

CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



(ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AUTHORITY (EOA))
(Former Cuyler Street School)

DECEMBER 18, 1997

City of Savannah

Bureau of Public Development

Department of Planning and Community Development

CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

City of Savannah

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December 18, 1997

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RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION TO DESIGNATE THE CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD AS MEETING THE CRITERIA FOR AN URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AREA UNDER THE GEORGIA URBAN REDEVELOPMENT LAW AND TO APPROVE THE CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN.

WHEREAS, the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood is defined as the area in the City of Savannah between West Anderson Street on the north; West Victory Drive on the south; Martin Luther King Jr., Blvd. on the east; and Ogeechee Road and Kollock Street on the west; and

WHEREAS, Cuyler-Brownsville residents and City staff have prepared a Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan to address blighting conditions in the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan documents existing conditions and sets out goals, objectives, and strategies, and a five-year work program designed to improve the physical and social conditions of the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, the City Council makes the following findings: that a feasible method exists for the relocation of families who might be displaced from the Urban Redevelopment Area; that the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan conforms to the Comprehensive Plan for Chatham County; and that the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan affords maximum opportunity for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of the Urban Redevelopment Area by private enterprises; and

WHEREAS, adoption of this Plan is necessary to designate Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood as an Urban Redevelopment Area in accordance with the Title 36, Chapter 61 of the Code of Georgia, as amended, known as the Urban Redevelopment Law; and

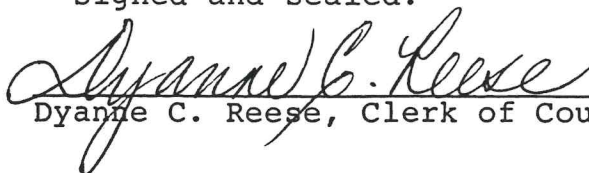
WHEREAS, such designation as an Urban Redevelopment Area will enable the City to undertake activities necessary to implement the proposed improvements and to revitalize buildings and infrastructure;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, Georgia, approve the adoption of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan and designation of the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood as an Urban Redevelopment Area.

ADOPTED AND APPROVED: December 18, 1997

I, Dyanne C. Reese, Clerk of Council for the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah, do hereby certify the above resolution to be a true copy as adopted by the Mayor and Aldermen at its meeting on December 18, 1997 and made a part of that meeting.

Signed and sealed:


Dyanne C. Reese, Clerk of Council


Date

CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE

Pamela Jones, Chairperson

Beverly Wallace

Olivia Swanson

Hezekiah Hudson, Sr.

Alberta Stokes

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Rosalie S. Simmons

Pauline Haywood, Community Services Coordinator

Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association

Cuyler Community Improvement Association

West 42nd Street Civic Association

Battery Ward Civic Association

Harden Street Block Association

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood (Showcase II), one of Savannah's oldest, intact African-American neighborhoods is located west of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., between Anderson Street and Victory Drive. The total population is 3,448, 99.8% of which are African-Americans. The per capita income of the area is about 56.2% of the City's, and the percentage of persons below the poverty level is twice that of the City of Savannah.

The neighborhood is currently in gradual decline. Property abandonment and disinvestment, population loss, worsening housing conditions, deteriorating physical infrastructure, crime, and social and economic issues are problems that threaten the livability of the neighborhood. However, the neighborhood has many assets, such as an excellent location; presence of Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA); the oldest intact African-American neighborhood; presence of Charity Hospital and Florance Street School that can be renovated and reused as multi-purpose facilities; presence of an active neighborhood association; Tompkins Recreation Center, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Martin Luther King Boulevard, Ogeechee Road Branch Library, Hodge Elementary School and religious institutions; a strong residential base; proximity to Wells and Cann Parks; and Cuyler Playground.

Following the lead of the residents, this plan puts forth some basic recommendations which are presented in more detailed form in the goals, objectives, and strategies section of this plan.

2. INTRODUCTION

A. Purpose

This document, the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan, presents a basis of knowledge from which informed decisions about the future of the neighborhood can be made. The plan includes documentation necessary to designate the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood as an urban redevelopment area, and will direct efforts intended to enhance the livability and quality of life in the neighborhood.

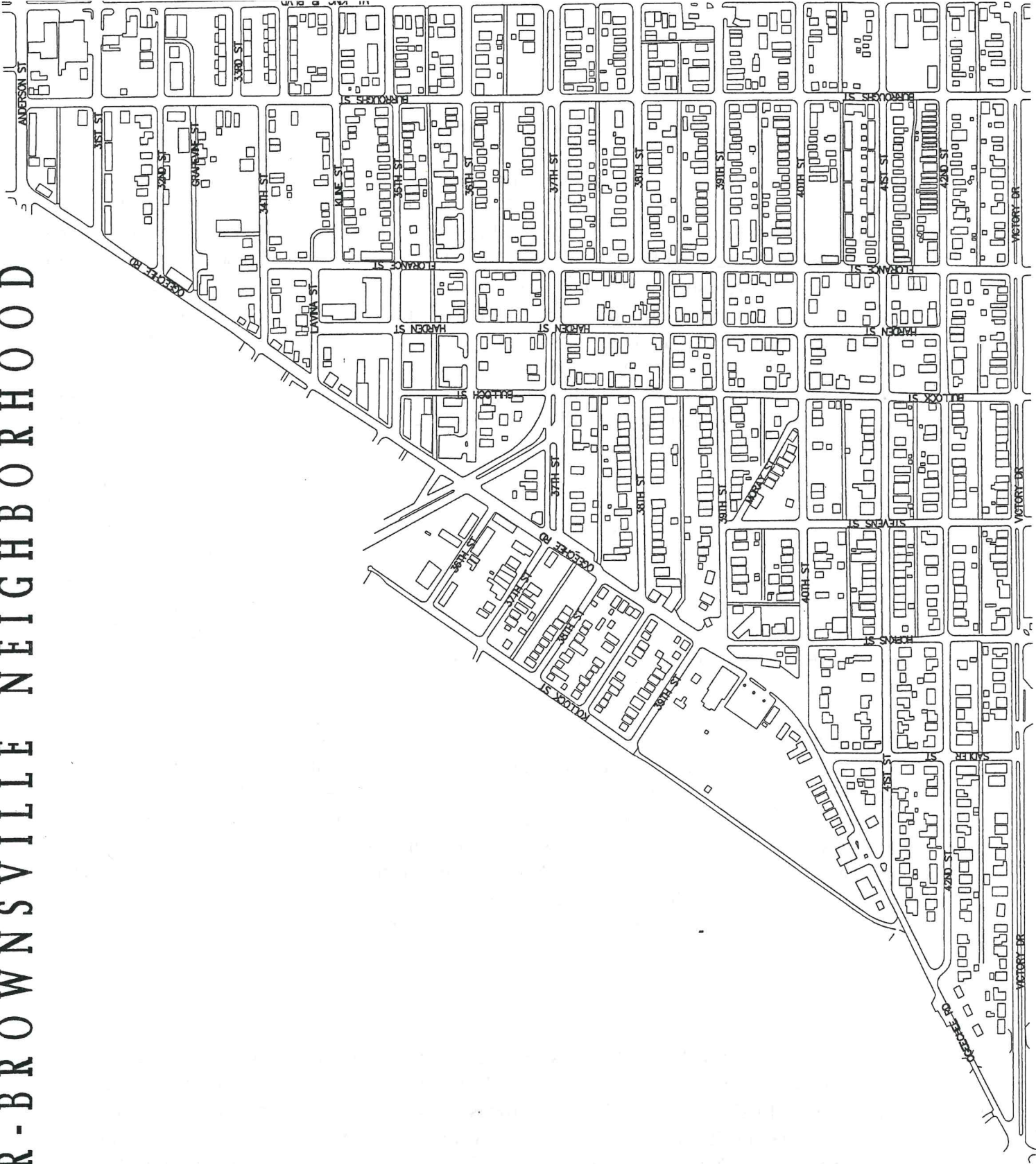
More specifically, this neighborhood redevelopment plan will create an action agenda based on the assessment of substandard conditions on a building-by-building and street-by-street basis. This assessment can assist future revitalization actions for individual properties, and also provide cost estimates for such actions. The ultimate intent of the plan is to outline steps necessary to create an environment that is clean, livable, safe, well-maintained, aesthetically pleasing and economically viable.

The second purpose of this neighborhood redevelopment plan is to meet the requirements of Title 36, Chapter 61 of the Code of Georgia, as amended, known as the Urban Redevelopment Law. Compliance with this law grants certain powers to the City of Savannah that are necessary to carry out redevelopment activities in the area. This document, serving as the neighborhood redevelopment plan, will document these conditions and recommend strategies for the revitalization of this neighborhood.

B. Description and Map of Study Area

Cuyler-Brownsville is actually made up of two neighborhoods. The Cuyler neighborhood is bounded by Anderson Street on the north, 37th Street on the south, Ogeechee Road and Kollock Street on the west and Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. (West Broad Street) on the east. The Brownsville section is bounded by 37th Street on the north, Victory Drive on the south, Kollock and Ogeechee Road on the West and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (West Broad Street) on the east. Today's Showcase Area II boundaries of Cuyler-Brownsville are Kollock Street and Ogeechee Road on the west, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. on the east, West Anderson Street on the north, and West Victory Drive on the south, with 37th Street dividing Brownsville to the south and Cuyler to the north. The project area boundaries are shown on Map 1.

CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD



C. Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood History

The development of this community dates back to 1867. "Brownsville," alternatively, "Brownville," referred to a tract of about 19.5 acres, owned by Savannah physician Dr. Louis A. Falligan. This area became the city ward of Brownville, bounded by Florance Street, Bullock Street, 36th Street and 42nd Street. In 1868, a one hundred acre tract of land adjacent to east of Brownville was purchased by David R. Dillon, a wealthy banker. This tract was laid out with streets and squares, and named Dillontown. In 1883, the land between Anderson and Victory Drive (12th Street), including Dillontown was incorporated into the city limits. Additional land was purchased from Dillon estate by the city in 1886 and the plan was changed, eliminating the squares. The streets are in fairly regular grid pattern, although the two western bounding streets follow an angle due to the presence of Laurel Grove Cemetery to the west. Wells Square (now Wells Park) is located on 38th Street and Montgomery.

Although the general pattern of development was from north to south, the 1891 Koch view indicates the presence of a well developed residential area in the Brownville neighborhood along Florance, Harden and Bullock Streets. This also appeared on the 1884 plan. The primary development period would seem to be within the 1884-1930 era, after the annexation by the City, however, earlier development dates should not be precluded on Florance, Harden, Bulloch and 33rd and 34th and Montgomery Streets. Laurel Grove Cemetery was opened in the 1850's; the Ogeechee Road was a Colonial Road, and some lots in Dillontown may have been developed before it was absorbed by the city and redesigned.

Although mainly a residential neighborhood with late victorian and early 20th century vernacular houses, the community had a strong African-American history which revolved around a number of prominent institutions. These are the Charity Hospital, 644 West 36th Street (1931); the Florance Street School, 1811 Florance Street (1929); and the Cuyler School (actually located on the northside of West Anderson). This structure is now home to the Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA). The neighborhood also consisted of prominent African-Americans such as doctors, lawyers and teachers. Also the fact that many of the residents were home owners gave the neighborhood itself a sense of personal pride and responsibility for its appearance and public attitude.

Charity Hospital

In 1893, Dr. Alice Woodby McKane, with her husband, Dr. Cornelius McKane, established the McKane Hospital for Women and Children and Training School for Nurses in a wooden building on the corner of Liberty and Montgomery Streets. It was entirely charitable in its conception and functions. The hospital's name was changed by a Georgia Chapter to the Charity Hospital and Training School for Nurses in 1903. Prior to this, the Georgia Infirmary, founded by whites for blacks in 1832, provided the only hospital care available to blacks in Savannah. The new hospital helped to meet the crucial medical needs of the black community.

In 1896, the hospital was relocated to a larger building at the corner of Florance and 36th Streets (see figure 1), in the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood. It was a facility founded, administered, and staffed by blacks.

The training school for nurses was the first of its kind in the state, and the hospital was the only one in Savannah opened to black physicians. Free care was given to the needy while more affluent patients paid for services. In 1901, the name Charity Hospital and Training School for Nurses was adopted, and male patients were admitted for the first time. By 1931, the doors of a new, two story brick building were opened on 36th Street (again see figure 1). A major fund raising drive supported by both the black and white communities of Savannah raised money for construction of the new hospital. Although the Training School for Nurses closed in 1937, Charity Hospital continued to serve Savannah's black community until 1964.

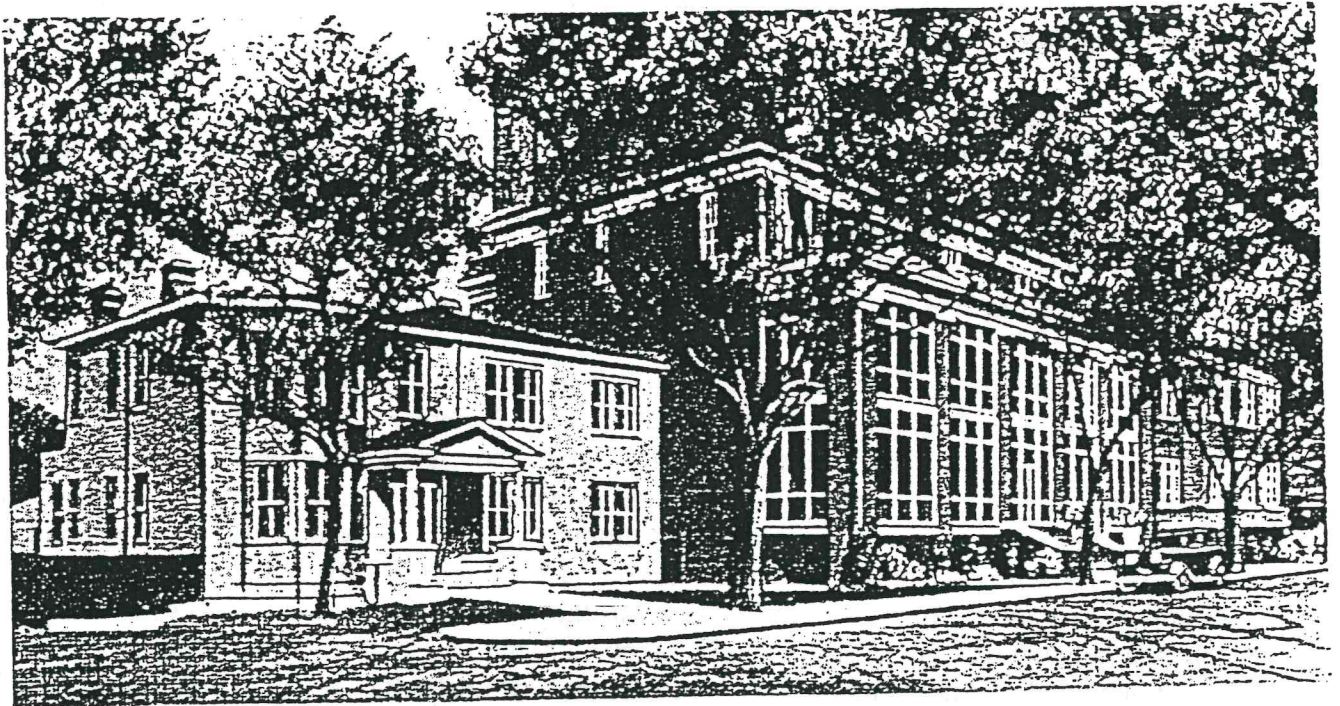


Figure 1: Charity Hospital (brick building) and Nurse's residence (original wooden building) - from original postcard (1939), courtesy of Alberta Stokes.

The building was reopened as a private nursing home in 1967, but closed in 1976. When the vacant building was earmarked for demolition, the Cuyler Community Improvement Association organized a fund raising drive and bought the property in 1983. The association succeeded in getting the building on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985 and a Committee to Save Charity Hospital continues to seek major funding for the building's renovation. Members of the

Cuyler-Brownsville Community Organization voluntarily maintain the grounds. Today, the building is being renovated by Tideland as multi-family housing for low income persons and recovering alcoholics. Residents are also proud of these three schools which are located in the area.

Cuyler Street School: Soon after the end of the Civil War, freedmen's associations and northern religious societies established several schools in Savannah to educate black youngsters. Under pressure from black citizens, the Chatham County Board of Education first opened two schools in 1872, but these were set up in existing buildings. The Board of Education did not construct a school building specifically for black children until 1914. This was the Cuyler Street School, located at the corner of Cuyler and Anderson Streets. Cuyler served elementary, junior high and senior high school students at various periods through its sixty-two years as a public school. It was the only black high school in Savannah from the late 1920s to 1950, when Alfred E. Beach High was opened and Cuyler became a junior high school. Although the school was under-funded and under equipped, standards were very high and the teachers, mostly blacks, were very strict. Cuyler School was closed in 1975. Today, the building is the headquarters of the Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA), a major human services asset in the neighborhood.

St. Mary's School: St. Mary's School, located at 902 West 36th Street, is another well-remembered center for black education. Father Ignatius Lissner founded the Most Pure Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church at this location in 1907. In 1909, a school and hall were built. Many neighborhood children, both catholics and protestants, attended St. Mary's School until it closed in 1977. Today the building serves as a center for senior citizens and neighborhood activities and a meeting place for the Cuyler-Brownsville Community Organization.

Florance Street School: Florance Street School is located in the heart of the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood. It opened in the winter of 1930 as an elementary school. The Parent-Teachers Association, begun in 1930, was a mechanism for neighborhood organization. Over the years, this group raised funds, volunteered time, and provided much needed assistance to the school. Many teachers and the first principal, Miss Emma A. Quinney, lived in the neighborhood and perpetuated local involvement and identification with the school. Mrs. Margaret Johnson was a student at Florance in the 1940s, and returned as the school's principal from 1978 to 1982. Mrs. Johnson helped steer the school through the challenging years of school integration. Florance Street School closed in the mid 1980s. In 1992, the Savannah Muslim Community purchased the building and plan to reopen it as an elementary school and community center.

Dr. Barbara Hendry, Professor of Anthropology at Georgia Southern University wrote in her article entitled Insight, Cuyler-Brownsville: Retrospect of a Savannah Neighborhood, that "the buildings which housed the schools and Charity Hospital, and the history of these institutions, are important symbols of black accomplishment for the neighborhood. The heritage of neighborly cooperation and trust which characterised Cuyler-Brownsville is well remembered by residents and former residents."

D. Savannah Showcase Neighborhood Program

The City designated Cuyler-Brownsville as a "Showcase Area II" under the City's Showcase Savannah Program in 1989 to promote the revitalization of the neighborhood. The Showcase Neighborhood Program is the City's comprehensive approach to neighborhood revitalization involving a variety of City departments in a common effort to improve neighborhoods. The major tenet of the program is the idea that **citizen participation is the key to effective neighborhood revitalization**. A positive cycle occurs when citizen participation grows and residents can see measurable improvements as a result of their involvement. Since the area was designated as a Showcase area, significant improvements have been made and a strong sense of community pride has developed in the neighborhood.

Currently, the neighborhood has problems with heavy traffic, drug activities, prostitution, intrusive non-residential uses, inadequate public facilities such as sidewalks and streetlights, speeding, poorly maintained streets, litter, unmaintained vacant lots, illegal dumping, vacant and dilapidated buildings, derelict vehicles, localized flooding, poverty, and a high unemployment rate. Despite these problems, there are many positive factors that can help enhance neighborhood livability. These factors include a reliable mass transit service, presence of churches and neighborhood institutions such as the Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA), the Charity hospital, a nearby YMCA, Hodge Elementary School, Most Pure Heart of Mary Catholic Church, a public library, Martin Luther King residential development (see figure 2), Laurel Heights affordable housing subdivision, Tompkins Recreation Center, proximity to Wells and Cann Parks, MLK Commercial Corridor, Florance Street School, Cuyler Playground, numerous convenient businesses, and the House of Prayer elderly housing development. Another positive factor is the existence of resident, business, community, and neighborhood-based groups that recognize the importance of the neighborhood to the community. The City is committed to assist in the revitalization efforts by continuing to invest in infrastructure improvements in the neighborhood.

Overview of the Planning Process

The Cuyler-Brownsville planning process was initiated in summer of 1995. The residents of the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood, working with the Community Services Coordinator and lead planner, established a vision statement for the future of the neighborhood. City staff worked closely with the Cuyler-Brownsville Planning Committee and residents to document existing conditions; this included a walking tour of the neighborhood, complimented with a windshield survey. The Planning Committee then developed a series of goals, objectives, and strategies designed to improve the physical, social, and economic conditions of the neighborhood, as well as quality of life.

E. Current Redevelopment Efforts

Recent revitalization efforts in Cuyler-Brownsville have included the rehabilitation of existing housing units and the renovation and adaptive reuse of vacant educational facilities. The projects

listed below represent a renewed faith in the future of the neighborhood, and serve as the foundation upon which future revitalization efforts can build.

- The City of Savannah provided \$467,250 in a float loan to Savannah Land Company to enable it to reconstruct eighteen residential units of affordable housing in the 600 block of West 31st Street (Laurel Heights Subdivision, Phase I). The houses are completed and have been sold to low-income, first-time home buyers. All eighteen units are occupied.
- The City's Housing Department recently provided \$51,563.00 in low-interest financing for the rehabilitation of three homes.
- The City's Housing Department is proposing a model block residential development in the neighborhood.
- Between 1994 and 1995, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) completed six home auction rehabilitations, initiated construction of three new home ownership units and acquired three properties for development into home ownership units. The total investment to date is \$809,453.00. NHS also proposes to construct five single-family units on the 600 block of West 40th Street (between Burroughs and Florance Streets). Cuyler-Brownsville has become a neighborhood of primary focus for NHS. NHS proposes to designate the following as impact blocks: 600 block of West 35th Street, 600 block of West 40th Street and 600 block of West 37th Street.
- The City completed Phase I of the sidewalk improvement program in the neighborhood. Of the \$320,000 in sidewalk allotment for 1993-94, a total of \$65,720 was spent to improve 1,252 square yards of sidewalks in the Showcase II neighborhood. This fund was part of the City's Showcase Neighborhood Infrastructure Improvement Program. In 1995, the City Council allocated another \$600,000 for sidewalk improvements in Showcase neighborhoods and Cuyler-Brownsville will benefit from this allocation.
- In 1994, City Council appropriated \$30,000 for Leisure Services to conduct a study that would result in the renovation of the Tompkins Recreation Center. Of the \$426,795 approved by the City Council in the 1995 Housing and Community Development Plan for public facilities improvement, \$100,000 was earmarked to complete Phase I of the renovations proposed for the Tompkins Recreation Center (Ogeechee Road and West 39th Street). In 1996, the City Council again appropriated \$330,000 for Leisure Services to continue the renovation work at the Tompkins Recreation Center. Phase I is now complete and funding is being sought for Phase II.
- In 1994, the City completed resurfacing the Ogeechee Road, from West Anderson Street to West 40th Street. This is part of the City's Street Resurfacing Program.
- The neighborhood received nine grants-for-blocks awards in 1995 totaling \$3,671, and

nine awards in 1996 totaling \$4,352. The program was designed to provide opportunities for neighborhood organizations and residents to develop leadership skills and capacity building, and to achieve self-reliance.

- The United House of Prayer recently constructed twenty-six housing units at 1807 Ogeechee Road for the elderly.
- The Coastal Contracting and Development Services, Inc. proposes to construct one hundred single-family residential units for low and moderate income would-be home buyers. These units would be equipped with modern electrical, plumbing, insulation and HVAC facilities.
- Anderson Street Associates has obtained approval from the Community Housing Services Agency (CHSA) for a \$260,000 loan as part of the \$330,887 needed to rehabilitate seven low and moderate income housing units at 602-614 W. Anderson Lane.



Figure 2: MLK Home Improvement Project.

Another indicator of the vitality of the area is the dynamic interest and enthusiasm of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association. This group of residents, developers and others who are interested in neighborhood improvement is active in conducting studies and planning improvements. The neighborhood association is creating activities designed to create a sense of community; improve the livability of the neighborhood; and encourage development that is compatible with neighborhood character. A unique opportunity exists in the neighborhood to encourage resident, public and private efforts to improve the quality of life for all the residents.

3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

The urban redevelopment plan process requires an inventory of existing conditions. This section presents an analysis and assessment of the neighborhood demographics, existing land use and zoning, structural conditions of existing properties, occupancy status, public infrastructure, economic conditions and public safety.

A. Neighborhood Organization

There are a number of organizations in the neighborhood, only one represents the whole area. The umbrella neighborhood organization is the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association (CBNA). CBNA was established in 1989 and currently has about fifty members, twenty of whom are active. Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month. The CBNA meets at 6:00 P.M., at the Saint Mary's Parish Hall, 812 West 36th Street. Monthly dues are \$1. The purpose of the association is to unite the people living in the community, to study, discuss, and recommend subjects beneficial to upgrading the area. The subjects range from politics, health, street paving, beautification, police protection, education to social programs, etc. The association also serves as a forum where neighbors can get to know each other, draw up goals and objectives and work for the common good of all in the Showcase II. Yearly activities include a membership drive, family festival, block party, programs for the elderly, fund raising, neighborhood beautification, youth development, and back to school picnic, crime watch, Adopt-a-Spot Program, and advocacy. The association participates in city-wide projects such as neighborhood clean-ups, grants-for-blocks program and National Night Out.

The Cuyler Community Improvement Association (CCIA) was established to represent the area bounded by Anderson Street, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Ogeechee Road and 37th Street. CCIA was chartered in 1979. The association has about seventy-five members, thirty of whom are active. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month. These meetings occur at 6:00 P.M. at the Saint Mary's Parish Hall, 812 West 36th Street. Monthly dues are \$1. The purpose of the association is to improve the neighborhood by building community pride and promoting the interests of the area. Annual activities include rummage sale, fish fries, block parties for children, administration of a golden age center, sunshine hospitality for sick members, in-house assistance for frail elderly, neighborhood beautification projects and neighborhood clean-ups.

B. Demographics and Socioeconomic Conditions

Table 1 presents demographic data which describe the population of the neighborhood in terms of race, gender, age, household size and type, income and poverty level, and education. The information was extracted from the 1990 U.S. Census of Population and Housing, the most up-to-date data source of demographic statistics currently available.

Over the 1980 to 1990 period the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood experienced 24.9% decline in population (1980 - 4,884 to 1990 - 3,448). Cuyler-Brownsville continues to be a predominantly African-American neighborhood; the white population is less than 1%.

Table 1: Population and Selected Demographic data, 1990

	1990	%	%
	Cuyler-Brownsville	C-B	City*
Total Population	3,448	100.0%	137,560
Race			
Black	3,440	99.8%	51.2%
White	8	0.2%	45.7%
Gender			
Male	1506	44.0%	47.1%
Female	1942	56.0%	52.9%
Age Groups			
0 - 4	274	8.0%	8.2%
5 - 17	755	21.9%	18.6%
18 - 64	1673	48.5%	59.5%
65+	746	21.6%	13.7%
Households	1,384	100.0%	51,890
Persons Per Household	2.5	-	2.55
Female Headed Households	375	27.0%	20.0%
Married Couple Households	346	25.0%	44.0%
One Person Households	540	39.0%	29.0%
Income			
Per Capita	\$6,167	56.2%	\$10,978
Persons Below the Poverty Level	-	48.1%	22.6%
Unemployment Rate	-	18.3%	8.3%
Education			
Completed High School (Persons 25+)	-	19.0%	70.0%
Completed College (Persons 25+)	-	13.0%	17.0%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census of Population and housing.

* Represents citywide percentage for this category.

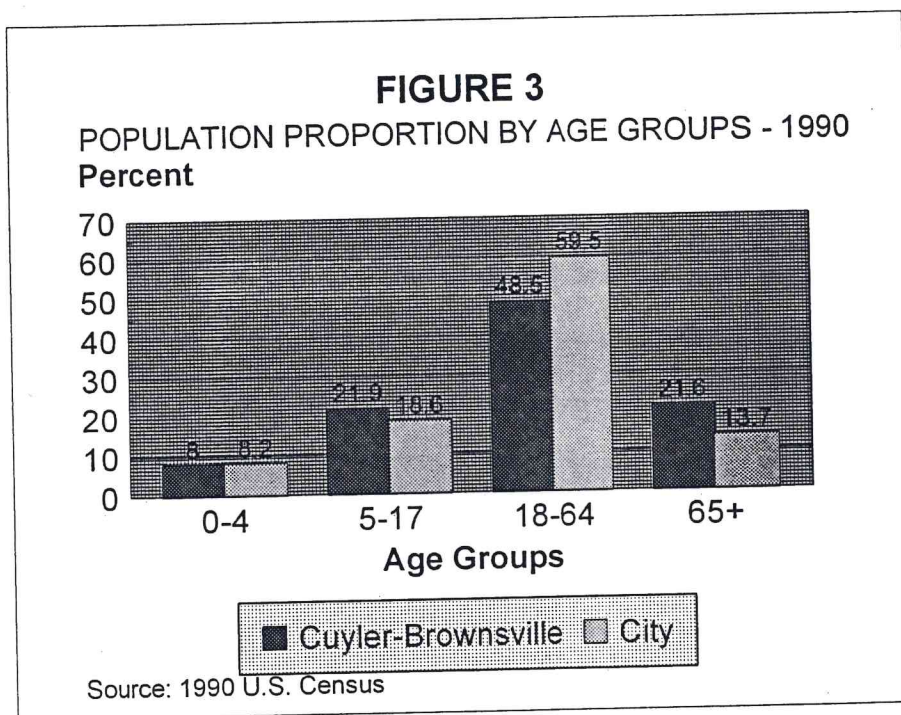
The proportion of women in the neighborhood is slightly higher than that for the City, as is the percentage of teenagers. Cuyler-Brownsville has a much higher percentage of people over the age of 65, indicating an aging population (see figure 3). This may be a factor for the low per capita income and higher poverty level since the children and elderly are more likely to be unemployed and/or dependent.

The 1990 per capita income of the neighborhood was \$6,167, about 56.2% of the City average of \$10,978. The percentage of persons below the poverty level is twice that of the City of Savannah. Unemployment rates and poverty are major problems in the neighborhood. The unemployment rate is 18.3% compared to 8.3% citywide and 7.0% countywide. A total 1,596 persons or 48.1% of the residents in the neighborhood are below the poverty level compared to 22.6% citywide and 17.2% countywide.

While the number of persons per household is about the same as that of the City, the children in the neighborhood are much more likely to be living in a one parent household. Table 1 indicates a higher percentage of female-headed households and one person households as compared to the City as a whole, and a lower percentage of married couple households.

Table 1 also shows the high school and college education levels for residents in 1990. Of the population 25 years of age and over, only 19% completed high school, compared to 70% citywide. However, the proportion of residents who completed college education for the same age group is slightly lower than the city as a whole. These figures, of course, include many older residents.

Figure 3: Population Proportions by Age Groups



C. Land Use and Zoning

The types and locations of existing land uses in the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood is merely the present form of development patterns which date back to the 1867. This present location pattern is the result of years of growth, change, building demolition, development and redevelopment activities.

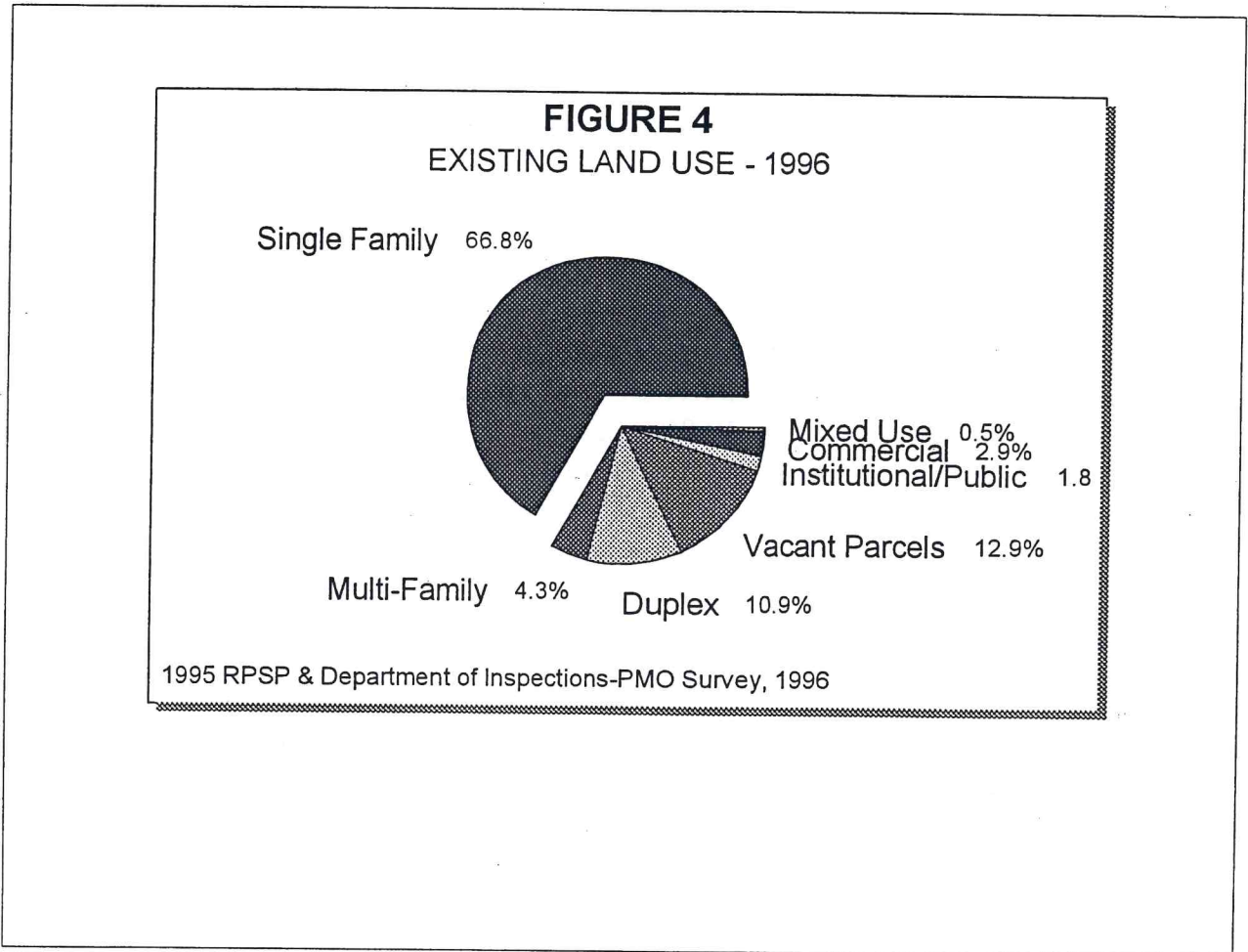
A windshield survey of land use, supplemented by mid-1980 aerial photographs, identified the following specific land uses in the neighborhood: single family residential, duplex and multi-family residential, commercial, public, institutional, vacant lots and other (mixed uses). Tables 2 and Figure 4 show the breakdown of existing land use, and Map 2 shows the existing land use pattern. Most of Cuyler-Brownsville consists of residential land uses, with 67.0% of the total parcels in residential use. About 10.8% of the parcels are duplexes and multi-family buildings account for only 4.3% of all parcels. Most residential structures in the neighborhood are two-story homes and single story bungalows. The architectural styles date back to colonial era (see Historic Resources).

Table 2: Existing Land Use

CATEGORY	1996	PERCENT
Total Parcels	1253	100.0%
Single Family	837	67.0%
Duplex	136	10.8%
Multi-Family	54	4.3%
Commercial	36	2.8%
Industrial	0	0.0%
Public	3	0.2%
Institutional	19	1.5%
Other - Mixed Use	6	0.5%
Vacant Parcels	162	12.9%

Source: 1995 Responsive Public Service Program (RPSP) Survey.
Department of Inspections PMO Survey, 1996.

Figure 4: Existing Land Use



There are few commercial structures in the neighborhood comprising 2.8% of all parcels. These commercial uses are located primarily along Martin Luther King Jr., Boulevard and Ogeechee Road. Most of the commercial businesses include beauty salons, barber shops, restaurants, auto repair, gas station, convenience shops, animal hospital, furniture store, laundry mat, and day care centers.

MLK. Boulevard Commercial Corridor

Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. (Former West Broad Street), once the retail hub of the neighborhood is now in decline. Its decline is accentuated by abandoned store fronts and dilapidated commercial buildings. The corridor needs renewed investment and commercial revitalization to stimulate retail and service activities.

Institutional uses, which consist mainly of churches, schools, and governmental facilities, are scattered throughout the neighborhood and account for 1.5% of the total parcels. Two of these are the Charity Hospital and Florance Street School, and are currently vacant. They are potential adaptive reuse buildings that could be considered for a wide range of uses including workshops,

police station, neighborhood restaurants, community center, library and cultural center. Every reasonable effort should be made to provide a compatible use for these buildings. Renovation work should not destroy the distinguishing qualities or character of the properties.

Public uses consist of government-owned park land and recreation facilities, representing less than 1% of the total parcels. These include: the Tompkins Recreation Center (located at the corner of Ogeechee Road and West 39th Street), the Cuyler Playground (located on the 600 block of West 34th Street), and the Laurel Grove Cemetery (located at the corner of West Anderson Street and Ogeechee Road).

There are 162 vacant parcels in Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood. These parcels vary from large lots, to small isolated lots (30 x 100). Vacant parcels represent the last phase in the cycle of land use development. The structures eventually deteriorate, become abandoned and are finally demolished. This cycle presents a never ending challenge to the City and the neighborhood. Even though some of these vacant lots have blighting impact on the aesthetic quality of the neighborhood, they represent an opportunity. Suitable vacant lots in the neighborhood are available for infill housing. The Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association and residents are currently working on turning five vacant parcels into "Adopt-A-Spots".

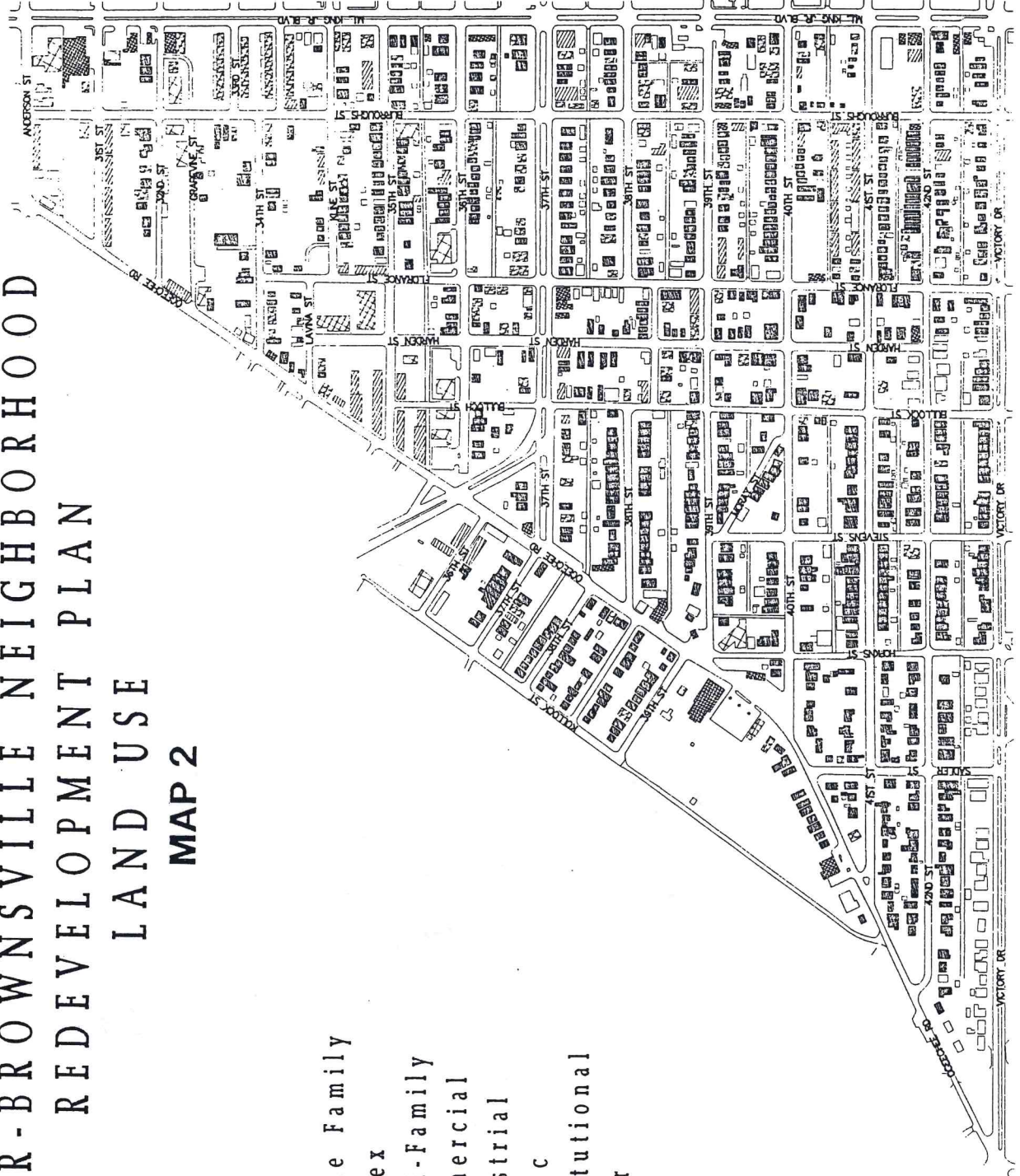


Figure 5: Recently constructed infill homes on 600 block of W. 31th Street by Savannah Land company

Overall, the neighborhood consists predominantly of single family residential units and duplexes, with a few four-plexes, rowhouses, corner stores, institutional uses such as government buildings and churches, and randomly scattered vacant lots.

CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN LAND USE MAP 2

- Single Family
- Duplex
- Multi-Family
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public
- Institutional
- Other



Scale: 1" = 400'

Zoning

The Mayor and Aldermen adopted and maintain the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance for the City of Savannah. It's purpose is to protect the health, safety and general welfare of the citizens of Savannah. The Zoning Ordinance establishes zoning districts, and identifies uses which are appropriate for specific areas due to location, density, water, sewerage, police and fire protection, and compatible future growth.

As shown on the Map 3, the vast majority of Cuyler-Brownsville has the R-4 (Four-Family Residential) designation by the zoning district. This zoning district is designed for residential development not to exceed 12 units per acre. With the small size of the lots, this effectively limits development in this zoning district to single-family uses (south of West 37th Street, from Kollock Street to Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard).

Multi-Family Residential (R-M) classification is the second largest zoning district in the neighborhood. This district is found north of West 37th Street, from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Kollock Street and at the intersection of West Victory Drive and Ogeechee Road. The RM 25 district is designed to allow the development of multi-family housing and compatible nonresidential development, and limits density to twenty-five units per net acre. Bonuses are allowed for construction of efficiency and one-bedroom apartments.

The northwest corner of West 35th Street and Ogeechee Road, is zoned Multi-Family Residential (RM 37). The RM 37 district is designed to allow the development of multi-family housing with density limited to thirty-seven units per net acre. The United House of Prayer recently completed a twenty-six unit affordable apartment complex for the elderly at this location.

The southeast corner of West 40th Street and Florance Street, is zoned P-RIP-B (Planned Residential Institutional Professional). The P-RIP-B district is intended to permit medium density limited to seven units per net acre. This district is essentially a planned overlay district and was zoned PUD-IS-B to permit single family residential development proposed by the Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS).

The non-residential zoning classifications in the neighborhood include the PUD-IS-B, B-N, B-G and R-B districts. The PUD-IS-B (Planned Unit Development Institutional) district, is located along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, between Burroughs Street and Montgomery Street. This district is generally used for institutional development.

The Neighborhood-Business (B-N) district allows convenient shopping facilities consisting of convenience goods and personal services in market areas of from 3,000 to 5,000 people. This district is located on West 37th Street, between Harden Street and Florance Street. A convenient store, restaurant and a pharmacy store are currently located in this area.

The General Business (B-G) district is located on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, between Anderson and 33rd Streets, and on the eastside of Ogeechee Road, between 37th and 40th Streets. This district permits heavy commercial and certain industrial uses. The B-G district on Ogeechee

Road is located in the middle of a predominantly residential district, indicating a spot zoning. It is essentially an intensive use district and is a threat to neighborhood stability.

Another business zoning classification in the neighborhood is Residential Business (R-B), located on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, between 36th and 40th Lane. The R-B district is a mixed-use district in which residential uses, institutional uses, professional uses and certain types of convenience-shopping-retail sales and service uses are allowed. This district was designed for those older sections of the community that have historically had such mixed-use districts. It is also used as a transition zone between a residential zoning district and a business zoning district.

Zoning Issues

It is likely that the mixture of zoning districts described above resulted from the belief that property values would be most enhanced by the mixed use classification. Unfortunately, these have resulted in uncoordinated zoning patterns which fall into the following two categories:

- **Actual uses are incompatible with the uses allowed in certain districts and/or encourage uses more intense than is desirable.** These incompatible commercial uses located in the middle of predominantly residential districts subject the surrounding residential areas to environmental pressures. These do not protect the residential quality of the neighborhood. The B-G district on Ogeechee Road is a case in point. It is located in the middle of an area that is zoned R-4. To permit this type of intensive commercial use district in a residential district would be to "spot zone." This is a practice which, in the past, has set the stage for similar rezonings and the expansion of unwanted commercial activity.
- **Uncoordinated commercial zoning pattern along the Cuyler-Brownsville's neighborhood corridors.** The neighborhood's main corridors are becoming a blur of overlapping commercial development that is gradually spreading in a linear fashion. These commercial strips or "ribbon" developments, generally one lot deep, are located along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Ogeechee Road. They pose several problems because they are not well designed to handle traffic. The businesses' individual parking lots and many access drives make both automobile and pedestrian movement within the commercially zoned districts hazardous and time-consuming. The parking lots and exterior storage areas are not properly buffered. These commercial strips are also unattractive and distracting due to a collection of uncoordinated and competing signs, building types and uses.

Some sections of the neighborhood are currently zoned to permit uses that are not compatible with the residential character of the neighborhood. In consideration of this Redevelopment Plan, the City of Savannah should tailor its future zoning and rezoning activities to discourage new development or redevelopment that is insensitive to the neighborhood character and values. In particular, the City should initiate rezoning of the B-G use along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

and Ogeechee Road and Community Business (B-C) district east of Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, to the Residential Business (R-B) or Neighborhood Business (B-N) classification. This would make these properties consistent and more compatible with the existing predominant residential development pattern, and limit intensive commercial uses from negatively impacting the neighborhood. This rezoning is vital to the health, safety, welfare, and aesthetics of the neighborhood.

D. Historic Resources and Architecture

Two of Cuyler-Brownsville's most important historic assets are the Charity Hospital and Laurel Grove Cemetery. These facilities are on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), recently completed a historic survey of the entire neighborhood, and has nominated it for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places. The survey documented the architectural and historic significance of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood is centered around several primary schools, and the Charity Hospital. The neighborhood is significant for several reasons. It can be distinguished historically from other neighborhoods in the city architecturally and ethnically.

Many early twentieth and late nineteenth century styles of architecture are found in the community. These include Italianate, Greek Revival, Bungalow Style, Colonial Revival and numerous vernacular combinations of these styles. The style of homes present in Cuyler-Brownsville have several influences from European designers, and domestic American elements and motifs. Figures 6 and 7 show examples of Cuyler-Brownsville architecture.

Figures 6 and 7: Examples of Cuyler-Brownsville Architecture



Figure 6: Venetian Greek Revival, 501 W. 34th Street (Erected in 1880)



Figure 7: Bungalow - 632 W. 35th Street (Erected 1930)

Laurel Grove Cemetery

Adjacent to the western boundary of the Cuyler-Brownsville community is the Laurel Grove Cemetery. It was laid out in 1852 by James O. Morse under the administration of Mayor Richard Arnold. The cemetery, originally a fifteen acre tract, was set aside for slaves and freed blacks by city ordinance. Even though slaves and paupers often had unmarked graves, some blacks before and after slavery had durable tombstones. These markers are the only material remains of their history.

The cemetery, for the most part, was arranged in a grid pattern, bordered by sand lanes and live oak trees. It soon became the final resting place for bodies of slaves moved from other cemeteries to make way for urban expansion. The tombstones of Laurel Grove South show a rich variation in size, style, and material. The rough cut, stone tombstones with a single inscribed name indicated the social scale. Larger lancey-shaped tombstones represented the higher reaches of black society in Savannah. The more distinguished inhabitants of the cemetery include leading pastors of the baptist church: Andrew Bryant, Andrew Marshall, and Henry Cunningham. There was a mausoleom for a few of the other distinguished blacks. Between the two extremes, there are many small stone tablets with minimal decoration, such as a wreath motif or cross. As a whole, the gravestones indicate the social hierarchy and success of the community.

Maintenance is the greatest problem concerning historic resources in the neighborhood. Property owners should be encouraged to clean, repair, and upgrade deteriorated structures, facades, and attendant items such as fences, yards, gates, and walkways. Even a house with little architectural distinction is a pleasant sight when it appears cared for. As the next two sections demonstrate, much of Cuyler-Brownsville's housing stock is in varying degrees of deterioration. If these problems are left unabated, the City and neighborhood stand to lose one of their oldest, intact African-American communities.

E: Structural Conditions

This section presents the structural conditions of buildings in Cuyler-Brownsville. The categories used to describe the structural conditions are based on the criteria set forth by the Code Enforcement Section of the Inspections Department of the City of Savannah. These categories are:

- (1) **Standard:** No problems.
- (2) **Minor Defects:** Chipped or peeling paint, broken windows, minor replacement of wood siding or shingles, shutters which are broken or in need of paint, curling roof shingles, fascia repair needed, eave work needed.
- (3) **Moderate Defects:** Complete repainting needed, damaged and unsafe steps, extensive replacement of shingles, siding or wood, defective porch, or three or more minor defects.
- (4) **Major Defects:** Defect in a major component of the building such as a sagging or cracked load-bearing wall, a serious defect in the foundation, missing steps, caved-in roof, deteriorated windows, major replacement of wood siding or shingles needed.
- (5) **Dilapidated/Condemned:** Two or more major defects.

Structures classified as having any of the last four conditions above are considered substandard units. *By definition, a substandard unit is any dwelling that requires minor to major repairs to comply with the City's minimum housing Codes.* Such repairs are those necessary to eliminate structural defects which threaten an occupant's health, safety or welfare. It is the intent of this study to provide data that can determine whether the substandard housing units in the neighborhood can, and should be economically brought up to minimum housing code standards.

Estimates of Substandard Residential Structure

The structural conditions information is based on the 1995 Responsive Public Services Program (RPSP) survey conducted by the City's Planning and Community Development staff. Because the survey was based on windshield and walk through observations of building exteriors, information on interior conditions and other hidden structural defects was not available. Table 3 lists the general neighborhood residential conditions data, as does figures 8 and 9. These data reflect conditions as of the Summer of 1995. New construction, renovation activity, demolition, and relocation of buildings subsequent to that date, will likely occur and require periodic updating of this information.

Residential Conditions

Much of the Cuyler-Brownsville housing stock is suffering from blight and physical deterioration. Cycles of disinvestment, speculation and absentee ownership combined with a high incidence of poverty resulted in the neighborhood's blight and deterioration. Of the 1,339 residential units in the neighborhood, 64% are in substandard condition. About 42.5% of the substandard units had moderate defects, 42% had minor defects, almost a tenth had major defects, and 6.5% were dilapidated and/or condemned. Barring any historical or architectural significance, these dilapidated buildings are probably beyond economically feasible repair. Table 3 indicates that housing deterioration is a serious problem in the neighborhood, and requires a commitment of public and private initiatives in rehabilitation funding.

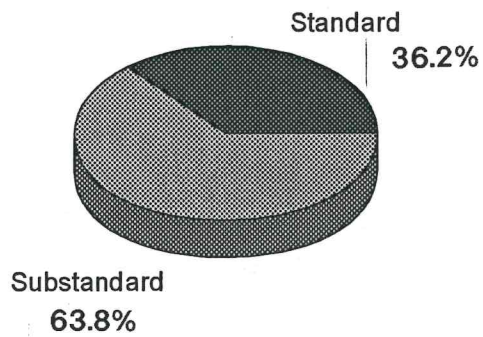
Table 3: Residential Conditions

CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT
Total Residential Units	1,339	100.0%
Standard	485	36.0%
Substandard	854	64.0%
Substandard-Minor Defects	359	42.0%
Substandard-Moderate	363	42.5%
Substandard-Major	76	9.0%
Substandard-Dilapidated/Condemned	56	6.5%

Source: 1995 RPSP Survey

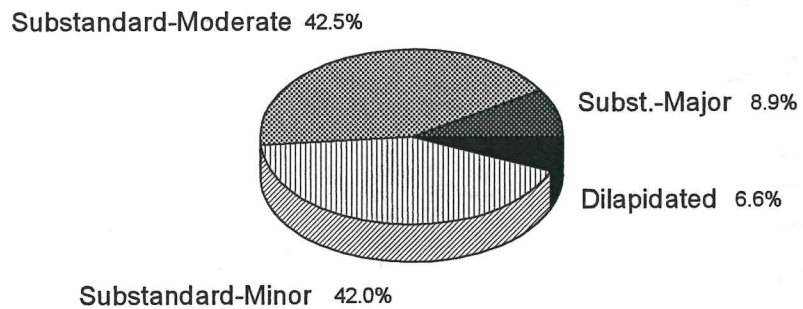
Map 4 presents the structural conditions of residential buildings in the neighborhood. Dilapidated and/or condemned structures are randomly scattered throughout the neighborhood.

FIGURE 8
RESIDENTIAL CONDITIONS-1995








Source: 1995 RPSP

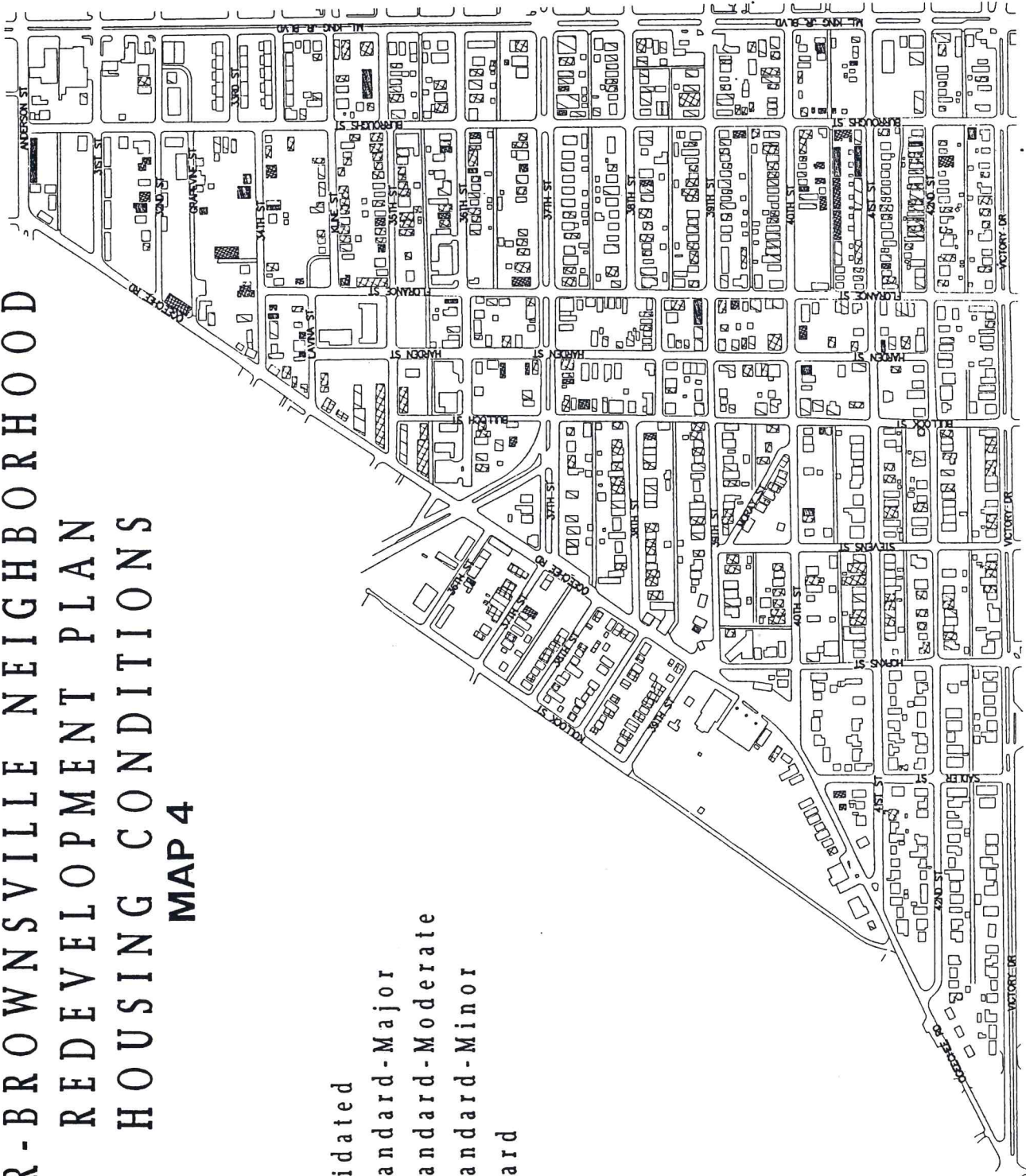
FIGURE 9
SUBSTANDARD RESIDENTIAL CONDITIONS-1995



Source: 1995 RPSP

CUYLER-BROWNSVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD REDEVELOPMENT PLANS HOUSING CONDITIONS MAP 4

-  Dilapidated
-  Substandard-Major
-  Substandard-Moderate
-  Substandard-Minor
-  Standard



Scale: 1" = 400'

Non-Residential Structural Conditions

The 1995 RPSP Survey indicates that a majority of the non-residential structures, predominantly commercial and institutional, had minor defects, a fifth had moderate defects, and less than a tenth had major defects or were dilapidated. Table 4 lists general non-residential conditions.

Table 4: Non Residential Conditions

CATEGORY	NUMBER	PERCENT
Total Non-Residential Structures	62	100.0%
Standard	16	25.8%
Substandard-Minor Defects	26	42.0%
Substandard-Moderate Defects	14	22.6%
Substandard-Major Defects	4	6.4%
Substandard-Dilapidated	2	3.2%

Source: 1995 RPSP Survey



Figure 10: Dilapidated/Condemned House

F. Estimated Rehabilitation Costs

Bringing every structure in Cuyler-Brownsville up to standard condition is the major goal of this redevelopment plan. Table 5 presents the estimated rehabilitation costs for residential units ranging in condition from minor to dilapidated. These estimates, based on amounts recommended by the City's Housing Department, are multiplied by the number of units which fall into each category. This process results in a grand total rehabilitation estimate of approximately \$11,660,000.

Table 5: Estimated Rehabilitation Costs

Category	Estimated Cost Per Unit	Number of Units	Total Rehabilitation Cost
Minor Defects	\$ 5,000	359	\$ 1,795,000
Moderate Defects	\$15,000	363	\$ 5,445,000
Major Defects	\$25,000	76	\$ 1,900,000
Dilapidated/Condemned	\$45,000	56	\$ 2,520,000
Grand Total	---	854	\$11,660,000

Source: City of Savannah Housing Department Estimates, 1996

G. Occupancy Status

Cuyler-Brownsville has a homeownership rate of 29%, compared to the citywide rate of 50.7%. A majority of the homeowners in the neighborhood are elderly who live on fixed incomes. They do not have the necessary resources to maintain their homes. As a result, these homeowners often cannot maintain their property until the situation has become a costly emergency. Over half of the available units are renter-occupied and a majority of them are owned by absentee landlords. This has resulted in vast majority of the neighborhood becoming rental enclaves of elderly, young singles and low income persons. Homeownership incentive programs are needed to encourage more homeownership. Despite these problems, there remain many positive reasons to believe that the multiple goals of enhancing the livability of the neighborhood, increasing the area's affordable housing supply, and encouraging a stable residential population are attainable.

The southwest section of the neighborhood still has a high number of owner-occupied single-family homes that are in generally good condition. Planning efforts should be directed primarily at preserving what is already a satisfactory living environment and addressing specific problems as they arise.

Table 6: Residential Occupancy

Category	Number	Percent
Total Housing Units	1339	100.0%
Owner-Occupied Units	388	29.0%
Renter-Occupied Units	759	56.7%
Vacant Units	192	14.3%

Source: 1990 Census of Population and Housing, and City Housing Code Inspections

City Neighborhood Planning staff estimates over half of the 1,339 year-round housing units in the area are renter-occupied and 14.3% are vacant units (see Table 6). The high number of vacant units presents a blighting influence, as well as safety problem in the neighborhood. More than 50% of the occupied units are over 50 years old, which further suggests potential future vacancies because the median rents per month are not sufficient for maintenance and upkeep. Coupled with the structural deficiencies and utility inefficiency are the enactment and enforcement of local building, subdivision, and zoning regulations which tend to increase the cost of housing. Therefore, successful housing strategies must address the need for an adequate supply of affordable standard housing units, enactment and enforcement of necessary regulations, and the need to increase the incomes of the renters and would-be homeowners in the neighborhood.

H. Vacant Parcels

Appendix 1 lists vacant lots by addresses. New addresses were created by following the existing property numbering system. There are approximately 162 randomly scattered vacant lots in the neighborhood. Analysis of the vacant parcels in Cuyler-Brownsville indicates that most of the vacant lots are in the form of multiple or large parcels, or small and isolated parcels. A majority of the vacant parcels do not conform to the City's minimum lot standards for residential development. These vacant parcels may be available for acquisition, and are probably affordable.

Cuyler-Brownsville has a large quantity of housing units, some of which can be rehabilitated at a cost that is lower than the cost associated with building a new home. However, infill housing development is necessary to increase the availability of affordable housing and enhance homeownership opportunity for low and moderate income persons.

In consideration of this Urban Redevelopment Plan, any future infill development should be considered in context with the architectural character and values of Cuyler-Brownsville. Unless a need for additional neighborhood commercial uses or public uses can be established, all new development should incorporate greater architectural sensitivity. Restrained, tasteful design and construction is preferable.

I. Infrastructure and Physical Conditions

Located in an established urban area, Cuyler-Brownsville is well served by public facilities. Water and sanitary sewer services, police and fire protection, tree and street maintenance, park and recreation, and solid waste collection are provided by the City of Savannah. Electric power is supplied by the Savannah Electric and Power Company (SEPCO) and natural gas is provided by the Savannah Gas Company. Public transit is provided by the Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT). Library service is provided by the Chatham County Library Board. Utilities and public services already exist to serve the area and do not present a limitation to redevelopment in the study area.

The quality of community infrastructure is a key factor in retaining residents and in maintaining a successful residential neighborhood. Cuyler-Brownsville currently suffers, in varying degrees, from the problems of substandard infrastructure conditions. These conditions include hazardous traffic, inconvenience and property damage flooding problems, poor sidewalk conditions, and deteriorating recreation facility. Table 7 presents the summary of the infrastructure and other physical conditions in the neighborhood. This information was collected on a street by street basis and through a neighborhood walk-through survey and reports provided by the residents.

This section focuses on physical conditions of key community infrastructure in Cuyler-Brownsville. As an integral part of the implementation strategy of this redevelopment plan, improvement of these substandard infrastructure will enhance the safety and livability of the neighborhood.

Table 7: Infrastructure Conditions

CATEGORY	NUMBER
Poor Drainage Areas	15
Poor/No Sidewalks	48
Poor/Hazardous Traffic Areas	7
Vacant Tree Spots	113

Source: Cuyler-Brownsville Surveys, 1995/1996

Pedestrian Lighting (Streetlights)

Several years ago the City implemented a comprehensive streetlights improvement in the neighborhood as part of the Showcase Neighborhood Program. In 1993, the City's Traffic Engineering Department determined that the whole of Cuyler-Brownsville is 100 percent lit and that it meets the minimum lighting standard. However, there are still too many dark sections or areas of uneven light, as well as glare, which do not provide the desired illumination. Erratic lighting levels can be dangerous and should be eliminated. Periodic night surveys are necessary

to ensure that dark areas are appropriately illuminated.

Drainage Conditions

The City of Savannah is located in a low land area and Cuyler-Brownsville is no exception. Some sections of the neighborhood are susceptible to flooding. The neighborhood experienced its worst recorded recurring flooding in ten years on October 12, 1994, August 21, 1995 and July 5, 1996, when the 1200 blocks of West 41st, 42nd, Victory Drive and the intersection of Ogeechee Road and Victory Drive, were badly flooded. Several structures in the area are subject to flooding by a "100-Year Frequency Flood." The City is currently implementing a city-wide drainage improvement plan. When completed, the improvement will reduce inconvenience and recurring flooding in the neighborhood. Residents identified the following flood prone areas:

1. 1100 and 1200 blocks of West 41st Street (Primary area)
2. 1100 and 1200 blocks of West 42nd Street (Primary area)
3. 1100 and 1200 blocks of West Victory Drive (Primary area)
4. Intersection of Ogeechee Road and West Victory Drive (Primary area)
5. 2500 block of Hopkins Street
6. Corner of MLK and West 35th Street, westside
7. Burroughs Street, between 36th and 37th Streets
8. 500 block of West 42nd Street
9. West 37th Street, from MLK to Ogeechee Road
10. West 39th Street, from MLK to Ogeechee Road, West 39th and Florance
11. 2300 block of Harden Street
12. Florance Street, between 37th Street and Victory Drive

Traffic Conditions

Cuyler-Brownsville's main thoroughfares are major traffic corridors. These include Ogeechee Road, Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and 37th Street. While traffic related problems such as speeding and illegal parking occur in much of the interior of the neighborhood, the intersection of 37th Street and Ogeechee Road remains a potential hazardous traffic area. This point is the gateway to the City from the Interstate 16. Residents have indicated their desire to have the traffic on this route redirected. However, the ability to successfully redirect traffic away from this sensitive area depends first on the availability of a suitable alternative route. Although development of alternative routes might theoretically be possible, for at least some of the problem traffic, there are serious political, financial and planning uncertainties that make the extent and manner of any redirection impossible to predict at this time. Accordingly, the recommendations of this redevelopment plan, while supporting the objectives of traffic redirection, are not dependent upon such redirections occurring.

As the City of Savannah continues to grow, the potential problem of insensitive traffic in the neighborhood will only get worse. Options for redirection are limited and the most effective

method of keeping automobile traffic at acceptable levels in the area may be a reduction in unnecessary trips and posting low speed limit and caution signs.

Hopkins Street is another street with a major traffic problem. From West 39th to 40th Street, is one-way northbound and two-way south of 40th Street. Many vehicles travel the wrong direction endangering students from Hopkins Elementary School as well as other pedestrians. Listed below are locations identified by residents as problem and hazardous traffic areas:

1. Intersection of Ogeechee Road and 37th Street (Dangerous intersection)
2. West 37th Street and 37th Street Connector (Dangerous intersection)
3. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
4. Intersection of MLK and Anderson Street
5. Intersection of Ogeechee Road and 39th Street
6. Intersection of MLK and Victory Drive
7. Hopkins Street, between 39th and 40th Street

Condition of Tompkins Recreation Facility

Even though fully utilized by the residents, it is currently in substandard condition and needs extensive repair work. The existence of the Tompkins Recreation Facility does not ensure that it meets established minimum conditions standards. The facility, especially the gymnasium, needs some improvement. A renovation study of the facility has been completed. Improvement to the facility will include air conditioner replacement, floor, roof, bleachers, painting, and some repairs to restrooms.

Sidewalk Paving

Table 8 lists specific locations where sidewalks are either broken, in disrepair or are absent. Established designated pedestrian crossings at some key intersections in the neighborhood are not bold enough. For example, Hodge Elementary School students must confront an absence of sidewalk on Hopkins Street, from Ogeechee Road to West 40th Street. Pedestrians experience the lack of bold and visible crossings at the intersections of Ogeechee Road and West 37th Street and at West 37th Street and 37th Connector. In fact, the intersection of Ogeechee Road and 37th Street is the major gateway to the neighborhood and City, handling heavy traffic. To improve the pedestrian environment, these crossings should have at a minimum, bold painted street markings and appropriate signs to make them visible to both motorists and pedestrians. Residents have recommended that pedestrian ramps be provided for the handicapped at all new and current intersections, if not already in place.

Table 8: Areas Needing Sidewalk Improvement

LOCATION	CONDITION/COMMENTS
1. Eastside of Ogeechee Road, between West 38th and 39th Streets.	Used by students for journey to and from school.
2. Ogeechee Rd., between 37th and 38th Streets, both sides.	Used by students for journey to and from school.
3. 1000 block of W. 38th, both sides.	Broken sidewalk
4. NW corner of W. 36th and Harden Streets.	Handicap ramp, Used by elderly/frail elderly to walk to the senior center at 812 W. 36th Street.
5. 500 block of W. 31st, southside.	Cracked
6. Ogeechee Road, between 32nd and Grapevine Streets, eastside.	Missing sidewalk
7. Eastside of Ogeechee Road, between 31st and 32nd Streets.	Missing sidewalk
8. Northwest corner of W. 35th and Florance St. (Florance St. School)	Broken/hazardous sidewalks
9. NE corner of 35th and Florance Streets.	Sidewalk/drainage catch basin need immediate repair.
10. Eastside of Ogeechee Road, between Lavina and 34th Streets.	Missing sidewalk
11. 600 block of W. 34th Street, northside.	Cracked/broken
12. Eastside of Ogeechee Road, between Grapevine and 34th Streets.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
13. Eastside of Ogeechee Road, between West 31st and Anderson Lane.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
14. 1800 block of Burroughs Street, westside.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
15. 500 block of Kline Street, northside.	Hazardous sidewalk
16. 1800 block of MLK, westside.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks

LOCATION	CONDITION/COMMENT
17. 505 W. 36th Street.	Broken
18. 2000 block of Florance Street, both sides.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
19. 2000 block of Burroughs Street, both sides.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
20. 2100 block of Florance Street, westside.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
21. 900 block of W. 38th Street, both sides.	Cracked, missing and hazardous sidewalks
22. 1018 and 1019 Terrace Street.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
23. 1600 block of MLK, westside.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
24. 1823 and 1825 MLK, westside.	Broken sidewalk
25. 2400 block of MLK, westside.	Cracked
26. 2500 block of MLK, westside.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
27. Hopkins Street, between W. Victory Dr. and W. 40th Street.	New sidewalk to improve pedestrian safety, especially for students attending Hodge Elementary School. Residents have repeatedly requested this improvement at the Cuyler-Brownsville Community Organization meetings. Traffic on Hopkins Street is one-way southbound and two-way northbound.
28. 500 Block of W. 41st Street, Northside.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
29. 2400 block of Burroughs Street, eastside.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
30. 650 W. 41st Street.	Missing sidewalk
31. 700 block of W. 41st Street, southside.	Missing/broken sidewalks
32. 901 W. 40th Street.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
33. 2300 block of MLK, westside.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
34. 500 block of W. 39th Street, northside.	Cracked, missing and hazardous sidewalks

35. 700 blk of W. 39th St., southside.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
36. 716/718 and 724 W. 39th St.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
37. 934/936/938 W. 38th Street.	Missing/cracked and hazardous sidewalks
38. 925/927/929 W. 38th Street.	Missing/cracked sidewalks
39. 919 W. 38th Street.	Missing/cracked and hazardous sidewalks
40. 915/916 W. 38th Street.	Missing/broken sidewalks
41. 901 W. 37th Street.	Broken sidewalk
42. 807 & 811 W. 37th Street.	Cracked/broken sidewalks
43. Southeast corner of W. 37th and Harden Streets.	Missing sidewalk
44. 700 block of W. 37th Street, southside.	Cracked
45. 601 W. 37th Street.	Broken/uneven
46. Eastside of Ogeechee Road, between Terrace and W. 39th Street.	Missing/hazardous sidewalks
47. 602, 603, 605, 626, 638 and 639 West 38th Street.	Cracked/hazardous sidewalks
48. 600 block of W. 37th, northside.	Cracked/damaged sidewalks

Source: NPCD Sidewalks Survey, 1996

J. Maintenance and Aesthetics

The inevitable consequence of neglect and lack of yard, house and vacant lot maintenance is evident in Cuyler-Brownsville. Throughout the neighborhood are randomly scattered derelict vehicles and illegal dumpings in the lanes, and badly maintained vacant lots resulting in part, from previous building demolitions. In addition, the community has 157 vacant substandard structures, 122 or 78% of which are unsecured. The property code enforcement report for the area indicates that from January 1, 1996, to August 31, there were 57 courtesy notices, 283 citations for property maintenance ordinance (PMO) violations, 231 derelict vehicles tagged, 46 residential code violations, 73 condemned housing units, 61 citations for unmaintained vacant lots, 7 residential demolitions and, in general, 851 PMO actions taken in the neighborhood. These factors contribute to the poor overall appearance of the neighborhood and represent a declining community.

K. Neighborhood Safety

Neighborhood safety is an important part of a successful neighborhood. Neighborhood safety can be improved in Cuyler-Brownsville through the following two methods: improving communication between the police department and neighborhood organizations and residents, and correcting environmental factors that foster crime such as unemployment, poverty and abandoned houses. Residents, in an attempt to prevent crime and improve safety, have identified the following safety concerns: drug activity, prostitution, burglary and robbery as major problems in their neighborhood.

The associations in the neighborhood and residents should coordinate crime prevention activities with the police department, especially, precinct II and the Chatham Narcotics Team (CNT). Residents often do not benefit from available protection services because they do not know about them or because they do not relate well to the police. Conversely, the police need to be aware of the need to relate to the residents and their lives. School children and young people who meet police officers face-to-face should understand the officers and more willingly trust police personnel. Personal communication will also help the police officers to better understand the youth. In fact, improved communication is a key to crime prevention. Better communication among neighborhood residents could encourage them to watch out for and defend one another. The Community-Oriented Policing Program (COP) that was implemented by the Savannah Police Department few years ago is helping to reduce crime and improve safety in the neighborhood. The goal of community-oriented policing is to work closely with residents, community organizations and businesses to jointly identify actions that can be taken to deter crime. Elements of the community-oriented policing program include increased citizen-officer contact and communication, more patrolling on foot, increased Neighborhood Watch involvement and neighborhood meetings, and a broader problem-oriented approach to solving crime problems.

Another factor affecting public safety is the increasing number of vacant and boarded-up structures, which provide safe havens for drug-users, prostitutes and other illegal activities. Finally, the growing unemployment rate, coupled with poverty are other contributing environmental factors to crime in the neighborhood. These factors are, in fact, the root causes of crime problems in the area. There is a correlation between unemployment and higher robbery and burglary rates.

In 1995, a total of 64 violent crimes and 238 property crimes were committed in Cuyler-Brownsville. Table 9 shows the crime conditions in the neighborhood. It also indicates that crime is decreasing down in the neighborhood. This may be largely due to the community-oriented policing program. Crime against persons (violent crimes) include homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The neighborhood rate for crimes against persons (18.5 crimes per 1,000 people) was almost twice the City rate of 10.23 crimes per 1,000 people in 1995 and 1996. However, the number of violent crimes committed in the neighborhood between 1994 and 1995 declined by 13%.

Crimes against property include burglary, larceny, arson and auto theft. The crime rate for crimes against property was 69.0, compared to 78.31 citywide. Within this category of crimes against property in Cuyler-Brownsville, there were 266 cases in 1994, 238 in 1995, and 238 cases in 1996. In general, the neighborhood's crime rate is unchanged between 1995 and 1996.

Table 9: Crime Conditions

Category	Cuyler-Brownsville	Cuyler-Brownsville	City	Cuyler-Brownsville	City
	1994	1995		1996	
Population	3448	3448	137,560	3448	137,560
Homicides	1	2	27	2	29
Rapes	4	4	80	4	79
Robberies	37	36	866	36	851
Aggravated Assaults	30	22	434	22	443
Total Violent Crimes	72	64	1,407	64	1,402
Rate per 1,000 Residents	20.9	18.6	10.23	18.2	10.2
Burglary	57	61	2,007	61	1,961
Larcenies	161	135	7,793	135	7,833
Auto Theft	48	42	972	42	988
Total Property Crimes	266	238	10,772	238	10,782
Rate per 1,000 Residents	77.1	69.0	78.31	69.02	78.4
Total all Crimes	338	302	12,179	302	12,184

Source: Savannah Police Department

L. Economic Conditions

Unemployment and poverty breed crimes. The economic conditions in Cuyler-Brownsville are potentially deploring. Most of the very low income households simply lack the purchasing power and/or cash flow necessary to afford basic necessities. This disparity is further compounded by lack of job/entrepreneurial skills and access to start-up capital. Many aspiring or would-be entrepreneurs lack some of the business skills necessary to operate a successful small business. These skills range from financial planning, budgeting, accounting, tax, legal awareness to marketing, and other skills that would ensure success. Residents should be encouraged to become

more involved. They should be motivated and provided with opportunities to break the cycle of dependency and perpetual poverty; to create an environment which leads to a greater sense of pride, self-esteem, personal responsibility, economic development, and ownership.

4. ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

A. Overview

Cuyler-Brownsville residents have identified a number of problems in their neighborhood that have been confirmed by the condition analysis of this redevelopment plan. These problems include property abandonment and disinvestment, population loss, worsening housing conditions, deteriorating physical infrastructure, environmental cleanliness, crime and drugs, social/economic problems that threaten the livability of the neighborhood.

Solving these problems is dependent upon actions leading to improvement and better utilization of the neighborhood resources. *Neighborhood resources are those assets that are currently available, can potentially be available, and can be made available to the neighborhood.* These resources include human, physical and financial assets.

1. Human Assets

The Action Plan should build upon the strengths of people.

Issues/Problems

Currently, there are eight neighborhood groups in the area, but cooperation and participation rates are lacking. Just less than 5% of the 3,448 neighborhood residents participate in the eight civic and community organizations.

Actions

- The success of the overall revitalization strategy will depend upon the effectiveness and ability of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association, residents, and other groups to have a cooperative working relationship with one another and with the City in making a commitment to the neighborhood over the next several years. The level of neighborhood residents' participation in civic and community organizations needs to be substantially increased. The City can assist the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association (the neighborhoods' umbrella association) with this goal through help with membership drives, residents notification, special events, capacity building, and leadership development.
- In particular, unity among neighborhood organizations must be improved if Cuyler-Brownsville is to address its problems in an effective and informed manner. The association can reach out to other organizations in the area like the West 42th Street Civic Association, Cuyler Community Improvement Association, Battery Ward Civic Association, West 40th Street Block Association, Harden Street Neighborhood Association, MLK Apartment Association, and Laurel Heights Home Owners Association.
- *Neighborhood Residents with Special Need.* The community needs to recognize persons in the neighborhood with special needs, such as the growing numbers of children, elderly residents, and higher percentage of female-headed households. Since these group of residents are more likely to be unemployed, poor, and dependent, there is a need for a targeted economic development program to improve the economic well being of these individuals. The neighborhood associations can encourage job training, job matching, job referral services and

job support to increase the employability and self-sufficiency of their residents. These can be coordinated with the local units of government, local training agencies, as well as the Savannah Technical Institute. The intent is to ensure that these entities offer job training courses appropriate to local residents and to see that neighborhood residents know about these courses. Also, children are in need of more recreation programs and tutorial services; and elderly residents need more social opportunities. The need for these types of activities makes a real case for the adaptive reuse of the vacant Florance Street School on West 35th Street. The Savannah Muslim Community owns this vacant school building which can be used for a wide range of uses such as workshops, police station, community and cultural center, library, educational and elderly services.

2. Physical Assets

The Action Plan should build upon and improve the physical characteristics to enhance livability and reinforce pride in neighborhood image.

Issues/Problems

More than half of the residential units in the neighborhood are in substandard condition, 42% of which had minor defects. The small problems with these houses with minor defects could easily deteriorate into larger problems. 4.2% of the residential structures are dilapidated and/or condemned. The high number of substandard and vacant units present a blighting influence, as well as a safety problem in the neighborhood.

An analysis of the vacant parcels in the neighborhood indicated there were 164 randomly scattered vacant lots in the form of multiple or large parcels, or small, isolated lots. Some of these lots hardly conform to City's minimum lot standards for residential development. However, they are available and can be cheaply acquired for infill housing.

Martin Luther King Boulevard has become a deteriorating commercial corridor with poorly maintained buildings and streetscape, inadequate pedestrian facilities, poor aesthetic appearance, poor street lighting and inconsistent zoning.

The quality of infrastructure is a key factor in retaining residents, and in maintaining a successful neighborhood. Cuyler-Brownsville suffers in varying degrees from the problems of substandard infrastructure conditions. These conditions include hazardous traffic areas, property damage and inconvenience flooding problems, inadequate sidewalks and recreation opportunities, and streets in poor repair.

High crime rates, primarily the abundance of drug related crimes, robbery, and associated problems of juvenile drug dependency and delinquency are serious threats to the stability of the neighborhood. In addition, the increasing numbers of vacant and boarded up units, coupled with a high poverty and unemployment rates further exacerbate the crime problem in the area.

Finally, neglect and lack of property maintenance is evident in the neighborhood. The loss of

neighborhood feeling and the perception of a poor self-image has resulted in residents' unwillingness to improve their properties and take care of their environment.

Actions

- The City and the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) can evaluate existing and permitted land use regulations which discourage residential infill and keep some residential and commercial structures in a vacant and blighted condition. Land use regulations which allow for only compatible new construction and rehabilitation, should be considered. Martin Luther King Boulevard should be designated as a special zoning district and efforts should be made to encourage pedestrian-oriented neighborhood businesses in this commercial corridor while discouraging alcohol beverage establishments.
- Additionally, the City and MPC should extend the MLK Commercial Corridor Revitalization Study from Gwinnett Street to Victory Drive.
- Since the Metropolitan Planning Commission has completed a historic survey of the entire neighborhood, the neighborhood association should work with the City and MPC in initiating the process of nominating the neighborhood for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Deterioration of houses with minor defects could be avoided through neighborhood stabilization and the active participation of the City in marketing housing rehab loans, counseling, and other forms of home improvement programs. The 4.2% of the structures that are dilapidated and/or condemned should be targeted for either demolition or rehabilitation if feasible, through urban homesteading programs. (*Urban homesteading is a program where people buy dilapidated and/or condemned homes for a nominal amount of money, often for as little as one dollar, substantially rehabilitate them, and live in them for a specific period of time*). The Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association should consider starting a handyman service, hiring local youth and residents to help elderly residents and the handicapped in home repair and maintenance, lawn care, exterior painting, and general cleaning.
- A goal of this redevelopment plan is to bring neighborhood infrastructure up to standard condition. The City is already initiating improvement to the Tompkins Recreation Center. The City Council has set aside funding for sidewalk repair program, a program that would make Cuyler-Brownsville a safer neighborhood for pedestrians. The City's Traffic Engineering Department should study traffic problems on Hopkins Street (northbound), and intersection of 37th Street and Interstate-16, which remain potential hazardous traffic areas. The neighborhood association should work with appropriate city departments to plant trees in vacant street-level tree spots to meet the City's Master Tree Plan for the neighborhood.
- The neighborhood associations and residents should cooperate with the police officers in crime prevention efforts, including developing youth programs for after school hours. Entrepreneurial training program should be provided to the youth to equip them with necessary skills on how to start and/or operate a business.
- Finally, over 851 property maintenance ordinance actions were taken in the neighborhood in 1996, indicating a need for increased education on litter reduction, property maintenance, and neighborhood pride. The Adopt-A-Spot program and neighborhood clean up campaigns are good examples of efforts by residents to remove eyesores and beautify vacant lots.

Financial Assets

Not only should the plan make use of all available funds and resources, but also find new ways to ensure efficiency and effectiveness.

Issues/Problems

The intent of this plan is to maximize utilization of existing City resources as much as possible and leverage public funds with private investments. Funding sources are mainly the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and General Fund Showcase Improvement monies. In terms of community involvement, the City has assigned a planner and a community services coordinator to the neighborhood to attend meetings and assist the residents in communicating with the City and other agencies. Also assigned are a police beat/crime prevention officer and a property maintenance code enforcement officer.

Actions

- Most of the drainage problems would be solved by the current citywide drainage improvement projects as well as regular cleaning of catch basins.
- By marketing and targeting Housing Department, Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), and other Non-profit agencies programs to the neighborhood, as outlined in the five year plan of this document, the City can achieve a level of progress that would inspire property owners to improve their properties. This would also encourage more financial institutions and private interests to invest in the neighborhood.
- Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Showcase funds can be used for sidewalk improvements and tree planting. The Keep Savannah Beautiful (KSB) Program can coordinate a neighborhood beautification program.

B. Conclusion

With a stepped up level of services, a partnership between neighborhood associations, residents, private interests and the City, and a steady commitment of resources to the neighborhood, a large part of the revitalization effort can be accomplished within a five year time frame. However, failure to attain a greater portion of these goals, revitalization of the neighborhood would become elusive.

5. GOALS

Establishing goals is critical for effective implementation of the neighborhood redevelopment plan. A goal can be defined as a "statement of the desired results to be achieved or the desired condition to be maintained." The goal statement describes an ideal. Total attainment of the goal may be impossible. However, the City directs its efforts and resources toward achieving the goal and uses it as an indicator to evaluate performance. Each goal requires a specific strategy which is designed to achieve the goal. Strategies in turn require that data be assembled and analyzed to develop an action plan.

The goals listed below emerged from a consensus of neighborhood residents and express the wishes of the residents involved in the planning process. The following goals are the foundation of this plan.

- GOAL 1. A self-reliant and organized neighborhood that is free of apathy.
- GOAL 2. A neighborhood free of substandard housing.
- GOAL 3. A neighborhood in which all residents have an opportunity to live in standard housing units and at affordable cost.
- GOAL 4. A neighborhood free of inappropriate and nuisance properties.
- GOAL 5. A neighborhood free of blighted, vacant lots.
- GOAL 6. A neighborhood free of incompatible and inappropriate land uses.
- GOAL 7. A neighborhood free of substandard and inadequate public infrastructure.
- GOAL 8. A neighborhood that is clean and well maintained.
- GOAL 9. A safe environment free of crime and substance abuse.
- GOAL 10. A neighborhood where the rates of unemployment, inactivity, and underemployment are equal to or less than the overall rates for the City.

6. URBAN REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLAN

Goals, objectives and strategies identify the needs and parameters for program development and are defined as follows:

Goals are the long term ends toward which programs and activities are directed.

Objectives are specific, measurable, intermediate ends that are achievable and marked progress toward a goal.

Strategies are the means by which objectives are achieved and are described as specific actions or programs.

A. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

GOAL 1: A self-reliant and organized neighborhood that is free of apathy.

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Increase membership of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association by 15% annually.

- Strategy 1.1.1: Hold three workshops on leadership, fund raising, financial management, membership recruitment, and self-help skills for the community association and residents.
- Strategy 1.1.2: Develop membership package and other incentive programs as means of attracting new members.
- Strategy 1.1.3: Establish a committee to recruit more block captains. Strengthen existing Block Captains Program and conduct block captains recruitment drive on a regular basis.
- Strategy 1.1.4: Conduct at least two membership drives annually.
- Strategy 1.1.5: Strengthen the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association so it can undertake projects independently as well as operate in accordance with the goals and objectives established in this Redevelopment Plan.
- Strategy 1.1.6: Coordinate activities of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association, 42nd Street Civic Association, Cuyler Community Improvement Association and other groups and social clubs in the neighborhood. Increase communication between these groups, and encourage them

- to work together in a collaborative manner to solve mutual problems.
- Strategy 1.1.7: Encourage the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association to work effectively with outside agencies interested in improving quality of life in Cuyler-Brownsville.
- Strategy 1.1.8: Provide Technical assistance to the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association and other neighborhood groups in the neighborhood on a regular basis, and continue to staff monthly meetings of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association.
- Strategy 1.1.9: Encourage the neighborhood associations and residents to continue participation in the City-wide Grants-for-Blocks Program, Adopt-A-Spot Program and other programs designed to improve the livability of the neighborhood.
- Strategy 1.1.10: Formulate ways and means to inform residents of many human services programs available in the City of Savannah.
- Strategy 1.1.11: Develop services for the handicapped and shut-in, particularly for seniors.
- Strategy 1.1.12: Implement programs for the youth.
- Strategy 1.1.13: Utilize nonprofit service agencies such as Neighborhood Housing Agencies and Economic Opportunity Authority to help improve the capacity of the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association and residents to actively act as developers of their neighborhood.
- Strategy 1.1.14: Conduct periodic public forums in the form of a town meeting. Elected officials at all levels would be urged to attend as would non-elected staff (including high-level administrators) who would provide services to residents of Cuyler-Brownsville.
- Strategy 1.1.15: Start Adopt-A-Library Program. Through this program, the neighborhood association can continue to assist with enhancing the landscaping and providing outside maintenance services of the County Branch Library on Ogeechee Road.

B. HOUSING REHABILITATION STRATEGY

GOAL 2: A neighborhood free of substandard housing.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Reduce the number of substandard residential units (defined as the total of minor, moderate, major, dilapidated and/or condemned dwellings) from 854 in 1997 to 600 in 2002, 400 in 2007, 200 in 2012, and 0 in 2017.

Strategy 2.1.1: Designate the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood an "Urban Redevelopment Area" under Title 36, Chapter 61, Urban Redevelopment Law, of the Code of Georgia.

Strategy 2.1.2: Provide low interest loans through the Community Housing Services Agency, Inc., (CSHA) to make rental rehabilitation economically feasible.

Strategy 2.1.3: Assist Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS), Habitat for Humanity and other non-profit agencies in marketing and implementing their programs in Cuyler-Brownsville. These agencies, in cooperation with appropriate City departments, will provide technical assistance, advice and counseling to residents on property maintenance and rehabilitation issues.

Strategy 2.1.4: Secure public and private financing and grants through a variety of programs such as the State Housing Trust Fund, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and other sources to enable rehabilitation of targeted substandard units.

Strategy 2.1.5: Actively market City's home improvement programs, and other non-city programs through planning and other City staff.

Strategy 2.1.6: Utilize powers of eminent domain to acquire properties for rehabilitation or redevelopment when the lack of private initiative proves the action necessary for the redevelopment of the neighborhood.

Strategy 2.1.7: Utilize Savannah-Chatham Land Bank Authority (SCOLBA) to acquire vacant parcels for donation to adjacent property owners, infill housing, community gardens, or open space. Utilize SCOLBA to acquire tax delinquent and/or vacant,

abandoned buildings and transfer those properties to non-profit housing organizations for the purpose of affordable housing.

- Strategy 2.1.8: Maintain pertinent information about the Cuyler-Brownsville neighborhood in a database for future use by those groups involved in the redevelopment of the area.
- Strategy 2.1.9: Encourage the neighborhood associations to foster urban homesteading.
- Strategy 2.1.10: Assist the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association to establish a home repair cooperative to buy large quantities of home repair materials at a lower price, and to solicit donation of tools for a tool lending library.
- Strategy 2.1.11: Assist the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association to establish a handyman service, hiring local residents to help senior citizens and handicapped in home repair and maintenance, lawn care, exterior painting and general cleaning.
- Strategy 2.1.12: Market the neighborhood to new city residents and potential home buyers.

C. RESIDENTIAL STABILITY STRATEGY

GOAL 3: A neighborhood in which all residents have an opportunity to live in standard housing units and at an affordable cost.

OBJECTIVE 3.1: Increase the rate of homeownership by 10% by the year 2002.

- Strategy 3.1.1: Target abandoned housing units in the neighborhood for housing auction or homesteading to provide homes and promote homeownership.
- Strategy 3.1.2: Utilize Savannah-Chatham County Land Bank Authority to acquire tax delinquent and abandoned, vacant dwellings and transfer them to non-profit agencies, who would in turn assist would-be homeowners in acquiring them.
- Strategy 3.1.3: Determine the feasibility of implementing a City staff-on-the-Block Homeownership Program to enable city staff to

purchase, rehabilitate and occupy substandard housing in the neighborhood.

Strategy 3.1.4: Implement first time home buying assistance program in the neighborhood to offer opportunities for home ownership.

Strategy 3.1.5: Require all new home constructions to be consistent with the residential character of the neighborhood.

Strategy 3.1.6: Permit residential conversions that would not have a negative impact on the residential character of the neighborhood.

Strategy 3.1.7: Target pre-home ownership and post-home ownership counseling services to potential home buyers. This educational program should focus on preparation for home ownership to avoid defaults on home loans.

Strategy 3.1.8: Develop a program to facilitate additional homeownership opportunity that gives priority to existing renters.

Strategy 3.1.9: Enact and/or strengthen and enforce Landlord-Tenant Laws which include regulations on the rights of all tenants to file complaints on code violations without being subjected to eviction. Consider adopting a Landlord Licensing Ordinance.

Strategy 3.1.10: Implement a model block residential development.

D. NUISANCE ABATEMENT

GOAL 4: A neighborhood free of inappropriate and nuisance properties.

OBJECTIVE 4.1: Reduce the number of priority nuisance properties (unsecured) from 122 in 1998 to 0 by 2003.

Strategy 4.1.1: Utilize the Nuisance Abatement Ordinance to secure and/or demolish structures that are unsuitable for rehabilitation.

Strategy 4.1.2: After the demolition of structures unsuitable for rehabilitation, place the vacant parcels in the Land Banking system, to be used for infill housing.

Strategy 4.1.3: Identify publicly those property owners within the neighborhood who ignore and flagrantly violate City Nuisance Abatement Ordinance.

Strategy 4.1.4: Strengthen residents' ability to report code violations through educational program on how to recognize zoning and housing code violations.

Strategy 4.1.5: Require non-conforming uses with outdoor and unbuffered storage facilities to comply with the Section 8-3055(g) Visual Buffers and Screening Provisions of the Nuisance Abatement Ordinance.

Strategy 4.1.6: Utilize vacant parcels for open spaces, community gardens, playgrounds, Adopt-A-Spot, or sell to adjoining property owners.

OBJECTIVE 4.2: Reduce the number of derelict vehicles from 231 in 1997 to 0 in 2000; and reduce the number of unmaintained vacant lots from 61 in 1997 to 0 by the year 2000.

Strategy 4.2.1: Conduct regular neighborhood code violation walk through and utilize nuisance abatement codes reinspection fees program for repeated violations (first inspection is free).

Strategy 4.2.2: Maintain an aggressive approach to enforcing the existing Nuisance Abatement Ordinance.

Strategy 4.2.3: Stop unauthorized sidewalk, street, and backyard auto repairs in the neighborhood. (Personal car repair may be allowed provided it does not become a nuisance to surrounding area).

Strategy 4.2.4: Encourage property owners to post "No Loitering/Trespassing" sign on vacant buildings and lots. This will allow police to arrest and/or disperse loiters.

E. VACANT LOT MAINTENANCE/INFILL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

GOAL 5: A neighborhood free of blighted, vacant lots.

OBJECTIVE 5.1: Reduce the number of vacant, unutilized lots from 162 in 1997 to 0 by 2008.

Strategy 5.1.1: Require vacant lot owners to maintain their properties, and aggressively enforce applicable city ordinance.

Strategy 5.1.2: Acquire abandoned, and tax delinquent lots through the Savannah-Chatham Land Bank Authority (SCOLBA) and donate or lease these properties to non-profit agencies engaged in providing housing for low and moderate income families, as well as other special needs groups.

Strategy 5.1.3: Donate or sell city-owned vacant lots to adjacent property owners.

Strategy 5.1.4: Establish a handyman service program, hiring neighborhood youth and volunteer adults to help elderly and disabled residents in vacant lot maintenance.

Strategy 5.1.5: Encourage the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association to establish and/or strengthen a tool lending library so residents can borrow the tools for property maintenance and community clean ups.

Strategy 5.1.6: Target city-owned vacant lots for appropriate reuse and redevelopment such as infill housing, open space, playgrounds, community gardens, Adopt-A-Spot, and other uses which contribute to the redevelopment of the neighborhood.

For housing infill, the following implementation steps should be considered:

- o Identify currently vacant property and prepare an inventory of these properties, including property description, dimensions, ownership, and impediments to purchase.
- o Identify potentially available property due to demolition of unsuitable or unsalvageable properties.

- o Assemble property areas that are suitable for infill housing and new compatible development.
- o Determine lots available for individual single-family housing.
- o Take all necessary administrative and legal steps to purchase or otherwise obtain title to assembled properties.
- o Establish suitable lot sizes and configurations necessary for new housing construction on potentially acquired lots.
- o Determine a menu of acceptable and preferred architectural styles and design features for infill housing.
- o Identify and list a group of prospective buyers of new infill housing.
- o Identify and recruit non-profit, private new home developers and builders.
- o Determine, identify and assemble sources of construction and permanent financing for new infill housing.
- o Formulate financing and implementation packages and projects of individual homes or re-subdivided area(s).
- o Identify and work with prospective homebuyers to assure financial and homebuyer readiness.
- o Prepare and implement means to remediate impediment homebuyer purchases, including lease purchase and other transitional options from rental to homebuyer.

Strategy 5.1.7: Provide incentives through zoning concessions, construction permits and utility service fees for infill projects that are consistent with the neighborhood character and redevelopment goals. Support variances for dimensional requirements when such an action will not result in a severe negative impact.

Strategy 5.1.8: Market to developers and potential homeowners the cost-benefits of infill housing in Cuyler-Brownsville.

F. LAND USE AND ZONING STRATEGY

GOAL 6: A neighborhood free of incompatible and inappropriate land uses.

OBJECTIVE 6.1: Maintain and preserve the residential character of the neighborhood, including ensuring appropriate land use mix.

- Strategy 6.1.1: Inform the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association in advance of any new proposed land use and/or rezoning in the neighborhood.
- Strategy 6.1.2: Maintain strong presence of institutional uses such as churches, schools and community centers which contribute to the vitality and safety of the neighborhood.
- Strategy 6.1.3: Encourage commercial development in vacant storefronts along MLK, Blvd., and any other appropriate vacant commercial buildings.
- Strategy 6.1.4: Discourage heavy commercial development in the interior sections of the neighborhood.
- Strategy 6.1.5: Convert the Florance Street School to a multi-purpose adaptive reuse building for senior center, mini-police station, neighborhood restaurant, private school and library/cultural center.
- Strategy 6.1.6: Accelerate conversion of the Charity Hospital to a multi-family residential complex, and ensure that the site is adequately landscaped.
- Strategy 6.1.7: Require commercial uses to have appropriate buffers, visual screening, and adequate landscaping.
- Strategy 6.1.8: Work with the Metropolitan Planning Commission to develop a compatible zoning system for MLK. Jr. Blvd. Corridor.
- Strategy 6.1.9: Retain older buildings with historical and architectural significance to provide the continuity and style necessary for maintenance and community identity.
- Strategy 6.1.10: Require new structures to incorporate greater architectural sensitivity. Building style, materials, and color should compliment adjacent or nearby buildings and fit into overall corridor and neighborhood context.

OBJECTIVE 6.2: Reduce non-conforming/incompatible zoning districts from 3 to 0 by 1999.

- Strategy 6.2.1: Rezone the General Business (B-G) districts on Ogeechee Road, between 40th and 37th Streets, and on MLK, Blvd., from Anderson Street to Grapevine Street, to Residential Business Limited (R-B-1).
- Strategy 6.2.2: Rezone the Residential Business (R-B) and the Community Business (B-C) districts on MLK, Blvd., to Residential Business Limited (R-B-1).
- Strategy 6.2.3: Rezone the Neighborhood Business (B-N) district on West 37th Street, between Harden and Florance Streets to Neighborhood Business Limited (B-N-1).

G. INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

GOAL 7: A neighborhood free of substandard and inadequate public infrastructure.

OBJECTIVE 7.1: Reduce the number of locations where sidewalks are either broken, in disrepair, or are absent from 48 in 1998 to 0 by 1999.

- Strategy 7.1.1: Provide more Showcase Sidewalk Improvement funding to enable the repair of substandard sidewalks.
- Strategy 7.1.2: Construct new sidewalks with curbs on Hopkins Street to improve pedestrian safety, especially for the journey-to-school students attending the Hodge Elementary School.
- Strategy 7.1.3: Provide pedestrian ramps for the disabled at all newly constructed intersections, as well as at intersections that do not have them now.

OBJECTIVE 7.2: Reduce the number of hazardous traffic areas from 7 in 1998 to 0 by 1999.

- Strategy 7.2.1: Work with the Traffic Engineering Department to improve the hazardous traffic condition on Hopkins Street, southbound.
- Strategy 7.2.2: Conduct a traffic study of the 37th Street and I-16 connector to determine the feasibility of redirecting traffic away from this sensitive area.
- Strategy 7.2.3: Establish clear pavement marking and pedestrian crossings

at key intersections. At a minimum, these crosswalks should have bold, painted street markings and appropriate signs to make them visible to both motorists and pedestrians.

Strategy 7.2.4: Identify faded traffic signs and areas needing traffic signs and install appropriate signs.

OBJECTIVE 7.3: Reduce the number of inconvenience and recurring flood areas from 12 in 1998 to 0 by the year 2000.

Strategy 7.3.1: Accelerate citywide-related drainage improvement.

Strategy 7.3.2: Maintain and/or clean the drainage catch basins and outfall ditches on a regular basis.

Strategy 7.3.3: Eliminate potential flood damages to properties in the neighborhood, especially in the primary flood prone areas.

OBJECTIVE 7.4: Improve other infrastructure elements in the neighborhood.

Strategy 7.4.1: Re-evaluate to determine if more streetlights are needed in other areas of the neighborhood.

Strategy 7.4.2: Resurface 1800 block of Florance Street, West 36th 39th, from Stevens to Bullock. Maintain brick streets with the same type of brick.

Strategy 7.4.3: Maintain inlets regularly to prevent runoff water from becoming stagnant and odorous.

Strategy 7.4.4: Pave W. 35th lane, from Ogeechee Road to Bullock Street.

Strategy 7.4.5: Work with Park and Tree Department to plant trees in the vacant tree spots in the neighborhood.

Strategy 7.4.6: Seek funding to enable the implementation of a tree planting project to fill vacant tree spots identified in the plan.

H. PROPERTY MAINTENANCE AND AESTHETICS

GOAL 8: A neighborhood that is clean and well maintained.

OBJECTIVE 8.1: Achieve a cleanliness rating of 3.0 or better.

- Strategy 8.1.1: Reactivate House-of-the-Month, Yard-of-the-Month and Block-of-the-Month programs to recognize residents and businesses for neighborhood improvement efforts. Provide rewards such as certificates and publicity to winners.
- Strategy 8.1.2: Encourage business owners to maintain the front of their shops, i.e., sweep sidewalks.
- Strategy 8.1.3: Install trash receptacles at bus stops and major intersections. The receptacles should be anchored firmly to the ground.
- Strategy 8.1.4: Conduct workshops that will acquaint neighborhood residents with the need for recycling, litter control and environmental quality.
- Strategy 8.1.5: Aggressively enforce city ordinance regarding illegal dumping.
- Strategy 8.1.6: Organize regular neighborhood clean-up campaigns. This should be done through a block captain network to help keep the neighborhood clean.
- Strategy 8.1.7: Strengthen the Adopt-A-Spot Program with assistance from the Community Services/Keep Savannah Beautiful.
- Strategy 8.1.8: Develop and implement a program that will employ neighborhood youth and/or use them as volunteers to maintain properties belonging to elderly and disabled residents.
- Strategy 8.1.9: Insist on proper maintenance of all commercial property. The simple act of cleaning exterior facades followed by adequate maintenance would in itself result in significant architectural improvement.

I. NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY STRATEGY

GOAL 9: A safe environment free of crime and substance abuse.

- OBJECTIVE 9.1: Reduce overall crime rate by 15% annually. Increase the cooperation between the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association, residents and police.

- Strategy 9.1.1: Strengthen the Neighborhood Crime Watch Program. This should be supported by a continued police presence in the area. To involve neighborhood residents in reporting crime, an extensive outreach effort by the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association is needed, as well as other organizations through the Block Captain Network. Initiate door-to-door interviews with residents by neighborhood watch members and police beat officers to determine neighborhood needs and to inform them of crime reduction efforts.
- Strategy 9.1.2: Demolish condemned buildings that cannot be renovated to eliminate safe havens for criminals.
- Strategy 9.1.3: Assist the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association to implement Operation Identification, working with the police to inscribe household and business property with identification numbers that allow police to trace recovered stolen property and return it to its owner.
- Strategy 9.1.4: Establish youth crime watch program.
- Strategy 9.1.5: Provide more after school programs to keep youth occupied.
- Strategy 9.1.6: Require and enforce property owner responsibility for assuring the safety of their property by eliminating environments favorable to unsafe conditions, ranging from dilapidated buildings to gang hangouts.
- Strategy 9.1.7: Implement a police week and coordinate that with the National Night Out to bring police and neighbors together.
- Strategy 9.1.8: Involve ministers in the fight against crime and in the neighborhood revitalization efforts.
- Strategy 9.1.9: Motivate the youth in the neighborhood to engage actively in improving the neighborhood.
- Strategy 9.10: Strengthen the "Eye and Ear of the Police" program. This program involves residents policing their neighborhood to deter crime. The Savannah Police Department will supply communication equipment such as cellular telephones to residents so that they can report directly to police headquarters or Precinct II when they observe

suspicious incidents.

Strategy 9.1.11: Consider implementing crime prevention through environmental design. This will entail a comprehensive approach to fight crime through design and use of public and open spaces using planning and building design techniques to prevent criminal activities. Elements to be considered may include landscaping, sidewalks, fencing, street layout, lighting, tree planting and maintenance, signage parking and design.

OBJECTIVE 9.2: Reduce the number of crimes against persons by 10% annually, from 64 in 1998 to 0 in 2008. Also, reduce the number of crimes against property by 20% annually, from 238 in 1998 to 0 by 2003.

Strategy 9.2.1: Encourage property owners to post "no trespass" signs warning of arrest and prosecution. This will allow police to arrest or disperse loiters.

Strategy 9.2.2: Initiate periodic stake-outs in high crime areas to apprehend perpetrators of burglaries.

Strategy 9.2.3: Inform homeowners of available incentives for making their homes and properties more secure which will help them take advantage of these benefits in addition to creating a secure neighborhood. The incentive may be lower insurance premiums.

J. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

GOAL 10: A neighborhood where the rates of unemployment, inactivity, and underemployment are equal to or less than the overall rates for the City.

OBJECTIVE 10.1: Reduce the unemployment rate from 18.3% in 1998 to 8.3% by 2008.

Strategy 10.1.1: Provide job readiness and job training programs for the unemployed and underemployed residents in the neighborhood.

Strategy 10.1.2: Target job-training programs and placement to low income residents in the neighborhood. The existing job placement and training agencies in the City should coordinate this

program with the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association.

- Strategy 10.1.3: Establish Entrepreneur Development Program for youth in the neighborhood.
- Strategy 10.1.4: Encourage the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association to participate in attracting new businesses and potential employers to the area. This should be coordinated with the MLK Revolving Loan Fund, SDRA, and SBAC.
- Strategy 10.1.5: Consider establishing a Community Development Corporation (CDC) to serve as a spring board for youth and adult entrepreneurial development, as well as for new and existing businesses.
- Strategy 10.1.6: Initiate MLK Blvd., Corridor Revitalization Study, including Ogeechee Road and 37th Street, and/or expand the scope of the existing study by Savannah Downtown Renewal Authority (SDRA), from Gwinnett Street to Victory Drive.
- Strategy 10.1.7: Establish MLK, Jr., Corridor Business Association.
- Strategy 10.1.8: Remove barriers that impede access to capital for small business development, i.e., redlining.
- Strategy 10.1.9: Establish partnerships between residents and neighborhood businesses. Involve the businesses in the neighborhood revitalization efforts.
- Strategy 10.1.10: Develop a business mentoring program. Have experienced businesses share experience ideas and advice with would-be entrepreneur, new and struggling businesses in the area.
- Strategy 10.1.11: Conduct bi-annual employment/job opportunities fair in the neighborhood.
- Strategy 10.1.12: Match neighborhood residents with local jobs.
- Strategy 10.1.13: Encourage the Cuyler-Brownsville Neighborhood Association and residents to support businesses in the neighborhood.

Strategy 10.1.14: Provide incentives to attract new businesses to the neighborhood, i.e., business tax abatement, interest free startup loans, and zoning concessions.

APPENDIX 1
VACANT PARCELS BY ADDRESS

Appendix 1: Vacant Parcels by Address

1. 620-628 West Anderson Lane
2. 526 West 31st Street
3. 600 block of West 31st Street, northside
4. 523 West 31st Street
5. 1606 Burrough Street
6. 1600 Ogeechee Road
7. 1610 Ogeechee Road
8. 636 and 640 West 32nd Street
9. 610 West 32nd Street
10. 631 West 32nd Street
11. 620-640 Grapevine Street
12. 509 Grapevine Street
13. 525 Grapevine Street
14. 601 Grapevine Street
15. 1603 Burrough Street
16. 625-637 Grapevine Street
17. 1630 Ogeechee Road
18. 624-626 West 34th Street
19. 632-634 1/2 West 34th Street
20. 1634 A-F Bismark Street
21. 623 West 34th Street
22. 641 West 34th Street
23. 647 and 649 West 34th Street
24. 1703 Florance Street
25. 673 West 34th Street
26. 705 West 34th Street
27. 1705 Ogeechee Road
28. 728 Lavinia Street
29. 510 and 512 Kline Street
30. 511 Kline Street
31. 1821 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
32. 526 Kline Street
33. 602-608 Kline Street
34. 621 Kline Street
35. 641 Kline Street
36. 643 Kline Street
37. 648 Kline Street
38. 1816-1818 Florance Street
39. 1802 Harden Street
40. 639 West 35th Street
41. 802 West 35th Street
42. 801-817 West 35th Street

Appendix 1: Vacant Parcels by Address Continued

43. 1017 West 35th Street
44. 1104 West 35th Street
45. 1105 West 35th Street
46. 610 West 36th Street
47. 633-637 West 36th Street
48. 704 West 36th Street
49. 2000-2004 Bullock Street
50. 1012-1020 West 36th Street
51. 1909 Ogeechee Road
52. 2006 Florance Street
53. 2009 Harden Street
54. 2013 Harden Street
55. 2006-2008 Bullock Street
56. 508-510 West 37th Street
57. 616 West 37th Street
58. 618 West 37th Street
59. 711 West 37th Street
60. 712 West 37th Street
61. 2013 Ogeechee Road
62. 1013 West 37th Street
63. 1022 West 37th Street
64. 1025 West 37th Street
65. 1026 West 37th Street
66. 2106-2108 Harden Street
67. 2105-2107 Florance Street
68. 2116 Harden Street
69. 2217 Florance Street
70. 2111 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
71. 601 West 38th Street
72. 628 West 38th Street
73. 901 West 38th Street
74. 925 West 38th Street
75. 1002-1010 West 38th Street
76. 629 West 39th Street
77. 725 West 39th Street
78. 2301-2303 Harden Street
79. 2310 Florance Street
80. 834 West 39th Street
81. 2217 Ogeechee Road
82. 1006-1008 Terrace Street
83. 1025 Terrace Street
84. 521 West 40th Street

Appendix 1: Vacant Parcels by Address Continued

85. 623-645 West 40th Street
86. 710-712 West 40th Street
87. 709 West 40th Street
88. 909 West 40th Street
89. 1104 West 40th Street
90. 2404-2408 Harden Street
91. 2412-2414 Harden Street
92. 2403-2405 Harden Street
93. 2409 Florance Street
94. 2407 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
96. 624-628 West 40th Lane
97. 2413 Bullock Street
98. 2415 Bullock Street
100. 2423 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
101. 522 West 41st Street
102. 524 West 41st Street
103. 526 West 41st Street
104. 942 West 41st Street
105. 2501 Harden Street
106. 902 West 41st Street
107. 1100 West 41st Street
108. 1212 West 41st Street (corner of 41st and Ogeechee Road)
109. 520-522 West 42nd Street
110. 601 West 42nd Street
111. 613 West 42nd Street
112. 615 West 42nd Street
113. 616/618 West 42nd Street
114. 702 West 42nd Street
115. 708 West 42nd Street
116. 829 West 42nd Street
117. 901 West 42nd Street
118. 909 West 42nd Street
119. 1014 West 42nd Street
120. 1208A West 42nd Street
121. 1228 west 42nd Street (corner of 42nd and Ogeechee Road)
122. 2607 Burroughs Street
123. 2611 Burroughs Street
124. 1114 West Victory Drive
125. 1206 West Victory Drive
126. 1228 West Victory Drive
127. 1260 West Victory Drive (corner of Victory and Ogeechee Road)

Source: City Housing Codes Inspections, 1995

