be made for passive recreation opportunities. The City has plans to build a passive park just west of the DeKoven Center that will be a significant new amenity for Southside residents. Additionally, small green spaces should be interspersed throughout the neighborhood and focus on providing benches, play space and community gardens. The greensward surrounding the SC Johnson campus could also be used for this purpose, to increase its functionality. Green spaces should be included in plans for the new housing clusters to be described in the Housing Initiative section to follow. It is important to address security issues in the design of all of these spaces.

**5. Improve public access to the lakefront**

In addition to bike paths throughout the Southside Neighborhood, public access to the lakefront in the area should be improved through directional signage and marked walking paths with intermittent resting points. Area employees should be encouraged to utilize the lakefront for lunchtime walks and picnics, in addition to use by area residents.

**6. Build a public pool facility on the Southside**

A need has been expressed for a public pool facility that is accessible to residents of the Southside. Ideal locations for such a facility would be either near Franklin Park or in Roosevelt Park. A public pool is an attractive amenity to offer potential homebuyers who might be considering investing in the Southside Neighborhood.

**7. Increase library services for the Southside**

To the extent feasible, library services should be expanded in Southside Racine. This can be achieved through re-establishment of a branch library, or through increased Bookmobile services. A library is an important amenity to offer potential homebuyers who might be considering investing in the neighborhood.

## **THE HOUSING INITIATIVE**

The Southside Neighborhood has one of the widest choices of quality housing available anywhere within the Racine area. These choices range from the large landmark residences of the Southside Historic District to affordable, single-family housing. While there is a need to improve the quality of some of the affordable housing, the fact that such a mix exists side by side offers the ability to assure the creation of a community of choice for a wide range of Racine's population.

Within the recent decade, many communities have sought to develop “communities of choice.” These communities contain a variety of housing densities and a population diversity which, when taken together, make a neighborhood an interesting and enjoyable place in which to live. In the Southside Neighborhood, Racine has in place all the components of a community of choice.



To create a community of choice it is critical to increase homeownership opportunities. Low homeownership rates are concentrated within particular sections of the neighborhood. In general, a predominance of renters over owners in a neighborhood is not a sign of difficulty. There are always people who prefer to rent. Yet, in the Southside Neighborhood, it appears that concentrations of renters are also associated with a concentration of housing problems, such as code violations and maintenance problems. Continuance of these concentrated problems can aggravate and hasten neighborhood decay.

Many efforts are ongoing to address issues of housing quality in these areas of the neighborhood on a house-by-house basis by organizations such as Southside Revitalization Corporation and Habitat for Humanity. Neighborhood Housing Services plans to come into the neighborhood in 2001, to work on both rehabilitating homes and offering homeownership counseling to prospective buyers. Several programs exist within the City of Racine to encourage the purchase and rehabilitation of homes in Census Tracts 1 through 5, which encompasses the Southside (see [Appendix C](#) for more information on these programs).

Key to these ongoing efforts, and to the future efforts anticipated by this strategic plan, is improving the overall quality of the housing stock on the Southside while maintaining a diversity of housing options, including an affordable component. It is important to note that maintaining a stock of rental properties is vital to meeting the housing needs of all residents. Seventy-three percent of all of Racine County's Section 8 certificates are in use in the Southside neighborhood. This suggests that there will continue to be a segment of the Southside population that is somewhat transient in nature. Meeting this need with higher quality rental properties will be important to improving the stability of the Southside.

The primary component of housing improvement efforts will be increasing the rate of home ownership. It is recognized nationally that areas with a high incidence of home ownership tend to also demonstrate good housing conditions. This is usually ascribed to "pride of ownership." Thus this plan seeks to increase homeownership opportunities, especially for present renters who might wish to become owners. Reducing concentrations of rental housing by mixing in owner-occupied housing will also encourage the upkeep of remaining rental properties. Current resources can be fine-tuned to better address the specific needs of the Southside and provide a more holistic approach to homeownership promotion. Existing down-payment assistance and rehabilitation lending programs can be better coordinated with conventional financing and homeownership training programs, and can be specifically targeted to the Southside.

The Housing Improvement strategies described below address the need to: increase the rate of homeownership in Southside Racine, raise the level of vested interest and stewardship of the private realm in the neighborhood; decrease the overall number of deteriorated



*Housing types and quality vary widely throughout the Southside, from boarded and vacant homes (top) to large, solid single-family homes in the Southside Historic District (bottom). In between are smaller but solid single-family homes, mixed-use structures which have often been converted to residential use (top middle), and apartment buildings of various vintages (bottom middle).*



properties; facilitate home purchases by qualified buyers of all income levels; increase the stock of well-managed rental properties that will continue to fill a critical need for affordable housing in the City of Racine; and, maintain the neighborhood's desirable and unique diversity by maintaining housing options that serve all income levels.

Figure 7: Housing Subarea, on the following page, serves as a “prototypical” example of the inter-relationship of many of the strategies in the Housing Improvement section. It depicts the potential for new housing development interspersed with infill housing opportunities. The plan also details the opportunity to improve Racine Street to serve more effectively as a buffer between residential and industrial areas (to be described more fully in the Industrial strategy section), and the need to include improvements to public facilities that impact upon the quality of life in Southside residential neighborhoods.

The Housing strategies and their related projects are as follows:

**A. Increase Neighborhood Reinvestment**

1. Market existing City housing assistance programs
2. Continue to aggressively enforce housing codes
3. Provide targeted homebuyer education, pre-qualification and mortgage products
4. Continue to provide Section 8 and other rental placement assistance
5. Continue to provide property management training
6. Create and enforce design standards
7. Create and enforce landscape standards
8. Create incentives for the purchase and appropriate rehabilitation of small older homes

**B. Stabilize and Rehabilitate Southside Housing**

1. Rehabilitate existing housing where feasible
2. Develop “infill” projects on scattered sites
3. Improve public infrastructure and ongoing maintenance

**C. Undertake Targeted Housing Redevelopment Projects**

1. Create a mechanism to assemble and hold redevelopment sites
2. Develop and market “New Homes for the Southside”

These strategies and projects are described in detail below:

**A. INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT**

Eight projects are proposed to address this critical issue. They focus upon the need to “indirectly” renew our existing housing stock, maintain quality rental properties, and continue to serve a diverse housing market within the Southside Neighborhood.

**1. Market existing City housing assistance programs**

Several housing assistance programs targeted to Census Tracts I through 5 are currently available through the City of Racine, yet they are not well utilized (see Appendix B). Working through area employers and churches, the City and the SNP should market these programs more aggressively. In addition to publicizing the programs in this manner, information about the programs should be attached to City citations issued for code violations, and the SNP should host a “Housing Fair” to increase awareness of the programs and aid property owners in getting started on home improvements.

**2. Continue to aggressively enforce housing codes**

Recent efforts by both the City of Racine and the Town of Mt. Pleasant to conduct code violation “sweeps” are applauded and should be continued by systematically identifying violations, issuing citations and following up with recalcitrant property owners. Simply increasing knowledge of, and aggressively enforcing, existing codes will go a long way toward encouraging appropriate upkeep of residential properties. Due to resource limitations the departments are currently limited to conducting sweeps and responding to specific complaints. More resources should be secured in the future to step up enforcement efforts in both communities. Figure 8: Workshop Map summarizes community input regarding the areas where most housing problems occur.

Figure 7: housing sub area

Figure 8: workshop map

**3. Provide targeted homebuyer education, pre-qualification and mortgage products**

Another key aspect of reinvigorating the housing market in Southside Racine is through identification and counseling of qualified homebuyers who can be encouraged to make the Southside their home. Several organizations already provide this service, or plan to begin doing so in the near future. A mechanism should be established for both publicizing these services and identifying potential homebuyers through local employers and churches. An important aspect of this education effort is to alert existing homeowners to the dangers of predatory lenders, to minimize their negative impact on the stability of the neighborhood through unscrupulous marketing of home equity loans. Targeted loans and technical assistance to be offered should include mortgage products designed specifically for the purchase of homes requiring additional rehabilitation financing, and for the purchase of small multi-unit properties by resident owner/managers.

**4. Continue to provide Section 8 and other rental placement assistance**

Affordable rental housing is a key component of the overall housing market and cannot be ignored in any neighborhood housing plan. The Housing Authority of Racine County currently provides placement assistance to Section 8 tenants and should continue to do so, with increased support. A placement service should be established to serve other rental properties as well, to offer assistance to quality-conscious landlords and provide tenant screening services. The important consideration is ensuring that both landlords and tenants act responsibly toward one another and toward neighboring homes, so that rental properties do not de-stabilize the neighborhood.

**5. Continue to provide property management training**

Existing property management training should continue and be increased. The key to ensuring quality rental housing for the Southside will be to encourage responsible property management that includes: 1) resident owner/managers at smaller properties; 2) adequate maintenance of rental properties; 3) screening tenants and promptly evicting problem tenants; and, 4) providing information to tenants to assist them in becoming involved members of the community.

**6. Create and enforce design standards**

Both the City of Racine and the Town of Mt. Pleasant should add additional requirements to their zoning regulations and housing codes to set minimum standards for design quality in residential areas. These codes should then be strictly enforced for both rehabilitation and new construction. These standards should be rigorously followed when public funds are utilized, and should be subject to regular review and refinement as appropriate. They will need to be appropriate for the neighborhood and the income level of families in all areas of the Southside. As an example, minimum standards could require that porches be constructed of high quality finished lumber with decorative railings.

**7. Create and enforce landscape standards**

Both the City of Racine and the Town of Mt. Pleasant should add additional requirements to their zoning regulations and housing codes to set minimum standards for landscaping quality in residential areas. These codes should then be strictly enforced throughout the Southside Neighborhood. These standards should be rigorously followed when public funds are utilized, and should be subject to regular review and refinement as appropriate. They will need to be appropriate for the neighborhood and the income level of families in all areas of the Southside. As an example, minimum standards could require that front yards and parkways be maintained as a lawn, and that parkway trees be maintained at designated intervals.

**8. Create incentives for the purchase and appropriate rehabilitation of small older homes**

Building upon the upcoming comprehensive survey planned by the Racine Landmarks Commission, a program should be established that encourages the purchase and rehabilitation of homes identified as being significant to Racine's history, regardless of their size or modesty. While ensuring that appropriate materials are used and that the original exterior appearance of the home is re-established, interior modernization and rear additions should be allowed to increase their marketability.

The property tax burden often makes ownership unfeasible for those who might otherwise qualify for housing assistance. While a homebuyer might be able to afford a home offered at a price reduced from the

actual market value, the home will be taxed according to its actual value. In addition to direct incentives, a program should be created that provides a reduction of the property tax rate on such homes for an established number of years after purchase.

## **B. STABILIZE AND REHABILITATE SOUTHSIDE HOUSING**

Action is needed to encourage the support and improvement of blocks containing good housing stock which is under stress due to age or the condition of adjacent property. The following three projects should help in these situations which are generally found in the “Housing Stabilization Areas” shown in [Figure 5: Neighborhood Revitalization Plan](#).

### **1. Rehabilitate existing housing where feasible**

Several organizations are rehabilitating housing for resale on an ongoing basis (including Southside Revitalization, Racine Mutual Housing and Habitat for Humanity), and NHS is poised to begin work in the neighborhood as well. This activity should be encouraged on blocks that are stable on the whole, but have a few problem properties. A simple rehabilitation and the addition of a stable homeowner can help to solidify the block and generate a shared sense of concern for the condition of the area. This activity should include both single family and multi-family structures, and both ownership and rental properties. Owner occupancy of two-family and multi-family properties should be encouraged wherever possible. These ongoing efforts will face the added challenge of new lead-based paint remediation requirements that became effective March 2001, which will raise the overall cost of rehabilitation using federal funding sources.

### **2. Develop “infill” projects on scattered sites**

Vacant lots and dilapidated structures occur throughout the Southside neighborhood, particularly within the first few blocks east of Racine Street/Highway 32. New housing should be constructed on vacant lots, lots made vacant by the demolition of dilapidated structures, and lots made vacant by the removal of incompatible land uses (scattered commercial and industrial properties). This lot-by-lot new construction should offer at least “one-for-one” replacement of units lost to demolition. The efforts of all housing organizations engaged in this activity should be coordinated by the SNP so that areas identified as having multiple opportunities for infill development are addressed in a coordinated manner, and the efforts of each group can positively impact the efforts of others by achieving a “critical mass” of new housing activity in key areas. Equally important to the quality of our neighborhood is ensuring that new housing is contextual in scale, design and construction quality, so that it blends seamlessly with existing housing and encourages the appropriate rehabilitation of solid existing homes. [Figure 9](#) provides an example of appropriate contextual design for infill housing. [Figure 10](#) provides an example of the level of quality and design envisioned by NHS in its plans for future housing construction on the Southside.



*Existing conditions on Mead Street just north of 17<sup>th</sup> Street.*

### **3. Improve public infrastructure and ongoing maintenance**

The quality of residential areas is significantly impacted by the level of public services in the area. The City of Racine should ensure that a consistent effort is made to address such issues of daily concern to Southside residents as sidewalk trip hazard repair, street sweeping, and mowing and litter clearance in public parks. To the extent possible, some of the tasks needing to be addressed are seasonal, and might offer opportunities for summer hiring of our local youth to augment City staff efforts.



**FIGURE 9**  
**HOUSING ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH: Infill Housing on Mead Street**

*This sketch illustrates the construction of two new, contextually designed homes next to an existing home on the corner of Mead and 17<sup>th</sup>. The home on the corner has been extensively renovated, and the two new homes replace an abandoned single-story home and a vacant lot.*



**FIGURE 10**  
**PLANNED NEW SOUTHSIDE HOUSING**

*This sketch illustrates the exterior appearance of a home designed for Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. by Hartmann Design, Inc. of Racine Wisconsin. NHS plans to construct this home and similar models on scattered sites within its Southside focus area.*



### C. UNDERTAKE TARGETED HOUSING REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Figure 5: Neighborhood Revitalization Plan identifies specific “Housing Redevelopment Areas” in the neighborhood, which should be the focus of new housing development. These developments will create a critical mass of new housing to replace areas of very weak existing housing and begin to exert a positive influence on adjacent older housing. Creating the opportunity to develop multiple units of new housing simultaneously should generate developer interest, and should make units easier to market. Two major projects are proposed as part of this strategy:

#### 1. Create a mechanism to assemble and hold redevelopment sites

Land assembly should be focused near a stabilizing influence such as an institution or a park, and should offer the opportunity to develop at least 8 to 10 housing units simultaneously. The areas might include properties that are currently isolated commercial or industrial businesses. Several areas to consider include: 9th Street between Washington Avenue and Center Street near the City Hall Annex, possibly incorporating former railroad right-of-way; Ann Street between Washington Avenue and 16th Street; and, the east side of Mead Street between DeKoven Avenue and 20th Street. See Figure 11: Workshop Map for community input regarding where new housing should be constructed.

A public or non-profit entity is needed to assemble and hold properties for development until complete site control are achieved. As a starting point, tax delinquent properties should be turned over by the County at no cost to the entity chosen to hold property for development, such as the Racine County Economic Development Corporation.

#### 2. Develop and market “New Homes for the Southside”

Site design should be undertaken, with significant community input from surrounding property owners and the SNP, to determine the appropriate mix of housing units and project design for each site. It is these clustered projects (of at least 8 to 10 adjacent housing units) that offer the opportunity to insert new housing types, such as townhouses or low-rise condominiums, into the market without altering the built environment of the rest of the neighborhood.

The SNP, in cooperation with the chosen land-holding entity and the City of Racine, should actively solicit developer interest in the clustered “New Homes” projects, and should offer financial incentives to get the projects off the ground. These incentives might include selling the land at a reduced cost.

The housing clusters should incorporate a variety of new housing types and offer a medium density housing alternative, such as townhomes or low-rise condominiums. The clusters should also provide for shared green space as part of the development, especially if the cluster is not immediately adjacent to an existing City park or other open space. Figure 12 provides an example of new medium density housing replacing existing dilapidated homes.

To the extent possible, local residents should be offered the first opportunity to purchase units in the new developments. Beyond this local marketing by the SNP, new Southside housing opportunities can be marketed to employees from the downtown area, local industrial businesses and St. Luke’s Hospital, who might be interested in living within walking distance of their workplaces.



*Existing conditions on 9th Street just west of Center Street.*

Figure 11: workshop map



**FIGURE 12**  
**HOUSING ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH: New Housing on 9<sup>th</sup> Street**

*This sketch illustrates the construction of new townhomes, replacing two severely dilapidated homes just west of Center Street. There are several other potential sites for similar construction along this block, including former railroad right-of-way. This “cluster” of new housing within easy walking distance of the downtown and City facilities could replace what is currently a neighborhood liability with a new neighborhood asset.*

## THE INDUSTRIAL INITIATIVE

The presence of industry not only contributes to the economic welfare of the neighborhood but also to Racine County as a whole. The most recent available data show that 32% of all workers in the County were employed in the manufacturing sector, and that six of the twenty largest employers located in Racine County are located in the Southside Neighborhood, along with approximately 50 other industrial and manufacturing enterprises. Discussions with businesspersons indicate that a location away from the Interstate is not adverse to successful operation. Highway 11 provides a good connection for truck movement. For smaller businesses dependent upon UPS and other similar package services, the distance of the Southside from the interstate does not seem to pose a problem.

Industrial facilities range from integrated facilities, such as that of the SC Johnson campus, to scattered individual buildings. Most of the industrial buildings were built in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and many are considered obsolete for today’s new technologies. Hence, this area has seen substantial changes in building tenants. Many of the buildings originally constructed for fabrication and assembly purposes are now used for storage. Some have been reused as multi-tenant facilities, housing various small businesses. Others remain vacant.

As a result, there are substantial underutilized areas which might best be recycled to more active use. In particular there are areas of predominantly industrial land between 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets, just west of Racine Street, which appear to have only marginal utility at present. This plan recommends recycling this underused area into new industrial development sites. It appears the inventory of available sites for new industrial development within the



*Modine Manufacturing has undertaken significant facility improvements in recent years, including this attractive signage and landscape treatment at Memorial Drive and DeKoven Avenue.*

city is being depleted. According to a 1998 survey by the Racine County Economic Development Corporation, if current development trends continue, current industrial park land within eastern Racine County will be fully developed within six years. The Southside Neighborhood has the services, access and orientation to accommodate industrial development and is a prime candidate for industrial development beyond that which can be accommodated in current parks. The Southside's ability to accommodate industrial redevelopment on smaller sites (1 to 3 acre sites can be accommodated within portions of the existing industrial area) will provide for a key segment of the Racine industrial market, while larger redevelopment parcels (such as CNH Global (Case), located in Mt. Pleasant, and Jacobsen/Textron) can accommodate larger users.

Maintaining and intensifying industrial activity at all scales within the Southside neighborhood is critical to maximizing tax revenue for the City, and also provides a key source of living wage jobs in a convenient "in-town" location. This new development will build upon the strong foundation already in place due to large and stable facilities such as SC Johnson and Modine Manufacturing.

The strategies outlined in this section address the need to revitalize existing facilities, find opportunities to bring in new industrial businesses, make physical improvements to the industrial area, and connect Southside residents to industrial job opportunities. [Figure 13: Industrial Subarea](#) summarizes many of the key projects indicated in this section, and outlines both areas that have redevelopment potential and stable areas that require only facility upgrades to remain viable. It also indicates the priority locations for gateway and identity elements that will define the industrial area which we propose to establish as the Central Racine Industrial Park. Four strategies are presented to address the needs of this major city-wide resource, and to assure its viability well into the future.

The Industrial strategies and their related projects are as follows:

**A. Establish an "in-city" Business Park**

1. Establish a Business Park Association
2. Strengthen existing businesses through technical assistance
3. Provide support services
4. Install gateway treatments and identity/way finding elements

**B. Improve Unsightly Industrial Areas**

1. Provide low-cost loans or grants to improve existing facilities
2. Widen and upgrade Racine Street/Highway 32
3. Install streetscape and landscape improvements

**C. Redevelop Underutilized Industrial Property**

1. Pursue City designation and acquisition of underutilized property
2. Develop reuse plans and marketing strategies for key sites
3. Develop site and building design standards
4. Market area to new industrial businesses
5. Phase out isolated industrial properties

**D. Connect Southside Residents to Living Wage Jobs**

1. Expand the local hiring/training network
2. Create incentives for businesses to hire locally



*The SC Johnson campus, including the research tower designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, is another key employer and physical anchor for the area, with a well-maintained and high quality facility.*

Figure 13: industrial sub area

These strategies and projects are described in detail below:

#### **A. ESTABLISH AN “IN-CITY” BUSINESS PARK**

Revitalization of the Southside industrial area involves attracting new investment. One key approach is to create a new identity for the area through the establishment of a “business park” image and an organization to assist in marketing the area and determining appropriate assistance to property owners. The work attendant to this organization would be conducted by existing organizations. An appropriate name would be determined for the business park to communicate the convenient “in-town” location of the present industrial district. Coordinated actions should be undertaken to market the park to new industrial users. Four projects are proposed:

##### **1. Establish a Business Park Association**

Creating an organization focused on coordinating improvements and marketing the Southside industrial area will be a critical first step in reinvigorating the industrial economy in Southside Racine. Existing organizations that work with industries in Racine County as a whole (the Racine County Economic Development Corporation and RAMAC) should work together with the City of Racine and key Southside industrial businesses to establish an entity focused solely on establishing and marketing the park, a Business Park Association (BPA). The Association will primarily coordinate marketing and area improvements, working closely with the established organizations that address industrial development in all of Racine County (RCEDC and RAMAC).

##### **2. Strengthen existing businesses through technical assistance**

A critical aspect of the BPA’s work will be to facilitate assistance to existing businesses who wish to undertake facility improvements or expansions in the area. The BPA will openly communicate plans for the area, share information about upcoming projects, and assist in ensuring the continued success of the established businesses in the area through referrals to RAMAC and the RCEDC.

##### **3. Provide support services**

Plans are already in place for a technology development center which could include a location near the Workforce Development/Human Services Center. This would clearly be a selling point to potential new companies, in that a ready supply of trained local workers can be made available to them. The BPA and its coordinating partners should look into the feasibility of providing other support services to local companies on a shared basis, such as a day care center and a meeting facility that smaller businesses will not be able to provide on their own.

##### **4. Install gateway treatments and identity/way finding elements**

An important aspect of establishing a business park “identity” for the Southside industrial area will be to demarcate the boundaries of the area to be maintained for industrial use, establishing “entry” points along key corridors. Unlike a more suburban business park, with limited access only from major arterials, the Business Park will be integrated into the circulation patterns of the Southside, and will thus have more entry points to address.

In addition to establishing the extent of the business park through gateway elements, there will be a need to install identity elements at key intersections within the park, and a system of directional and informational signage that is clearly distinct from standard City signage and reinforces the image and “logo” of the Business Park.

#### **B. IMPROVE UNSIGHTLY INDUSTRIAL AREAS**

One of the key hurdles to overcome in marketing the Business Park concept is the “tired” appearance of many existing facilities and of the public rights-of-way in the area. Another concern is the lack of buffering between active industrial businesses and adjacent residential land uses. Three actions should be taken to address these issues:

##### **1. Provide low-cost loans or grants to improve existing facilities**

Financial incentives should be provided to existing businesses, in the form of low-interest loans, to leverage private investment in facility modernization and aesthetic improvements. Many of these loans are currently



available through the Racine County Economic Development Corporation. Many existing businesses in the area can continue to be viable for years to come if certain key improvements can be made, which may at this point be beyond immediate capital resources.

## 2. Widen and upgrade Racine Street/Highway 32

A major proposal of this plan is to widen and upgrade Racine Street/Highway 32 as it bisects the Southside Neighborhood. This is a key component of making the Business Park a modern, marketable business location. While increasing the accessibility of industrial property east of the railroad, this improvement will also significantly enhance the ability of Racine Street to accommodate through traffic destined for the downtown, and will enable the thoroughfare to serve as an effective buffer between the residential neighborhood east of Racine Street and industrial activity to the west. Existing viable businesses impacted by the street widening should be relocated into the Business Park or into designated commercial nodes, as appropriate. See [Figure 14](#) for an example of the image Racine Street could project.



*The south end of Racine Street does not currently communicate a positive message about the Southside to visitors and residents, nor does it serve effectively as a buffer between incompatible land uses.*



**FIGURE 14**  
**INDUSTRIAL ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH: Racine Street/Highway 32 Improvements**

*This sketch illustrates the proposed widening and realignment of Racine Street/Highway 32. The roadway is expanded to accommodate four moving lanes and a center planting strip, while the parkway dimension in front of properties abutting the roadway to the east is expanded. This will enhance the quality of existing residential properties and allow for more effective traffic movement to access to new industrial park to the west. The south end of Racine Street is also a prime location for an identity sign welcoming visitors to the Southside.*



### 3. Install streetscape and landscape improvements

In addition to establishing an image for the business park through signage and gateway elements, a consistent streetscape treatment should be installed throughout the industrial area. Landscape treatments should be installed along the perimeter of the industrial area as new development occurs, to provide a buffer between adjacent residential areas and industrial activity within the business park. It should be noted that such a buffer need not be wide and imposing, but it must be sensitively designed.

## C. REDEVELOP UNDERUTILIZED INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY

In addition to maintaining as many existing and active industrial businesses as possible, properties that are currently vacant or being used primarily for cold warehouse storage or outdoor storage should be redeveloped to accommodate new active industrial uses. These types of businesses will contribute significantly more to the tax base than the existing uses of these properties. Smaller businesses that can effectively utilize small development parcels and will benefit from co-location with other industrial businesses should be solicited, as well as larger businesses for large sites that can be created through consolidation of parcels into larger development sites, primarily south of DeKoven Avenue. Five projects should be considered:

### 1. Pursue City designation and acquisition of underutilized property

To establish a clear commitment to maintaining industrial uses in the Southside Neighborhood, the City of Racine should designate the area as a redevelopment area and pursue economic development tools for portions of the area, such as the establishment of tax increment finance (TIF) district to encourage new development. The designation(s) will facilitate phasing out incompatible and physically isolated residential and commercial properties west of Racine Street in the blocks south of 16th Street so that well-planned industrial development sites of varying sizes can be created, and redundant and wasteful public rights-of-way can be eliminated through replatting.

### 2. Develop reuse plans and marketing strategies for key sites

As a first project of the new Business Park, a reuse plan and marketing strategy should be developed for the Jacobsen/Textron site, which will be vacated by the end of 2001. This is a large site in a highly visible central location, and its successful reuse will have a positive impact on marketing efforts for the remainder of the business park. Also, potential reuse strategies for the 100-acre CNH Global (Case) site should be explored by the Town of Mt. Pleasant. The CNH Global (Case) site, due to its significant size, provides a unique opportunity to bring in a new Southside industrial anchor that can promote spin-off activity on smaller sites within the business park in future years. RCEDC should develop these plans and strategies and work closely with the BPA to facilitate their implementation.

### 3. Develop site and building design standards

As new development occurs in the Business Park, it will be important to assure that it is of an appropriately high quality. The most important issues to address in this “in-town” business park will be the provision of adequate landscaping and other buffering between industrial and other land uses, adequate off-street loading and parking areas, and appropriately scaled and coordinated signage. Standards for the renovation of existing facilities to modern standards should also be included. Approaches to applying these standards may vary — buffering requirements could be added to the zoning regulations of both the City of Racine



*The two images above, of a new industrial facility (above) and a renovated industrial facility (below) in Chicago, demonstrate the positive impact of landscaping when used to buffer truck loading areas and large wall expanses from view.*

and the Town of Mt. Pleasant, and other requirements might be tied to available financial incentives.

#### **4. Market area to new industrial businesses**

The ideal businesses to solicit for the Business Park are clean-operating light industrial facilities, as well as industries that can operate effectively in rehabbed, multi-story facilities. Due to the proximity to existing residential areas, industries that create nuisance conditions, such as noise from off-hours truck traffic or heavy machinery operation, should be avoided. An economic readjustment study by the RCEDC and its partners will help to guide these marketing efforts. See [Figure 15: Workshop Map](#) for community input on where new industrial development should occur.

#### **5. Phase out isolated industrial properties**

Some older industrial businesses are in small facilities located within residential areas in the Southside, sharing property lines and alleys with homes. A key outcome of the creation of the Business Park will be the phasing out of these isolated industrial uses that are a detriment to residential areas and, instead, consolidating industrial activity within the business park where it can be adequately buffered from its non-industrial surroundings. Most of the examples of this condition occur in the following areas: a few blocks east of Racine Street, north of 13th Street; just north of 17th Street in the blocks east of Taylor Street; and east of Washington Avenue between 8th and 10th Streets. Once these isolated industrial properties are vacated and remediate, the property should be rezoned for more appropriate development.

### **D. CONNECT SOUTHSIDE RESIDENTS TO LIVING WAGE JOBS**

There were approximately 4,900 persons employed in manufacturing within the Southside Neighborhood and surroundings in 1999. However, only about 1,400 Southside residents were employed in manufacturing. This difference (about 3,500 persons) indicates that most workers at manufacturing plants within the neighborhood are “imported” from other neighborhoods. Creating a new business park environment and bringing in new industrial businesses will obviously have a positive effect on the aesthetics and functionality of the Southside Neighborhood. However, it is important to capture the potential such development will have for providing living wage employment opportunities to residents of the Southside. Two projects are proposed:

#### **1. Expand the local hiring/training network**

Industrial businesses often rely on temporary agencies to provide ready access to employees to fill lower skill and entry-level positions. We strongly encourage Southside businesses to transition these temporary employees to permanent employees. We also encourage businesses to work closely with the Workforce Development Center to maximize opportunities for local residents to fill these positions. A local hiring and training network can facilitate connections between Southside residents seeking training and entry level job opportunities and Southside businesses who are committed to making a positive impact on their neighborhood.

#### **2. Create incentives for businesses to hire locally**

To make the hiring and training network more successful, businesses should use existing employer training incentives to make hiring local residents advantageous to local, especially smaller, businesses. These incentives are available through the Workforce Development Center. Companies willing to hire local youth for summer jobs might receive a partial wage reimbursement, for example. As another example, companies that hire local residents who do not need to drive to work might be able to offer a transit pass as a fringe benefit in combination with an adjusted hourly wage.

### **THE COMMERCIAL INITIATIVE**

Existing Southside commercial activities provide, at best, modest service to the community. At present, the Uptown Commercial District, along Washington Avenue (between Taylor Avenue and 8<sup>th</sup> Street), is the area’s major commercial concentration and contains approximately 235,000 square feet of commercial space. However, the vacancy rate in the Uptown Commercial District is high. A survey conducted in mid-2000 showed that about 20% of the total square footage available for commercial retail and office uses was vacant.

Figure 15: workshop map

As outlined in [Chapter II: the Southside Neighborhood](#), there are few quality restaurants and other offerings that might interest area employees or visitors to utilize uptown. Now the “second-hand” area of town, Uptown currently includes several isolated destination businesses: an office supply store (Easterday), a music store (Schmitt), the Corner House (an evening-only restaurant), a dentist, a vacuum repair shop, a key shop and an eye clinic. None of these businesses generate significant spin-off traffic or feed off of each other, meaning there is no “synergy” in the current retail mix. In past years the area has lost two banks, a department store (Paulson’s), a pharmacy, a grocery store (A&P), a bakery, a library branch and a theatre. Clearly, at one time uptown functioned as a key provider of daily retail services to Southside residents. During the 1970s the grade separation installed at Memorial Drive served to reduce the visibility and accessibility of Uptown, and new retail offerings to the west have produced stiff competition.

Thus, the Southside Neighborhood, like many other “in-town” neighborhoods, lacks adequate commercial services, especially convenience services which are critical to everyday life. Commercial development in Racine has suburbanized – the bulk of all shoppers’ goods are now found in the shopping centers that extend west from the City along Washington Avenue (Highway 20). Everyday convenience shops also appear to have suburbanized. The lack of readily accessible convenience goods or groceries is, at best, an inconvenience to people who have access to an automobile. Those without access to a vehicle are forced to rely on a limited public transit system, friends and neighborhood facilities for access to grocery stores and other daily needs.

The lack of commercial services in a mixed-use neighborhood such as the Southside Neighborhood also affects business investment or reinvestment. Many workers look for jobs in areas where they can accomplish multiple activities on their way to and from work. Businesses are dependent upon ready access to commercial suppliers and restaurants. The fact that such uses are a ten to fifteen minute car ride away makes the Southside Neighborhood less competitive as a location for business investment, and further weakens the long-term viability of the neighborhood.

[Figure 16: Workshop Map](#) and [Figure 17: Workshop Map](#) indicate that while many Southside residents shop elsewhere, uptown is clearly the primary retail area in the Southside in the minds of residents. [Figure 18: Workshop Map](#) further suggests that uptown is the most appropriate location for future commercial development to serve the Southside, with secondary commercial along Racine Street. Action needs to be taken to increase the range, size and viability of commercial services within, or adjacent to, the neighborhood. While residents in the northeast section of the Southside live in close proximity to the high quality retail and restaurant offerings of the downtown area, residents of the rest of the Southside have very limited access to convenient retail and services.

The Commercial Development strategies described below address the need to: increase the retail mix in Uptown to create synergy and draw in both residents and employees; improve the physical conditions of the public rights-of-way and commercial structures in Uptown; and, strengthen existing businesses. [Figure 19: Commercial Subarea](#) summarizes many of the key physical development projects proposed in this section.

The Commercial strategies and their related projects are as follows:

**A. Establish Uptown as the Southside Commercial District**

1. Create the Uptown Business Association
2. Study feasibility of parking options
3. Install gateway treatments and identity/way finding elements

**B. Redevelop Underutilized Commercial Property**

1. Bring an “anchor” use to Uptown
2. Phase out most scattered commercial properties
3. Establish a Southside visitor center within Uptown

**C. Improve Unsightly Commercial Areas**

1. Provide grants or low-cost loans to improve existing commercial facades
2. Install streetscape and landscape improvements
3. Install parking lot landscaping improvements

Figure 16: workshop map

Figure 17: workshop map

Figure 18: workshop map



Figure 19: commercial sub area

These strategies and projects are described in detail below:

#### **A. ESTABLISH UPTOWN AS THE SOUTHSIDE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT**

Uptown, currently serving a destination-oriented regional marketplace may again become the primary commercial district serving the daily convenience needs of both Southside residents and Southside businesses. As new businesses and residential development come into the neighborhood, retailers will again take notice of the area. However, a coordinated effort to actively revitalize the area will be needed. All the physical elements for a revival are in place: a strong pedestrian-orientation, adequate parking lots, and high quality commercial



*This view looking east along Washington Avenue from Owen Avenue shows the traditional, pedestrian orientation and varied storefronts of the Uptown area.*

architecture that merely need a “facelift” in most cases. In fact, there may be excess parking, and an arrangement to provide remote hospital employee parking for St. Luke’s might serve to both better utilize parking lots and provide a ready market for potential businesses.

Initial revitalization efforts should focus on the core of Uptown, between Memorial Drive and the Union Pacific railroad tracks. Commercial areas further north, while receiving basic streetscaping enhancements, should not be a focus of primary marketing efforts at the outset. Key to the rebirth of Uptown will be reestablishing a mix of uses focused on the needs of the resident population — new convenience shopping and services such as a bank branch or currency exchange, a postal substation, a video store, and a dry cleaner. The key is to serve residents, area employees and visitors. Finding a market niche to pursue (such as antiques) will also be important. Three projects are proposed:

##### **1. Create the Uptown Business Association**

An Uptown Business Association (UBA) should be created to coordinate marketing of available retail space, organize shared advertising campaigns (targeted to both Southside residents and employees), organize community-wide events (such as antique fairs or farmer’s markets), and to coordinate a greater police presence within Uptown. Initially, the organization will require City financial support, but should transition into a city/business-supported “special service area” model over time.

##### **2. Study feasibility of parking options**

As a long-term strategy, the UBA and the City should look into the feasibility of providing free shopper parking in the Uptown area at certain times of day. Also, providing hospital employee parking in the Uptown area, coordinated with a hospital-provided shuttle, would create a built-in market for convenience goods. Additional parking, when merited by increased commercial activity, might be provided between 15th and 16th Streets, east of Junction Avenue. In the near term, it appears that adequate shopper parking exists in current City-owned and dedicated parking lots.

##### **3. Install gateway treatments and identity/wayfinding elements**

The Uptown shopping district needs to establish a unique identity and have defined limits. Initial revitalization efforts should focus on the stretch of Washington between the Memorial Drive access ramp to the west and the Union Pacific Railroad crossing to the northeast. Gateway elements should be installed at these locations. Secondly, 14th Street between Washington Avenue and the railroad tracks and Junction Avenue between 14th and 16th Streets should be addressed. For this reason, a third gateway element should be installed along 14th Avenue at the railroad tracks.

Within the Uptown district, consistent identity signage and directional signage should also be provided. The most



*The small open space at the railroad crossing just north of 13<sup>th</sup> Street provides an ideal location for an Uptown District north gateway feature.*

important function of this signage will be to alert shoppers to the location of public parking lots behind existing buildings.

## **B. REDEVELOP UNDERUTILIZED COMMERCIAL PROPERTY**

Uptown is the most appropriate location for new Southside commercial development to occur, as the needed elements of access and parking are already in place. To support new commercial development beyond small, convenience-oriented businesses in other parts of the Southside would only dilute the potential market for Uptown and further weaken the faltering market for the long-standing businesses that operate in Uptown today. Three projects should be pursued:

### **1. Bring an “anchor” use to Uptown**

Two prime sites for a new “anchor” development have been identified (see [Figure 19: Commercial Subarea](#)), both of which could accommodate new construction without interrupting the strong street wall and pedestrian orientation of the core of the Uptown district along Washington Avenue. Addition of an anchor use such as a food and/or drug store would stimulate further retail development activity. The possibility of incorporating a police outpost in Uptown should be considered in any plans for a new anchor development.



*This view looking southeast across the Washington/ Junction/ 14<sup>th</sup> intersection shows one potential “anchor” development site, south of 14<sup>th</sup>. This site could be developed without compromising the strong existing pedestrian orientation of the Washington Avenue frontage.*

### **2. Phase out most scattered commercial properties**

With a few exceptions (such as the Matrenga’s site near the St. Catherine’s school campus), scattered and isolated commercial zoning should be eliminated on the Southside and at a minimum treated as a special use within residential districts. Isolated commercial properties on street corners in residential neighborhoods have often ended up accommodating liquor-oriented stores or drinking establishments that create a nuisance and have a destabilizing influence on their residential surroundings. Viable existing businesses should be relocated either to Uptown or along Racine Street in the block north of DeKoven, and most other scattered properties should be rezoned so that commercial uses can be carefully controlled. Additionally, should industrial uses vacate the properties just north of 16<sup>th</sup> Street (between Memorial and Junction) in the future, consideration should be given to redeveloping the parcels as housing or as an office or light industrial use that does not generate significant truck traffic.

### **3. Establish a Southside visitor center within Uptown**

SC Johnson and the City of Racine could pursue the feasibility of establishing a visitor center within Uptown. Tours of the SC Johnson campus, as well as tours of the historic district and other points of interest in Racine, could be started from the visitor center. The facility could possibly be housed in the former library building or in a renovated theater, and tied into the existing trolley tours that serve the downtown area. This activity center would generate a natural spin-off market for boutique or tourist-oriented retail.

## **C. IMPROVE UNSIGHTLY COMMERCIAL AREAS**

In addition to establishing an identity for Uptown through signage and advertising, and bringing in a new anchor business to serve as a catalyst for new development, it will be important to upgrade the generally run-down appearance of Uptown and ensure that increased retail activity does not negatively impact surrounding areas. [Figure 20](#) indicates the potential for Uptown with only minor modifications. Three projects are proposed:

### **1. Provide grants or low-cost loans to improve existing commercial facades**

Many existing businesses rely upon dedicated repeat customers, and therefore do not seem particularly concerned about the appearance of their stores. In fact, several have come to rely exclusively on rear entrances from their parking lots, which virtually eliminate any potential spin-off shopping activity at other businesses. As façade improvements are made, front entrances should be maintained or reestablished. A few

relatively low-cost façade upgrades would significantly enhance the visual interest of the Uptown district, and potentially lure passers-by to take notice of the retail offerings in Uptown. *All* businesses would benefit from an effort to spruce up the appearance of the older commercial buildings along Washington, even those who may continue to rely, at least in part, on rear store entrances.



**FIGURE 20**  
**COMMERCIAL ILLUSTRATIVE SKETCH: Uptown Improvements**

*The sketch above details suggested upgrades to building facades and streetscape and landscape improvements within the public right-of-way throughout Uptown. These public improvements include the addition of street trees, special sidewalk paving treatments, plantings at traffic medians and identity signage at public parking lots.*

## **2. Install streetscape and landscape improvements**

A few subtle and relatively low cost upgrades to the public right-of-way along both Washington Avenue and Junction Avenue would have a significant positive visual impact on the Uptown district. Improvement should be coordinated with planned upgrades to the intersection of Washington Avenue and 14th Street, including the accommodation of planting areas in the planned traffic control medians. The UBA should coordinate (i.e. with volunteers) the installation and upkeep of low maintenance perennials in planting areas. Other upgrades should include: a new coat of glossy paint on all existing light poles; a rotating schedule of banners and hanging flower pots on all light poles; planter pots at corners and in front of cooperating stores; coordinated benches and trash receptacles; and bike



*Existing conditions in Uptown, looking north from the intersection of Junction Avenue and 14<sup>th</sup> Street.*

racks where space permits on side street sidewalks and in parking lots. Public area lighting can be improved through the addition of building-mounted lighting at side streets and other dark areas, as appropriate.

### **3. Install parking lot landscaping improvements**

Landscaping should be added to existing City-owned and private parking lots, including shade trees and perimeter plantings. The palette should be coordinated with plantings used along Washington in pots and medians. The most important consideration in adding landscaping will be buffering adjacent residential properties from lights and noise as much as possible.

## V. IMPLEMENTING THE VISION

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The Steering Committee recognizes that no single entity can carry out these strategies and related projects alone. Implementation of this ambitious plan will require the involvement of the City of Racine, the Town of Mt. Pleasant, other local groups, private businesses and local institutions. The Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership's role, in addition to taking prime responsibility for overall plan coordination and related projects, will be to encourage a community-wide effort to coordinate the efforts of interested parties, seeking investment from both within and beyond the Southside community, and acting as a rallying point for all in the community to get involved in the revitalization of the Southside neighborhood.

The "Implementation Work Program" on the following pages prioritizes the projects within each strategy area described in Chapter IV: Strategies to Implement the Vision and identifies both potential funding sources for each project and groups or entities which have committed to, or are targeted for, leadership of each project.

### PRIORITY PROJECTS

Several projects have been highlighted as "Priority Projects" that will be pursued immediately. For some of these projects, in fact, the groundwork has already been laid. They fall within each of the four strategy areas, and can be described as "Catalyst Projects" and "Symbolic Projects." Catalyst Projects are major undertakings with a potentially significant cost (in dollars and/or staff time), and are key to ensuring a strong start in each of the strategy areas. Symbolic Projects, by contrast, do not require the same funding and/or staff commitment, but are also key to generating interest and excitement in the plan among residents and businesspersons. While relatively simple and finite, they will "symbolize" the future revitalization of the Southside in a tangible way.

The **Catalyst Projects** are as follows:

- Establish the Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership (*Quality of Life*)
- Create a mechanism to assemble and hold redevelopment sites (*Housing*)
- Pursue City designation and acquisition of underutilized property (*Industrial*)
- Develop a reuse/marketing strategy for the Jacobsen/Textron site (*Industrial*)
- Bring an "anchor" use to Uptown (*Commercial*)

The **Symbolic Projects** are as follows:

- Install night lighting improvements (*Quality of Life*)
- Host a Housing Fair to market housing programs (*Housing*)
- Install banners with a new "Business Park" logo (*Industrial*)
- Incorporate landscape improvements into Washington Avenue intersection upgrades (*Commercial*)
- Install banners with a new "Uptown" logo on repainted street lights (*Commercial*)

The Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership's role, in addition to taking prime responsibility for overall plan coordination and related projects, will be to encourage a community-wide effort to coordinate the efforts of interested parties, seek investment from both within and beyond the Southside community, and act as a rallying point for all in the community to get involved in the revitalization of the Southside neighborhood.

The Steering Committee recognizes that no single entity can carry out these strategies and related projects alone. Implementation of this ambitious plan will require the involvement of the City of Racine, the Town of Mt. Pleasant, other local groups, private businesses and local institutions. Key next steps to be undertaken will include: encouraging the City of Racine and the Town of Mt. Pleasant to adopt aspects of the strategic plan as public policy, including the land use recommendations; and, developing cost estimates for proposed capital improvements to facilitate their inclusion in the capital improvement plans of city, county and state agencies.



## THE QUALITY OF LIFE INITIATIVE

Note: *italicized text* indicates continuation or expansion of an existing project or initiative

Note: \* indicates a "Priority Project"

Strategy / Project	Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5	Organization(s)	Funding Source(s)
<b>A. ORGANIZE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE (p.17)</b>					
1) Establish a Sustainable Neighborhood Partnership (SNP) (p.17)*	X			Sustainable Racine, organizations, businesses, residents	
2) <i>Expand block club coverage and involvement</i> (p.17)	X	X		SNP, block clubs	
3) Undertake community leadership training programs (p.18)	X	X		SNP, Sustainable Racine	grants
4) Host community-wide Southside events (p.18)	X	X	X	SNP	private donations
<b>B. MAKE THE SOUTHSIDE A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND PLAY (p.18)</b>					
1) <i>Strengthen and aggressively enforce health and sanitation codes</i> (p.18)	X	X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
2) Install night lighting improvements (p.18)*	X	X		Neighborhood Watch, block clubs, Safe & Sound	CDBG, Safe & Sound, private donations
3) <i>Increase neighborhood-based crime prevention and police presence</i> (p.18)	X	X	X	Neighborhood Watch, Safe & Sound, City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	Safe & Sound
4) Maintain all railroad crossings and advocate for commuter rail service (p.18)	X	X	X	City of Racine, Wisconsin DOT, SNP	
<b>C. BEAUTIFY THE NEIGHBORHOOD (p.20)</b>					
1) Undertake community-based beautification/improvement projects (p.20)	X	X	X	SNP, community centers, neighborhood residents	CDBG, private donations
2) Establish a tree maintenance/replacement program (p.20)		X		City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, SNP, neighborhood residents	CDBG, private donations
3) Upgrade the condition of key corridors (p.21)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	state and federal funding
4) Bury utilities along key corridors (p.21)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, utility companies	state and federal funding, utility companies
<b>D. KEEP SOUTHSIDE STAKEHOLDERS INFORMED ABOUT KEY ISSUES (p.21)</b>					
1) Establish a locally-oriented publication or news column (p.21)	X			SNP, Sustainable Racine	grants



2) Establish a feedback mechanism (p.21)	X			SNP, Sustainable Racine	grant
<b>E. PROVIDE AMENITIES FOR RESIDENTS AND EMPLOYEES (p.21)</b>					
1) Reassess the 18th Street Mall (p.21)	X			City of Racine	City of Racine
2) Install park signage and information kiosks (p.22)		X		City of Racine, SNP	City of Racine
3) Install bike paths, marked on-street routes and bike racks (p.22)		X		City of Racine	state and federal funding
4) Create additional usable green space (p.22)	X	X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, SNP	county funding, grants and private donations
5) Improve public access to the lakefront (p.22)		X	X	City of Racine	City of Racine
6) Build a public pool facility on the Southside (p.22)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
7) Increase library services for the Southside (p.22)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant

#### THE HOUSING INITIATIVE

Note: *italicized text* indicates continuation or expansion of an existing project or initiative

Note: \* indicates a "Priority Project"

Strategy / Project	Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5	Organization(s)	Funding Source(s)
<b>A. INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD REINVESTMENT (p.24)</b>					
1) <i>Market existing City housing assistance programs (including Housing Fairs) (p.24)*</i>	X	X	X	SNP, City of Racine, banks, realtors, employers	City of Racine, grants
2) <i>Continue to aggressively enforce housing codes (p.24)</i>	X	X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
3) <i>Provide targeted homebuyer education, pre-qualification and mortgage products (p.27)</i>	X	X	X	NHS, Family Service, Housing Authority of Racine County, banks	state and federal funding
4) <i>Continue to provide Section 8 and other rental placement assistance (p.27)</i>	X	X	X	Housing Authority of Racine County	state and federal funding
5) <i>Continue to provide property management training (p.27)</i>	X	X	X	Neighborhood Watch, Landlord Association	state and federal funding
6) Create and enforce design standards (p.27)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
7) Create and enforce landscape standards (p.27)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
8) Create incentives for the purchase and appropriate rehabilitation of small older homes (p.27)		X		Racine County, City of Racine, WHEDA	Racine County, City of Racine

<b>B. STABILIZE AND REHABILITATE SOUTHSIDE HOUSING (p.28)</b>					
1) <i>Rehabilitate existing housing where feasible (p.28)</i>	X	X	X	housing organizations/developers	CDBG, state funding
2) Develop “infill” projects on scattered sites (p.28)		X	X	housing organizations/developers	CDBG, state funding
3) Improve public infrastructure and ongoing maintenance (p.28)	X	X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
<b>C. UNDERTAKE TARGETED HOUSING REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (p.30)</b>					
1) Create a mechanism to assemble and hold redevelopment sites (p.30)*	X	X		City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, Housing Authority of Racine County, Racine County EDC, NHS	CDBG, state funding
2) Develop and market “New Homes for the Southside” (p.30)	X	X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, Racine County, housing organizations/developers, Housing Authority of Racine County, Racine County EDC, SNP	CDBG, City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, Racine County, private funds, state and federal funding

#### THE INDUSTRIAL AREA INITIATIVE

Note: *italicized text* indicates continuation or expansion of an existing project or initiative

Note: \* indicates a “Priority Project”

Strategy / Project	Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5	Organization(s)	Funding Source(s)
<b>A. ESTABLISH AN “IN-CITY” BUSINESS PARK (p.35)</b>					
1) Establish a Business Park Association (BPA) (p.35)	X			Racine County EDC, RAMAC, businesses	private donations, grants
2) <i>Strengthen existing businesses through technical assistance (p.35)</i>	X	X	X	BPA, Racine County EDC, RAMAC	State econ. dev. funding
3) <i>Provide support services (p.35)</i>	X	X	X	BPA, OIC, entrepreneurs	CDBG, private funding
4) Install gateways and identity/wayfinding elements (including banners) (p.35)*	X	X		BPA, City of Racine	State econ. dev. funding, private donations
<b>B. IMPROVE UNSIGHTLY INDUSTRIAL AREAS (p.35)</b>					
1) Provide low-cost loans or grants to improve existing facilities (p.35)	X	X	X	BPA, Racine County EDC	CDBG, state econ. dev. funding

2) Widen and upgrade Racine Street/Highway 32 (p.36)		X	X	Wisconsin DOT, City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	state and federal funding
3) Install streetscape and landscape improvements (p.37)		X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, BPA	state and federal funding, private donations
<b>C. REDEVELOP UNDERUTILIZED INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY (p.37)</b>					
1) Pursue City designation and acquisition of underutilized property (p.37)*	X			City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant, Racine County EDC	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
2) Develop reuse plans and marketing strategies for key sites (p.37)*	X			Racine County EDC, BPA	State econ. dev. funding
3) Develop site and building design standards (p.37)	X	X		City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant
4) <i>Market area to new industrial businesses</i> (p.38)	X	X	X	BPA, Racine County EDC	State econ. dev. funding
5) Phase out isolated industrial properties (p.38)	X	X	X	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	federal and state brownfield funding
<b>D. CONNECT SOUTHSIDE RESIDENTS TO LIVING WAGE JOBS (p.38)</b>					
1) <i>Expand the local hiring/training network</i> (p.38)	X			Workforce Development/Human Services Center, OIC, SNP	State econ. dev. funding
2) Create incentives for businesses to hire locally (p.38)	X			Racine County, Racine County EDC, City of Racine	Racine County, City of Racine

#### THE COMMERCIAL INITIATIVE

Note: *italicized text* indicates continuation or expansion of an existing project or initiative

Note: \* indicates a "Priority Project"

Strategy / Project	Year 1	Years 2-3	Years 4-5	Organization(s)	Funding Source(s)
<b>A. ESTABLISH UPTOWN AS THE SOUTHSIDE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT (p.45)</b>					
1) Create the Uptown Business Association (UBA) (p.45)	X			Sustainable Racine, businesses	private donations, grants
2) Study feasibility of parking options (p.45)	X	X		UBA, City of Racine, St. Luke's Hospital	City of Racine, St. Luke's Hospital
3) Install gateways and identity/wayfinding elements (p.45)	X	X		UBA, City of Racine	CDBG, private donations

<b>B. REDEVELOP UNDERUTILIZED COMMERCIAL PROPERTY (p.46)</b>					
1) Bring an “anchor” use to Uptown (p.46)*	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		City of Racine, UBA	State econ. dev. funding
2) Phase out most scattered commercial properties (p.46)	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	City of Racine, Town of Mt. Pleasant	CDBG, grants
3) Establish a Southside visitor center within Uptown (p.46)			<b>X</b>	UBA, SC Johnson, City of Racine	SC Johnson, City of Racine
<b>C. IMPROVE UNSIGHTLY COMMERCIAL AREAS (p.46)</b>					
1) Provide low-cost loans or grants to improve existing commercial facades (p.46)	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	UBA, City of Racine	CDBG
2) Install streetscape and landscape improvements (including banners) (p.47)*	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		City of Racine, UBA	CDBG, state and federal funding, private donations
3) Install parking lot landscaping improvements (p.48)		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	City of Racine, UBA	CDBG, private donations

## **APPENDIX A: EXISTING INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS**

### **SOCIAL SERVICES**

<b><i>ORGANIZATION NAME</i></b>	<b><i>PROGRAM ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><i>CONTACT INFORMATION</i></b>
Center for Community Concerns, Inc./ Racine Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	donations, volunteers, mentoring	Sister Michelle Olley 1501 Villa Street 262-637-9176
YWCA	multi-use, various youth programs	Sherry Smerchek, Carol McNulty 740 College Avenue 262-633-3503
Safe Haven	home for runaway teenagers	Jim Huycke 1030 Washington Avenue 262-637-9559
Opportunity Industrialization Center of Racine County (OIC)	at-risk youth training center	Claudius Adebayo 1020 Washington Avenue 262-636-3818
Salvation Army	recreation programs for youth	Capt. Brian Burkett, Pat Crowell 1901 Washington Avenue 262-632-3147
Homeless Assistance Coalition	<i>planning a dedicated facility for the homeless</i>	Jim Huycke Safe Haven 1030 Washington Avenue 262-637-9559
Women's Resource Center	support for displaced women and families	Christine Folsom P.O. Box 1764 (Park and 16 <sup>th</sup> Street) 262-633-3233
Family Practice Center		1320 Wisconsin Avenue 262-638-5600
Bethany Apartments	transitional housing	806 Wisconsin Avenue 262-633-9446
Family Life Center St. Paul Baptist Church	<i>proposed (at Carrol Street and Center Street)</i>	Rev. Lawrence Kirby 1120 Grand Avenue 262-632-1467
First United Methodist Church	Saturday bag lunch program	Rev. Harvey Delavy, Pastor Delray 745 Main Street 262-633-7632
Evangelical United Methodist Church	Mother's Day Out	Rev. Harold Zimmick, Jr. 212 11 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-632-8381
Victory Center United Methodist Church	church	1331 Washington Avenue 262-632-1061
Better Way Ministries	church	1343 Washington Avenue 262-619-0466
Compassion Tabernacle	church	Rev. John Smith 2054 Mead Street 262-633-4460
St. Richard of Chichester	church	Rev. Jack Kern 1509 Grand Avenue 262-637-8374
Shiloh Stronghold Church of God in Christ	church	Rev. George Ramsey, Sr. 1836 Howe Street 262-637-4466

Zoe Outreach Ministries	church	625 17 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-619-3027
Searching Together	church	825 21 <sup>st</sup> Street 262-633-4421

**COMMUNITY  
ORGANIZING/CRIME  
PREVENTION**

<b><i>ORGANIZATION NAME</i></b>	<b><i>PROGRAM ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><i>CONTACT INFORMATION</i></b>
First District Friends	Neighborhood Watch facilitates meetings of this group	Cop House on Davis Place
Second District Action Coalition	Neighborhood Watch facilitates meetings of this group	Chris Binetti Cop House on Mead Street
Safe and Sound	safe neighborhood / crime prevention program	Melanie Bohl, Daryl Carter 420 7 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-632-7525
Neighborhood Watch	block club facilitation / crime prevention	Carol Wester, Charlie French, Aldee Lewis, Carl Hubbard, Mary McIlvaine, Arletta Frazier 800 Center Street 262-637-5711
Southside Revitalization Corporation	community outreach (with UW-Parkside), "Make a Difference Day" with Trinity Terrace	Pat Obernberger 716 17 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-637-7628
NAACP		(Racine Street just south of 16 <sup>th</sup> St.)
Hispanic Roundtable		Donna Maldonado Catholic Charities Hispanic Outreach Office 800 Wisconsin Avenue 262-635-9510

**COMMUNITY  
ACTIVITIES/YOUTH  
ACTIVITIES**

<b><i>ORGANIZATION NAME</i></b>	<b><i>PROGRAM ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><i>CONTACT INFORMATION</i></b>
Cops & Kids	reading program for youth	City of Racine Police Department 800 Villa Street 262-632-1606
Mack C. Davis Center	youth & elderly programs	(2000 block of South Mead)
Bryant Community Center	youth programs	601 21 <sup>st</sup> Street 262-636-9235
Bray Center	after-school youth programs	Jameel Ghuari 924 Center Street
DeKoven Center	youth art classes	Denise Zingg, Nancy Kellogg 600 21 <sup>st</sup> Street 262-633-6401

## **HOUSING**

<b><i>ORGANIZATION NAME</i></b>	<b><i>PROGRAM ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><i>CONTACT INFORMATION</i></b>
Southside Revitalization Corporation	housing rehabilitation and sale	Pat Obernberger 716 17 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-637-7628
Racine Mutual Housing Association	housing rehabilitation and sale	Kay Larsen 822 Park Avenue 262-637-8558
Racine Neighborhood Housing Partnership, Inc.	housing rehabilitation and sale	Mary Beth Aldrich 718 N. Memorial Drive
Neighborhood Housing Services, Inc. (NHS)	homeownership counseling, housing rehabilitation and sale	17 <sup>th</sup> Street and Mead Street 262-632-6188 Domenick Martinelli (in Kenosha)
Habitat for Humanity	new housing construction and sale homeownership counseling new homeowner support services	Nora Grosse 1501 Villa Street 262-637-9176
Family Service of Racine	homeownership and credit counseling	Barney Nelles, Mary Cruz 420 7 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-634-2391
The Home Company		Marianne Adamski
Housing Authority of Racine County	Section 8 assistance, housing development	Kim Zaminek 800 Center Street 262-636-3405
Neighborhood Watch	landlord training	Carol Wester 800 Center Street 262-637-5711
Southeast Wisconsin Landlord Association (SWLA)	landlord training	262-552-6688
Wisconsin Housing Partnership		

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

<b><i>ORGANIZATION NAME</i></b>	<b><i>PROGRAM ACTIVITY</i></b>	<b><i>CONTACT INFORMATION</i></b>
Sustainable Racine	non-profit with program focus on: 1) neighborhoods 2) economic development	Gary Vaillancourt, Bonnie Prochaska 413 Main Street 262-632-6440
Racine County Economic Development Corporation	non-profit development corporation	Gordon Kacala 4701 Washington Avenue, Suite 215 262-638-0234
Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce (RAMAC)	non-profit connecting businesses to the community	Roger Caron 300 5 <sup>th</sup> Street 262-634-1931
Racine County Workforce Development Center	job training programs, job placement, assistance to employers	Debra Jossart 1717 Taylor Avenue 262-638-6312
Racine County Human Services Department		William Adams 1717 Taylor Avenue 262-638-6321



## **APPENDIX B: RACINE HOUSING COALITION MEMBERS**

Callie Adams	Transitional Living Services, 436 Main Street
Claudius Adebayo	OIC of Racine, 1020 Washington Avenue
Waleed Ahmad	2113 N. Wisconsin Avenue
Mary Beth Aldrich	Racine Housing and Neighborhood Partnership, 718 N. Memorial Drive
Arliss Bass	Transitional Living Services, 436 Main Street
David Bybee	4915 Vrana Lane
Sherlynn Campbell	Family Resource Center, 1508 W. 6th Street
Tom Christensen	Racine Police Department, 730 Center Street
Pat Crowell	Salvation Army, 1654 Washington Avenue
Kevin Dunk	Housing Authority, 837 S. Main Street
Katee Eliasson	Racine County EDC, 4701 Washington Avenue, Suite 215
Officer Mark Esch	Community Policing Station, 1140 Geneva Street
Charlie French	Neighborhood Watch, 800 Center Street
Dora Garcia	Homeward Bound of Racine County, P.O. Box 1888
Betsy Georg	1931 West Boulevard
Nora Grosse	Habitat for Humanity, 1501 Villa Street
Rick Heller	Building Department, City of Racine, 730 Washington Avenue
Jim Huycke	S.A.F.E. Haven, 1030 Washington Avenue
Gordie Kacala	Racine County EDC, 4701 Washington Avenue, Suite 215
Neil Kueny	1332 Arthur Avenue
Diana Lange	2908 Ruby Avenue
Kay Larsen	Racine Mutual Housing, 822 Park Avenue
Richard Linsmeier	Department of City Development, City of Racine, 730 Washington Avenue
Jim Luellof	Department of City Development, City of Racine, 730 Washington Avenue
Domenik Martinelli	NHS of Kenosha, Inc., 1119 60th Street, Kenosha
Scott McClelland	Landlord Representative, 1630 Villa Street
Michael Miklasevich	1423 Windsor Way, #1
Ann Morehouse, O.P.	Catherine Marian Housing, Inc., 806 S. Wisconsin Avenue
Pat Obernberger	Southside Revitalization Corporation, 716 17th Street
Michelle Olley	1501 Villa Street
Bonnie Prochaska	Sustainable Racine, 413 Main Street
Morris Reece	Fair Housing, 800 Center Street, Suite 120
Shane Scarbrough	Environmental Health, City of Racine, 730 Washington Avenue, Room 1
William M. Skiba	4946 Regal Court
Ronald Thomas	1429 Grange Avenue
Gary Vaillancourt	Sustainable Racine, 413 Main Street
Carol Wester	Neighborhood Watch, 800 Center Street
Sherry Wooten	Homeward Bound, P.O. Box 1888
Kim Zaminek	Housing Authority, 800 Center Street

## **APPENDIX C: CITY OF RACINE HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

### **HOME PURCHASE – DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The City of Racine, in cooperation with local lending institutions, has a program available to provide down payment funds for eligible persons interested in purchasing and residing in a single or two-family home in Census Tracts One through Five in the City of Racine. Persons eligible to participate in the Down Payment Assistance Program must meet income eligibility criteria. To be eligible to participate in the Program, buyers must obtain a certification of homebuyer counseling from an approved homebuyer-counseling program. Single-family homes having the purchase price of no more than \$99,400 and are either occupied by the seller, or occupied by the buyer, or vacant at the time of “Offer to Purchase” qualify for purchase through the program. Two-family homes having the purchase price of no more than \$99,400 where the unit to be occupied by the buyer is occupied by the seller, or occupied by the buyer, or vacant at the time of “Offer to Purchase” also qualify for purchase through the program. All properties purchased with down payment assistance under this program must be located within Census Tracts One through five in the City of Racine, Wisconsin. Eligible buyers can receive a zero (0) percent, forgivable loan from the City of Racine. The loan will be forgiven at the rate of 20% per year for five years as long as the buyer retains the home as their principal place of residence. A buyer who has remained in the house as owner for five years will owe the City nothing. Eligible buyers may receive down payment assistance up to 7.5% of the purchase price.

For more information on the down payment assistance program, contact:

CITY OF RACINE - Department of City Development,  
730 Washington Avenue, Racine, WI 53403  
Phone: (262) 636-9151

### **HOMEOWNER DEFERRED REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM**

This program is a fixed rate homeowner low interest loan program, with interest and principal repayments deferred until the property is sold or transferred. Loans are limited to single- and two-family residential structures. Priority consideration will be given to the rehabilitation of properties most in need of repair and whose rehabilitation will yield significant benefit of the neighborhood. Loan funds may be used for the correction of major housing and building code violations, weatherization, exterior rehabilitation and selected interior repairs. The loan carries a 3% interest rate for a term up to 20 years. All loans are secured by a mortgage on the property.

### **HOMEOWNER FIXED INTEREST REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM**

This program provides for a fixed interest rehabilitation loan, with the interest rate based upon the income of the homeowner. Priority consideration will be given to the rehabilitation projects which will yield a significant benefit to the neighborhood. Interest rate on the loan is 3% or 5% depending on the income of the applicant. Only homeowners who have low or moderate incomes as determined by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development are eligible to participate in the program. The loan proceeds may be used for the correction of major housing and building code violations, weatherization, exterior repairs and selected interior repairs. The loan term can be for a term of up to 20 years. Monthly repayment of the principal and interest is required. All loans are secured with a mortgage on the property.

### **RENTAL ASSISTANCE REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM**

This program provides loan funds for the rehabilitation on non-owner occupied residential property occupied by low and moderate-income tenants. Loans may be available for up to 75% of the cost of the rehabilitation project. The loan rate is 5% with a term of up to 20 years. Loan funds may be used for the correction of major housing and building code violations, weatherization, exterior repairs and limited interior repairs. All loans are secured with a mortgage on the property. Eligibility for the program is based upon the income of the tenants.

### **MIXED USE REHABILITATION LOAN PROGRAM**

This program provides loan funds for the rehabilitation of residential units contained in mixed-use structures. Loan funds may be used only for interior rehabilitation work of the residential portion of the building. Loan amount up to \$8,000 per dwelling unit, with a maximum of two units assisted in any one structure. The loan rate is 5% with a term of up to 20 years. All loans are secured with a mortgage on the property.

FREE EXTERIOR PAINT PROGRAM

This program provides free exterior house paint to low and moderate-income homeowners and landlords who own property which is rented to low and moderate income tenants. In the spring of each year the City solicits applicants for participation in the program. Participants must complete the painting by November.

For more information on the loan programs listed above, contact:

CITY OF RACINE – HOUSING DEPARTMENT

800 Center Street, Room 104, Racine, WI 53403

Phone: (262) 636-9197