

West End

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION
STRATEGY AREA PLAN

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City of Roanoke
Department of Planning Building and Development
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I. Introduction and Purpose of the NRSA Plan

The development of a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) plan for the West End Community provides a unique opportunity to promote the long-term strength and stability of an older area of Roanoke with residential, commercial, industrial and historical uses. This plan identifies strategies to revitalize the West End target area which include increasing the homeownership rate through rehabilitation and new construction, rehabilitating owner-occupied housing, enhancing neighborhood business opportunities, and promoting employment opportunities. In coordination with the Roanoke Neighborhood Revitalization Partnership (RNRP), the City of Roanoke continues to forge a partnership with businesses, community groups, and residents to address community revitalization through a comprehensive strategy.

The framework for the NRSA approach was established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in the regulations entitled “Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs” [24 CFR 91.215(e)(2)]. This approach is intended to enable communities to tailor strategies to meet local needs through a flexible, holistic process linking economic, human, social, physical, and environmental and design concerns to build viable neighborhoods of opportunity. Under these regulations, cities are permitted to prepare and submit neighborhood revitalization plans as part of the local Consolidated Plan¹. The issuance of HUD Notice CPD-96-01 entitled “Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Revitalization Strategies” on January 16, 1996 provided further guidance addressing the approval regulatory framework and incentives to develop a NRSA.

The elements of this plan are consistent with the format presented in HUD Notice CPD-96-01 and include:

- Boundaries – The boundaries of the designated area.
- Demographic Criteria – The demographic characteristics of the area (statistics about the residents of the community).
- Consultation – The consultative approach to the community stakeholders (input from the residents, business owners, nonprofit organizations, community groups and churches located in the designated area).
- Assessment – An assessment of the economic conditions of the area and the opportunities for economic development.
- Economic Empowerment – The plan to create meaningful jobs for low- and moderate-income persons of the area.
- Performance Measurements – The plan to identify progress that is readily measurable.

Although the strategies presented in this plan will ultimately generate a number of important benefits for the community, the NRSA plan will enable the City of Roanoke to implement a mixed-income development strategy for the community while providing certain flexibility in the use of CDBG-funded business development assistance. CDBG funds for affordable housing development have traditionally benefited only low-income families. The NRSA plan will allow the City of Roanoke to reconstruct or rehabilitate and market housing in the West End

¹ In order to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City must submit a five-year Consolidated Plan (CP) and Annual Updates. The five-year CP describes our City, our priorities and objectives, and the specific funding and activities planned for the period.

Neighborhood to individuals and families of a diverse range of income levels, thereby creating a broader income base in the community.

Upon adoption by the Roanoke City Council and approval by HUD, this plan will become part of the City of Roanoke's 2011-2015 Consolidated Plan. The NRSA-related activities in West End are expected to extend through 2014, and likely into 2015. Additionally, the NRSA plan will be evaluated periodically against the benchmarks established herein, and to determine whether activities will require a continuation under the next Consolidated Plan.

NRSA Mission Statement

The area designated by the City of Roanoke in 2011 as the next area for future Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds, and referred to as the *West End Target Area*, will be revitalized with a concentration of public and private funds that return the area to its origins as a safe, stable and economically viable destination for residents and businesses alike, with a high quality of life that is suitable and healthy for people of all ages, lifestyles and origins.

II. West End Background and History

The West End Target Area (“target area”) encompasses portions of five neighborhoods. Historically the neighborhoods adjoining downtown Roanoke to the west were referred to collectively as the *West End*, but four of the City’s planning areas - West End, Hurt Park, Old Southwest and Mountain View – constitute most of the Strategy Area. Recently, the Downtown West Neighborhood Association formed and overlaps a small portion of the Strategy Area. Neighborhood boundaries and the boundaries of this NRSA plan are included as attachments. The boundaries of the NRSA planning area are herein referred to as West End. At least three neighborhood organizations will be involved in NRSA planning and implementation.

The Strategy Area adjoins the City of Roanoke’s previous NRSA, Hurt Park, just to the north. Much of the development, history, and current issues of the West End mirror those of Hurt Park.

West End has become deteriorated and is dealing with years of disinvestment, yet at the same time it was selected as a focal point to use the City’s HUD funds due to numerous recent improvements from the public and private sectors. The City’s goal is to use targeted public investment to spur further revitalization of the entire neighborhood. The NRSA is an important component of using public investment in a comprehensive approach that will “prime the pump” for private investment in the neighborhood.

Like many urban neighborhoods, the West End community continues to deal with the consequences of several decades of suburban growth that fostered an exodus of homeowners. It is crucial that the community is involved in determining its own future and that the community's goals and interests are reflected in future development, ultimately leading to a better and more vibrant West End.

In 2001, Roanoke adopted a new policy for the use of HUD funds. This policy focuses CDBG and HOME resources in targeted neighborhood areas to achieve visible and lasting impacts. After the Bullitt-Jamison corridor was designated as an initial pilot area to implement and test the efficacy of the targeted approach, the City Manager appointed a “Neighborhood Selection Task Force,” a 15-member group of community leaders, housing professionals, realtors, and bankers, to determine the next neighborhoods to be targeted. The group developed an objective methodology, including criteria for evaluating neighborhood need. Of the 26 predominantly low and moderate income neighborhoods, six were identified for future concentrated HUD funding assistance: Gainsboro, Gilmer, Hurt Park, Loudon-Melrose, Old Southwest and Washington Park.

Since the HUD policy and neighborhood selection approach were adopted by City Council, three neighborhoods (including the initial pilot area) have been the focus of targeted efforts using HUD funds. In the latter two, Gainsboro and Hurt Park, a NRSA was used to guide the revitalization process. Although those efforts achieved many of their stated goals, City leadership realized that changes in the economy and varying degrees of success in some aspects of the policy warranted evaluating the policy to determine if any changes to it were needed.

In 2010, the City formed a 10-member task force to review the HUD policy adopted in 2001. The task force recommended slight changes to the policy’s allocation of funds and also chose three new *target* areas. In contrast to the Neighborhood Selection Task Force in 2002, which selected six neighborhoods, the Task Force opted to choose three distinct corridors, two of which

included overlapping neighborhood boundaries. In addition, the selection was based after a quantitative analysis of all eligible neighborhoods that put equal weight on *needs* and *opportunities*. The objective was to select areas that not only had issues that needed to be addressed with the City's allocation of HUD funds (*needs*), but also to invest in areas that already were experiencing some form of improvement (*opportunities*).

Their recommendations resulted in a revised HUD policy that City Council adopted in 2010. The revised policy continued the previous policy's directive to invest the majority of the City's HUD funds into one area of the city at a time. It also included the three new target areas and directed City staff to further evaluate the three to determine which one offered the best chance to achieve optimal outcomes through the allocation of HUD funds.

In 2011 an interdepartmental team of City staff met to determine which of the three target areas should be selected. In contrast to previous target area decisions, relevant City departments were asked to advise on which areas were best to invest in and what potential projects could be accomplished. The West End area was the overwhelming choice due to two very active neighborhood organizations, public support, and the significant number of projects that had been completed there in recent years.

Prior to the City's evaluation of this area in 2011, three different plans were adopted by City Council over the years to address the neighborhoods in the West End target area. These include:

Outlook Roanoke Update, the downtown plan, adopted in 2002

The Old Southwest Neighborhood Plan, 2nd edition, adopted in 2009

The Hurt Park/Mountain View/West End Neighborhood Plan, adopted in 2003

Each of these plans was created through a public planning process that involved residents, property owners and stakeholders. Outlook Roanoke Update differs from the latter two in that at the time it was written, there were very few downtown residents, especially in or near the West End target area. Since then, new residential and commercial development has taken shape in the area where downtown and the West End meet. Furthermore, a Downtown Residents Association has formed.

The *Old Southwest* and the *Hurt Park/Mountain View/West End Neighborhood Plans* both address similar issues; substandard housing, concentrations of crime, with low-income and poorly-educated populations. Data from the HUD Task Force Neighborhood Selection process in 2010 further revealed these same issues. However, as previously noted, significant public and private investment in the West End recently provides a unique opportunity to further improve this corridor through the implementation of this NRSA plan.

III. Components of the Plan

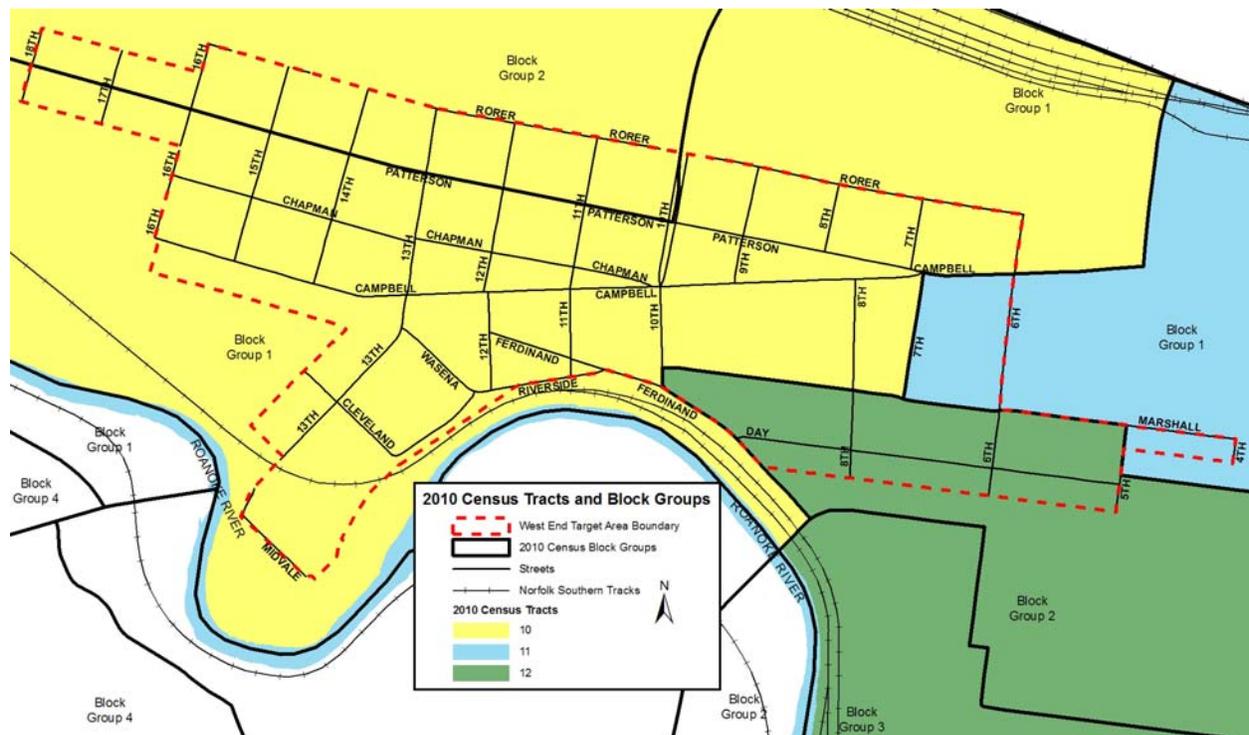
A. Boundaries

Located just west of downtown in the City's southwest quadrant, the West End target area is bounded on the west by 18th Street, on the south by the Roanoke River and the alley between Elm and Day Avenues, on the north by Rorer Avenue, and on the east by 4th Street (see map below). This NRSA identifies some projects geographically and some by programmatic outcome. The bulk of the NRSA plan pertains to housing, which is consistent with the City's revised HUD Policy.



B. Demographic Criteria

The NRSA focuses on a portion of several neighborhood areas in the City of Roanoke. These neighborhood areas lie within three Census Tracts: 10, 11, and 12. Therefore, demographic information has been collected for a portion of multiple census tracts. The vast majority of the area is located in Census Tract 10, Block Group 2, but since Census Tract 10 block group boundaries were adjusted in 2010, we will compare information based on the entire Census Tract, which remained the same between the 2000 and 2010 Censuses. Approximately, 1/6 of the area is located in Census Tract 12, Block Group 2. Only four residential properties reside in Census Tract 11, so as such a small percentage of the population, it has been excluded from the demographic data listed. Table 1 below displays the most recent data available from the 2010 Census. The Census Tract and Block Group boundaries in relation to the target area are shown on the map below.



*Note that only a small portion of Census Tract 12, Block Group 2 is within the target area

The Census Data reveals that the City of Roanoke has had some beneficial improvements between 2000 and 2010. There have been increases in the total population of the city, median family income, median values for all owner-occupied housing units, and the number of housing units. Unfortunately, there have also been increases in the population with income below poverty level.

Focusing on the NRSA, the demographics reveal a very different trend. Between 2000 and 2010, the population in the NRSA has decreased. Specifically, the area within Census Tract 10 decreased by 21%, while the population of Census Tract 12, Block Group 2 decreased by 16%. This is in direct contrast with the population increase of 2% in the city overall. The median

family income has also decreased in the majority of the NRSA between 2000 and 2010. In Census Tract 10, the Median Family Income in 2010 was \$21,294 compared to \$46,627 for the City. This is a 2% decrease compared to the 23% increase experienced city-wide. The data indicates that the percentage of residents who are at the low-moderate and below poverty income levels is higher in the NRSA than the City of Roanoke as a whole. In Census Tract 10, 45% of the population is below poverty, compared to 24% citywide. While the Median Family Income in Census Tract 12, Block Group 2 grew by an astounding 119%, the NRSA encompasses only a small portion of this block group. City code enforcement and police data reveal this portion of the block group to be the most challenging.

**Table 1
Comparison of Selected Demographic Characteristics**

Selected Demographic Characteristics	Census Tract 10 - 2000	Census Tract 10 - 2010	Census Tract 12 - Block Group 2- 2000	Census Tract 12 - Block Group 2- 2010	City of Roanoke - 2000	City of Roanoke - 2010
Total Population	2785	2192	1487	1244	94911	97032
Total Population 65 or older	9%	5%	10.5%**	5%	16%	14%
Minority Population	58%	64%	27%	27%	31%	36%
Median Family Income	\$21,905	\$21,294	\$26,976**	\$59,211**	\$37,826	\$46,627
HUD Low-Moderate Income Population	*	*	*	*	52%	*
Population w/ Income Below Poverty Level	39%	45%	31%**	20%**	16%	25%
Total Housing Units	1291	1017	846	744	45257	47453
Total Vacant Units	19%	25%	14%	19%	7%	10%
Total Owner-Occupied Units	26%	22%	21%	21%	52%	49%
Total Renter-Occupied Units	55%	53%	65%	61%	41%	41%
Median Value for All Owner-Occupied Housing Units	\$39,100	\$62,900	\$69,600	\$160,200**	\$80,100	\$145,800
Median Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income	27%	42%	26%	32.4%**	24%	31%

*Data not yet released at the time of writing

**Data for entire Census Tract 12

On a more positive note, a large part of the NRSA is one of the most racially diverse areas in the City. The minority population in Census Tract 10 increased from 57% to 64% between 2000 and 2010, a gain of over 6%. At the same time, the minority population of Census Tract 12, Block Group 2, remained relatively stable at 27%. The minority population in the city increased from 31% to almost 36%, a gain of almost 5%. African-Americans remain the largest racial group in Census Tract 10, making up 53% of the population, up from 52% in 2000. In the same area, whites have decreased from 41% of the population in 2000 to 40% of the population in 2010. In Census Tract 12, Block Group 2, whites remain the largest racial group at 73% of the population.

African-Americans remain the second largest racial group at 16% of the population, another slight decrease from 19% in 2000. People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity comprise 6% of the population in Census Tract 10, 7% of the population in Census Tract 12, Block Group 2, and almost 6% of the population in the city.

The data reveals a number of stresses within the NRSA. While the number of housing units and population in the city as a whole has grown and the median family income has increased, the opposite has occurred in the NRSA over the past ten years. From 2000 to 2010, the number of housing units in Census Tract 10 decreased by 21%. This correlates with the decrease in the population that has occurred in the same period of 21%. The decrease in units and people has occurred through natural market forces and concentrated city code enforcement. This has led to returning multi-family units to single family units, reducing the density of multi-family structures, property condemnation by city code enforcement, and demolition of condemned units beyond repair.

There has also been an increase in the overall number of vacant housing units here and throughout the city. In Census Tract 10, the vacancy rate increased from almost 19% in 2000 to almost 25% in 2010. In Census Tract 12, Block Group 2, the vacancy rate increased from 14% in 2000 to almost 19% in 2010. This is much higher than the vacancy rate in the City of 7% in 2000 and 10% in 2010.

With respect to housing, the homeownership rate in Census Tract 10 is 22%, well below the 49% rate for the entire City of Roanoke. And at \$62,900, the median value of owner-occupied housing units in Census Tract 10 is less than half that of the community overall. The median value of owner-occupied housing units in the City of Roanoke is \$145,800. Thus, the NRSA has a concentration of poor housing and vacant lots.

Median family income has dropped in the largest part of the NRSA, Census Tract 10. At the same time, median gross rent as percentage of household income has increased from 27% to 41% in that same area. A population with less income to maintain property contributes to decreased maintenance, lower property values, and higher incidence of vacant land due to the clearance of houses that have become too deteriorated to restore. Such extrapolations from the data support the need for concentrated revitalization efforts.

C. Consultation

The earliest background work for this NRSA plan was conducted by the Department of Planning Building and Development as part of the planning processes for the three neighborhood plans that apply to the NRSA. Numerous public meetings were held in the neighborhoods from 2001-2009 to gather input for the respective plans. Much of the NRSA plan's understanding of neighborhood goals and needs relies on the extensive process used to develop the neighborhood plans, which involved residents, neighborhood organizations, property owners, and business owners of the neighborhoods in numerous meetings and discussions.

An interdepartmental roundtable of City staff was formed in March 2011 and met several times, based on the City's revised HUD policy (see the Assessment chapter). The nature and benefits of preparing a plan were also discussed with the West End target neighborhood organizations. In March 2012, City staff began a series of ongoing monthly meetings with the Stakeholders of the West End Target Area (SWETA). The first few meetings were devoted to the City's preparation

of the NRSA plan. These meetings will continue throughout the process as the NRSA is implemented.

Specific points of NRSA plan consultation are indicated in the table below.

**Table 2
Consultation and Plan Development Schedule**

Event/Meeting	Date
HUD Policy Task Force: 10 meetings & field trip	June – August, 2010
HUD Policy City Council briefing and Public Meeting	September 7 & 9, 2010
Revised HUD Policy adopted by City Council	October 7, 2010
HUD Policy Public Meeting	July 14, 2011
Staff Team Process to select Target Area	February – March, 2011
Neighborhood Meetings	January – May, 2011
City Council Public Meeting	September 6, 2011
Stakeholders of the West End Target Area Meeting NRSA Public Review and Comment	March 7, 2012

D. Assessment

The majority of the staff assessment of the West End target area occurred in the City’s HUD Policy Task Force process in 2010, which led to an interdepartmental Staff Team further evaluating three potential target areas that were included in the policy, and ultimately selecting the West End. The Task Force went through an 11 meeting process, which began with an evaluation of the City’s performance under the policy. The Task Force noted that since the original policy was adopted in 2001, the housing market had changed dramatically, there were few economic development projects done with HUD funds, and that infrastructure improvements

were needed and a good way to invest funds. The Task Force concluded that the policy had been implemented well, but needed some tweaks to the allocation percentages.

A revised HUD policy was adopted by City Council on October 7, 2010. The revised policy altered the allocation percentages of the previous policy as follows:

Category	% Allocated in 2001 (amended in 2004) Policy	% Allocated in 2010 Policy Revision
Housing	60	50
Economic Development	15	25
Neighborhood Development	10	11.5
Human Development	10	13
Homeless Services	0*	.5

* Homeless services were incorporated into human development. Planning and administration was 5% of the original policy, however the revised policy notes that the percentages are calculated after planning and administration expenditures have already been addressed.

The Task Force then went through a neighborhood selection process to determine the next target areas. The process began with a quantitative ranking of each of the 30 eligible neighborhoods in the City. The ranking criteria were based on *needs*; e.g. poverty, education and blight conditions; and *opportunity*; e.g. building permits, presence of public facilities, and vacant lots.

The revised policy also included the selection of three target areas from which to invest HUD funds, and directed staff to further research the areas prior to deciding which one to focus on. A team was composed of staff from the departments of Planning Building and Development, Engineering, Transportation, Economic Development, Neighborhood Services, and Parks and Recreation. Each participant was asked to provide a catalyst project in each of the three areas. In addition, the team discussed qualitative factors related to the areas. In contrast to previous targeting processes, this staff team sought to determine the cost and benefit of potential projects, rather than selecting the target area and then creating projects.

Among other reasons, the West End was chosen due to these positive factors:

- It has the most private sector market activity
- Proximity adjacent to the recent Hurt Park revitalization project area and the western edge of downtown
- Rebuilding Together Roanoke’s recent move to the area with renovation of an office on 8th Street
- Habitat for Humanity’s 3 year commitment to do rehab work in the Mountain View neighborhood
- The development opportunity at the former Health Department site
- Public facilities such as the Mountain View Recreation Center and the recently opened Vic Thomas Park and accompanying segments of the Roanoke River Greenway

- Commitment from the West End United Methodist Church as a partner
- Presence of active neighborhood groups

As noted previously in the demographic data, the West End is not without its issues and challenges. In addition to the economic conditions discussed in Section B, the Task Force process in 2010 also determined the following:

- A large number of vacant lots
- A high number of code enforcement violations related to building conditions
- A high crime rate
- Poor school performance by public school students

Key nodes and Sites in the West End target Area

Several key areas within the target area could serve as focal points for continued revitalization. In addition, there are also areas that are in need of investment that far exceed the resources available. Strategic planning and coordination among all organizations involved will be needed to ensure resources are maximized. The major focal areas are described below and shown on the *Key Nodes and Sites* map that follows.

The western edge of downtown (eastern edge of the target area) – this area has seen a significant amount of revitalization recently that features a large industrial building converted to apartments (Cotton Mill), a newly renovated restaurant, a new YMCA, and the Jefferson Center with offices, auditorium and event space.

Day and Marshall Avenues – these two residential streets in Old Southwest have seen increased revitalization and homeownership recently, however still have several problem properties and vacant lots that need to be addressed. There are numerous housing rehabilitation and new construction opportunities on these streets. This area is in the H-2 Historic District.

The former Health Department building and site – the City owns this currently vacant building and it offers the best opportunity for a large redevelopment or renovation in the target area. There are no current plans for this site, so SWETA and City staff will need to determine a strategy during the NRSA implementation process. The site has the potential for mixed use or office development.

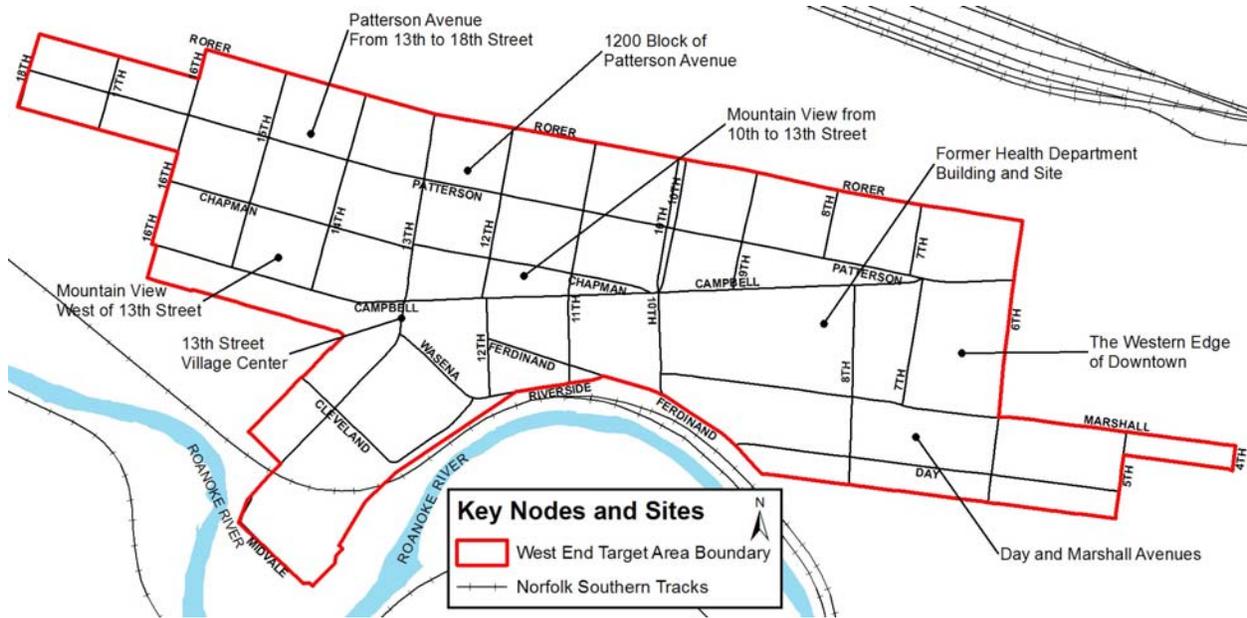
The 13th Street Village Center – 13th Street has some existing commercial establishments and is commercially zoned from Cleveland Avenue to Patterson Avenue (see below). There are vacancies and underused properties in this area. Residents have expressed support for a revitalized village center, which is consistent with the Hurt Park/Mountain View/West End Neighborhood Plan.

1200 Block of Patterson Avenue – this block has the West End Center, a non-profit organization that provides day care and after school services for low to moderate income families, a grocery store, a weekly community market and other businesses nearby that provide a lot of services. Addition of a new credit union branch (see the Economic Development section below) will enhance this area.

Patterson Avenue from 13th to 18th Street – this section of Patterson Avenue holds great potential for revitalization with office and residential uses. Many of the houses are large and likely not financially conducive to single-family use.

Mountain View from 10th to 13th Street – most of this area is within the H-2 Historic District and is home to most of the neighborhood’s homeowners.

Mountain View west of 13th Street – this part of the target area poses the greatest challenge as it contains the most glaring problems with substandard housing and code enforcement.



HOUSING

Like many older neighborhoods, West End has areas with blighted conditions. Areas with older housing and lower incomes tend to have more code and maintenance violations, such as outdoor storage, junk cars, and poor property conditions. The Old Southwest and Mountain View neighborhood organizations have made code enforcement and improvement and/or reduction of rental housing among their highest priorities.

The Hurt Park/Mountain View/West End Neighborhood Plan includes two priority initiatives for housing:

- Establish this plan as a framework for more specific revitalization plans, to be considered in future allocations of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOPE VI funds. Particular emphasis should be placed on infill development, the rehabilitation of

substandard structures, increased administration of the H-2 Historic District, and initiatives to increase homeownership.

- Insure that new grant funded housing development adheres to the design guidelines of *Vision 2001-2020*.

In addition, code enforcement is one of the priority initiatives as well:

- Continue to target the neighborhood for all code violations and maintain the rental inspection program on designated properties.
- The Old Southwest Neighborhood Plan lists code enforcement as its top priority, with much of the attention directed toward issues with rental housing:
- Continue the Rental Inspection Program, general code enforcement and identify properties to be targeted by the Code Team. Residents cited this as the top priority.

Most of the residential dwellings in this area were built between the late 1800s to the 1930s, and there are a variety of architectural styles. While the older housing stock lends a sense of character and history to the neighborhood, it also requires greater care and maintenance with time. Declining maintenance and a lower rate of owner occupancy has contributed to a significant amount of blight and deterioration. This area has an above average number of both vacant lots and units compared with overall city averages.

Housing in the area is renter-dominated. However, in recent years the number of owner-occupied homes has increased on the eastern end of the area. A major factor in the residential makeup of the area has been the conversion of single-family homes into multifamily structures. With some exceptions, the vast majority of the multifamily housing structures are the result of conversions rather than new construction. There are few blocks that have a majority of single-family dwellings, although the area originally had a lot of single-family homes.

Poor housing maintenance has been a chronic problem, despite the high quality of the original construction. Code enforcement inspectors routinely work in the area in response to substandard conditions and poor maintenance.

Neighborhood Design District (NDD) and H-2 Historic District

Most of the West End target area is within the Neighborhood Design District (NDD) or the H-2 Southwest Historic District overlay zoning districts. The latter was adopted in 1987 after the Southwest Historic District was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. This National Register district includes much of the NRSA.

The H-2 is more restrictive than the NDD and requires property owners to have exterior work approved by the City's Architectural Review Board. The H-2 was adopted as the Old Southwest neighborhood was in the early stages of revitalization. Since then the neighborhood has attracted many homeowners that feel their investment is protected by the H-2 guidelines. The H-2 guidelines were updated in 2007.

The NDD overlay zoning regulates the design of new construction and replacement or alteration of existing features, but differs from H-2 in that all approvals are administrative as long as work conforms to the design standards. The NDD guidelines ensure that there is design compatibility within the district, while not regulating as stringently the materials used or the permissibility of the owner to change existing features.

Work in both of these districts will require more attention to detail than in other areas of the City, particularly in the H-2 District. The design guidelines of these districts help ensure that new or rehabilitated housing fits in architecturally in the area. Particularly in the case of low to moderate income housing, it is important that such units do not draw negative attention to themselves due to lesser design and building materials. In many cases, repair and routine maintenance is less expensive and more sustainable than replacing or covering up building features (i.e. windows and siding).

To assist with development in the NDD and H-2 districts, the City's *Residential Architectural Pattern Book* and *Plans Library* can be used by developers and contractors. The pattern book describes the architectural styles of the area, while the Plans Library contains actual building plans that have been pre-approved by the City for construction in the NDD and are ready to be submitted for building permits.

Housing Agencies and Programs

Roanoke Neighborhood Revitalization Partnership (RNRP)

The RNRP is a partnership of four housing agencies: Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA), Habitat for Humanity in the Roanoke Valley (Habitat), Total Action Against Poverty, Inc. (TAP), & Rebuilding Together – Roanoke (RTR). The RNRP formed to better coordinate housing repair and rehabilitation in the City's target areas. This partnership enables the agencies to align their efforts and reduces unnecessary competition among the agencies for grant funding. The RNRP applies to the City for HUD funding with a single application, with each member of the partnership responsible for a different aspect of the housing revitalization strategy. For the 2012-2013 fiscal year, the partnership plans to focus on low-moderate income homeowner and rental housing. RRHA will be the acquisition and demolition agent for the partnership. Habitat will focus on new housing construction. TAP will focus on homeowner and rental housing repair. And, RTR will focus on homeowner-occupied small to moderate repair and rehabilitation. The RNRP will adjust its applications in following years as implementation of the NRSA plan progresses.

Freedom First Credit Union

Freedom First Federal Credit Union is a local, community development financial institution (CDFI). At the time of writing Freedom First has a plan to open a branch in the NRSA (see the Economic Development chapter below). As a CDFI, Freedom First operates several housing programs for low to moderate income citizen:

- First-time Home Buyers - down payment and closing cost assistance up to \$7,500.
- Community Stability - down payment and closing cost assistance up to \$7,500 in neighborhoods targeted for stabilization by a state or local government.

- Foreclosure Recovery - down payment and closing cost assistance up to \$15,000 for the purchase or rehabilitation of select foreclosed properties.
- Energy Efficiency and Weatherization Rehabilitation – rehabilitation improvements of existing owner-occupied units up to \$15,000
- Accessibility Rehabilitation - rehabilitation improvements of existing owner-occupied units up to \$15,000

Freedom First will work with the City and the RNRP on housing issues in the NRSA. Freedom First may use its funds or apply for HUD funds to implement its programs, and there may be an opportunity for them to pursue market rate financing in the NRSA as well.

Lead Safe Roanoke

Lead-Safe Roanoke is funded by a HUD grant. The program’s mission is to eliminate lead hazards in households that meet the income requirements and have children 5 or under either living there or visiting regularly. The Lead-Safe Roanoke program will reduce lead hazards in 75 low-to-moderate income homes or apartments over the next few years. The program is just entering its third grant recipient period, after having successfully met its target goals in a previous grant.

The West End area has high environmental risk factors related to lead exposure, with most of the housing built before 1978 when lead-based paint was prevalent. The program has successfully completed some projects in the H-2 Historic District; however it has faced disproportionately high costs to meet the historic design guidelines in doing so. As a substantial portion of the target area is within the H-2 Historic District, additional CDBG funding may be devoted to Lead Safe Roanoke II to accomplish the more expensive lead remediation projects in the area. Larger, older homes feature more painted areas that can be difficult to reach, e.g. the eaves of two-storey houses. Repairing the original windows in older homes usually produces a much higher quality and durable long-term solution than replacing the windows. However, window repair takes more time and needs to be done with greater care. In addition, communication with the other housing agencies will allow for some properties to undergo lead remediation from Lead Safe Roanoke II in addition to other repairs the agencies are working on.

Café 2

Café 2, the Community Alliance for Energy Efficiency, is a non-profit program dedicated to improving energy efficiency in homes. Café 2 offers energy assessments and improvements to foster greater energy efficiency in residential structures. Qualified recipients can not only receive upgrades to their property but also learn how to best manage their home for greater energy efficiency.

Café 2 is a subsidiary of Community Housing Partners, a non-profit housing agency that specializes in low to moderate income housing development. Funding for Café 2 is via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through a Department of Energy Better Buildings grant.

As a partner in Café 2, the City of Roanoke has a vested interest in seeing it meet its goal of serving 300 homes through its program within 18 months. Much the same as the Lead Safe

Roanoke II program, Café 2 will coordinate with the Roanoke Neighborhood Revitalization Partnership to maximize the resources available in the target area.

Down Payment Assistance (DPA)

Since 2007 the City has administered the DPA program to encourage homeownership. Loan funds are available for up to 50% of the required down payment plus reasonable closing costs. This assistance is in the form of a 10-year, forgivable, no interest loan of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$8,000. If the home was built before 1978, a visual assessment of potential lead-based paint hazards is required. Homes with potential lead hazards are not eligible, however coordination with Lead Safe Roanoke II can alleviate that issue. Previously, eligibility was only per HUD's low to moderate income requirements based on total household income. For the NRSA target area only, the DPA has been adjusted to allow for market rate purchases, provided that the overall value of such allocations does not exceed HUD's maximum of 49% in the NRSA.

The DPA program will again be primarily funded with HUD funds. To maximize opportunities and compensate for less overall funding, a large portion of the DPA will be allocated to the target area. At least 50% of the DPA loans will be made within the target area over the course of the NRSA's implementation.

Energy Efficient Home Rehabilitation Program

This program currently provides a ten year forgivable loan for homeowners to make improvements on their homes. It currently has two projects underway and a waiting list of eight applicants. The program employs a 'rehabilitation consultant' that determines the scope of work needed and estimates the cost. Originally City funds were used for market rate projects, while CDBG and HOME funds were used for low to moderate income properties.

This program will be adjusted to suit the needs of the NRSA, including the potential allocation of CDBG funds for market rate housing. The City funding originally allocated for market rate projects has not been replaced in recent years due to budget cuts. The current projects in this program involve fairly substantial rehabilitation work. For the purpose of the Strategy Area, this program may be scaled down to make it possible to reach more homeowners and to combine it with other existing programs and funding sources. Due to the backlog of properties at the time of writing, the use of this program in the NRSA may not take place during the first year. As the backlog of properties is reduced, use of this program will be focused almost entirely in the target area.

E. Economic Empowerment

This NRSA plan is designed to promote the community’s economic progress while building on the area’s current and future revitalization efforts which are described in this section. In doing so, the plan will address the items identified in the neighborhood plans and HUD Policy Task Force analysis by focusing on activities such as housing rehabilitation, business development, infrastructure improvements, public safety and neighborhood organizational development.

Housing Strategy

The NRSA plan includes geographic and policy priorities, however the latter will follow the former during implementation. As noted below, some areas are more conducive to new construction, while others have old, yet perfectly salvageable houses.

While the City’s allocation of HUD funding will be substantially lower for this NRSA plan than in years past, the existence of several housing programs currently being administered will help maximize opportunities. The following table illustrates the main housing providers and programs that will overlap in the implementation of the NRSA plan:

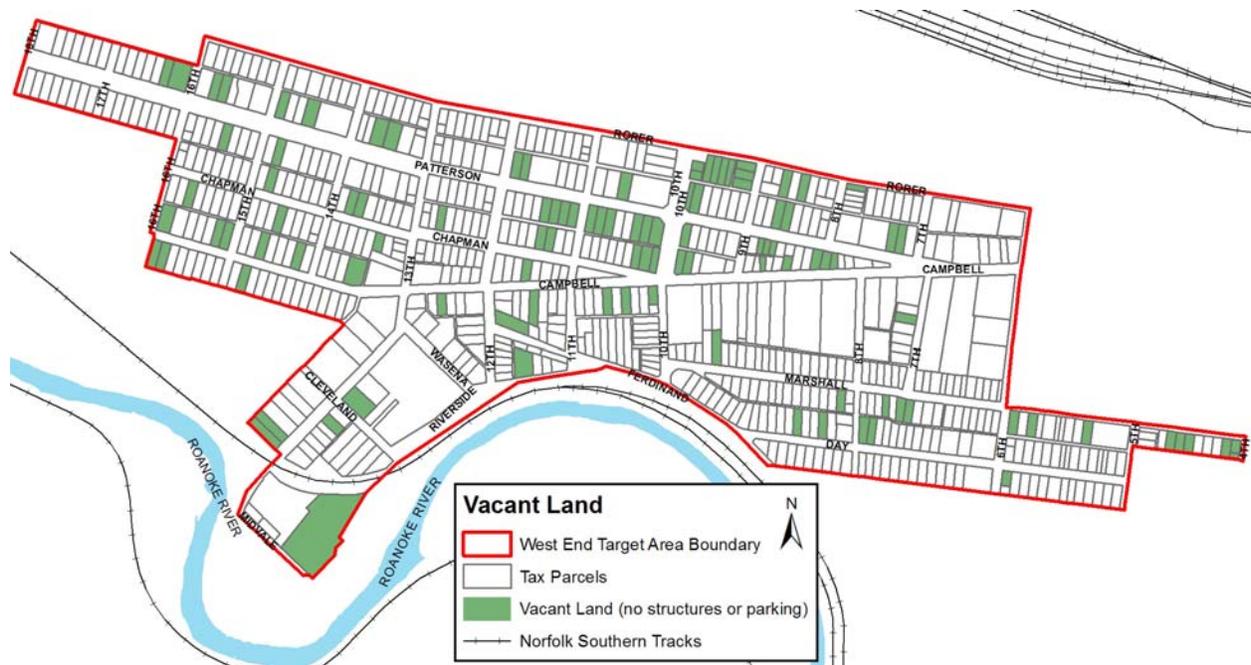
Program or Activity	Agencies Involved	CDBG Funds	HOME Funds	Rental	Homeownership
Homeowner Counseling	Freedom 1 st , Habitat, TAP	Y	Y	N	Y
Lead Safe Roanoke II	Café 2, Freedom 1 st , Habitat, RTR, TAP	Y	N	Y	Y
Café 2	Café 2, Freedom 1 st , Habitat, LSR, RTR, TAP	Y	Y	N	Y
DPA	Habitat, LSR, TAP	Y	Y	N	Y
Energy – efficient rehab	Café 2, Habitat, LSR, RTR, TAP	Y	Y	N	Y
Limited owner-occupied repair	Habitat, RTR, TAP	Y	Y	N	Y
Rental Rehabilitation	LSR, RRHA, RTR, TAP	Y	Y	Y	N
New Construction /Home-ownership	Habitat	N	Y	N	Y
Market Rate Rehab & New Construction	Freedom 1 st , Private Sector	Y	N	N	Y

Legend:

Café 2 (subsidiary of Community Housing Partners)

Freedom 1st – Freedom First Federal Credit Union
 Habitat – Habitat for Humanity Roanoke Valley
 LSR – Lead Safe Roanoke II
 RRHA – Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority
 RTR – Rebuilding Together Roanoke
 TAP – Total Action Against Poverty

The issues associated with vacant lots and infill housing are complex and require a partnership between the public and private sectors to develop strategies for specific areas. Residents’ primary concerns center on the continued viability of the residential portions of the neighborhood. Their goals focus on keeping homeowners in the neighborhood, developing homeowners from current renters, and promoting responsible property ownership. The outcome should be the elimination of destabilizing conditions created by irresponsible rental property owners. Strategies should strive to retain a range of housing options that will permit responsible residents to remain in the neighborhood.



Substandard and housing units with dated systems are widespread in the West End target area. By identifying crucial pockets of emphasis and not spreading resources too far, a demonstrable impact can be achieved. The NRSA focus area offers potential for construction of new housing units and rehabilitation of existing structures. While the NRSA provides the flexibility with CDBG funds to develop market rate housing through rehabilitation, new construction activities can only be achieved through the use of HOME funds, which are primarily targeted to low- and moderate-income individuals.

The NRSA focus area contains 58 properties (60%) that have recently been cited by City Code Enforcement inspectors. In addition, a number of other structures have dated heating systems or are in need of some form of general preventative maintenance, e.g. painting. Rehabilitation of existing structures will entail improving some rental units. While a goal of the Neighborhood Plan and the NRSA is to increase homeownership, it is necessary to improve some housing units that will remain rental. Although the City’s preference is to rehabilitate structures where

opportunities exist for homeownership and market rate housing, market conditions and funding limitations will limit our ability to do so. The NRSA plan strategies for these activities are based upon market factors, available funds, City and other programs, and the work of the RNRP.

Market Rate Housing

In previous years, a portion of the City's Energy Efficient Home Rehabilitation Program was allocated to market rate households. City funds were used for this program, however future City funding for it is unlikely. Otherwise, there are no programs in place to address the needs of existing and new moderate-high income population that we desire to increase in the area. A major goal of this NRSA plan is to increase the amount of market rate housing, allocating as much of the 49% allowable of CDBG funding as possible.

In previous years, the City has seen little market activity as a result of its two previous NRSA plans. The West End was selected in part due to the recent market activity that has taken place in the area. To capitalize on this momentum and further the goals of the NRSA, the RNRP and other private sector builders and developers will be engaged to determine what is needed to encourage market rate investment. The intent of the NRSA in this regard will be to maximize the existing programs and agencies, while leaving open the possibility of collaboration with the private sector to facilitate market rate housing activity.

Property Catalog

The first step of preparation for housing investment in the NRSA will be a property catalog that provides information on vacant lots and select structures that are ideal to purchase. This catalog will include vital information on infrastructure that will aid in determining its viability for investment. Owners will be contacted to see if they are interested in selling their property prior to the property's inclusion in the catalog. Thus, the catalog will feature the best opportunities to purchase and develop vacant lots, or to buy and renovate existing units.

Process and Adjustment of Current Housing Programs

Owner-occupied Rehabilitation

In the NRSA's first year it is anticipated that much of the housing activity that is funded will be for limited repair of owner-occupied houses. The NRSA will allow this in two forms; low to moderate income and market rate. To maximize the funds available, coordination between agencies and programs will be critical.

Low to moderate income owner-occupied rehabilitation will involve these agencies and process:

1. Determination of owner-occupied households that meet low to moderate income requirements by RNRP or other housing agencies.
2. Review by City staff and owner to determine if historic tax credits should be applied for
3. Staff assists owner in applying for State and Federal historic tax credits, if feasible, and the City's *Partial Tax Exemption on Rehabilitated Buildings*.
4. Energy assessment on eligible households conducted and funded by Café II

5. Determination of above households eligibility for Lead Safe Roanoke II
6. Application to the Energy Efficient Home Rehabilitation Program
7. Lead abatement, if applicable
8. Funds allocated for improvements, including remaining Café II energy assessment recommendations not fundable by Café II

Market rate investment in owner-occupied rehabilitation will involve these agencies and process:

1. Determination of owner-occupied households that don't meet low to moderate income requirements by Rebuilding Together Roanoke, Habitat for Humanity and TAP.
2. Review by City staff and owner to determine if historic tax credits should be applied for
3. Staff assists owner in applying for State and Federal historic tax credits, if feasible, and the City's *Partial Tax Exemption on Rehabilitated Buildings*
4. Energy assessment conducted by Café II with \$500 fee paid by homeowner (refundable if improvements are made)
5. Application to the Energy Efficient Home Rehabilitation Program
6. Funds allocated for improvements, including \$2500 for Café II energy assessment recommendations, if feasible

Rental Rehabilitation

Due to the current economic market, rental housing is in greater demand and homeownership is difficult for many citizens to attain. At the same time, using public funds to rehabilitate rental housing that is privately owned by profit-motivated landlords is problematic for many reasons. TAP and _____ have committed to improving rental units in the target area under the condition that overall density in such structures will be reduced. This process will require more preparation and oversight, however will provide a much needed service for the area.

Rental Rehabilitation will proceed with the following agencies and process:

1. Review of Lead Safe Roanoke II list of eligible households. Properties in the queue for lead abatement will be given priority and will serve as the initial inventory.
2. Determination of households that meet low to moderate income requirements by TAP and RTR.
3. Review by City staff and owner to determine if historic tax credits should be applied for
4. Staff assists owner in applying for State and Federal historic tax credits, if feasible, and the City's *Partial Tax Exemption on Rehabilitated Buildings*
5. Funds allocated for improvements
6. Establish rental rates to ensure low to moderate income citizens are served
7. Property owners must have fair housing training and no existing code violations

Homeownership via New Construction

Habitat for Humanity plans to build new homes in the target area on lots acquired by the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority. While there are houses in the area that may need to be razed, many houses in disrepair have value for rehabilitation projects, and there are numerous vacant lots throughout the area. All opportunities for acquisition of vacant lots should be exhausted before any houses are razed.

New construction of owner-occupied units will proceed with the following agencies and process:

1. Acquisition of lots from the Property Catalog
2. Application to the DPA
3. Funds allocated to Habitat for Humanity and/or TAP for construction or funds allocated to the private sector through DPA. A lease/purchase option will be available if the property cannot be sold.

Homeownership via Rehabilitation

Up to 49% of the City's CDBG funding may be used for market-rate housing, and a major goal of this NRSA plan is to achieve a funding allocation that meets or approaches that level.

Market rate rehabilitation will proceed with the following agencies and process:

1. Application to the Down Payment Assistance Program and/or the Energy Efficient Home Rehabilitation Program
2. Acquisition of properties by prospective owner via HUD or private funds based on the property catalog and availability.
3. Review by City staff and owner to determine if historic tax credits should be applied for
4. Energy assessment conducted by Café II with \$500 fee paid by homeowner (refundable if improvements are made)
5. Staff assists owner in applying for Virginia historic tax credits, if feasible, and the City's *Partial Tax Exemption on Rehabilitated Buildings*
6. Energy assessment conducted by Café II
7. Funds allocated for improvements, including \$2500 for Café II energy assessment recommendations, if feasible. A lease/purchase option will be available if the property cannot be sold.

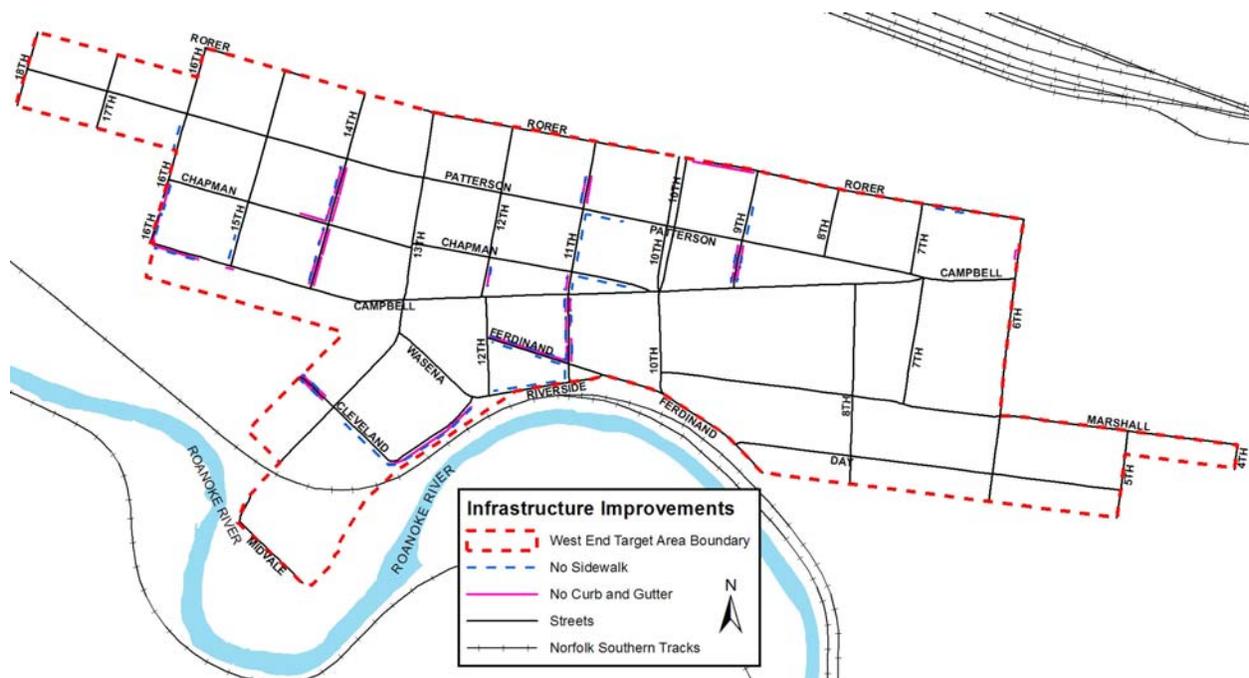
Residential Façade Grants

Currently the City has a commercial façade grant program. This program would be similar administratively to that program, however would be for residential structures only. It would provide up to a \$5,000 matching façade grant for any dwelling. There are no income limitations for this grant. The city will match dollar for dollar up to \$5,000 any monies spent on the exterior façade viewable from any public right-of-way. This may include roofing, painting, and other repairs to the façade. The applicant must apply to the program and be approved before starting work to qualify for the grant. The exterior of the property must be clearly documented with photographs, large scale and close-up as required, before the application stage and after the work is completed.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Overall, the infrastructure in the West End is not a pressing issue. However, the plan does include several potential infrastructure improvements that would enhance the function, appearance, and identity of the neighborhood. Per the Neighborhood Plans and input from City staff and residents, potential focus areas for infrastructure improvements in the West End target area include:

- Curb, gutter and sidewalk improvements
- Streetscape Improvements on Patterson Avenue
- Gateway landscaping and street trees



Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk

Sidewalks exist along most streets within the revitalization area; however, there are a few areas that lack curb or sidewalk or both. In addition, repair of existing sidewalks is needed in some areas. Based on the Infrastructure Improvements map above, these improvements will be done as funding permits. Priorities for these improvements will be based upon their feasibility from a design standpoint, and their impact on other ongoing work at the time.

Patterson Avenue Streetscape

To enhance the village center, streetscape improvements may be done on the 1200 block of Patterson Avenue. This block is part of the village center that joins the Hurt Park and Mountain View neighborhoods. It features a weekly farmers market, the site of a future branch credit union, recently closed grocery store, and the West End Center.

The West End Center has expressed concern that crossing the intersection at 13th Street and Patterson Avenue was not safe. Children and instructors usually cross the street at mid-block.

The Sav a Lot grocery store is on the north side, while the weekly West End Market is on the south side. These two complement each other and customers cross the street from one to the other. A mid-block crossing between the two would slow traffic down and increase pedestrian safety. Funding will be very limited for infrastructure projects, so this potential project will need to be weighed with others.

This project is not a high priority given the low levels of funding available for infrastructure. However, in the event that funds become available it should be considered.

Streetscape Trees

City Council adopted the Urban Forestry Plan in 2003. The plan is a component of *Vision 2001-2020* and sets goals to increase the tree canopy of the City. Planting street trees will further the goals of both plans.

Tree canopy has numerous public benefits; improves fish and wildlife habitat, absorbs pollution, reduces soil erosion and storm water runoff, and provides shade which can reduce energy costs. In addition, trees are a vital component of traffic calming and streetscape beautification. Traffic calming measures, various strategies aimed to slow down traffic, are recommended in the plan. The presence of trees is crucial to the appearance and function of the streetscape, and will aid in slowing down traffic and make the street more pedestrian friendly and livable for residents.

For several years street trees have not been funded in the City's budget. However, planting trees is one of the best means to meet the City's storm water regulations. As part of any streetscape improvements (including curb, gutter and sidewalk projects) funds will be included to plant the appropriate species of street trees. In addition, if funding permits landscaping will be planted in gateway green spaces and other visible public spaces.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Crime in the target area is a concern, though recent improvements have increased citizens confidence in public safety. The Hurt Park NRSA led to several initiatives by the police, which continue. That in turn has improved conditions in the Mountain View area, though there is still much to continue working on. The two main neighborhood organizations, Old Southwest and Mountain View, both work closely with City police. Adapting this relationship to the Stakeholders Roundtable will be vital to improving public safety as work in the target area is underway.

The Police Department will regularly monitor crime in the area. The Department's Crime Analyst will maintain a database of all criminal activity, including calls for services and arrest information. The Department will also designate police officers to the area to provide monthly criminal reports and to receive help from residents and others relative to police strategies.

Currently, City Police are working on a new initiative in the Hurt Park neighborhood, the Drug Market Initiative (DMI). In this initiative Police identify drug dealers using video cameras. Select individuals from those investigations are picked to participate in the program; they are not charged if they successfully complete the program, which includes counseling services from TAP and Police officers. During the course of the NRSA implementation, the Police will

evaluate progress on the DMI and consider it for the target area. Regardless, the work underway with the DMI in Hurt Park will have a positive impact on the West End area.

In addition to the DMI, the Police used CDBG grant funds to employ a regular bike patrol in Hurt Park. This grant helped Police do better monitoring of the area and gave residents a greater sense of security. During the course of the NRSA implementation, the Police will work with residents, businesses and other City staff to devise new strategies to address issues in the area. As was the case with the Hurt Park NRSA, grant opportunities will be explored based on what is needed for the target area.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

On July 1, 2006, the City of Roanoke, in partnership with the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney, implemented several new code enforcement initiatives that fight crime by improving the City's ability to address nuisance properties. This program recognizes that crime increases in neighborhoods where nuisance violations occur and go unchecked. Hence, the program's name: "Crime Prevention through Code Enforcement." These initiatives result from the efforts of the City and the Commonwealth's Attorney to continuously improve code enforcement programs. Improving our programs required education on "best practices" being utilized by other communities and public engagement with citizens. The Roanoke Neighborhood Advocates (RNA) provided significant leadership in the areas of education regarding best practices and in facilitating the public engagement process. The new code enforcement initiatives broaden the authority of City employees to issue citations for several of the most common violations, and also improve the efficiency of our enforcement and abatement process. These new initiatives are the first in a series of changes being implemented to better serve our citizens and strengthen our community.

Prosecution of Violations of Nuisance and Building Maintenance Codes

A critical component of this new initiative is the addition of an Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney position funded by the City. This attorney's primary duty is to prosecute nuisance, building code, and zoning code violations. The presence of a dedicated attorney working with the City to prosecute these violations does more than strengthen our ability to effectively prosecute these cases. Having a dedicated attorney sends a message to violators that the community is serious about eradicating nuisance issues.

Interdepartmental Code Enforcement

The City and Commonwealth's Attorney's Office have formed a cross-functional, inter-departmental/inter-agency team that will target particularly challenging properties. This "Code Team" is led by the City's Planning Director. The Code Team will enforce environmental, fire safety, building code, and other regulations as appropriate to combat nuisance properties that traditional code enforcement measures don't effectively address.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The division of Solid Waste Management provides weekly collection of residential refuse, bulk & brush, recycling, commercial refuse collection, and seasonal collection of leaves.

To address the neighborhood's concerns with trash and debris, the division of Solid Waste Management will hold an annual clean-up each year the City allocates funding for the NRSA focus area. Staff will work in and around the focus area collecting trash and recyclable materials.

WELLNESS

Recognizing that obesity rates are far too high, particularly among the younger population, the City and all stakeholders of the target area will seek creative ways to encourage wellness and healthy eating habits for residents of the area. The City's previous NRSA plan for Hurt Park included the *Hurt Park Healthy Living* Program, which was created by the Roanoke City Health Department and funded in part by a grant from the Virginia Department of Health in conjunction with the Virginia Board of Health. The Health Department was the coordinator of the project in collaboration with Roanoke City Public Schools, the 21st Century Community Learning Center Program, City of Roanoke Department of Parks and Recreation, and Carilion Clinic. The goal was to promote lifetime walking activity and healthy behavior among children and their families by increasing daily physical activity and encouraging healthy eating habits in students in the Hurt Park Elementary 21st Century Community Learning Center. The program was viewed as a success by all that participated in it.

At the time of writing, City staff is discussing similar initiatives with Carilion Clinic. Carilion is exploring various wellness grant opportunities in the City. While this grant is not specifically allocated to the NRSA, it may provide opportunities for coordination of wellness and other activities within the NRSA. In addition, Carilion is exploring the possibility of a wellness center within the target area or nearby.

Other positive factors that the NRSA plan will build upon include:

- The new sections of the Roanoke River Greenway that adjoin the target area by 13th Street
- Existing fitness programs at Mountain View Recreation Center.
- The community garden on the 1300 block of Campbell Avenue.

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

West End has several community organizations that actively work with City of Roanoke departments, policy makers, businesses, and private institutions. Each organization focuses on a specific area of West End, but all are striving for the common goal of making the community a better place to live, work, and play.

Stakeholders of the West End Target Area

The Stakeholders of the West End Target Area (SWETA) is a multi-stakeholder group formed to provide insight and advise the City on the community's needs and implementation of revitalization activities in the neighborhood. SWETA is comprised of neighborhood leaders,

representatives of Freedom First Credit Union, the West End Center for Youth, and a local artist. City staff lead the meetings; however the members guide much of the agenda each month. As project activities develop, SWETA will help guide the revitalization process of the NRSA by providing local knowledge and marketing.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As previously noted, economic development constitutes a 25% allocation of HUD funds in the City's updated HUD policy, an increase from the previous version. This increase reflects the importance and need of the communities that are served by HUD funds. While the City has numerous incentives, which are outlined below, the NRSA plan contains one signature project; a new branch of Freedom First Credit Union.

Freedom First Credit Union Branch

In 2001 the City granted funds to the West End Center for Youth to acquire a building next to its establishment on the 1200 block of Patterson Avenue. Due to cuts to its state funding and other sources, the Center was never able to renovate the space and use it as planned. Over the last two years the West End Market, a food market that specializes in local and sustainable agriculture, has used part of the building once a week for its market operation. Otherwise, this building at 1210 Patterson Avenue has been vacant, save for storage.

Freedom First Credit Union has been granted City HUD funds to use this site, either to raze the existing building or renovate the structure to create a new branch. Freedom First is a certified *community development financial institution*, thus they primarily provide financial services to low to moderate income populations. Freedom First has a grant from the Treasury Department to create the new branch. It is expected to be operational in early 2013.

City HUD funds will offset much of the site preparation and building costs of this project to make it feasible. In addition, *brownfield* grant funds (see below) are being used to help with lead and asbestos abatement.

Freedom First chose this location based on its research and knowledge of the community, having been drawn to it after observing the revitalization efforts in Hurt Park over the past few years. Its location right between the Hurt Park and Mountain View neighborhoods, and the visibility on a well traveled street adjacent to the 13th Street village center made it ideal for the clientele they serve. Public support for this new branch has been overwhelmingly positive, as currently there are no financial institutions in the area. Freedom First will also generate several new jobs at this new branch.

Revitalization of the 13th Street Village Center has been a major point of emphasis for the Mountain View neighborhood. The establishment of the Freedom First branch credit union will hopefully provide a major catalyst for improvements to the village center.

Business Incentives

The northeastern corner of the West End target area has a great advantage in promoting economic development because it is designated both as an Enterprise Zone and a Technology

Zone. In these zones, state and local incentives are available. Below is a list of incentives available to residents and businesses in the West End target area.

City Incentives

Residential/Commercial Real Estate Tax Abatement Program

A real estate tax exemption is available for the rehabilitation of existing structures citywide, with additional exemptions for structures in the H-1, H-2, Conservation, and Rehabilitation Districts. Recently this tax abatement has also been extended to new construction on vacant lots within Conservation and Rehabilitation Districts.

Target incentives are available in the H-1, H-2, Conservation, and Rehabilitation Districts for increasing, through substantial rehabilitation or renovation, the assessed value of an existing residential, commercial, commercial mixed use or industrial buildings. This exemption lasts for a period of 10 years. In order to qualify for the exemption, a structure must be at least 25 years old and rehabilitated or renovated so as to increase the assessed value of the structure by at least 60%, no less than 40% for residential structures. The rehabilitation or renovation must be completed within (2) two years after the date of the filing of the application for exemption.

New residential construction or improvements receive a ten (10) year tax abatement for structures initially assessed below \$300,000 and a three (3) year tax abatement for those assessed over \$300,000. An exemption of ten (10) years applies to structures in CN, Neighborhood Commercial, zoning districts that are initially assessed below \$800,000 and five (5) year abatement for those assessed over \$800,000. The City tax abatement incentives can be combined with state and federal tax credits.

Economic Development Authority Entrepreneur District

The Economic Development Authority (EDA) of the City created the first of its kind Entrepreneurial District within the city to stimulate and support entrepreneurship by offering incentives in the areas of training, research projects, loans and reducing the cost of services. Partners include Virginia Tech, Virginia Western Community College, and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC). In the NRSA, the Entrepreneur District aligns with Enterprise Zone 1A (see map below).

Brownfield Redevelopment Program

Roanoke's brownfield program is one component of the City's efforts to encourage investment in and rejuvenation of its core neighborhoods. The brownfield program, when coupled with the City's economic development, housing, and community development programs, offers a holistic package to spur new uses in the City. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines brownfields as "real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. Cleaning up and reinvesting in these properties takes development pressures off of undeveloped, open land, and both improves and protects the environment."

Since 2005 the City has acquired over \$2.6 million in EPA and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) grant funds. The City is recognized by the EPA and DEQ as the

best model in Virginia of how to create a brownfield program. Currently the City has approximately \$487,000 in EPA assessment funds, and almost \$1 million in a revolving loan fund for cleanup, available. These funds can provide much needed assistance to owners or prospective purchasers to determine any risks on their property and help with funding to address those risks. Brownfield funds will be marketed to commercial and industrial property owners in the target area, and to prospective purchasers of such properties.

Enterprise Zone 1A Incentives



Façade Grant

The Façade Grant program was established to visually improve the appearance of commercial buildings within Enterprise Zone One A. The grant is equal to 33% of the cost of façade renovations, capped at \$25,000. Applications must be submitted before work begins on the renovation and all applications must be approved by the Economic Development Authority (EDA).

Partial Real Estate Tax Exemption of Rehabilitated Buildings

A real estate tax exemption may be available for businesses within the Enterprise Zone One A for increasing, through substantial rehabilitation or renovation, the assessed value of an existing commercial, commercial mixed use (no more than 80% residential) or industrial building. In order to qualify for the exemption, a structure must be at least 15 years old, located within

Enterprise Zone One A and rehabilitated or renovated so as to increase the assessed value of the structure by at least \$50,000 or more. The rehabilitation or renovation must be completed within (1) one year after the date of the filing of the application for exemption.

Development Fee Rebates

Refund of development fees (building permit and comprehensive development plan review) may be available for business firms or building owners located in Enterprise Zone One A. The City offers rebates up to 100% depending on the amount invested by a business.

Water, Fire, and Sewer Hookup Fees Rebates

Refund of Water, Fire, and Sewer hookup fees may be available for business firms or building owners located in Enterprise Zone One A. The City of Roanoke offers rebates up to 100% based on the amount invested by a business.

Fire Suppression Retro-Fit Grant and Fire Hookup Rebate

For rehabilitated commercial and industrial buildings, or mixed-use buildings having no less than 20% devoted to commercial uses, not needing a fire suppression system, a full rebate of fire hookup fees is available from the City of Roanoke. A grant from the EDA is also available every year for five years that covers a percentage of monthly fire charges.

Neighborhood and Parks Grant

Grants are available for neighborhood organizations to improve gateway features, signage, or undergo beautification measures. Only neighborhoods in the Enterprise Zone One A or a census tract contiguous to the zone are eligible for these \$500 grants.

Business Security Grant

For any business located in Enterprise Zone One A undergoing the Police Department's Star City Business Watch program, security grants of up to \$500 to enact the security measures are recommended by the Roanoke Police Department.

Job Training Grants

Businesses that have qualified for job training assistance from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA) may be eligible for job training grants from the City of Roanoke. The grant from the City is either up to the State's grant or the training need, whichever is less.

State Incentives

Job Grants

Qualifying businesses located within an Enterprise Zone must increase their employment by at least four (4) full-time positions prior to receiving any job grants. Thereafter, each additional job created qualifies for a \$500 grant.

Real Property Improvement Grants

Businesses located in an Enterprise Zone may be eligible for a grant equal to 30% of qualified zone improvements. Rehabilitation projects must have a minimum investment of at least \$50,000 with mixed-use projects dedicating at least 30% of the floor area to business use.

Telecommunications Connection Fee Grant

This grant which is awarded through the Economic Development Authority will pay for 50% of the actual cost of extending telecommunication services to a business location. The maximum amount of the grant is \$1,000 per business.

Capital Investment Grant

This grant which is awarded through the Economic Development Authority will pay for 50% of the net increase in business personal property and real estate taxes paid by the firm in the first year following the capital investment.

Rehabilitation Tax Credits Available

Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits

This program provides tax credits for qualifying historic properties used for income-producing purposes. A tax credit of 20% of the rehabilitation costs can be taken for historic properties on the National Register or contributing to a National Register Historic District. In addition, a Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit of 10% is available for non-historic buildings built before 1936 that are not on the National Register or contribute to a historic district.

State Rehabilitation Tax Credits

This program provides tax credit of up to 25% for qualifying historic properties on the Virginia Landmarks Register, or properties certified by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources as contributing to an historic district or meeting the criteria for listing on the Register.

Business Marketing Strategy

The City of Roanoke Department of Economic Development markets the incentives available to businesses through various outlets. Business visits (BIZVIZ) are often conducted to obtain information on business needs and information is provided to them addressing their needs. A BIZBREAK is a breakfast meeting in which businesses are able to interact with a member of City Council, the City Manager, a department head, and the Director of Economic Development. The Economic Development website and Business Development Guide are very good sources of information concerning available incentives, financing sources, training assistance, and other desirable information. Furthermore, a business questionnaire is provided with all business applications which allows Economic Development to receive more information about needs of

the company. The Department of Real Estate Valuation and Department of Planning and Development may also provide information to businesses when services are rendered.

The strategy for marketing these incentives specifically to West End starts with identifying all of the businesses located in the area. The Department of Economic Development staff will contact the businesses directly by mailing them an invitation to a meeting to discuss the incentives. Included in the mailing will be the Business Development Guide and a list of incentives available. After the meeting, staff will then follow up by contacting the businesses and conducting Business Visits (BIZVIZ) to each business in West End and working with the businesses on their growth and expansion plans.

F. Performance Measurements

This section establishes benchmarks for the activities presented in this plan. Whenever possible, the benchmarks will reflect time-sensitive, feasible performance measurements consistent with the availability of funds.

Residential Development

Goal 1: Increase Homeownership at all Income Levels

Goal 2: Improve Existing Owner-Occupied Housing

Goal 3: Improve Rental Housing

Benchmarks:

- 1.1 Perform substantial rehabilitation on existing owner- and tenant-occupied units in the neighborhood.
 - a. By June 30, 2014, three (3) units will have been completed.
 - b. By June 30, 2016, fifteen (15) units (cumulative) will have been completed.

Amount and Source of Funds (1.1 a. and b.):

It is anticipated that approximately \$750,000 in CDBG and/or HOME funding will be allocated to these activities.

Benchmarks:

- 1.2 Perform limited rehabilitation, including emergency home repairs, on owner-occupied units in the neighborhood.
 - a. By June 30, 2014, twenty (20) units will have been completed.
 - b. By June 30, 2016, fifty (50) units (cumulative) will have been completed.

Amount and Source of Funds (1.2 a. and b.):

It is anticipated that approximately \$250,000 in CDBG funding will be allocated to these activities.

Benchmarks:

- 1.3 Construct or rehabilitate houses for sale to qualified homebuyers.
 - a. By June 30, 2014, eight (8) units will have been completed.
 - b. By June 30, 2016, twenty (20) units (cumulative) will have been completed.

Amount and Source of Funds (1.3 a. and b.):

It is anticipated that approximately \$2.5 million in CDBG and/or HOME funding will be allocated to these activities.

Benchmarks:

- 1.4 Market City, State and Federal tax credits and incentives to property owners.
 - a. By June 30, 2013, mail information regarding the City’s Real Estate Tax Abatement program to all property owners in the focus area.
 - b. By June 30, 2015, hold up to three annual public workshops to inform property owners of the tax credits and incentives available to them.

Amount and Source of Funds (1.4 a. and b.):

The cost attributed to these activities will consist of primarily in-kind costs. The cost for conducting the mailing would be approximately \$600, which would be an internal cost for the Real Estate Evaluation department, while the cost for informational materials at the workshops would be minimal.

Economic Development

Goal 1: Revitalize the 13th Street Village Center

Goal 2: Attract New Businesses

Goal 3: Improve Existing Businesses

Benchmark:

- 2.1 By _____, conduct special outreach efforts to businesses in West End to increase awareness of available Enterprise Zone incentives such as job grants, façade improvement grants, and rehabilitation grants.

Amount and Source of Funds:

The City’s Department of Economic Development will market the availability of up to \$_____in Enterprise Zone funds over the next three years to assist new and existing businesses in the West End target area with façade grants, job grants, and other grants available to these businesses.

Infrastructure

Goal 1: Install new curb, gutter and sidewalk where needed

Goal 2: Repair existing curb, gutter and sidewalk where needed

Goal 3: Install streetscape improvements on the 1200 block of Patterson Avenue

Benchmarks:

- 3.1 By June 30, 2013, coordinate with neighborhood representatives to identify priority areas in need of curb, gutter and sidewalk.
- 3.2 By June 30, 2014, install neighborhood infrastructure such as curb, gutter, sidewalk and drainage improvements.

Amount and Source of Funds (3.1 and 3.2):

The City has set aside \$100,000 in CDBG funds to assist with infrastructure activities in the West End target area. The amount of local funds leveraged by the City will be unknown until specific projects are identified.

Benchmarks:

- 3.3 Coordinate with the neighborhood representatives to develop a plan to plant 30 trees in the West End target area.
 - a. By June 30, 2014, the City's Parks and Recreations Department will coordinate with the neighborhood representatives to develop a plan to plant trees in the West End target area and undertake the planting of 10 trees.
 - b. By June 30, 2015, the City's Parks and Recreations Department will coordinate with the neighborhood representatives to undertake the planting of an additional 10 trees.
 - c. By June 30, 2016, the City's Parks and Recreations Department will coordinate with the neighborhood representatives to undertake the planting of the final 10 trees.

Amount and Source of Funds (3.3 a., b. and c.):

The cost of this project is approximately \$8,250 (30 trees @ \$275/ea.). Utilizing primarily CDBG funds, approximately \$2,750 of these funds will be used to plant trees by June 2014; \$2,750 to plant an additional 10 trees by June 30, 2015; and \$2,750 to plant the final 10 trees in the neighborhood by June 30, 2016.

Public Safety

Goal 1: Reduce the number of offenses in the target area

Goal 2: Improve the perception and sense of safety in the target area

Goal 3: Maintain strategic and effective communication between Police and stakeholders

Benchmark:

- 4.1 By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, provide enhanced bike patrol services to add to public safety and quality of life issues within the West End target area.

Amount and Source of Funds:

It is anticipated that approximately \$50,000 in CDBG funding will be provided to the City's Police Department to increase the hours of bike patrol services in the target area. Approximately 1000 units of bike patrol services would be contributed annually. (One hour of bike patrol equals one unit of service.)

Benchmark:

4.2 By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, assign at least one officer to the West End target area to be a liaison responsible for providing monthly activity reports to the SWETA, as well as communication on all matters of crime prevention.

Amount and Source of Funds:

The cost attributed to this activity consists of primarily in-kind costs. The time invested in attending the monthly neighborhood meetings and updating the residents on criminal activity in the neighborhood would equate to approximately 12 hours in staff time utilized annually.

Benchmark:

4.3 By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, maintain a database of all criminal activity reported to the Police Department, which includes calls for service and arrests in the neighborhood.

Amount and Source of Funds:

The cost attributed to this activity consists of primarily in-kind costs. The time invested in generating arrest reports and mapping arrest locations would equate to approximately 156 hours in staff time utilized annually.

Benchmark:

4.4 By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, conduct concentrated code enforcement sweeps annually to identify and cite visible code violations and resolve issues.

Amount and Source of Funds:

The costs associated with conducting a code enforcement sweep would consist of primarily City staff time. Approximately 1000 work hours would be utilized annually to conduct the sweep throughout the neighborhood.

Neighborhood Appearance

Goal : Improve the appearance and cleanliness of public spaces

Benchmark:

- 5.1 By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, advertise and hold a annual clean-up event in conjunction with the SWETA and the Youth Commission to collect trash and recyclables in all public rights-of-way.

Amount and Source of Funds:

The cost attributed to this activity consists of primarily in-kind costs. Approximately 8 hours of staff time would be devoted to this one-day event which will occur once every year.

Neighborhood Identity and Marketing

Goal: Market the target area to a broader audience to attract new residents and investors

Benchmarks:

- 6.1 In consultation with the SWETA and local businesses, create and market an identity for the West End target area.
- a. By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, create a web page or link on the City's web site to advertise public meetings and provide information during the planning process, and to market the West End target area.
 - b. By June 30, 2013 and ongoing through June 30, 2016, feature a series of episodes on Roanoke Valley Television (RVTV) devoted to the West End NRSA plan.
 - c. By June 30, 2014, create a marketing strategy for the West End target area which may include a logo, tagline, brochure, or a combination thereof.

Amount and Source of Funds (6.1.a., b. and c.):

The costs attributed to these activities consist of primarily in-kind costs. Approximately 8 hours of staff time would be devoted to creating a neighborhood brochure as the project nears completion. Approximately 2 hours of staff time per year would be contributed to developing web pages and updating information on the City's website. Approximately 1.5 hours of staff time per year would be contributed to filming general footage of the project and coordinating with RVTV to produce the special episode.

IV. Conditions for Success

The activities associated with this NRSA plan reflect and are meant to be consistent with the goals and needs expressed by the community. The NRSA plan does not purport to fulfill all of the many recommendations of the neighborhood plans, or to be the only catalyst for revitalization of the target area. However, it does provide a direction to the community, and to HUD, that merits granting the regulatory flexibility available to the CDBG-assisted activities.

Achieving the performance benchmarks set forth herein requires the participation, cooperation and investment of many stakeholders. Given that CDBG funds are a significant source of investment, a NRSA plan is a logical step for the West End revitalization activities. The plan provides a framework for progress, self-evaluation and accountability.