

Grandin Court

NEIGHBORHOOD
PLAN

Adopted by Roanoke City Council
January 18, 2005

ROANOKE
VIRGINIA



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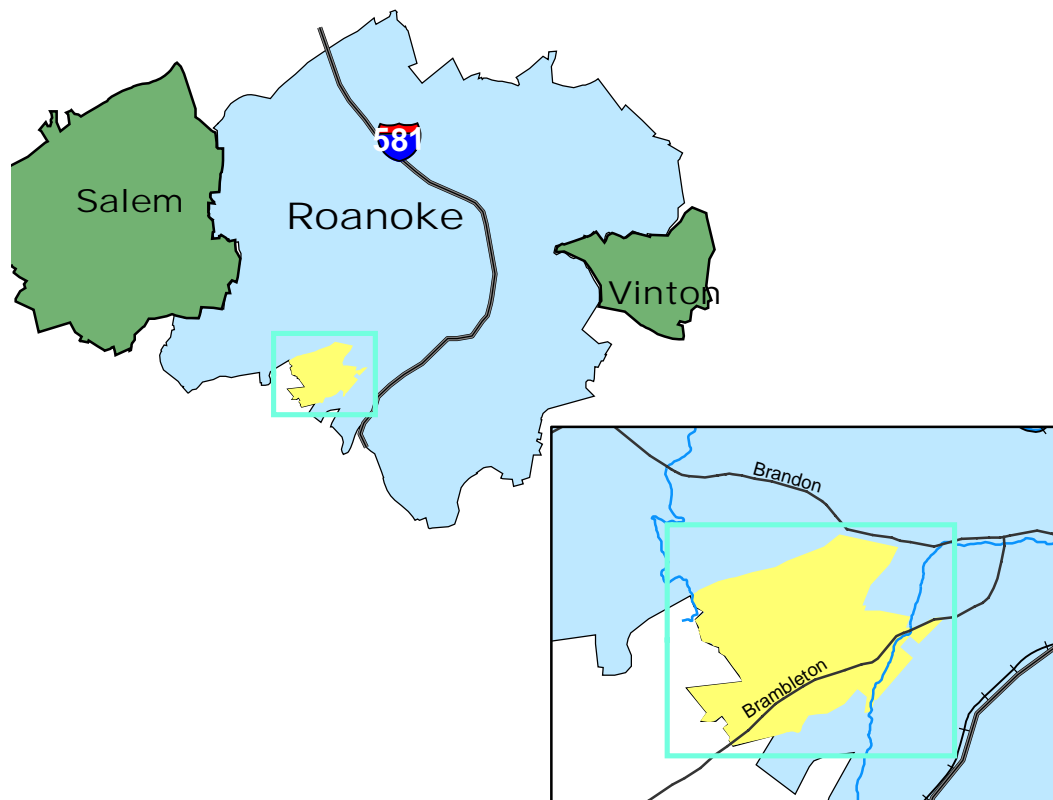
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Planning Building & Development

Introduction

Grandin Court is a well-defined residential community bordered by Grandin Road to the north, Creston Avenue to the south, Persinger Road to the east, and Roanoke County to the west. The neighborhood is fully developed with most of the homes built between 1920 and 1960 on undulating topography. The arterial corridors of Brambleton Avenue and Grandin Road provide access to other parts of the region.

Grandin Court has an abundance of amenities that create a high quality of life. The neighborhood features three parks, two greenways, a recreational center, schools within walking distance, and pleasing streets that residents walk day and night. The majority of houses are one- and two-story brick houses that front tree-lined streets, creating a sense of permanency and stability. Located in southwest Roanoke, Grandin Court borders Roanoke County with direct access toward downtown via Brambleton Avenue. Children attend Grandin Court Elementary, James Madison Middle School, and Patrick Henry High School. Excellent city parks and greenways create wonderful visual beauty and recreational activities.



Neighborhood Planning

In 1985, *Roanoke Vision*, the city's comprehensive plan, called for the preservation and enhancement of existing neighborhoods and recommended that city policies and actions support neighborhood revitalization and preservation. The current comprehensive plan for the city, *Vision 2001-2020*, continues support for neighborhood-based planning for a livable and sustainable city. Roanoke must work to retain its citizens and improve the livability of its neighborhoods.

Staff from the City of Roanoke's Planning Building and Development Department involved the community in the development of this plan. Planners worked with Grandin Court residents in 2004 through a series of workshops to identify priorities and issues of concern. Community input was used to develop the policies and actions in the plan.

This plan recommends actions that can be carried out by citizens, the city, neighborhood organizations, as well as policies that are used to guide future decisions. Neighborhood and area plans are official documents that City Council adopts and they become part of the city's comprehensive plan. These initiatives are reflected in the policies and actions located in the Recommendations section of this document.





High Priority Initiatives

This plan proposes **four** priority initiatives:

1. Reactivate the Grandin Court Civic League.
2. Strengthen neighborhood identity.
3. Encourage the establishment of vibrant village centers.
4. Improve corridors and gateways.

Plan Elements

Discussion in this plan is organized into six major **Plan Elements**:

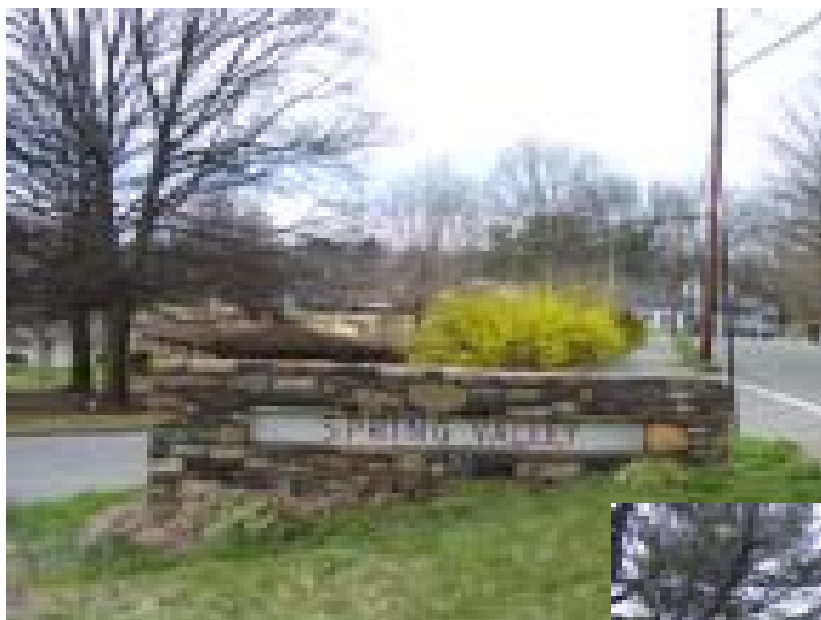
1. Community Design looks at physical design development and land use patterns.
2. Residential Development addresses existing and new housing opportunities.
3. Economic Development deals with commercial and industrial development in the neighborhood.
4. Infrastructure evaluates transportation systems and utility systems.
5. Public Services assesses the critical functions of the Fire/EMS, police and other city services.
6. Quality of Life addresses recreational opportunities, environmental issues, education, and community involvement.

Development History

Land development in what would become Grandin Court first began when William Terry purchased his first 400-acre tract of land in 1775. Seven years later, he purchased another 400-acre tract. The oldest standing house in the neighborhood is the 'Caretaker' house located in Fishburn Park. The log house, now covered with wood siding, was built before 1850 on a large tract of land that straddled Murray Run.

Grandin Court began development in 1926. The area became a part of Roanoke through annexations in 1926 and 1943. Four entities owned large tracts of land that eventually developed into subdivisions, schools and an office park. In 1923, the Weaver Heights Corporation mapped out "suburban lots" on 140 acres of land that developed into Weaver Heights and Grandin Court subdivisions within the newly annexed area.

The 1943 annexation brought in 119 acres that became Fishburn Park, and the land now occupied by James Madison Middle School and Virginia Western Community College. The 100-acre Kazim Temple tract developed into Shrine Hill Park and the Patrick Henry High School complex. In 1949, the land owned by the Shenandoah Life Insurance Company became their office complex.



The old with the new: the ca. 1850 log house covered with lap siding in Fishburne Park, and the sign for the 1950s development of Spring Valley.

People

According to the 2000 Census, Grandin Court contains 2,463 residents and 1,212 housing units. The "average" Grandin Court family has a 36-year old male and a 41-year old female living in an \$110,000 home. They earn a median household income of \$44,000 (much higher than the citywide median household income of \$30,719), and have a commute of 20 minutes or less. Nearly one-half of the residents pursued higher education degrees and three-fourths of the registered voters vote. Females outnumber males 53% to 47%.

The tables below show general demographic characteristics of Grandin Court and the surrounding census tract/block groups for the last two censuses. Please note that the numbers below reflect a slightly larger geographic area than the Grandin Court neighborhood. The total population decreased slightly, mostly reflected in younger adults and elderly populations. The 2000 Census introduced a race category to incorporate citizens who consider themselves of two or more races. Fifty-nine residents classified themselves under the new category.

Table 1. Total Population and Racial Composition

	1990 Census	2000 Census	Percent
Total Population	2,530	2,463	-3%
White	2,509	2,381	-5%
African American	11	23	+101 %
Other Races and Multiracial	10	59	+500%

Grandin Court is losing population and households while gaining slightly in diversity; the neighborhood contains a 97% white population, while Roanoke has a 69% white population. Grandin Court's population decreased by 3% (66 people) between 1990 and 2000. During the same period, Roanoke's population decreased by 1.5 %. Such population losses can usually be attributed to smaller household sizes. However, the number of housing units also decreased. It is likely that some conversion of units from multifamily to single-family occurred, leading to fewer housing units and a population decrease.

Table 2. Age Distribution

	1990 Census	2000 Census	Percentage Change
Total Population	2,530	2,463	-3%
0-17 Years	505	526	+4%
18-39 Years	851	741	-12%
40-64 Years	595	773	+30%
65 Years and Over	580	423	-37%

Table 3. Age Distribution: Comparison between Grandin Court and Roanoke, 2000

	Grandin Court	Roanoke
0-17 Years	22%	23%
18-39	30%	31%
40-64 Years	31%	30%
65 Years and Over	18%	16%

Community Design

Physical Layout

Grandin Court is a well-defined residential community bordered by Grandin Road to the north, Creston Avenue to the south, Persinger Road to the east, and Roanoke County to the west. The neighborhood is fully developed with most of the homes built between 1920 and 1960 on undulating topography. The arterial corridors of Brambleton Avenue and Grandin Road provide access to other parts of the region.

The neighborhood has focal points and community gathering places in its schools and parks. Fishburn Park, Shrine Hill Park and Woodlawn Park provide large areas of open space and wooded areas for outdoor and recreational activities. Grandin Court Elementary, the Grandin Court Recreational Center, and the Patrick Henry High School complex all provide excellent amenities and visual variety.



The view northeast overlooking the Patrick Henry High School ballfield.

Land Use Patterns

The majority of land is zoned single-family residential with some commercially zoned land. Guilford Avenue has a strip of multifamily zoning. The total percentage of commercially zoned properties is minimal, mostly contained in the large parcel for Shenandoah Life, and the businesses along the western end of Brambleton Avenue. City parks and schools account for a large amount of total land use.



The zoning and land use in Grandin Court can be summarized in five general categories:

1. Traditional Residential—the neighborhood is comprised primarily of single-family detached houses with duplexes scattered throughout the area. Zoned as a Residential Single-Family District (RS-3), the district provides for medium population densities, and promotes and encourages the revitalization and preservation of single-family neighborhoods.



2. Mixed Density Residential—most of Guilford Avenue is a mix of single-family and multifamily residential units, while areas along Brambleton Avenue make up the primary Residential Multifamily, Medium Density District (RM-2). The RM-2 District is intended to encourage the preservation and enhancement of city neighborhoods which have historically developed with medium population densities and to provide for a compatible mix of housing types which encourage innovative infill development and to accommodate the efficient use of utilities.



3. Village Centers—Most commercial development is located along Brambleton Avenue. Shenandoah Life is also a large commercial use. Small-scale commercial uses are located along Brambleton Avenue between Spring Road and the City limit. On Grandin Road, two parcels are dedicated to commercial uses: a convenience store and a restaurant. These commercial areas are zoned General Commercial.

4. Office—Shenandoah Life is a large office building on a 27.5-acre tract, half of which is wooded.

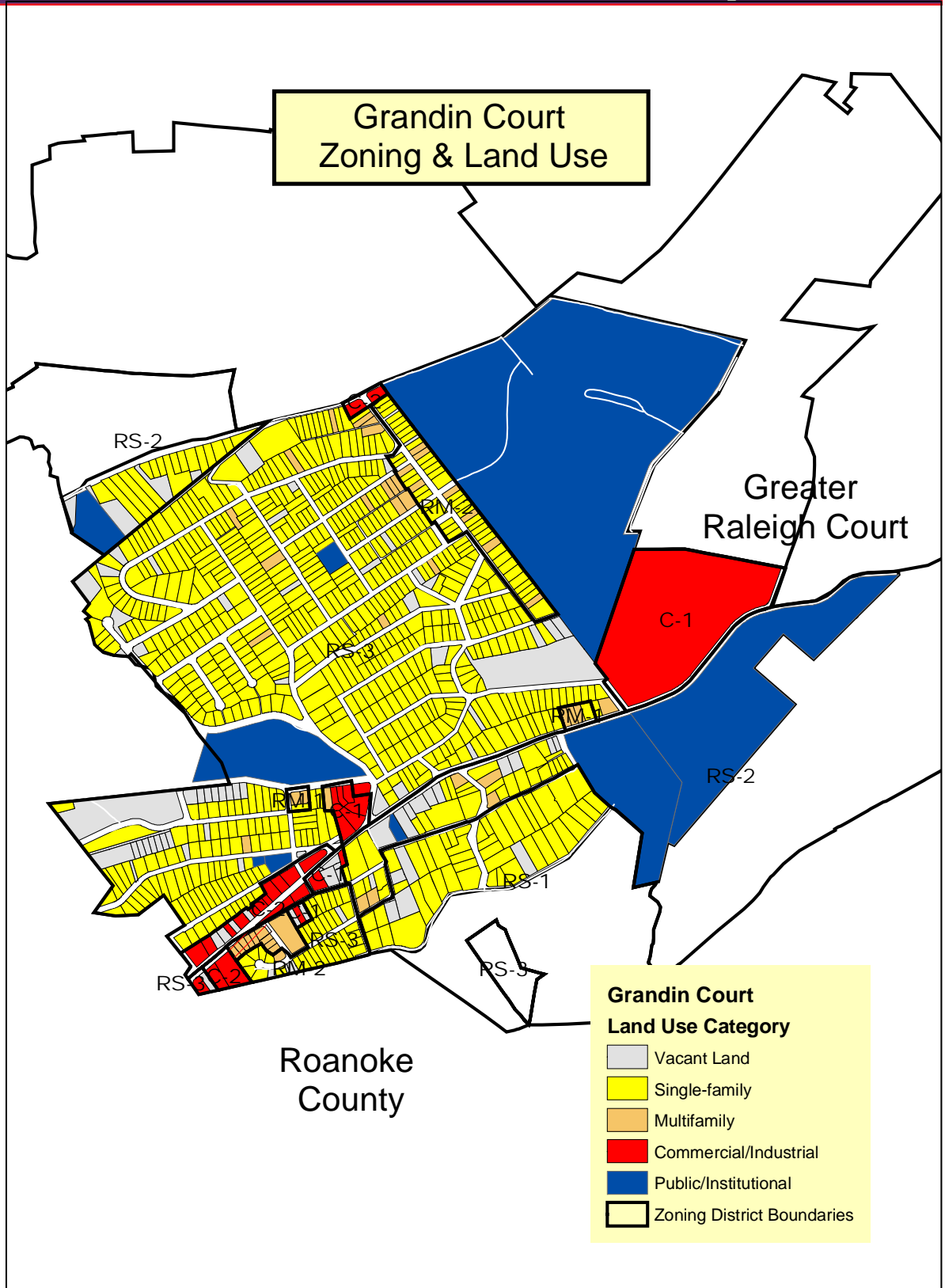
5. Institutional—Patrick Henry High School is a major presence. This complex contains the high school, an elementary school, a library, and sports facilities. In addition, a considerable amount of land is dedicated to wooded areas.



View east on Brambleton Avenue approaching the City of Roanoke.

As a major gateway to Roanoke, the commercial area along Brambleton Avenue should take on a distinct character, more like a village center than a continuation of the strip commercial along the County portion of the street. This change in character should be accomplished through application of office and neighborhood commercial zoning districts as well as special infrastructure improvements.

Likewise, the small commercial intersection at Guilford and Grandin should have neighborhood commercial zoning and special infrastructure treatments. This plan recommends that higher residential density be concentrated near village centers. Accordingly, the residential density along the southern portion of Guilford Avenue should be reduced through rezoning to a single-family district.



Community Design Issues:

- Address inappropriate commercial zoning.
- Define Brambleton Avenue as a place to better identify the neighborhood and increase business.
- Establish two village centers.
- Focus multifamily development near the village centers.

Residential Development



The Grandin Court neighborhood displays a median 1950s housing stock with a strong mix of historic Cottage, Bungalow, and American Foursquare styles popular during the 1920s and 1930s. The northeast residential area has a uniform grid street pattern, while the remaining streets follow the topography.

Grandin Court developed in three stages. About half of the current houses were first constructed in the northeastern corner during the 1920s. They remain in good condition and attractive today with their brick construction and pleasing environment. After World War II and through the 1950s, the former "J.P. Woods Lands" to the west, developed into the Spring Valley subdivision featuring one-story brick and frame Ranch style houses. Rich varieties of house types from the 1920s and 1950s perch on the steeper hills to the south of Brambleton Avenue. By the 1960s, housing development leveled off.



There are many strong examples of the housing stock in Grandin Court that make it a unique neighborhood.



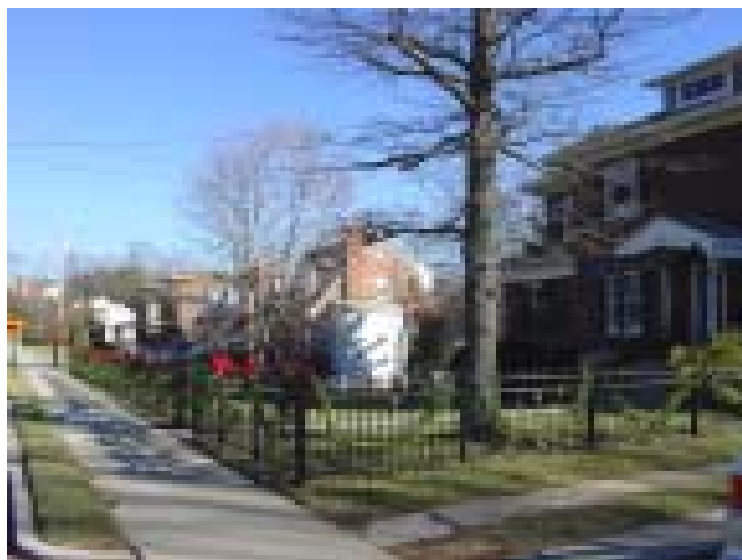


Although the area has a stable housing stock, recent infill housing has occurred that is incompatible with the character of the neighborhood. There are over 50 vacant residential lots on which to build, so it is important that new infill housing be well designed and compatible with existing housing. However, regulatory tools such as the Neighborhood Design District or a historic district are not applicable because the neighborhood does not meet the criteria for these opportunities.



The Grandin Court Neighborhood is above the city average in property value and below in the percentage of rents under \$500. Citizens value the housing stock in the area in terms of types and styles. Many houses are built of brick, which reduces long-term maintenance needs. Quality construction and high home ownership rates result in few housing maintenance issues. The owner-occupancy rate of 77% is much higher than the city rate of 56%. There are multifamily houses and apartments scattered throughout the neighborhood.

Traditionally a neighborhood dominated by single-family detached dwellings, Grandin Court and the surrounding area offers a balance of single-family and multifamily housing options. However, the study area has seen a shift to more renter-occupied units.





A good example of an American Foursquare style of architecture.

Table 4. Housing

	1990	2000	Percentage Change
Occupied Housing Units	1,170	1,144	-2%
Owner Occupied	984	943	-4%
Renter Occupied	186	201	+7%

Although Grandin Court enjoys a high rate of owner-occupancy, residents have cited their concern about increasing multifamily and single-family rental units. In accordance with *Vision 2001-2020*, future higher-density development should take place near activity nodes.

Residential Development Issues:

- Incompatible infill development and conversion of single-family homes to rental housing units.



Economic Development

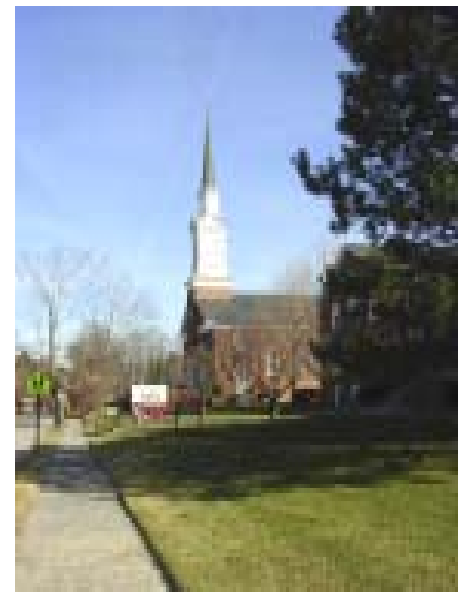
Grandin Court's economic activity is focused along Brambleton Avenue (U.S. Route 221). Brambleton Avenue has a variety of commerce and is a strong commuter route from adjoining Roanoke County into the city. Vacancies in this area do not last long as new establishments continue to replace outgoing ones.



The largest and oldest company in the neighborhood is the Shenandoah Life Insurance Company. Located on a 27.5-acre semi-wooded tract of land, the building and its setting lend to the visual appeal of the neighborhood. The original business opened in downtown Roanoke in 1916 to provide a "home-town" insurance company to western Virginia. Civic leader Robert Angell served as its first president until his death in 1933, when E. Lee Trinkle, a former governor of Virginia, took over as president. In 1943, the company purchased the land and shortly after WWII, built their modified Georgian style brick office building overlooking a sloping hill. The building has expanded and been remodeled over the years to meet new needs.

Brambleton Avenue

Brambleton Avenue contains virtually every type of development except industrial. It features a large church, three large office buildings, a historic restaurant and filling station, auto sales, single-family bungalows, multifamily houses, one-story commercial stores, a gas station, and a produce stand. With all the available shopping options, there are few sidewalks to provide safe pedestrian passage. Asphalt surrounds the businesses, especially along the north side of Brambleton Avenue. The lack of sidewalks and street trees makes the business area more auto-oriented. The commercial area needs to be a part of the neighborhood to make it pedestrian friendly, accessible, and attractive.



Previously known as Greenbrier Road (and earlier, Martin's Lane), Brambleton Avenue today remains two lanes until it reaches the Roanoke County line where it expands to four lanes. In 1932, the section of Greenbrier Road that ran through Grandin Court was developed into U.S. Route 221. One of the first establishments to take advantage of the new road was the 1936 Coffee Pot Restaurant and its adjacent filling station. This popular roadside destination for travelers originally served as a teahouse. Steam emanated from the spout of the three-dimensional coffeepot sign. The vertical unhewn log building was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1996 and still provides entertainment for locals and travelers alike.



Detail of the Coffee Pot Restaurant's coffee pot



A classic 1950s business sign from a Brambleton Avenue shop

The commercial area of Brambleton Avenue developed over time with a variety of buildings and uses. Much of the street still contains single-family dwellings. Additionally, many of the brick commercial/office buildings that line the north side of the street were originally 1950s and 1960s single-family houses and later converted to commercial use. Most stores are one-story, with inconsistent setback lines with different roof shapes, signage, and uses. Anchoring the commercial sector on the eastern boundary is a cluster of two-story brick office buildings in a neo Colonial-Revival style. Typical businesses include a barber-shop, used car dealership, video store, cell phone store, insurance company, pizza delivery, and a dry cleaner. At the neighborhood meetings, the residents stressed that this commercial area needs beautification and traffic calming, and that this concentrated commercial area should not expand along Brambleton Avenue.



An office complex on Brambleton and Spring Avenue



An example of one of the many houses that were converted to businesses along Brambleton Avenue.

Village Centers



1936 Coffee Pot Restaurant

The original core business area of Grandin Court developed during the 1940s and 1950s at the corner of Brambleton Avenue and Ashby Street. This corner contains the only concentration of historic commercial buildings that resemble a traditional commercial style. Today, the three historic buildings (intact buildings 50-years of age or older) consist of the original 1936 Coffee Pot Restaurant, an adjacent used-car dealership that originally served as the 1952 Farris Atlantic Service Station, and a 1951, two-story brick commercial building that once housed Lipes Pharmacy (later Revco). Better signage, lighting, street trees and street furniture could make this corner a focal point for Grandin Court. Installing utilities underground has been proposed as an option for beautification in village centers throughout the city.



Former Lipes Pharmacy building



View northeast down Grandin Road looking towards the Grandin Road Village Center.

The two parcels that contain a restaurant and a convenience store at the corner of Grandin Road and Guilford Avenue should remain a small village center. Although both sides of Grandin Road have sidewalks, street crossings at corners need to be accented for pedestrian safety. Grandin Road also serves as a commuter route, and special streetscape enhancements at this corner may reduce traffic speed and increase the appeal of the neighborhood. Residents cited concerns about trash and parking in areas adjacent to these businesses.

Economic Development Issues:

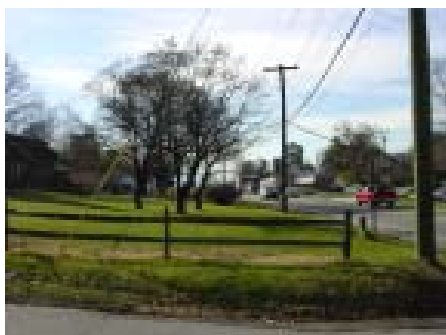
- Develop a Village Center at the corner of Grandin Road and Guilford Avenue.
- Redefine and beautify the Brambleton Avenue commercial area as a Village Center.
- Limit expansion of the Guilford/Grandin Village Center.

Infrastructure

Street System



Grandin Road and Brambleton Avenue are arterial streets along the north and south edges of the neighborhood. These streets are the primary means of access from the neighborhood to other parts of the city. Grandin Road is adequately sized to meet current and future traffic demands. Brambleton Avenue carries more traffic. VDOT estimates from 2003 indicate the street has about 14,000 ADT (Average Daily Trips). Traffic counts indicate a negligible increase in traffic since 1990. The Roanoke Valley Long-Range Transportation Plan does not recommend modifications to Brambleton Avenue. Any widening of Brambleton Avenue would most likely induce more traffic by encouraging more sprawl development in southwest Roanoke County.



Though Brambleton Avenue is not slated for widening, the function of the street can be improved. Between Spring Road and the City limit, Brambleton should be designed to support village center development. Sidewalks and curbs should be installed. Trees should be installed in grates on the street side of the sidewalk. Sufficiently wide grass strips laid between the sidewalks and the streets should be considered neighborhood-wide. Curb cuts should be carefully considered, limited in both size and number.

East of Spring Road, Brambleton Avenue has a more residential context. Mature trees just inside the curb line and steep topography would make it difficult to install a sidewalk without removing trees. This area needs further study to determine appropriate pedestrian accommodations. Farther east, where the street is bordered by Shenandoah Life and Fishburn Park, the street becomes winding and is unwalkable. This plan recommends that an asphalt path be installed on at least one side of the street. The residents suggested the north side of the street.



*Views of
Brambleton
Avenue, looking
south and north,
near Fishburn
Park.*



The interior streets of Grandin Court are generally arranged in a grid system. The grid, however, is modified due to topography. Streets are interconnected and there are few dead ends. The connected system tends to distribute traffic among many smaller streets. Guilford Avenue, Spring Road, Woodlawn Avenue, and Rosewood Avenue function as neighborhood collectors, which convey traffic between individual properties and arterials. Because there are so few linking streets between Grandin Road, Brambleton Avenue, and Colonial Avenue, some

of Grandin Court's neighborhood collector streets are used by cut-through traffic. Residents cited speeding and cut-through traffic as ongoing concerns. Residents suggested lowering the speed limit along the residential area of Brambleton Avenue from 35 miles per hour to 30 miles per hour.



In the 1990s, large volumes of cut-through traffic on Rosewood Avenue led to aggressive tactics to calm and divert traffic. The City of Roanoke installed several new stop signs and constructed asphalt curbs. Despite these measures, Rosewood remains a convenient access between Brambleton and Colonial, so it still experiences cut-through traffic and speeding, though to a far less extent than before.



Strategies should focus on encouraging traffic to travel at speeds appropriate for the neighborhood setting. Measures aimed at reducing traffic volume are not recommended. Such tactics tend to inconvenience residents the most and, even worse, simply shift traffic problems to other streets that have even less capacity to handle it. Cut-through traffic between Brambleton Avenue and Grandin Road tends to use two routes. From Grandin Road, traffic uses Guilford and Woodlawn Avenues. From Brambleton, traffic tends to use Spring Road, Livingston Road, and Guilford Avenue. Residents requested that the streets around the Grandin Court Elementary School have full stop signs, and that Rosewood and Woodlawn also need a stop sign. They also asked that the section of street currently named Woodlawn be changed to Spring Road because it connects to Spring Road on either end where it intersects with Brambleton Avenue.

Streetscape and traffic-calming priorities for Brambleton Avenue and Grandin Road should consider tree planting. The tree species must be selected to ensure survivability and to provide a generous canopy over the street.



This plan recommends a number of strategies to encourage lower traffic speeds and increase pedestrian safety and accessibility:

- Keep streets as narrow as possible. Narrow travel lanes tend to slow traffic.
- Install infill curbing and sidewalks. Sidewalks and curbing are missing in some sections of the neighborhood collector streets.
- Encourage on-street parking. Residents can have a role in slowing traffic by simply parking their cars on the street to narrow the apparent width of the street.
- When new curbs and/or sidewalks are installed, a minimum three-foot wide grass strip should be included between the curb and sidewalk to accommodate street trees.
- Plant street trees as part of the overall infrastructure plan. Trees should be long-lived species with spreading canopies.

Residents voiced concern about increased traffic and parking along the streets resulting from the construction of Patrick Henry High School. Measures are being taken to limit access in order to mitigate traffic impact.

Sidewalks and Curbs

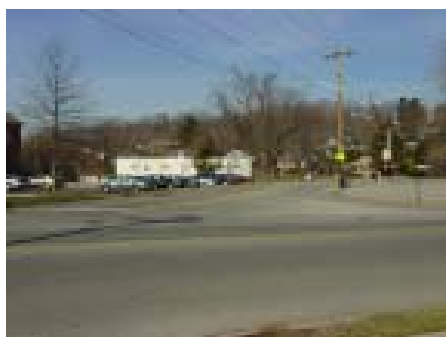
The majority of the neighborhood's streets have curbing. Some, however, have only gravel shoulders. Sidewalks are common throughout the neighborhood, but the area lacks a complete system. Many sidewalks abruptly begin and end in the middle of blocks. City resources to construct curbing and sidewalks on a citywide basis are limited, so in order to facilitate the timely installation of such improvements, residents may consider participating in cost sharing arrangements. Arterial and neighborhood collector streets should be priorities for new sidewalk construction. New sidewalks for local streets should be considered once arterial and collector streets have a complete system.

Gateways

This plan recommends a new Roanoke gateway sign on Brambleton Avenue near the intersection of Red Rock Road. The setting for the sign should be a curbed and landscaped median constructed in the triangular area created where the center turn lane transitions into a center stripe. This gateway would not only announce the entrance into the city, but would also serve as a visual transition to a lower traffic speed.



The areas where new gateway signs are needed, both for the City of Roanoke and for Grandin Court.



An island gateway sign for the neighborhood is recommended at this intersection at Brambleton Avenue and Spring Road.

Two neighborhood gateways are recommended on Spring Road and on Guilford Avenue - the two primary entrances to the neighborhood. The gateways should be of a durable material like masonry or metal. The pillars that mark the entry to the Rugby neighborhood provide a good example from which to borrow a style. Signs should be located within landscaped curb extensions on both sides of the street.



Stone pillars similar to those that mark the entrance into the Rugby neighborhood could be used on Guilford Avenue at this entrance into the Grandin Court.

Public Transportation

The area has excellent transit access. Valley Metro has two routes in the neighborhood. Route 65/66 provides public transportation along Memorial Avenue and Grandin Road including Patrick Henry High School. Route 61/62 serves Brambleton Avenue, Brandon Avenue, and Main Street. Most of the neighborhood is within a quarter mile of a transit route.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Connections

New sidewalk construction is needed in Grandin Court to provide for a more pedestrian friendly environment, especially along the commercial area of Brambleton Avenue. In addition, the shoulder of Brambleton should be widened along Shenandoah Life to provide better pedestrian access. According to the bicycle survey, both Grandin Road and Brambleton Avenue would require widening in order to accommodate bicycle traffic, although it appears that a bike shoulder could be built on the south side of Brambleton from Woodlawn Avenue east to Fishburn Park. For a more natural stroll through the neighborhood, two greenways are proposed, the Murray Run and the Mudlick Creek greenways that will connect to other parts of the city.

Utilities

American Electric Power, Verizon, and Roanoke Gas serve the area. Western Virginia Water Authority provides public water and sewer services, which are available throughout the neighborhood.

Streetscapes

The majority of the residential blocks have appealing streetscapes with rhythmic placement of trees and sidewalks, while others developed along flowing hill-sides. Houses are similar in architectural style and are consistently set back from the street. The majority of public rights-of-way have adequate curbs, sidewalks, street trees, although the system is not complete. Other blocks have mixed residential and commercial uses or have numerous vacant lots. The homes along the southern boundary overlook the city to the north from larger lots along a ridgeline.

Infrastructure Issues:

- Streetscape and pedestrian accommodations on Brambleton Avenue.
- Addressing traffic on collector streets.
- Defining City and neighborhood gateways.

Public Services

Public Safety

The Roanoke Police Department divides the city into 14 districts. The Grandin Court neighborhood is completely contained in District 9, but also includes the neighborhoods of Wasena, Franklin Road, and part of Raleigh Court. District 9 contains the fourth lowest "calls for service" in the city with 4,987 calls for fiscal year 02/03. Calls for service and reports increased 19% in 2002. Fire Station Number 7 serves the area for fire and emergency responses. Located at 1742 Memorial Avenue, S.W., the 1922, two-story brick fire station houses an engine and a ladder truck. The Fire/EMS Strategic Business Plan recommends future improvements to this station to continue its operation.

Recycling

According to the current comprehensive plan for the city, Vision 2001-2020, recycling and resource recovery will be promoted as a regional solid waste management tool. Roanoke provides curbside recycling collection throughout the neighborhood.

Public Schools and Libraries

Numerous schools and a library serve the community. Children attend Grandin Court Elementary School, James Madison Middle School, and Patrick Henry High School. Grandin Court Elementary and Patrick Henry are located within the neighborhood plan boundaries. Residents have easy access to the Raleigh Court Public Library.



Window detail at Grandin Court Elementary School.

Grandin Court Elementary School was built in 1950 to ease the overcrowding conditions at Virginia Heights School, and coincided with the development of the Spring Valley subdivision. The REACH program for preschoolers with disabilities had been housed here since its beginning in 1978. In 2000, the school underwent a major renovation with a library expansion, new classrooms, windows, and heating and cooling systems. The attractive school stands on 11 acres, with about half of it wooded and home to local wildlife.

James Madison Middle School, located at Brambleton Avenue and Overland Road, serves approximately 530 students in grades six, seven, and eight. This school is the first fully SOL-accredited middle school in Roanoke.



Patrick Henry High School serves the whole city, and is under Phase I of a major construction project that will be completed in three phases beginning in 2006, then 2007, and 2008. This educational facility will continue to serve as a neighborhood asset. It will contain a health and fitness center, but it is undetermined as to whether it will be open to the public. Patrick Henry was constructed in 1966 to serve 1,200 students. In 1975, the school's capacity expanded to 1,600 students and a new auditorium was constructed. The current campus also houses Raleigh Court Elementary and the Roanoke Valley Governor's School.

Built in 1966, the one-story brick Raleigh Court Public Library was expanded and renovated in 1982. Virginia Western Community College, located on Colonial Avenue, is an asset to the city, and offers continuing educational opportunities near the neighborhood.

Public Services Issues:

- Reorganize the Grandin Court Civic League in conjunction with the Police Department for better awareness and control of crime.
- Encourage recycling.

Quality of Life

Parks and Recreation

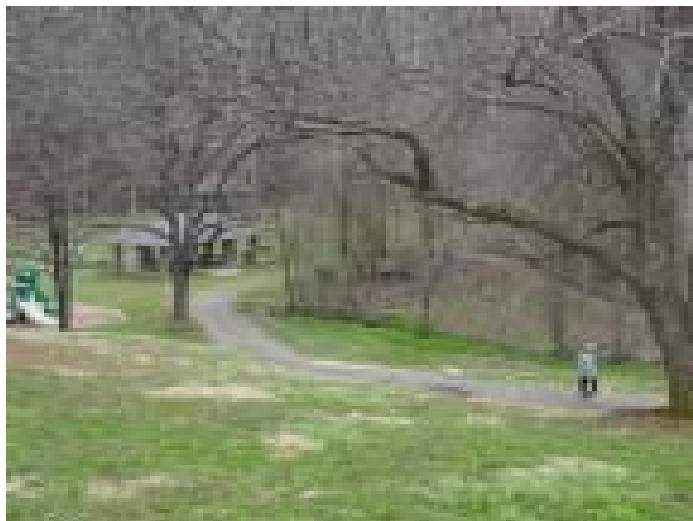
Grandin Court has an abundance of amenities that contribute to the neighborhood's quality of life. The neighborhood features three parks, a greenway, a recreational center, schools within walking distance, and attractive, walkable streets.

Grandin Court is noted for its abundant park space, natural resources, and recreational opportunities that benefit all Roanoke citizens. It features a large community park, two neighborhood parks, and a recreational center. Fishburn

Park is the largest community park in southwest Roanoke, and the fourth largest in the city. A community park contains between 10-100 acres and usually serves two or more neighborhoods. Blair J. Fishburn deeded it to the City in 1935. Its 43 acres contain open land, wooded hillsides, a flowing creek, a historic house, two tennis courts, a picnic shelter, two playgrounds, and numerous trails for hiking and biking.



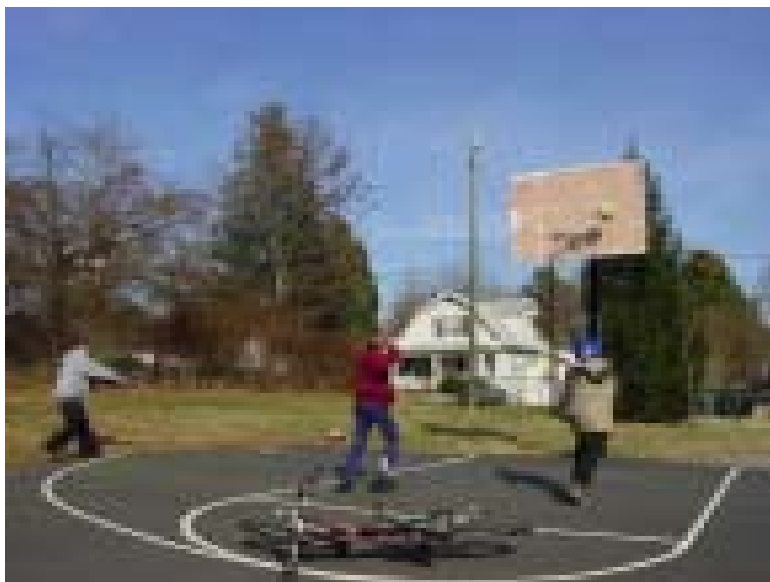
Views of Fishburn Park



Shrine Hill Park, a 6-acre neighborhood park is located within the Patrick Henry High School complex near the corner of Grandin Road and Guilford Avenue. A neighborhood park contains between two and nine acres, is the basic unit of the park system, and serves as the recreational and social focus of the neighborhood. This park features three lighted tennis courts, parking areas, and open space for soccer practice. Woodlawn Park is a unique six-acre wooded neighborhood park that features a creek and bird sanctuary. Murray Run Greenway runs through the park. Residents noted the need to maintain the quality of the wooded spaces that they enjoy.

Grandin Court Recreation Center, located in the residential core, was built in 1935 as the Weaver Heights Public School. The frame structure with large windows contains 1,900 square feet with a meeting room/dance floor, a crafts room, game room, and small kitchen. Dancing, arts and crafts, and games are the primary uses of the facility. The small site features a playground and a basketball court. Although regarded in good condition, the facility is outdated and undersized. With daily average participation of 60 people, the facility is heavily used. Residents voiced concern about the elderly population being able to use the center. The Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan recommends the building be renovated as a regional dance center. The building may also be used for the new location of the Grandin Court Civic League.

The small site features a playground and a basketball court. Although regarded in good condition, the facility is outdated and undersized. With daily average participation of 60 people, the facility is heavily used. Residents voiced concern about the elderly population being able to use the center. The Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Master Plan recommends the building be renovated as a regional dance center. The building may also be used for the new location of the Grandin Court Civic League.



Children having fun at the Grandin Court Recreation Center on a day off from school!

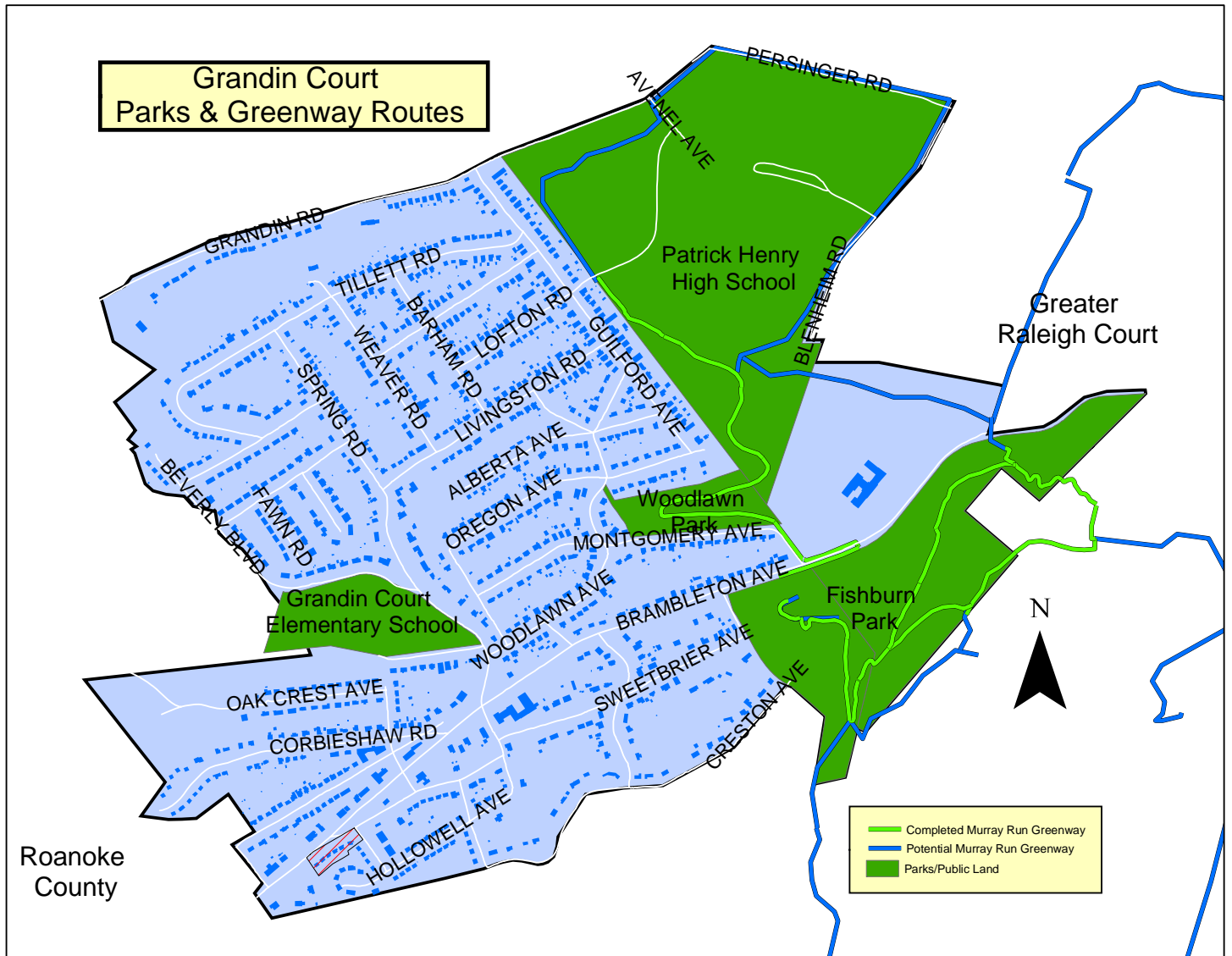


Greenways

The Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan proposes two greenways for the area:

Murray Run - extends west from the Roanoke River along the southern side of Brandon Avenue to the south across Colonial and Brambleton Avenues to southwest Roanoke County. The greenway is finished along part of the Patrick Henry High School complex, into Woodlawn Park, and all of Fishburn Park.

Mudlick Creek - This corridor would use city streets, sidewalks, and alleys to connect Mudlick Creek, and the adjacent Greater Deyerle and Raleigh Court neighborhoods, with the Patrick Henry High School complex.



Community Involvement

Interested residents have responded to concerns raised at the initial neighborhood planning workshops and are reactivating the Grandin Court Civic League to maintain and improve the neighborhood. The league was established in 1992 with the purpose of "maintaining wholesome living conditions in the neighborhood." The League had 70 members and met on an as-needed basis. Since 1996, the league has been inactive.

Quality of Life Issues:

- Identify the future role of the Grandin Court Recreational Center.
- Reactivate the Grandin Court Civic League.
- Maintain and improve the current green space and natural resources.



Vic Garbor of Parks and Recreation, gives a presentation to residents in one of three city workshops for the Grandin Court Neighborhood Plan.

Recommendations

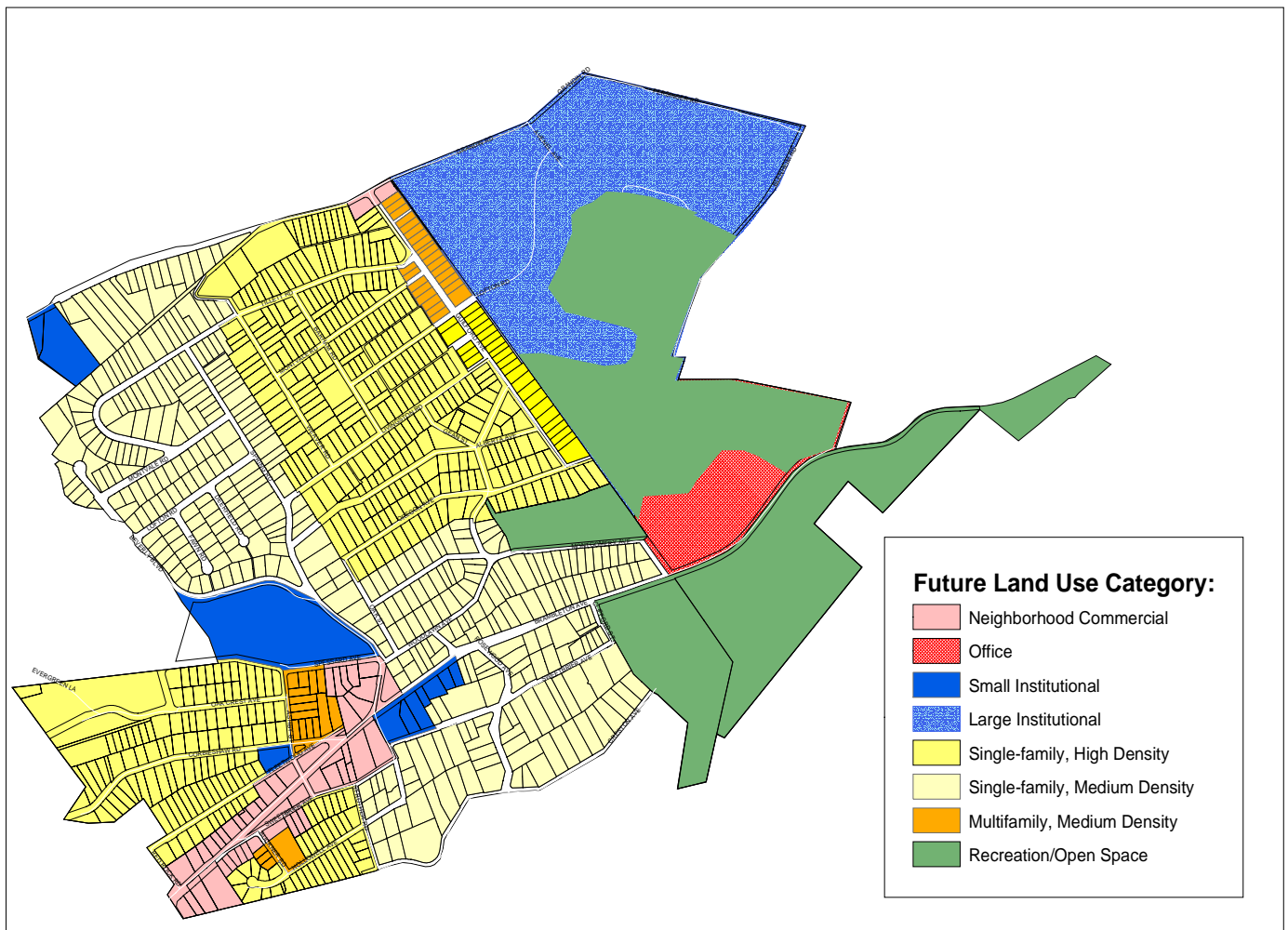
Recommended Policies and Actions

Recommendations are organized by the Plan Elements (community design, residential development, etc.). Recommendations take the form of “policies” or “actions.” Policies are principles or ways of doing things that guide future decisions. Generally, policies are ongoing. Actions are projects or tasks that can be completed and have a definite end.

Future Land Use

The *Future Land Use* plan is the most important recommendation of this plan. It specifies how future development should take place. Zoning is the principal tool that is used to implement the future land use plan.

Grandin Court Future Land Use



Community Design Recommendations

Policies

- Village Center development will be encouraged along the western segment of Brambleton Avenue and at the intersection of Grandin Road and Guilford Avenue. Village centers should be dense, compact in size, and identifiable. Uses in village centers should generally be neighborhood-oriented commercial, but should also contain some businesses that serve a larger market.
- Medium- to high-density residential development such as townhouses and apartments should be located near the village centers.
- Areas between village centers will be designated for primarily single-family dwellings.
- Community identity will be established at important nodes and locations in the neighborhood.

Actions

- Change zoning in village centers where needed to encourage a mix of uses and building scales that are appropriate in a neighborhood setting. Development codes should promote development of well-designed commercial structures that encourage pedestrian activity.
- Install gateway signs at locations identified in the Infrastructure/Gateway section of the plan. Work with the Grandin Court Civic League to obtain matching grant funds through the Department of Neighborhood Services to install neighborhood gateway signs.

Residential Development Recommendations

Policies

- New infill housing should be well designed and be compatible with the existing housing stock in scale, massing, and architectural styles and details.
- Generally, higher density residential uses will be centered in and around village centers. Between village centers, residential densities will be lower to reflect existing development patterns.

Actions

- Develop design guidelines for new infill housing that are universal in that they apply to both traditional and modern styles. Such guidelines can help communicate with builders what is appropriate in the neighborhood and provide guidance for land use decisions such as special exceptions.
- Change residential zoning to reflect appropriate densities in relation to village centers.

Economic Development Recommendations

Policies

- Support development of compact village centers in Grandin Court and encourage appropriate development in them. Most businesses will be neighborhood serving, but village centers will ideally contain some larger-market businesses. These commercial areas should not expand beyond their current boundaries.
- Infrastructure improvements will be targeted to support village center development.
- To encourage a pedestrian environment and desirable streetscape, new buildings in village centers should be placed close to or immediately adjacent to the right-of-way. Storefronts should be limited in width (25- 40-ft.).
- Parking is recognized as a necessity, but should not be allowed to dominate any development. Parking should be located primarily on-street. Zoning regulations should consider the availability of on-street parking when determining appropriate levels of on-site parking. Where additional parking is warranted, it should be located to the rear or side of buildings.
- The village center on Brambleton Avenue should make a distinct change in character when entering from Roanoke County. The development pattern and infrastructure should more resemble a main street than a continuation of the strip commercial pattern found in the County.

Actions

- Provide for general beautification, traffic calming, and better signage along Brambleton Avenue to promote more business activity.
- Limit surface parking. Develop mechanisms to limit surface parking lots and encourage use of shared parking lots and on-street parking. Look for opportunities to create on street parking when planning infrastructure improvements.

Infrastructure Recommendations

Policies

- Streets and gateways should be attractively designed. Specific attention should be placed on Brambleton Avenue because it is a major gateway to Roanoke. Functionally, streets will accommodate autos, pedestrians, and bicycles. Trees should be used to create a canopy over streets, so large species of trees should be used whenever possible.
- Special attention will be given to the quality of public street spaces in village centers. Decorative sidewalks, lamp posts, street furniture, trees, and other public improvements will distinguish village centers.
- Manage traffic to promote livability, commerce, convenience, and safety.

Actions

- Develop site-specific plans for the Brambleton Avenue village center.
- Improve the streetscape of Brambleton Avenue and Grandin Road. Traffic-calming strategies should be incorporated into improvements. The priority should be on providing an improved pedestrian environment.
- Infill curb, gutters, and sidewalks on neighborhood collector streets as needed.
- Develop safe bike/pedestrian connections through the neighborhood to link schools, libraries, village centers, downtown, and greenways.
- Install special infrastructure in village centers such as decorative lights, street furniture, textured sidewalks, and covered transit stops.
- Continue regular bus transportation available within a five-minute walk of residential areas.
- Develop a pedestrian/bike path along Brambleton Avenue from Woodlawn Avenue east to Fishburn Park.
- Maintain Brambleton Avenue as a two-lane street. Consider intersection improvements to improve safety and convenience without increasing capacity.
- Consider reducing speed limit along the residential area of Brambleton Avenue. (Currently being implemented).

Public Services Recommendations

Policies

- Citizens and police will work cooperatively to promote a safe and crime-free neighborhood.

Actions

- Reactivate the Grandin Court Civic League and continue to improve liaison activities with the Roanoke Police Department.

Quality of Life Recommendations

Policies

- Residents should be involved in neighborhood improvement and advocacy.
- Maintain and enhance the recreation, parks, and open space.
- Maintain and increase tree canopy.
- Promote the proposed greenways in the neighborhood.

Actions

- Reactivate the Grandin Court Civic League.
- Determine appropriate role and function of the Grandin Court Recreational Center; study parking arrangements for the facility.
- Continue greenway development.
- Preserve wooded areas.
- Plant street trees.

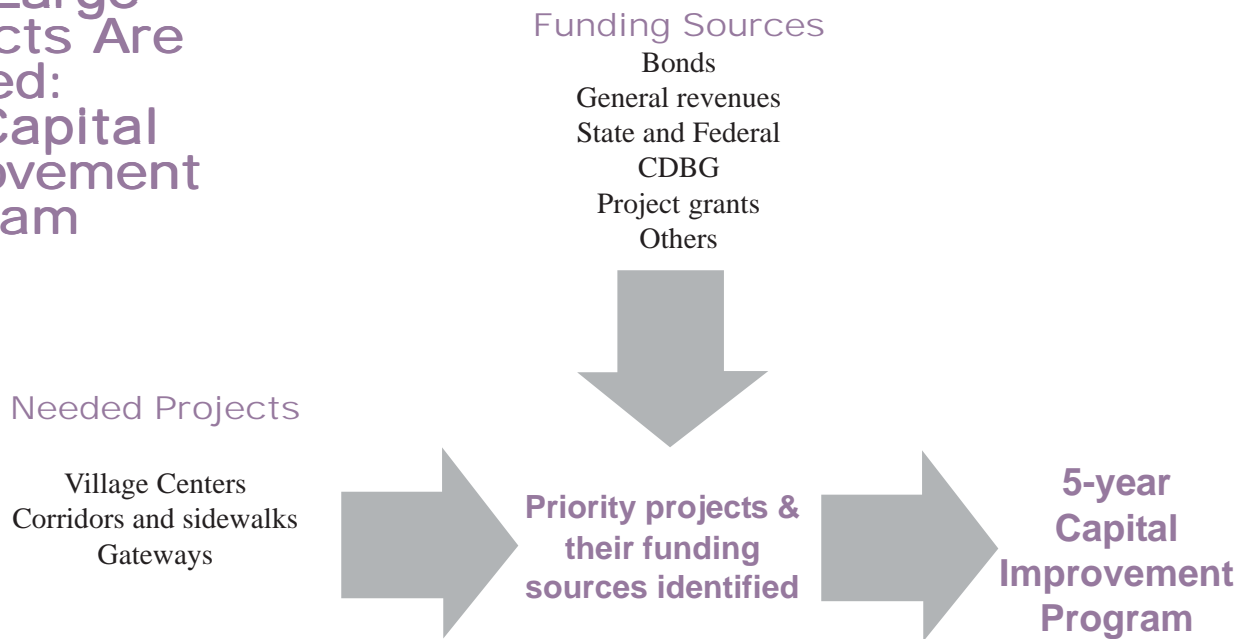
Implementation

Funding

Funding for major infrastructure projects is generally provided through the city’s Capital Improvement Program. Funding can come from a variety of sources, including CDBG, transportation funding, state and federal funds, and general revenue. The Capital Improvement Program is developed by identifying needed projects and matching them with potential funding sources. Each project is reviewed and ranked in terms of priority.

The chart on the following page identifies major projects, their time frame, the lead agency or department, and potential sources of funding. The cost of most projects such as streetscape improvements cannot be determined until more detailed planning is completed.

How Large Projects Are Funded: The Capital Improvement Program



Action	Year	Participants
• Zoning Changes	1 Year	Planning Building & Development
• Market village centers	Ongoing	Economic Development
• Brambleton Avenue traffic calming, beautification and gateway signage	2 Years	Public Works/Park and Recreation
• Tree planting and landscaping Forestry	Ongoing	Roanoke N'hood Advocates/Urban
• Develop Mud Lick Greenway Route	3 Years	Parks and Recreation/Public Works
• Reactivate Grandin Court Civic League and Neighborhood Watch	1 Year	Residents/Police & N'hood organization

Acknowledgments

City Council

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Alfred T. Dowe, Jr.
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