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**KANAWHA CITY REVITALIZATION PLAN**

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## **Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **I. OVERVIEW**

The Kanawha City Community is located on the south side of the Kanawha River in the City of Charleston. The Community is bound by 19<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, 72<sup>nd</sup> Street to the east, the Kanawha River to the north and ridge tops to the south. Key landmarks, such as the University of Charleston, Watt Powell Park, and the Charleston Area Medical Center (Memorial Division), are located within the Community.

Kanawha City is comprised of several distinct neighborhoods that interact as a self-contained community. The community enjoys convenient access to an array of high quality of goods services, plus necessary public transportation and public services. The community’s neighborhoods have, for the most part, been fully developed for more than thirty years and are predominantly residential. These neighborhoods have different needs that, by thoughtful process, have been identified by members of the Community. This Revitalization Plan recommends solutions to specific problems identified by that process.

Design guidelines, housing strategies, crime prevention measures, organizational recommendations and employment and economic development strategies have been identified by the Community as critical components of any implementation strategy. The recommendations outlined in this plan will ensure a visually, socially and economically viable Community in which people can continue to work and reside.

### **II. HISTORY**

Charleston residents, historically, often identify themselves by the community in which they live. From Kanawha City to South Hills, from the East End to North Charleston, the several communities within the City all have unique features that make them home to the people who live there. Kanawha City was developed to be a self-contained Community with a blend of residential, commercial and industrial uses. It still maintains that original design.

Kanawha City was originally annexed into the City of Charleston in 1929, with subsequent annexations to follow. The area is unique to the City in that it offers its residents most of the goods and services needed without having to cross the Kanawha River.

Two historic figures resided in what is currently referred to as Kanawha City. These were Daniel Boone and Colonel Andrew Donnally, Sr. Daniel Boone moved his family to the Kanawha Valley around 1788. They lived in a double log cabin on what

is now Kanawha Avenue, opposite and slightly west of the mouth of Campbell’s Creek. Colonel Andrew Donnally, Sr. was one of the earliest and largest salt makers in the area and was a major landholder in Kanawha City.

Kanawha City’s first industrial plant was the Columbia Barbed Wire and Nail Works located in the 4800 block of Kanawha Avenue. The plant was started in 1893 by D. A. Chenoweth. The plant employed more than 400 workers at the height of its business activity and shipped nails by rail and barge throughout the East. Most of its employees lived in boarding houses near the plant or traveled upriver by steamboat from Charleston.

The Kanawha City Company, a major landholder in its early land development, offered investors 6,000 square foot lots or 20,000 feet of river frontage for residential or industrial use.

Libbey Owens Company and Owens-Illinois Bottle Company opened manufacturing operations in Kanawha City in 1917. Libbey Owens Company built its first six units in 1916-1917. Six more units were added in 1918 and 1923, making it the largest plate glass plant in the world. In 1929, Ed Ford Plate Glass Company purchased an interest in the company and later changed its name to Libbey Owens Ford. The plant manufactured plate, window, windshield, and non-shattering glass. By 1929, Kanawha City was one of the largest glass producing areas in the world.

Charleston’s first airport operated in Kanawha City in the late 1920’s and early 1930’s. It preceded construction of Wertz Field at Institute, which saw the introduction of the City’s first commercial air service in 1933.

During the early 1900s Kanawha City was the location for National Guard encampments. The 2<sup>nd</sup> West Virginia Infantry Regiment of the Guard used the area during World War I and in 1925 it camped in the area bordered by the Kanawha River, MacCorkle Avenue, 35<sup>th</sup> Street, and 50<sup>th</sup> Street. The Guard had previously used the same area during the 1912 coal strike and the Mexican Border Crisis of 1916.

The 1915 construction of the original Kanawha City Bridge at 35<sup>th</sup> Street opened up the area for future development. Governor MacCorkle built the bridge to provide street car access to the Kanawha City and Cabin Creek areas. The bridge operated as a toll bridge from 1915 to 1928. After the bridge opened, the glass plants developed Kanawha City lots that were sold for construction of residential structures. All of the available lots were not, however, built upon until after World War II.

The Kanawha City Bridge was dismantled and dropped into the Kanawha River in 1975. It was replaced by the present 35<sup>th</sup> Street and 36<sup>th</sup> Street bridges connecting to Washington Street and the Interstate. MacCorkle Avenue was widened to four lanes and landscaped during the 1930s. In the late 1960’s its treescape was removed when the street was again widened.

In recent years increased traffic, spot zoning, increased signage and illumination along the MacCorkle Avenue corridor have begun to overpower the Community’s essence. The Community’s infrastructure is in need of improvement. The Community also finds itself attending to an aging population and an aging housing stock.

Largely buoyed by its reputation as a family community, and benefited by its park-like setting and newly opened ridge top land for residential development, younger families are moving into the Community who appear willing to rehabilitate housing and continue the tradition of Kanawha City as a caring, interactive and involved community.

### **III. VISION STATEMENT**

It is the vision of the Kanawha City Revitalization Plan to protect property values, enhance the Quality of Life and maintain a nurturing and prosperous Community by recapturing the village atmosphere envisioned by developers a century ago. This will be achieved through the organized and cooperative efforts of City officials and the Kanawha City Community Association.

### **IV. MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of the Kanawha City Revitalization Plan to enhance the environment, safety, housing, services, economic development and land use of Kanawha City by compliance with the following standards and criteria:

- Adopt policies that provide for a clean and aesthetically pleasing environment and improve accessibility to, and within, Kanawha City.
- Develop policies and programs that enhance the business environment and support and promote Kanawha City’s business community.
- Maintain a quality housing stock and a low crime rate.
- Preserve Quality of Life by being proactive.
- Ensure access to both private and public goods and services that satisfy basic human needs (health care, recreational facilities/programs, retail establishments, restaurants and pharmacies).
- Develop policies that stimulate economic development activities, enhance job opportunities, provide skills training and increase the educational opportunities available in Kanawha City.

- Prepare a Future Land Use plan that reflects optimal land uses for Kanawha City at its long-range, full development scenario and represents the graphic expression of the physical implementation of the adopted goals and objectives established by Kanawha City residents and representatives of its business community.
- Ensure that decisions regarding land use are consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

## **V. PURPOSE**

The Kanawha City Community Revitalization Plan is a collaborative effort between the residential and business communities of Kanawha City and the City of Charleston. Kanawha City was selected for study based on the fact that it demonstrates a potential for improvement. The Community is also very vocal about its situation and energetic to secure improvements. The Revitalization Plan will serve as the mechanism to assist the Kanawha City Community in elevating its Quality of Life, preserving its residential character and maintaining its economic viability by directing and monitoring consistent and compatible development initiatives.

## **VI. APPROACH**

The Community Revitalization Plan is a guide for the future physical development of the Kanawha City Community. The principle behind this approach is that by preparing a plan that is integrally tied to its precedent goals, the old adage that “...a locality can do no better than it aspires to be...” is underscored. A revitalization plan cannot be structured without generally accepted goals for the future.

This goals-directed planning process specifically focuses on those issues deemed critical by the Community. These adopted goals set the physical, social, economic and cultural framework around which the Community Revitalization Plan is drafted. The Plan is organized, designed and will be implemented to achieve desired goals relative to: (a) future land use; (b) scale and intensity of land uses; and (c) development of strategies and programs that maintain and enhance the Quality of Life of current and future residents.

## **VII. CONCEPT**

The Kanawha City Community Revitalization Plan includes an analysis of existing conditions in Kanawha City. It also identifies strategies for solution of specific problems. Over the course of the planning effort, relevant data was assembled and used to identify and analyze problems, develop and select alternatives, and formulate a revitalization plan for the area. This Plan will be used to present the identified problems, needs,

opportunities and strategies to agencies, organizations and individuals to gain their understanding and support for improvements and positive change.

In order to develop and maintain a successful revitalization program, the Plan addresses four basic areas: (a) Environment and Community Image; (b) Crime, Safety and Housing; (c) Organization and Public/Private Services; and (d) Economic Restructuring, Employment and Education. The Plan recognizes the need for a strong partnership between the private sector and the City government in order to succeed. Other factors include an incremental approach to implementing the program, an emphasis on quality in all activities and a variety of promotional activities to market the entire Kanawha City area. The Community believes that both its physical conservation and economic strength are critical to the health of the City and will continue to both anchor and support the vitality of the City of Charleston.

The Kanawha City Community Association has been formed by members of the Community to operate exclusively for charitable and educational purposes in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. The Community Association is referenced throughout this document as an active participant in the successful and effective implementation of the Plan. Most matters relating to community involvement and advocacy are assigned to the Community Association.

The Plan builds upon the strengths of the Kanawha City Community in the following ways:

- A. It addresses land use, housing, employment, municipal services and environmental problems;
- B. It increases resident awareness of, and participation in, their community-building activities;
- C. It includes implementation strategies and specific recommendations for improvements; and
- D. It documents the collaborative efforts of the Kanawha City Community in the development process so that the experience may be shared and may contribute to the development of other successful community-building partnerships throughout the City.

## **VIII. ORGANIZATION OF THE PLAN**

The Kanawha City Community Revitalization Plan is divided into seven chapters. The first chapter covers the makeup of the Plan, a historical perspective, a vision statement, a mission statement and a listing of key Players and Partners. Chapter Two presents a Socio-Economic Analysis of Kanawha City. An assessment of the Environment and Community Image comprises Chapter Three and includes proposed strategies designed to assist the Community in improving its image as well as its physical and social environment. Chapter Four - Crime, Safety and Housing - includes a Community assessment and proposed strategies regarding crime (vandalism, theft, and drug abuse), safety, (speeding, loitering, and cruising) and housing (owner-versus renter-occupied units, vacant housing structures, absentee landlords, and substandard housing). Chapter Five of the Plan, Organization and Public/Private Services, includes an assessment of existing conditions and lists proposed strategies to assist the Kanawha City Community in providing public and private services to its residents. Chapter Six addresses Economic Restructuring, Employment and Education and identifies strategies that will improve the economic vitality of the Community and the quality and extent of educational opportunities available to residents of Kanawha City. Chapters Three, Four, Five, and Six include a list of proposed activities that have been prioritized as short, medium, or long range strategies. Chapter Seven of this Community Revitalization Plan includes an analysis of existing land uses and future land use recommendations.

## **IX. THE PLANNING PROCESS**

The City Planning Department guided the Kanawha City Community through a process that included eight exercises and an open house. The exercises were as follows:

<b>Exercise One:</b>	Define Boundaries
<b>Exercise Two:</b>	Create a Mission
<b>Exercise Three:</b>	Identify Players and Partners
<b>Exercise Four:</b>	Choose an Organizational Sponsor
<b>Exercise Five:</b>	List Assets & Liabilities; Potential Opportunities & Threats
<b>Exercise Six:</b>	Define Activities and Set Priorities
<b>Exercise Seven:</b>	Draw Up a Work Plan
<b>Exercise Eight:</b>	Create Final Recommendations for a Program

During the planning process the Charleston City Planning Department worked closely with a consultant (Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani), residents of Kanawha City, developers and business leaders in the Community as well as elected City officials.

After Exercise Five, the Community held an open house to present the work completed to date in order to solicit comment and build consensus for the Plan. Comments were noted

and returned to the Planning Department whereby the Kanawha City Revitalization Steering Committee, the Planning Department, and its Consultant defined activities, set priorities, and ultimately developed program recommendations. Upon completion of this work, the Planning Department collaborated with Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani to solicit additional input from the Community and to develop a future land use plan for Kanawha City.

## **X. KEY PLAYERS AND PARTNERS**

### **A. Purpose**

There are both public and private agencies and organizations that have demonstrated an interest in preserving and enhancing the visual and social quality of Kanawha City. The interest has been positive. The responsibilities to implement this Plan must be shouldered by both the public and private sector. A partial list of such agencies and organizations includes:

### **B. Players and Partners**

#### **1. City Government**

- Municipal Planning Commission
- Board of Zoning Appeals
- City Council
- Mayor
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Traffic Engineer
- Building Commission
- City Engineer
- Sanitary Board
- Public Works Department
- City Manager
- Municipal Beautification Commission
- Parks and Recreation
  - Mini Park at 57<sup>th</sup> St. and Victory Avenue
  - Recreation Center at 36<sup>th</sup> St. and Venable Avenue
  - Watt Powell Park

#### **2. Kanawha County Government**

- Board of Education
  - Kanawha City Elementary
  - Chamberlain Elementary
  - Horace Mann Junior High
- County Commission
- Kanawha/Charleston Health Department

- Emergency Services
3. State Government
    - Department of Highways
    - Governor’s Office
    - Worker’s Compensation
    - Department of Administration
    - Department of Motor Vehicles
    - Division of Environmental Protection
  4. Shawnee Hills/Highland Hospital
  5. Covenant House
  6. Federal Government
    - Corps of Engineers
  7. Charleston Housing Authority
    - South Park Village
    - Lippert Terrace
  8. West Virginia Housing Development Fund
  9. University of Charleston
  10. CSX Railroad
  11. Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC)
  12. Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KVRTA)
  13. Realtors
  14. Developers
  15. Churches
  16. Private Schools
    - St. Agnes
    - Montessori School
  17. Landlord Association
  18. Kanawha Mall/Kanawha Cinemas
  19. Union Mission Ministries
  20. Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)

21. Charleston Alley Cats
22. Land Companies
  - Kanawha City Land Company
  - Maier Foundation
  - Kanawha Village Apartments
23. Clubs
  - Kanawha Estates Garden Club
  - Chappell Road Garden Club
  - Lion’s Club
  - Charleston Boat Club
  - Optimists
  - Greenbrier Pool Association
24. Unions
  - Teamsters
  - United Mine Workers
25. Media
  - Charleston Daily Mail
  - Charleston Gazette
  - Television
    - WCHS
    - WOWK
    - WSAZ
    - Public TV
    - Fox
26. Financial Institutions
  - Savings and Loans
  - Credit Unions
  - Banks
27. Businesses in Kanawha City
  - Landscaping and Sign Companies
  - Engineering Companies
  - Restaurants
  - Supermarkets
  - Hotels/Motels
  - Doctor Offices
  - Hospitals
  - Professional Office
  - Highland (non-medical)
  - Pharmacies

- Health and Fitness Centers
- Service Stations
- Car Wash
- Southern West Virginia Auto Club
- Cantrell Trucking
- Quality Woods
- Automobile Dealerships
- Computer and Technology Stores
- Dry Cleaners
- Jewelers

## Chapter 2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

### I. OVERVIEW

In this section of the Kanawha City Community Revitalization Plan, demographic and socio-economic characteristics are analyzed to identify past conditions and trends in the Community. Demographic information is important in making planning decisions involving the physical, economic, and social development of the Kanawha City Community. In addition to this, demographic data serves as a basis for determining the assets and liabilities of the Community.

Kanawha City is comprised of Census Tracts 15, 16, 17 and 18. Census Tract 16 was combined with 15 after 1980. Data on Census Tracts 15 and 16 has been combined (and will collectively be referred to as “Census Tract 15”) for analytical purposes.

The land area of Kanawha City is likewise comprised of three voting wards designed to give proportionate representation in the City Council. The wards combined land area and boundaries are approximately the same as those comprising Census Tracts 15, 17 and 18. As a result the Census Tract totals are representative of the Kanawha City Community.

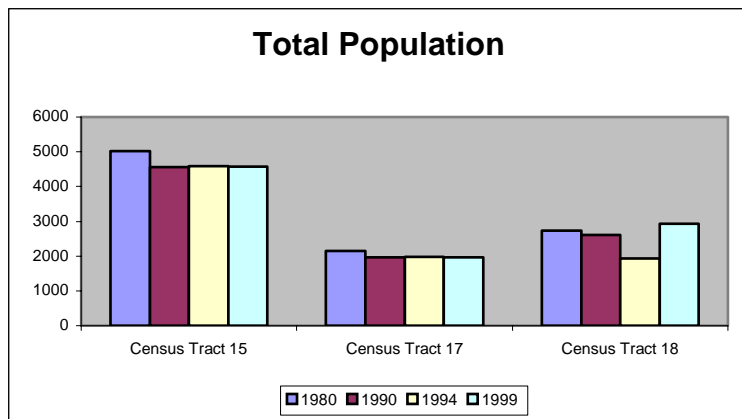
A map on the following page, entitled “Kanawha City Revitalization Plan Ward/Census Boundary Relationship,” shows both the ward and census tract areas for the Community.

### II. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Kanawha City’s population decreased by 8 percent from 1980 to 1990. This is in keeping with the State’s, as well as the City’s, trend in population decline. However, the Community’s population increased 4 percent between 1990 and 1994. By 1999, a marginal decrease in total population of 1.4 percent is projected.

**Table 2.1 – Total Population**

	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1999</b>
Census Tract 15	5013	4556	4593	4573
Census Tract 17	2154	1964	1979	1968
Census Tract 18	2733	2613	2935	2937
<b>Total</b>	<b>9900</b>	<b>9133</b>	<b>9507</b>	<b>9478</b>



All three Census Tracts decreased in population from 1980 to 1990. The population of Census Tract 15 and Census Tract 17 decreased nine percent, while Tract 18 decreased four percent. Between 1990 and 1994, both Tracts 15 and 17 increased marginally. The population in both census tracts is

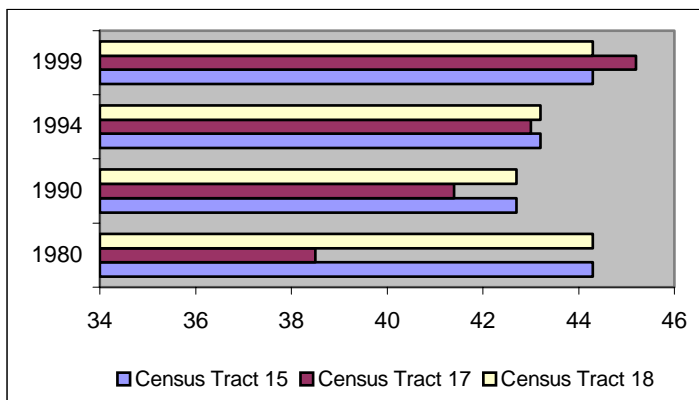
projected to remain fairly stable through 1999. In 1994, the population in Tract 18 increased eleven percent to 2,935 persons (from 2,613 persons in 1990). This is due to development along the ridgetops and is expected to contribute to continued population growth to a projected 2,937 by 1999.

**A. Median Age**

During the eighties, the median age dropped slightly in Census Tract 15 from 44.3 to 42.7. In contrast, the median age of Census Tracts 17 and 18 increased during the same period of 41.4 and 38.6 years, respectively. The 1999 projections indicate an increase in the median age in Census Tracts 15 and 17 and a decrease in Census Tract 18.

Table 2.2 – Median Age

	1980	1990	1994	1999
Census Tract 15	44.3	42.7	43.2	44.3
Census Tract 17	38.5	41.4	43.0	45.2
Census Tract 18	44.3	42.7	43.2	44.3



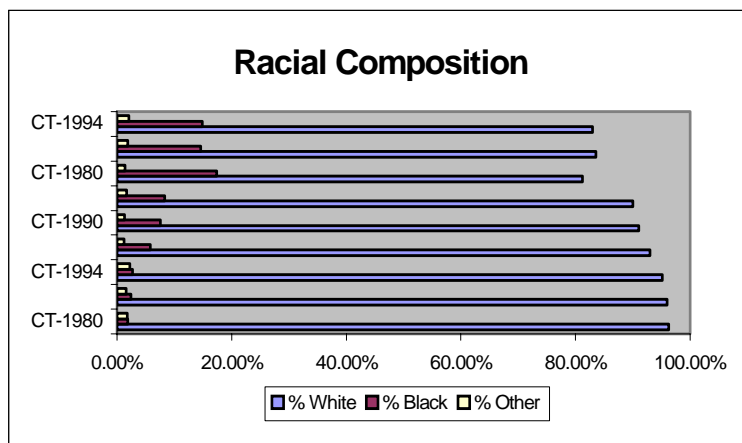
**B. Racial Composition**

In terms of race, all three Census Tracts have a predominately white population. In 1994, Census Tract 15 recorded the highest percentage of white population at 95.1 percent. It experienced a marginal increase in the black

Table 2.3 – Racial Composition

	White	% White	Black	% Black	Other	% Other
<b>Census Tract 15</b>						
1980	4,829	96.3%	93	1.9%	91	1.8%
1990	4,365	96.0%	111	2.4%	80	1.6%
1994	4,367	95.1%	124	2.7%	102	2.2%
<b>Census Tract 17</b>						
1980	2,001	93.0%	126	5.8%	27	1.2%
1990	1,790	91.0%	148	7.6%	26	1.3%
1994	1,779	90.0%	166	8.3%	34	1.7%
<b>Census Tract 18</b>						
1980	2,219	81.2%	476	17.4%	38	1.4%
1990	2,184	83.5%	381	14.6%	48	1.9%
1994	2,426	83.0%	437	14.9%	62	2.1%

population (1.9% in 1980 to 2.7% in 1994). In Census Tract 17, the white population decreased from 93 percent in 1980 to 90 percent in 1994. There has been a steady increase in the black population as well as other races during the same time period.



Census Tract 18 had the highest percentage of black population of the study area; however, there has been a slight decrease between 1980 and 1994 (17.4% to 14.9%). The white population and other categories increased slightly from 1980 to 1994. These trends are expected to continue in the future.

**C. Age Group Proportions**

In Census Tract 15 the percentage of population between twenty to sixty-four decreased from 59% in 1980 to 53% in 1990. In the same period the percentage of children below 19 years of age also decreased (22.4% to 19%) while the percentage of senior citizens above 65 increased from 18.6% to 28%.

By 1994 the percentage of children had further decreased, the median age group had increased almost to the 1980 level and the senior age group percentage experienced only a very minor decrease. Some changes are believed due to an earlier exodus of younger families to Putnam County and other outlying areas while the percentage increase of senior citizens is believed due to a decrease in the mortality rate and decision by older parents to retain their Kanawha City residences after their children had left their homes.

Between 1980 and 1990 the combined age group percentages of children and adults in Census Tracts 17 and 18 decreased. During the same period the percentages of the senior citizen population increased more than 20%. During the 1990-94 period, Census Tract 17 reflected a slight drop in the actual numbers of children and adults

**Table 2.4 – Age Group Proportions**

	1980	% 1980	1990	% 1990	1994	% 1994
<b>Census Tract 15</b>						
0-19	969	22.4%	856	19.0%	703	15.3%
20-64	2,876	59.0%	2,437	53.0%	2,632	57.3%
65+	1,168	18.6%	1,263	28.0%	4,258	27.4%
Total	5,013	100.0%	4,556	100.0%	4,593	100.0%
<b>Census Tract 17</b>						
0-19	388	65.0%	338	18.0%	320	16.0%
20-64	1,392	18.0%	1,171	65.0%	1,166	59.0%
65+	374	17.0%	455	17.0%	493	25.0%
Total	2,145	100.0%	1,964	100.0%	1,979	100.0%
<b>Census Tract 18</b>						
0-19	849	31.0%	686	31.0%	702	24.0%
20-64	1,452	53.0%	1,414	53.0%	1,696	58.0%
64+	432	16.0%	513	16.0%	537	18.0%
Total	2,733	100.0%	2,613	100.0%	2,935	100.0%

while the actual number of seniors increased by 38%. During the 1990-94 period Census Tract 18 experienced an actual increase in population in all three age categories.

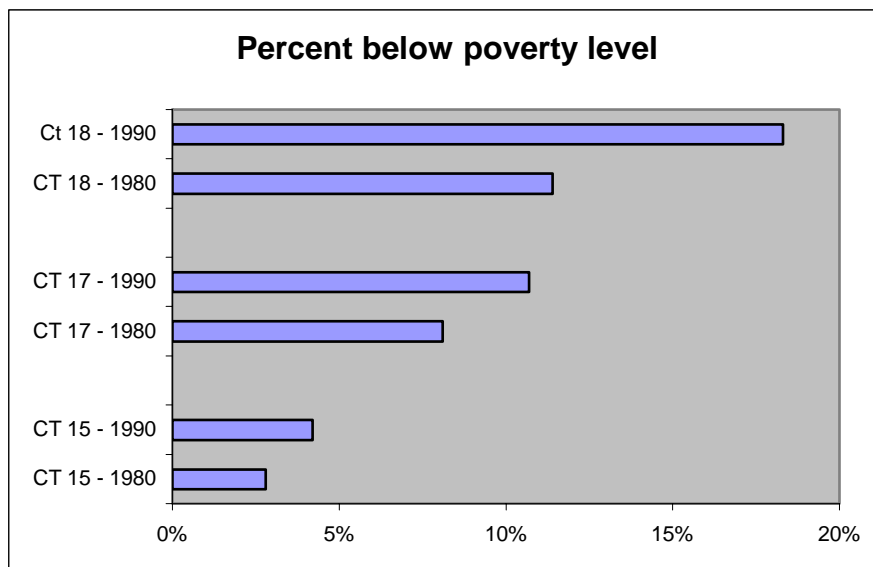
**D. Poverty Status**

Poverty levels are also an important indicator of the socio-economic conditions prevalent in an area. A high poverty level is often associated with increased levels of crime, a declining housing stock and the deterioration of communities. An increase in the number of people living below the poverty level can create a visible change in the quality of life within a community and can contribute to the overall decline of a community.

**Table 2.5 – Poverty Status**

	Population above poverty	Population below poverty	Total % below poverty	Population < 65 below poverty	% < 65 below poverty	Population > 65 below poverty	% > 65 below poverty
<b>Census Tract 15</b>							
1980	4,871	142	2.8%	63	44.4%	79	55.6%
1990	4,365	191	4.2%	106	55.0%	85	45.0%
<b>Census Tract 17</b>							
1980	1,979	175	8.1%	128	73.0%	47	27.0%
1990	1,753	311	10.7%	191	90.5%	20	9.5%
<b>Census Tract 18</b>							
1980	2,422	311	11.4%	299	96.2%	12	3.8%
1990	2,135	478	18.3%	454	95.0%	25	5.0%

Fortunately, Kanwah City does not have high levels of poverty compared to the rest of the City. All three Census Tracts experienced an increase in the number of persons living below the poverty level between 1980 and 1990. However, all three were still below the overall City average of 18.8%. The area that raises the most concern is Census Tract 18. This Census Tract has the largest percentage of people living below the poverty level and also has a significantly larger number of people below sixty-five living below the poverty level.



### III. EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

#### A. Employment Trends

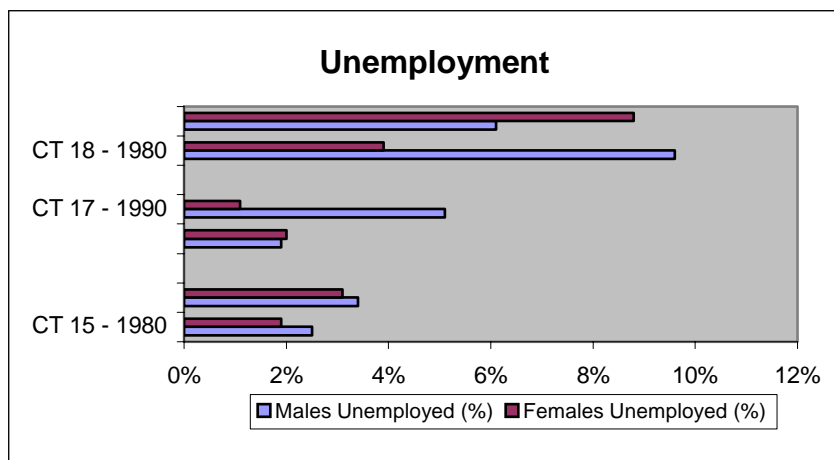
Unemployment is another indicator of the socio-economic conditions of a community. The unemployment rate is calculated as the proportion of the civilian labor force that is currently seeking employment. Persons not employed and not looking for work are not counted in the labor force.

**Table 2.6 – Employment Status**

This area has a significantly lower unemployment rate than other areas of the City. A higher unemployment rate is often associated with increased levels of crime and deteriorated

	Male Labor	(%) Males	Female Labor	(%) Female
<b>Census Tract 15</b>				
1980	1,305	2.5%	1,125	1.9%
1990	1,028	3.4%	1,072	3.1%
<b>Census Tract 17</b>				
1980	641	1.9%	546	2.0%
1990	396	5.1%	437	1.1%
<b>Census Tract 18</b>				
1980	552	9.6%	512	3.9%
1990	664	6.1%	442	8.8%

dwelling units. For example, the area comprising Census Tracts 15 and 17 has relatively low levels of unemployment. Consequently, crime is low and the dwelling units are better maintained. Census Tract 18 has the highest levels of unemployment. The percentage of females unemployed increased dramatically from 3.9% in 1980 to 8.8% in 1990.



However, the number of unemployed males decreased within the same time period (9.6% in 1980 to 6.1% in 1990). The percentage of unemployed females increased in Census Tracts 15 and 18 between 1980 and 1990. Census Tract 18 had a significant

increase in the number of unemployed females between 1980 and 1990. The percentage of unemployed rose in Census Tract 17 between 1980 and 1990.

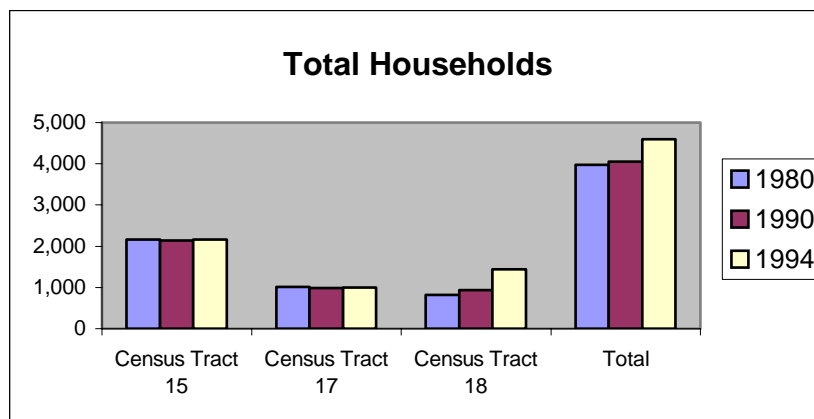
## IV. HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

### A. Total Households

Table 2.7 – Total Households

Census Tract 15 experienced a slight decrease in the number of households between 1980 and 1990. In 1994 the total community was estimated to be 4,592 households.

	1980	1990	1994
Census Tract 15	2,161	2,136	2,158
Census Tract 17	1,008	989	998
Census Tract 18	813	939	1,436
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,982</b>	<b>4,055</b>	<b>4,592</b>



### B. Household Size

Table 2.8 – Household Size

The average household size in the three Census Tracts decreased over the last ten years. This trend reflected a state and national trend of people having fewer children.

	1980	1990	1994
Census Tract 15	2.13	1.99	1.98
Census Tract 17	2.14	1.99	1.98
Census Tract 18	3.03	2.73	2.73

Census Tracts 15 and 17 have consistently had a smaller average household size compared to that of Census Tract 18. This may be attributed to the ridge top development, which is comprised of younger, larger families, and a higher percentage of black population, who, based on national trends, have households that are normally larger than most white households in inner cities.

### C. Median Household Income

The median household income for a community provides important information regarding spending power and lifestyles of residents of that community. These trends are closely related to the local economic conditions and opportunities. The median household income decreased by 29% for Census Tract 15 between 1980 and 1990.

Census Tract 17 had the lowest median income in 1990. The significantly smaller percentage of people living below the poverty level in Census Tract 15, as compared to Census Tract 17, may account for its higher median household income. Even though the inflation rate has not been factored into this equation, it is evident that the median income did increase, during this period, based on the large percentage change in Census Tract 15 and Census Tract 18.

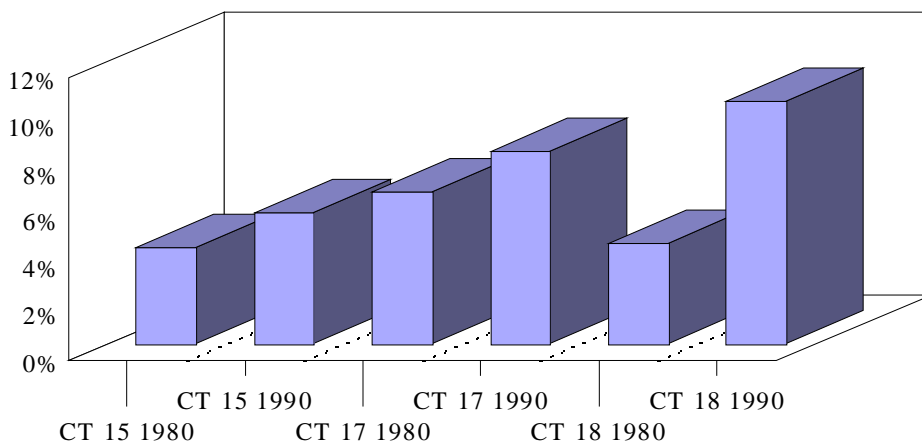
**Table 2.9 – Median Household Income**

	1980	1990	1994
Census Tract 15	\$20,541	\$31,824	\$34,217
Census Tract 17	\$17,331	\$20,386	\$22,420
Census Tract 18	\$16,156	\$31,167	\$33,376

**D. Housing Units**

The presence of vacant structures can be viewed as both an asset as well as a liability to a community. Dilapidated houses and buildings are considered blight if left to deteriorate; however, some abandoned structures may be rehabilitated and vacant lots can be used for infill housing units. The number of vacant structures increased marginally during the last decade in Census Tracts 15 and 17. Vacant housing in Census Tract 18 represented 10.3% of all units in 1990. This figure has more than doubled since 1980.

**Housing Vacancy**



**Table 2.10 – Housing Vacancy**

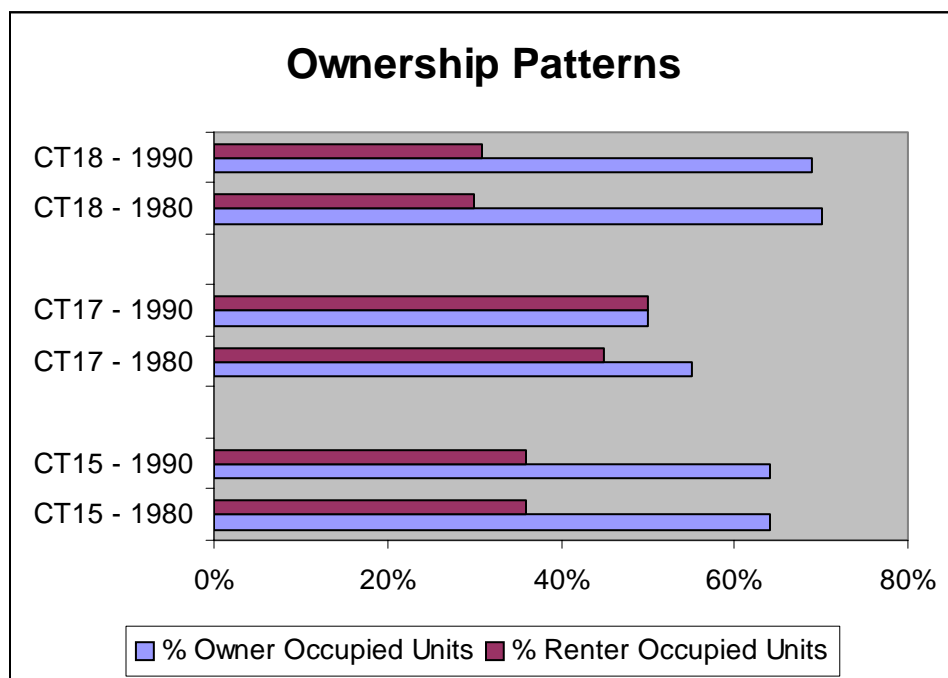
	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Total Housing Units	(%) Vacant Housing Units
<b>Census Tract 15</b>				
1980	2,161	89	2,250	4.1%
1990	2,136	127	2,263	5.6%
<b>Census Tract 17</b>				
1980	1,008	71	1,079	6.5%
1990	989	88	1,077	8.2%
<b>Census Tract 18</b>				
1980	813	37	850	4.3%
1990	870	100	970	10.3%

**E. Home Ownership**

The existence of a large percentage of owner occupied housing is a stabilizing element for a community. In general, the perception is that home owners take better care of their own property and have more incentive to be involved with their community. Home-owners tend to have more at stake in terms of property values and personal investment. The percentage of home owners remained consistent during the last decade for Census Tract 15. Census Tract 18 indicated a marginal decrease, but has a higher percentage of home owners than Census Tract 17.

**Table 2.11 – Ownership Patterns**

	% Owner Occupied Units	% Renter Occupied Units
<b>Census Tract 15</b>		
1980	64%	36%
1990	64%	36%
<b>Census Tract 17</b>		
1980	55%	45%
1990	50%	50%
<b>Census Tract 18</b>		
1980	70%	30%
1990	69%	31%



## Chapter 3 ENVIRONMENT & COMMUNITY IMAGE

### I. OVERVIEW

Kanawha City has many assets working in its favor as it ventures into the twenty-first century. The Community is blessed with high property values, good housing, and a high degree of home ownership. Residents are also afforded the luxury of having goods and services of all varieties within the immediate vicinity. Families and individuals are confident that households and commercial entities can have a peaceful co-existence and, at the same time, preserve their identity.

Kanawha City’s identity was not built overnight. A community’s image is defined by residents, persons living in other parts of the City and to some extent by realtors, developers and financial institutions. The image that a community projects, either positively or negatively, affects that community’s ability to implement its development strategies.

### II. MISSION STATEMENT

Adopt policies that provide for a clean, tranquil and aesthetically pleasing environment and improve accessibility to, and liveability within, Kanawha City. Develop policies and programs that enhance both the business environment and the Quality of Life for the Community.

### III. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

#### A. Purpose

In order to identify the assets and liabilities of Kanawha City, information from several sources was collected and analyzed. The sources included the Census, market surveys and land use inventories. A key factor in the assets and liabilities category for Kanawha City was information obtained from residents who live there. Input on assets and liabilities received at community meetings and field inventories during the planning process is the most important element found in this section.

The following lists of **Assets** and **Liabilities** provide the framework around which Plan recommendations were developed.

**B. Assets**

**1. Land**

- a. Flat Land** – *Kanawha City contains a large segment of accessible flat land.*

Flat residential and commercial lots in the village and valley floor area are an unusual and valued find in our mountainous region. The flat terrain allows for greater ease in getting out and around in the winter, which is especially beneficial to our older and disabled residents.

- b. Riverfront Properties** – *Riverfront property is in high demand.*

The Kanawha River provides a visually pleasing setting and calming presence that adds to the tranquility of the community. Riverfront residential lots enjoy separation from adjacent properties, which brings additional green space to the community and enhanced property values.

- c. Park-like Setting** – *Kanawha City is blessed with mature trees and green hillsides.*

Despite its proximity to the tangible elements of an urban setting, Kanawha City has numerous and varied pockets of vegetation in the valley floor, and beautifully wooded hollows and hillsides within the community at its southern boundaries. Hardwood trees planted by the original developers have matured throughout the valley floor to create a park-like setting that is enjoyed by the residents of Kanawha City and the City of Charleston as a whole. Kanawha City is favored by many who bike, run, roller blade or walk on its streets as a form of recreation and physical fitness.

**2. Identity**

- a. Neighborhood Identity and Pride** – *Kanawha City exhibits a sense of neighborhood identity and pride.*

Identity, pride and reputation are characteristics that can be used to attract responsible community-active businesses and families to a Community. Families are drawn by a sense of Community.

- b. Active Involvement** – *Kanawha City residents are actively involved in the Community.*

Involvement is characterized by:

- a traditionally high voter participation (often double the state and national average);
- the continued involvement of many parents in creating highly desirable and award winning schools; and
- the formation and continuance of numerous neighborhood and community oriented associations and clubs that boost high participation and sustained leadership in a variety of civic issues that directly effect the community – evidenced by recent community zoning issues.

**c. Traditional Grid Street Design** – *The community has a traditional grid street design.*

The grid design is a major asset to traffic flow and allows for easy identification of residential and business properties. The traditional neighborhood design (TND) is widely recognized by planning professionals as a significant contributor in building the sense of community valued by Kanawha City residents.

**d. Well-Defined Boundaries** – *Well-defined sections of Kanawha City are in place.*

Persons generally know when they are entering or leaving Kanawha City. Boundaries (river, hills, entrances) are well defined and evident.

**e. Generations of Families** – *Many Kanawha City residents are second and third generation residents.*

A significant number of second and third generation homeowners adds to a community memory and binds the neighborhoods together into a cohesive community with a common sense of place.

**3. Housing**

**a. High Property Values** – *Kanawha City has higher than average property values.*

Areas with high property values tend to attract residents with professional backgrounds. This is a stabilizing community force.

**b. Desirability** – *Housing in Kanawha City is desirable.*

The high quality housing stock makes the community viable for families or individuals interested in residing in the community. Desirable housing serves as a magnet to keep the community intact by

reducing the interest of residents to move elsewhere in search of better housing.

**c. Home Ownership** – *A high degree of home ownership is prevalent.*

A large number of individuals owning their homes are a stabilizing force in the community.

**d. Ridge Top Development** – *Residential property is available for development in the ridge tops adjacent to the river-plain section of Kanawha City.*

Families or individuals moving into the community have opportunities for building in these ridge top areas.

**4. Services**

**a. Essential Services** – *Essential services are available through all of Kanawha City.*

Emergency services such as 911 Emergency Number, a Community Policing Office, a City Fire Station with Emergency Medical Service, and residential waste hauling are in place.

**b. Basic Services** – *Basic services are readily available within Kanawha City’s borders.*

Basic services are within walking distance or a short drive from most points in Kanawha City. Professional, retail and food establishments offer a wide variety of easily accessible services.

**c. Medical Facilities** – *Convenient medical facilities/services are in place.*

Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) affords quick access to quality care and ensures a high level of comfort to the Community.

**5. Crime and Safety**

**a. Low Crime Rate** – *Kanawha City has a low crime rate.*

As a major area within West Virginia’s capital city, the maintenance of a low crime rate is one of the components that makes Kanawha City attractive to current as well as prospective residents and businesses. A high home ownership rate and the active involvement of its citizens have been major factors in maintaining the low crime rate.

**C. Liabilities**

**1. Land**

- a. Buffering** – *Inadequate buffering between residential and adjacent zones is a problem.*

Buffer zones are needed to shield residential areas from noise and aesthetic encroachment of institutional and commercial uses.

- b. Available Land** – *There is a lack of available land for institutions to expand in Kanawha City.*

Key community institutions such as the Charleston Area Medical Center and the University of Charleston are landlocked and consequently cannot expand horizontally without acquiring residential properties outside their present borders. Such expansion moves result in increasing and persistent tension between the institutions and their adjacent neighborhoods.

- c. Steep Roads** – *Steep (up to 15% grade) roads leading into ridgetop developments are found at several places in the Community.*

Such roads become acute maintenance problems during severe weather conditions.

**2. Identity**

- a. Commercial Encroachment** – *Commercial encroachment into residential areas is a constant threat.*

Land development in Kanawha City has generated several pitfalls. A prime example is the encroachment of business into residential areas. As such moves occur, adjacent residential property values decline because the commercial uses physically and visually dominate the landscape. The trend is also counter productive to the preservation of greenspace, green hillsides and the remaining stand of trees found in the community.

- b. Incompatible Uses** – *Incompatible land uses are prevalent.*

The continuing trend of land use in Kanawha City could have an adverse affect on neighborhoods as they presently exist. Land use should be maintained in a manner that ensures that businesses and institutions do not further encroach into residential areas.

**c. MacCorkle Avenue** – *MacCorkle Avenue has its downfalls.*

A steady influx of service and retail businesses along the roadway has contributed to significant increases in traffic flow. This traffic has brought increasing noise and disturbance that has infiltrated residential areas. Both public and commercial lighting on MacCorkle Avenue is increasingly intrusive into adjacent areas particularly on Venable and Noyes Avenues.

**d. Commercial Signs** – *Commercial signs dominate and distract from the streetscape along MacCorkle Avenue.*

Signs and billboards are the dominant characteristic of the streetscape.

**e. Lack of Streetscape** – *MacCorkle Avenue lacks attractive streetscape amenities.*

A general lack of architectural amenities, landscaping, attractive signs and lighting, and missing curbs are found throughout the length of MacCorkle Avenue. Stately trees removed when MacCorkle Avenue was widened in the late 1960's were not replaced.

**3. Housing**

**a. Aging Housing Stock** – *Kanawha City's housing stock was predominately built in the 1940-1960 period and needs significant rehabilitation.*

Housing in much of the Community is in need of attention if it is to retain its luster and reputation for above average quality and desirability. Homeowner confidence in the continued viability of the residential neighborhoods and the Community as a whole will play a significant role in their motivation and commitment to expend the monies necessary to not simply maintain their homes, but rehabilitate them for an extended future.

**4. Services**

**a. Parking** – *Lack of parking in commercial areas is increasing.*

As commercial, business and public entities attempt to draw from a larger area they have been unsuccessful in providing the additional parking needed to support their growth. As a result parking has overflowed into adjacent residential areas.

- b. Aging Infrastructure** – *Streets and sewers in Kanawha City need rehabilitated.*

The Community’s sanitary sewers are crumbling and in several areas provide inadequate service. Storm water that runs into some sanitary sewers must be separated. Aging streets need rebuilt in many areas.

**5. Crime and Safety**

- a. Cruising** – *Cruising has been an ongoing problem.*

Several establishments with parking lots on MacCorkle Avenue are used by teens as a night time and weekend gathering place. Although not always a problem - loud music, racing vehicles and vandalism often accompany the cruising activities. With limited recreational opportunities for teenagers and young adults many cruise the Kanawha Mall and MacCorkle Avenue areas with resultant adverse identity reflections on the community.

- b. Noise** – *Noise from the railroad, MacCorkle Avenue, the Interstate and helicopter service to Charleston Area Medical Center is widely evident in Kanawha City.*

Noise emanating from these sources often becomes overbearing for residents of the community. The situations also present safety problems that need to be addressed by CSX Corporation and the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

Despite convenient commercial trash pick up, some areas are visited by trash collectors in the early morning hours creating substantial neighborhood disturbance. Other commercial entities have delivery trucks driving through residential areas at all hours of the night.

- c. Crime Accessibility** – *Kanawha City is easily accessible to criminals.*

Despite its low crime rate the community with its convenient interstate access is a potential target for drugs and criminal activity.

- d. Chemical Storage** – *Chemicals are stored in a Kanawha City warehouse.*

Drum quantities of hazardous chemicals are currently stored on 57<sup>th</sup> Street. The warehouse known as Total Distribution, originally containing three zones, now contains one large warehouse that stores approximately 26 chemicals. The only ingress/egress to the facility is adjacent to a densely populated area adjacent to 57<sup>th</sup> Street on its west

side. In the event of an emergency the Charleston Fire Department responds but they are not permitted to enter the storage building. The Fire Department does not have the equipment or the training to handle a chemical release or a related fire. The Department stands by until the DuPont Terp Team arrives. Their response time is 30-45 minutes.

e. **Chemicals in Transit** – *Chemical shipments in transit through Kanawha City could, under accident conditions, present resulting problems similar to those described for chemical storage.*

f. **Bars** – *Problems exist at some Kanawha City bars.*

Bars that cater to underage drinkers need to be dealt with in an aggressive and expeditious manner. Bars, by the nature of their clientele, can and frequently do bring into a community activities that are not compatible with a desired residential/family community environment.

## IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### A. Purpose

The following statements of Goals and Objectives have been developed for the purpose of guiding development policies and activities in the areas of Environment and Community Image.

### B. Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1: Reclaim the Kanawha City Village atmosphere.**

**Goal 2: Preserve residential areas and stop commercial and institutional encroachment.**

**Goal 3: Support the Kanawha City Community Association in its efforts to increase communication and encourage continued participation amongst members of the Community.**

**Goal 4: Preserve, enhance and create green areas.**

Objective 1: Provide areas for active and passive recreation

Objective 2: Improve public river front access.

Objective 3: Preserve hillsides and ravines.

**Goal 5: Seek opportunities to improve streetscapes.**

- Objective 1: Strive to limit billboards and pole signs.
- Objective 2: Reintroduce suitable tree planting to MacCorkle Avenue.
- Objective 3: Install village appropriate lighting on residential streets and alleys.
- Objective 4: Evaluate alternatives to better accommodate on-street parking.
- Objective 5: Evaluate alternatives to better accommodate pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists, particularly those using the bike route on Kanawha Avenue.

**Goal 6: Support the Sanitary Board’s efforts to separate storm and sanitary sewer systems and correct other current Kanawha City sewer deficiencies.**

**Goal 7: Mitigate the impact of noise, light and pollution.**

- Objective 1: Control the continual increase of automobile traffic entering into the community through effective land use planning.
- Objective 2: Evaluate interstate and train noise abatement techniques.
- Objective 3: Regulate truck transit and helicopter traffic through residential areas.
- Objective 4: Regulate the hours of commercial trash pick-up.
- Objective 5: Create strategic buffers wherever feasible to limit the impact of noise, light and pollution on residential properties.
- Objective 6: Implement community beautification campaigns.

**Goal 8: Review existing establishments with liquor licenses on a regular basis.**

## **V. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES**

### **A. Purpose**

In order to implement a comprehensive revitalization strategy, an overall blend of short-range, medium-range and long-range actions is required.

The following section identifies the proposed activities as defined in the Plan. Activities to be implemented are prioritized into three categories. The categories are defined as follows:

**Short-range** - those that can be initiated and completed in a one to two year time period.

**Medium-range** - those that can be initiated and completed within five years.

**Long-range** - those which require more than five years to complete.

In the following sections the activities are placed in the order of short-range first, medium-range second, and long-range last.

A working mix of short, medium and long-range actions is required to ensure continuous results throughout the Plan’s implementation. Although all of the activities are important, those listed as short-range provide immediate positive results around which the Community can rally.

A short-range activity will convey to the Kanawha City Community that the Plan is result-oriented. It will also show that City officials and the Community Association are dedicated to improving the Quality of Life in Kanawha City.

Medium and long-range activities, however, are also essential. Activities falling in these ranges offer solutions to complex problems that sometimes require large financial commitments and require a longer time period for implementation.

Each of the three sets of activities is broken down to designate the agency (City, Kanawha City Community Association) that has primary responsibility to see that the specified action is taken.

## **B. Short-range Activities**

### **1. City:**

- a. Comprehensive Traffic Study** – A comprehensive “corridor” study of all Kanawha City streets from 19<sup>th</sup> Street to 72<sup>nd</sup> Street should be performed to guide further traffic related issues. This should include traffic visibility studies to ensure that shrubbery trimmings and vision fields, particularly along MacCorkle Avenue, are maintained.
- b. Corridor Village District** – MacCorkle Avenue serves as the main traffic artery and sets the tone for Kanawha City. It is imperative that residents, business owners, merchants and other interested parties work closely with the City Planning Department to develop the Corridor Village District design guidelines.
- c. Traffic Impact Studies** – Traffic impact studies should accompany any development proposal that includes a change in land use.

- d. **Commercial Traffic Abatement** – Alternative routes should be identified to remove non-residential traffic from residential neighborhoods. Traffic calming barriers for alleys and through street intersections should be created where feasible.
- e. **Hillside Protection** – The City should revise its zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations to ensure that access to any new development is designed with the protection of the hillside in mind. Hillside development should be carefully planned.
- f. **Signage Design Guidelines** – Billboards and other off premise signs should be limited. Property owners should remove signs remaining on vacant buildings that are considered as off-premise advertising. Design guidelines should address size, lighting, color and other aesthetic attributes, and discourage pole signs.
- g. **Village Lighting** – The City should maintain or replace old streetlights with village appropriate lighting fixtures.
- h. **Crime Reducing Site Design** - Crime should be discouraged through physical site design endeavors. Business owners should chain-off large parking lots and take other appropriate action with regard to securing their premises.
- i. **Enforce Zoning Code** – Strict enforcement of current zoning must be undertaken to handle problems relating to commercial and institutional encroachment. In particular, this would benefit residents directly behind the commercial strips along both sides of MacCorkle Avenue. The City staff should enforce zoning to ensure that rezonings, special permits and variances are granted only if the change meets the goals and intent of this plan.
- j. **Proactive Policing** – The low crime rate in Kanawha City should place police in a proactive mode. Areas needing immediate attention are: prevention of vandalism, a need for greater police presence along MacCorkle Avenue to deter speeding, and assurances that the police staff currently assigned to Kanawha City is maintained.
- k. **Annual Review Liquor Licenses** – Establishments with liquor licenses should be map-identified and reviewed on an annual basis by the City and State to ensure compliance with regulations.
- l. **Enforce Adult Entertainment Regulations** – Spacing requirements between adult entertainment establishments should be enforced. Such

businesses are not deemed appropriate for the Community. Zoning changes to seek their elimination should be undertaken.

- m. Timely Response to Refuse Collection Inspection Requests** – The Refuse Collection Department should work to ensure that the City is responsive to inspection requests.
- n. Implement Complaint Form System** – A complaint form to record and communicate suggestions and complaints about matters in the Kanawha City Community should be implemented. The system should involve appropriate Community and City personnel.
- o. Zero Tolerance for “Cruisers”** – Police should have a zero tolerance for “cruiser” on weekends. Citations should be enforced along with the aggressive enforcement of the curfew law.
- p. Identify Alternatives for “Cruisers”** – Due to a lack of recreational opportunities, the City’s Parks and Recreation Department should be brought in to discuss alternative sites for “cruisers.”
- q. Effective Street Signs** – Street signs should be studied regarding their visibility and effectiveness for traffic control and safety purposes.
- r. CSX Maintenance of Right-Of-Way** – Cooperation from CSX should be sought in order to improve the cutting and maintenance of railroad right-of-way.

## **2. Community Association:**

- a. Awards Program** – An awards program should be instituted in conjunction with the City Planning Department to recognize businesses, institutions and residents that improve the Quality of Life of the community by upgrading their property or undertaking other improvement initiatives.
- b. Block Parties** – Block parties and fairs should be used to convey community pride and to raise awareness of the related importance of the City’s zoning ordinances and building codes.
- c. Involve Community Organizations** – Churches, schools, garden clubs and other organizations should be sought out to gain their participation in community programs.
- d. Involve Senior Citizens** – Older residents of the Community should be actively solicited in planning community events.

- e. **Community Newsletter** – Residents and business owners are not always aware of existing zoning laws. To address this problem, a continuing section in the Community Association Newsletter and/or other service advertisements should be used to educate residents and business owners about such laws.
- f. **“Citizen’s Crime Line”** – The telephone number for the anonymous “Citizen’s Crime Line” for crime observations or complaints should be published. In particular, this could help identifying problems that might arise at bars and adult entertainment establishments. Also, it could serve to deter crime, particularly vandalism and drug trafficking.
- g. **Block Groups** – The creation of block groups should be promoted. Such groups could help neighbors handle difficult or unfamiliar tasks. In particular, the practice would benefit Kanawha City’s elderly residents.
- h. **Chemical Warehousing Safety Procedures** – Members of the Community should initiate communications with officials from DuPont, Total Distribution, the City, and the Kanawha County Commission to review safety procedures relating to warehousing at the Owens Industrial Park site. Precautionary matters should be explained to residents and a warning system that is audible throughout Kanawha City should be put into place. Sheltering, escape routes, evacuation drills and other measures need to be developed and upgraded continuously as new development and traffic patterns emerge. Residents should also be informed as to who is responsible for liabilities in the event of an emergency. A full-time security officer, with prominent visibility, is needed at the site.
- i. **Reuse of School Property** – Any reuse of vacant school property should be compatible with its residential neighborhood.
- j. **Media Relations** – The Community should actively develop media relations to ensure prominent publication of crimes and to bring issues to the attention of the public and City officials.

### C. Medium-range Activities

#### 1. City:

- a. **Comprehensive Rezoning** – The City should comprehensively rezone the Kanawha City area to make it consistent with its Future Land Use Plan. Residential Office zoning should be used more frequently to

protect the Community. However, it should be on a case-by-case basis.

- b. MacCorkle Avenue Zoning** – The rezoning of MacCorkle Avenue to a Corridor Village District is a recommended means to improve and assure a compatible residential community relationship.
- c. Buffering** – The Community needs to work with the City’s Planning Department to ensure that a comfortable noise/aesthetic buffer zone is achieved between businesses along MacCorkle Avenue and adjacent residential areas. The Planning Department needs to implement land use recommendations in this Plan to achieve that goal and to mitigate or eliminate current land use activities if they are viewed to adversely impact the Community.
- d. Parking** – Strengthen parking requirements in commercial areas and make them more regulatory.
- e. Encroachment** – Existing zoning should be made stronger and more restrictive to handle encroachment issues.
- f. Livability Code** – A Livability Code should be adopted. Such a Code would establish minimum property maintenance standards for lighting, heating, ventilation and sanitation. The Code would be enforced on residential and commercial properties. The Code should be developed as a joint effort between the City’s Planning Department and Building Commission.
- g. Pedestrian Safety** – Pedestrian crossing signals at MacCorkle Avenue intersections should be improved to apply ample opportunities for children and pedestrians to cross the street.
- h. Chemical Storage** – Regulate chemical storage warehousing that is adjacent to residential areas and eliminate additional chemical storage warehouses
- i. Bars** – Regulate the proximity of bars to one another and amend the Zoning Ordinance so that bars would need a special permit.

## **2. Community Association:**

- a. Community Clean-up Day** – A “Community Clean-Up Day” program should be created. The clean-ups should be held several times a year to maintain the positive visual character of the Community and to strengthen the bond between residents, businesses and the City.

- b. **Community Police Office** – The City’s Police Administration should attempt to staff the Kanawha City Police Office twenty-four hours a day. Civilian personnel could be employed to both respond to walk-ins at the office and to help with other policing matters.

**C. Long-range Activities**

**1. City:**

- a. **MacCorkle Avenue Streetscape** – Streetscape improvements are needed along MacCorkle Avenue. The improvements should include new curbs, attractive lighting and landscaping. Implementing a streetscape plan would help beautify MacCorkle Avenue. With ordinances in place to handle future signage problems, the Community’s main roadway should have an attractive appeal. Proper greenery, lighting and related amenities should be put into place.
- b. **Non-Conforming Uses** – Set up an amortization schedule for all “grandfathered” uses for Zoning Ordinance provisions pertaining to signs and other violations.
- c. **Neighborhood Conservation Districts** – The appropriateness of Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs) and their location in Kanawha City should be considered as a tool to preserve the character of the Neighborhood. The NCDs will also protect areas from inappropriate development by creating the opportunity to regulate new construction.
- d. **Tree Preservation Ordinance** – The City should develop a tree preservation ordinance.
- e. **Building Design Code** – Study building design codes and explore the possibility of introducing a new code for the inspection of commercial structures. Such a new code would require parking below newly constructed buildings.
- f. **River Access** – Relocate river access areas to eliminate crowded conditions where people gather to fish.

**2. Community Association:**

- a. **Tree Plantings** – Plant trees along railroad tracks and plant foliage on cliffs along the tracks to help buffer noise from residential areas.

- b. **Underground Utilities** – Complete a feasibility study and an implementation program to locate underground utility and transmission lines.
  
- c. **Original Land Covenants** – Review Kanawha City Land Company covenants and the BOCA Livability Code. Consider covenant enforcement by the Community Association rather than by the Land Company.

Chapter 4  
**CRIME, SAFETY & HOUSING**

**I. OVERVIEW**

Unlike many surrounding communities, Kanawha City boasts a low crime rate. Its housing stock is in good condition. The Community is safe for children, adults and the elderly. Residents of the Community would like it to remain so. In order to preserve the Quality of Life that Kanawha City residents enjoy, the Community must be attentive to any subtle changes that might trigger either an increase in the crime rate or a decline in its housing stock.

Many sections of Kanawha City lack sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities. These same areas also have high volumes of fast traffic moving through the streets. The combination of these two factors creates a very hostile environment for pedestrians as well as automobiles. Another subtle liability is the Interstate System which, while it provides a valuable access to the Community, has also contributed to an increase in criminal activity. Housing conditions, for the most part, are above average; however, there are areas that need immediate attention.

Subsurface conditions also pose a concern to area residents. Abandoned mines, gas wells, and other utilities are of great concern to the residents of Kanawha City. Presently, many of the subsurface issues do not pose any threats. However, residents want to ensure that a properly prepared Plan keeps these problems in the forefront for attention.

**II. MISSION STATEMENT**

Redevelop a strategy for maintaining a quality housing stock and a low crime rate. The Community should be proactive in its efforts to preserve the Quality of Life in Kanawha City.

**III. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

**A. Purpose**

In order to identify the assets and liabilities of Kanawha City, information from several sources was collected and analyzed. The sources included the Census, market surveys and land use inventories. A key factor in the assets and liabilities category for Kanawha City was information obtained from residents who live there. Input on assets and liabilities received at community meetings and field inventories during the planning process is the most important element found in this section.

The following lists of **Assets** and **Liabilities** provide the framework around which Plan recommendations were developed.

## **B. Assets**

### **1. Environment**

- a. Minimal Drug Problem** – *Kanawha City does not have a sizable drug problem.*

Although zero tolerance and the eradication of drug problems are preferable, the lack of a sizable transient population keeps most of the dealers away from Kanawha City.

- b. Safe for Pedestrians** – *Kanawha City provides residents with a safe haven to walk the streets at night.*

Due in large part to the Neighborhood Watch Program and adequate police protection, residents of Kanawha City can confidently and comfortably walk their streets at night.

- c. Responsible Business Owners** – *Most business owners are responsible, particularly those that are community owned and operated.*

Business owners have shown a genuine concern about their property.

- d. Churches** – *Churches serve the spiritual needs of the Community.*

Various church denominations are found in Kanawha City. Many of those provide day care and other community support services. They are an integral part of the Quality of Life in Kanawha City.

- e. Bicycle Route** – *Bicycle routes provide recreational opportunities for all residents.*

As an alternative to walking, Kanawha City offers a bicycle route along Kanawha Avenue. The route is heavily used and is regularly maintained. Again, community watch programs and adequate police protection make this a viable form of recreational activity for young and old alike.

- f. Village Character** – *The neighborhood village character is evident.*

Many of the aforementioned environmental assets have contributed to the evolution of a village atmosphere in Kanawha City. These physical attributes must be maintained to keep this character intact.

## **2. Housing**

### **a. Diverse Housing** – *A good mix of housing is available within the Community.*

A wide array of housing choices in Kanawha City provides an attractive alternative to suburban and rural living for both individuals and families.

#### **a. Well-Maintained** – *Well-maintained homes and properties are prevalent in Kanawha City.*

Well-maintained homes and lawns are essential elements of an economically and socially viable community. The proper and timely maintenance of houses is even more critical in communities that have a housing stock over thirty years old. For this reason Kanawha City must regularly address the maintenance of its houses in order to maintain the Community’s coveted position of having above-average property values within the City.

#### **b. Few Substandard Homes** – *Substandard housing is rare in the Community.*

Substandard houses are defined as those houses that require considerable cosmetic and/or structural repairs. In Kanawha City, homes with sagging front porches, foundation cracks, missing windows or outside doors are practically non-existent.

#### **c. High Home Ownership Rates** – *A high home ownership rate is prevalent in Kanawha City.*

The high rate of home ownership is an asset to Kanawha City. This characteristic will hopefully continue to be a trait that fosters a stable Community and draws long-term financial commitments from the area’s banks.

## **3. Services**

### **a. Police Protection** – *Adequate police protection is in place.*

Kanawha City residents believe the City’s Police Department is doing an adequate job in protecting businesses, residents and upholding the

law. The presence of a police office in the Kanawha Village Apartments provides a quick response time to service calls.

**b. Neighborhood Watch Programs** – *Neighborhood Watch Programs deter crime and create community unity.*

Attempts are being made to form additional neighborhood watch programs and implement other crime prevention activities. The Neighborhood Watch Program deters crime and promotes strong bonds between community members. Due to the success of the initial watch program, steps should be taken to expand the program into to other sections of Kanawha City.

**c. Fire Department and Emergency Medical Technicians** – *Fire Department and Emergency Medical Technicians benefit the Community.*

Kanawha City enjoys the benefits of a responsive Fire Department and quality Emergency Medical Technicians. Together these services afford Kanawha City residents a high standard of emergency support.

**C. Liabilities**

**1. Environment**

**a. Accessible to Criminals** – *Interstate Systems provide easy access for crime.*

A heavily traveled Interstate System provides easy access into communities for individuals with criminal intentions. Convenient entrance and exit ramps to Interstates 64 and 77 provide perfect gateways for potential criminals.

**b. Commercial Corridor is Conducive to Crime** – *The commercial corridor is evolving into an environment conducive to criminal activity.*

For the most part, residential areas of Kanawha City have been free of crime. Criminal activity is, however, present along the MacCorkle Avenue corridor. Businesses along MacCorkle Avenue have been the target of criminal activity on more than one occasion. Although the activity is not nearly as high as found in other communities in Charleston, the potential exists for existing criminal activity to escalate into a serious problem. Addressing the problem in an aggressive proactive mode is the best means to combat the situation.

- c. **High-Tension Power Lines** – *High-tension power lines are a problem.*

The lines located in the Quarry Creek area are of concern to families living nearby. A more secure area alongside the lines would be desirable in order to prevent problems from occurring.

## 2. **Housing**

- a. **Public Housing** – *Public housing on South Park Road is a problem.*

Public housing that is not properly supervised and maintained deters new commercial and residential development. It is also more difficult for individuals in close proximity to such housing to obtain loans from financial institutions. Public housing projects, if not properly managed, can significantly alter the character of a community. Routine inspections to ensure that the South Park public housing conforms to the City’s Building Code are critical to the preservation of Kanawha City residential environment.

## 3. **Hazards**

- a. **Abandoned Mines and Gas Wells** – *Abandoned punch mines in hollows, old gas wells and abandoned coal, salt, clay and rock mines pose a safety hazard for the Community.*
- b. **Chemical Pipelines** – *Chemical pipelines on Mount Alpha create a safety hazard.*

The transfer of chemicals through pipelines on Mount Alpha is a fact of life for residents of Kanawha City. However, they would like the comfort of knowing that the areas in and around the lines are safe, secure and maintained in accordance with federal standards and guidelines.

- c. **Outdated Warning System** – *Antiquated warning systems from chemical plants must be updated.*

Due to the close proximity of Kanawha City to many of Kanawha County’s major chemical plants, residents are entitled to state-of-the-art warning systems. The fear is that the systems in place are not adequate and would be ineffective in the event of an emergency. Public education, relative to behavior in emergency situations, should be encouraged.

## 4. **Infrastructure**

- a. Inadequate Street Lighting** – *Sections of the Community are plagued with inadequate street lighting.*

There is a lack of adequate street lighting in various sections of Kanawha City. In spite of this fact, there are many residents who take evening walks. The lack of lighting has not caused any problems, however it may open the door for eventual criminal activity. Well-lit areas are generally a safeguard to criminal activity. Sections of the Community could benefit from appropriately sited, pedestrian-scaled streetlights.

- b. Excessive Speeding** – *Excessive vehicular speeds are endangering the lives of Community residents.*

Kanawha City has a high number of nighttime walkers, individuals who use the bicycle route and heavy traffic flow. These factors point to the need to enforce posted speed limits throughout Kanawha City. Speeding vehicles jeopardize the safety and health of residents and produce a hostile pedestrian environment.

- c. Lack of Sidewalks** – *Sidewalks are practically non-existent in Kanawha City.*

Residents are generally forced to walk on street right-of-ways due to a lack of sidewalks. The lack of this pedestrian amenity makes the enforcement of speed limits and the installation of proper lighting all the more critical.

- d. CSX Railroad Crossings** – *The condition of CSX railroad crossings in Kanawha City is poor.*

Aging rail facilities include the deterioration of railroad crossings and their signal systems. The problem is two-fold. First, automobiles, pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the railroadways are subjected to an increased chance of damage and/or injury. Secondly, the poorly maintained crossings provide an opportunity for a potentially fatal situation involving a passing train. Incidents of this nature have happened and safeguards should be implemented by CSX Corporation to minimize the potential for future problems. Crossing gates are down for long periods of time when work is being done on the railroad, even when work crews are not visible. This encourages auto traffic to go around warning gates. It then becomes a habit for people to go around gates when no work is being performed, creating a safety hazard. CSX could post a warning sign to permit crossings when work is being done to help this situation.

## IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### A. Purpose

The following statements of Goals and Objectives have been developed for the purpose of guiding developmental policies and proposed activities in the area of Crime, Safety and Housing.

### B. Goals and Objectives

**Goal 1: Support the Police Department as it works toward making Kanawha City a safer Community.**

- Objective 1: Increase patrols with a more visible presence.
- Objective 2: Address growing vandalism and theft problems.
- Objective 3: Fight the drug problem.

**Goal 2: Develop improved emergency signals to alert the Community of danger.**

**Goal 3: Improve traffic conditions by adding stop signs where warranted and by better synchronization of traffic signals on MacCorkle Avenue.**

**Goal 4: Improve maintenance of sidewalks and alleys.**

## V. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

### A. Purpose

In order to implement a comprehensive revitalization strategy, an overall blend of short-range, medium-range and long-range action is required. For a definition of the three levels of action see pages 3-9 and 3-10.

Each of the three sets of activities which follow is broken down to designate the agency (City, Kanawha City Community Association) that has primary responsibility to see that the specified action is taken.

**B. Short-range Activities**

**1. City:**

- a. **Report Crimes to the Media** – The City Police Department should report crimes to the media in a timely manner.
- b. **DUI Patrols** – State and Federal grant money should be actively pursued to finance additional DUI patrols after 5 p.m. on weekdays.
- c. **Street Lighting** – The City should be responsive to requests for street lighting in certain darkened areas. Additional lighting in the South Park Public Housing facility should be considered.
- d. **Crossing Signals** – Time periods should be lengthened at pedestrian crossing signals on MacCorkle Avenue to allow ample opportunities for children and pedestrians to cross the street.
- d. **Abandoned Mines Inventory** – The City should make readily available its inventory of abandoned mines in Kanawha City.
- e. **South Park Housing** – Open dialogue with the Charleston Housing Authority to handle South Park Housing facility problems and ensure that the property is properly maintained.
- f. **Implement Complaint Form System** – A formal complaint process should be developed to ensure a quick response to City Code violations. The process should provide a simple mechanism whereby the affected property owner(s) are notified by the City’s Planning Department if a violation of a code or ordinance is observed or suspected.

**2. Community Association:**

- a. **Open Community Forums** – The Charleston Police Department should conduct open community forums to explain the laws and codes of Charleston and the State of West Virginia. The forums could be done in conjunction with the City of Charleston Community Policing initiative. Besides providing an explanation of the laws and codes, it opens up lines of communication between the police and the Community. This could lead to a more highly visible police presence in Kanawha City and the creation of citizen/police partnerships that could jointly respond to problems.
- a. **Involve the Elderly** – The elderly should take part in any public forum involving the City Police and crime prevention.

- b. **Focus on Drug Trafficking** – Arrange community meetings with the Police Department to focus on drug trafficking. The most notable areas for drug activity are Noyes Avenue and the 4800 block of Washington Avenue.
- c. **Underage Drinking** – A dialogue needs to be established with the Alcohol and Beverage Control Commission (ABCC) regarding underage drinking and what should be done about the problem.
- d. **Loitering** – In order to prevent after hours loitering in the parking lots of businesses, a dialogue needs to be developed between the Kanawha City business community and residents. Merchants should be encouraged to secure and monitor parking lots after business hours. Merchants should also post signs to discourage loitering.
- e. **Motion Detection Lighting** – Residents should be encouraged to install motion detection lighting.
- f. **Pipeline Awareness** – Due to the presence of major industrial entities, such as DuPont and Union Carbide, residents should be aware of existing pipelines in their area.
- g. **Chemical Company/Resident Relationship** – Local chemical plants should improve their notification processes, educate residents on emergency procedures and ensure that evacuation plans are updated. Along with maintaining procedures, companies should be encouraged to communicate openly with residents to create a more positive community relationship.

### C. Medium-range Activities

#### 1. City:

- a. **Additional Police Patrols** – The need for additional police patrols, including bike and foot patrols, should be explored to mitigate crime. A detailed inventory of officers should be conducted to determine if more patrols are needed.
- b. **Relocation of Police Precinct Office** – The possibility of moving the City Police Department’s precinct office to a more visible and/or higher crime area in Kanawha City should be investigated.
- c. **Rail Crossings** – The City Engineer and Division of Highways should work with CSX Corporation to develop better rail crossing standards and to improve traffic signals at crossings.

- d. **Public Housing Inspections** – The Charleston Housing Authority and residents of the Community should work together to ensure that all public housing projects are inspected and conform to the City’s Building Codes. The inspections should be done across-the-board on all projects, using the same criteria.

**2. Community Association:**

- a. **Expand Neighborhood Watch** – The existing Neighborhood Watch Program should be expanded. The expansion would assist the City’s Police Department and further the goal of positive relations between the Police and the Community.
- b. **Chemical Plant Warning Systems** – To ensure that all areas of Kanawha City can hear warning sirens of the area’s chemical plants, the companies should coordinate their warning systems with the appropriate City and County officials.
- c. **“Safe Havens”** – Churches, schools, the City Police Department, the City Fire Department, local businesses and all community organizations, should set up “safe havens” in Kanawha City to serve as designated places for residents in times of emergency.
- d. **Traffic Calming** – Examine traffic calming techniques to discourage speeding.
- e. **Sidewalk Survey** – Survey residents about the lack of sidewalks and the poor condition of existing sidewalks.

**D. Long-range Activities**

**1. City:**

- a. **Lighting** – The City, various community groups and American Electric Power should develop a plan to ensure that lighting is adequate, unobtrusive and properly placed in all areas of Kanawha City. Properly lit areas would help deter criminal activity.
- b. **Gas Wells Inventory** – The City, in conjunction with the Division of Environmental Protection, should prepare an inventory of gas wells in the Mount Alpha and South Ruffner Road areas and ensure that they are properly capped.

## **Chapter 5 ORGANIZATION & PUBLIC / PRIVATE SERVICES**

### **I. OVERVIEW**

Goods and services are readily available to residents of Kanawha City. Such resources are available either on foot, by bicycle, by bus or by other motor vehicle. The area, served by Watt Powell Park, several active garden clubs and civic groups, has the Charleston Area Medical Center as a nearby resource.

The picture, however, is not perfect. The neatly laid out streets are in poor condition and the infrastructure serving the well-maintained homes is aging. To compound these problems, money is not readily available to afford a quick fix. Despite the presence of Watt Powell Park and the Kanawha City Recreation Center, there is an overall lack of recreational opportunities for residents, young and old, in Kanawha City.

Policies and strategies need to be established for the implementation of future projects and strategies that would help satisfy both previously listed needs as well as those listed in succeeding parts of this section. All are critical to the future Quality of Life in Kanawha City.

### **II. MISSION STATEMENT**

Ensure continued and improved access to those public and private goods and services that satisfy basic human needs (health care, recreational facilities/programs, retail establishments, restaurants, and pharmacies).

### **III. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

#### **A. Purpose**

In order to identify the assets and liabilities of Kanawha City, information from several sources was collected and analyzed. The sources included Census data, market surveys, land use inventories and discussions at numerous community meetings.

Using the assembled information, a list of Kanawha City’s Assets and Liabilities were identified. The list which follows provides the framework around which Plan recommendations were developed.

**B. Assets**

**1. Critical**

- a. Fire and Police Protection** – *Good fire and police protection are in place.*

A responsive police and fire department is a mandatory requirement for any city. The City should ensure that both departments have appropriate equipment and personnel to effectively serve the Kanawha City area.

- b. Access to Services** – *Kanawha City has good access to essential services.*

Services that are critical to residents of Kanawha City are located in the immediate area. Medical, recreational, police, fire and other critical services are readily available.

**2. Public Services**

- a. Area School Recreational Facilities** – *Excellent recreational facilities are already in place at area schools.*

Opportunities exist for school facilities to be used by the public, particularly for recreational purposes. Such use would avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that resources are used in an efficient manner.

- b. Watt Powell Park** – *Watt Powell Park is a highly visible, highly utilized public recreational facility.*

This baseball facility is a valuable recreational resource. It is the home of Charleston’s Class A baseball team, the Alley Cats. The Charleston Alley Cats offer residents a chance to watch professional baseball. The field is also used for the West Virginia State High School Baseball Tournament, regular season prep baseball, Senior League and Little League baseball activities.

- c. Residential Services** – *Residential services are abundant and readily available in Kanawha City.*

Services ranging from water supply and distribution to waste collection are readily available to Kanawha City residents. These services contribute to the Quality of Life in Kanawha City and make the area attractive for future development.

- d. **Sanitary Board** – *Quick and professional response to inquiries to the Sanitary Board and the Planning Department have helped foster positive relationships between the City and community residents.*

### 3. **Private Services**

- a. **Local Civic Groups and Organizations** – *Local civic groups and garden clubs are actively involved in the Community’s life.*

Local civic groups and garden clubs have been key participants in community development and have displayed a lot of energy towards improving, promoting and protecting the Community. The key to any revitalization plan is to make sure that residents are intimately involved with, and informed of, actions that are taken by either the City, the neighborhood association, or a developer.

- b. **Churches** – *Churches provide a vital support network for the Kanawha City residents.*

Churches play a key role in the Community. In addition to being places of worship, the churches serve as centers for many community activities. They participate in furthering community development goals through involvement in ongoing activities in Kanawha City as well as through programs initiated of their own accord.

- c. **Bus Service** – *Bus service is an alternate form of transportation available to Kanawha City residents.*

Although it is not used nearly as often as it once was, the Kanawha Valley Regional Transportation Authority (KVRTA) bus service is an alternate mode of transportation readily available to Kanawha City residents. This is an inexpensive mode of transportation that also helps in alleviating traffic congestion, particularly along MacCorkle Avenue. Expansion of bus service to include CAMC and other intense service areas would further help with relief of present and future traffic congestion problems.

- d. **Medical Facilities** – *Medical facilities dot the Kanawha City landscape.*

The Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC), along with other medical practitioners, provides Kanawha City with an extensive level of medical care and coverage. CAMC, one of the area’s largest employers, is planning future expansion in Kanawha City, despite land limitations.

**C. Liabilities**

**1. Infrastructure**

- a. Aging Infrastructure** – *Kanawha City is plagued with an aging infrastructure.*

Water and gas lines as well as the sanitary sewer system are rapidly deteriorating. If left unchecked, their deterioration will be counterproductive to the Community’s revitalization efforts. Furthermore, deferred attention or “no maintenance” is too costly in the long run. Situations need to be addressed, hopefully, before they arise.

- b. Zoning Variances** – *The rationale of zoning variance approval needs to be re-assessed.*

In Kanawha City, approval of variances is granted too frequently. A stricter review by the City’s Board of Zoning Appeals is needed. If variance approvals continue unchecked, height, setback and other limits could become sufficiently altered to disrupt the general aesthetic character of the Community.

- c. River Property Erosion** – *Erosion of river property is progressively getting worse.*

Flooding along the Kanawha River has changed the river’s channel and continues to erode adjacent riverbanks. The problem demands immediate attention by the City and the Federal Corps. of Engineers.

**2. Public Services**

- a. Streets** – *The overall condition of Kanawha City’s streets is poor.*

What often begins with potholes and chipped pavement can eventually lead to more serious problems. Poorly maintained streets can result in damage to automobiles, bicycles and even pedestrians. The streets of Kanawha City have become progressively worse in recent years.

- b. Lack of Recreation Facilities** – *Young and old alike are faced with a lack of recreational facilities.*

Kanawha City has Watt Powell Park and its adjacent Recreation Center. These are the only public recreational facilities in Kanawha City. The lack of recreational facilities weakens the social fabric of a

community and decreases the overall quality of life within the Community.

- c. Lack of Green Space** – *Lack of “green space” in recreational areas is a problem.*

As commercial and residential development continues, one of the first victims is green space (generally used for passive and active recreational purposes). A lack of such green space is already visible in the Community. In order to recover the plush hillsides and a village atmosphere, areas need to be designated for green space development.

- d. Lack of Capital Improvement Funds** – *Lack of a capital improvement budget limits the City’s ability to plan for major community improvements.*

The upgrading of streets, infrastructure and recreational facilities are projects that any city must undertake. The upgrades, however, require large capital outlays. Currently, there is no funding mechanism (i.e. a capital improvement budget) in place to take care of such situations. The availability of a capital improvement budget could, in addition, stop small problems from becoming large problems and provide a funding source for emergency or desperately needed community services.

- e. MacCorkle Avenue Parking** – *Vehicles backing into the public rights-of-way are a serious problem on MacCorkle Avenue.*

The situation, a major problem for commercial entities on MacCorkle Avenue, has led to numerous accidents and demands a quick remedy.

- f. Underutilized Recreation Center** – *The Kanawha City Recreation Center is underutilized.*

Despite including an indoor basketball court, a swimming pool, a weight room and tennis courts, the Kanawha City Recreation Center is generally underutilized. The most actively used service is its tennis courts.

### **3. Private Services**

- a. Drainage** – *New developments do not have appropriate drainage provisions.*

Proper drainage must be ensured in all developments. Design standards should be set, publicized and enforced for all developments. Proper line capacity to handle sanitary/storm water must be installed.

- b. Overhead Power Lines** – *Overhead power lines are unsightly in many areas.*

Issues involving secured right-of-ways with overhead power lines are a problem. Many residents feel the lines are unsightly and aesthetically distracting. The lines detract from building appearances, their intervening spaces and generally clutter the Community.

## **IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **A. Purpose**

The following statements of Goals and Objectives have been developed for the purpose of guiding development of policies and proposed activities in the area of Organization and Public/Private Services.

### **B. Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1: Create a City “Hot Line” for complaints and/or suggestions.**

**Goal 2: Correct surface and sanitary sewer drainage problems in Kanawha City.**

**Goal 3: Replace deteriorated drainage culverts on Chappell, Lower Donnally, Porter, Ruffner and South Park Roads.**

**Goal 4: Consider relocating utility lines to alleys or underground.**

## **V. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES**

### **A. Purpose**

In order to implement a comprehensive revitalization strategy an overall blend of short-range, medium-range and long-range actions is required. For a definition of the three levels of actions see pages 3-9 and 3-10.

Each of the three sets of activities that follow is broken down to designate the agency (City, Kanawha City Community Association) that has primary responsibility to see that that the specified action is taken.

**B. Short-range Activities**

**1. City:**

- a. Inspect Park Facilities** – The City should inspect all park facilities and develop a prioritized list of facilities and equipment that need to be replaced, upgraded and/or removed.
- b. Zoning Ordinance Amendments** – To preserve the Quality of Life for all residents, the City Planning Department should amend the City’s Zoning Ordinance to better address the dependent needs of the residential and commercial areas of Kanawha City.
- c. Recycling Centers** – All grocery stores serving Kanawha City and neighboring areas should contain recycling centers.
- d. Hillside Fire Prevention** – With continuing hillside development in Kanawha City, the City’s Fire Department should develop a comprehensive strategy to respond to emergencies, fire or otherwise, that could occur on the hillsides.
- e. Surface Drainage** – The City should address surface drainage problems already present in areas of Kanawha City. Immediate attention should be given to the alley in the 5400 block of Noyes Avenue, the 5600-5700 section of Kanawha Avenue and its adjacent alley and the 4600 block between MacCorkle Avenue and Venable Avenue (Sewage backs up into Morris Memorial Church).
- f. Weight Limits** – Weight limits on residential streets should be imposed and enforced. This would reduce the noise factor, the wear and tear on the streets and damage to the infrastructure that lies beneath the street surfaces.
- g. Update Paving Schedule** – The City’s paving schedule should be updated every two years. Public input should be sought on the matter to ensure that streets to be paved are those in need.
- h. Maintain Alleys** – A program for the regular maintenance of Kanawha City’s alleys should be developed.
- i. Discourage Variance Approvals** – The granting of variances should be discouraged both by setting up specific review criteria for the Board of Zoning Appeals and by increasing fees for variance applications. At the same time, the public should be made aware of the application process for variance consideration.

- j. Stop Sign** – A stop sign is needed at CAMC and Frontage Road. The directive should be rigorously enforced.
- k. Synchronize Traffic Lights** – Traffic lights should be synchronized on MacCorkle Avenue from 35<sup>th</sup> Street to the Turnpike interchange.
- l. Comprehensive Traffic Impact Study** – The City’s Traffic Engineering Department and the West Virginia Department of Transportation should develop a comprehensive traffic impact study for the entire Kanawha City area from 19<sup>th</sup> Street to 72<sup>nd</sup> Street.
- m. South Park Recreation Facilities** – More recreational opportunities for the youth of South Park’s Housing Facility should be provided. Transportation to and from the Kanawha City Recreation Center should be explored.
- n. Trash Ordinance** – The City should improve enforcement of its Trash Ordinance. The Ordinance permits residents and commercial properties to place trash out the day before the weekly collection date.

**2. Community Association:**

- a. Refuse Inspection Requests** – The City’s Refuse Collection Department and residents must work together to ensure that the Department is responsive to inspection requests.
- b. Regular Meetings with Refuse Department** – Meetings of community groups and the City’s Refuse Collection Department should be held on a regular basis to discuss problems, issues and recommendations concerning solid waste management.
- c. Recreational Facilities** – The City’s Parks and Recreation Department, in conjunction with residents and the Police Department, need to ensure proper lighting, regular patrolling, continuous maintenance and proper screening of all recreational facilities.
- d. School Recreational Facilities** – Explore a cooperative agreement between the City’s Parks and Recreation Department and the Kanawha County Board of Education for the use of school property for recreational purposes.
- e. Business Promotion Brochures** – Brochures promoting the Kanawha City Community should be prepared and distributed. Private businesses could be responsible for this activity.

**C. Medium-range Activities**

**1. City:**

- a. Survey Recreation Needs** – The recreational needs of the Kanawha City Community should be routinely surveyed by the City’s Parks and Recreation Department.
- b. Kanawha City Community Center** – The City’s Parks and Recreation Department needs to work with residents to assess the need and the potential for improving recreational outreach programs at the Kanawha City Community Center.
- c. Capital Improvement Plan** – A seven year Capital Improvement Plan for Kanawha City needs to be developed by the City. This should be done with adequate community involvement.
- d. Capital Improvement Budget** – The city should act immediately on creating a Capital Improvement Budget. The process to implement a successful plan will take several years. The City should earmark a percentage of unencumbered or “carryover” funds each year to contribute to this budget for capital improvements and for emergency situations that are not included in the City’s general budget.
- e. Comprehensive Rezoning** – The City should comprehensively rezone the Kanawha City community based on the Future Land Use Plan (Chapter 7) recommendations. Addition of a Corridor Village District along MacCorkle Avenue would be part of this rezoning endeavor.
- f. Public Relations Training** – To facilitate better communication with the public, the City should provide on-the-job training in public relations for their employees.
- g. Annexation Plans** – The City of Charleston and Kanawha County should open dialogue to initiate compatible annexation plans.
- h. Replace Culverts** – The City should initiate a program to replace collapsing culverts, or those in need of repair. Particular attention should be given to drainage culverts in the five hollows to the south of Kanawha City.

**2. Community Association:**

- a. Redesign Community Center** – The Community Association should work with the City’s Parks and Recreation Department to redesign the existing Community Center. Community input should be sought to

assess the needs of the community, and to develop and maintain a viable programming schedule.

- b. Identify Vacant Parcels** – Vacant parcels of land, suitable for recreational purposes, should be identified by the Community, the Planning Department and the Parks and Recreation Department.

#### **D. Long-range Activities**

##### **1. City:**

- a. Institutional Expansion** – The City’s Planning Department, the University of Charleston, Charleston Area Medical Center, along with various community groups should work together to ensure that future expansions of campuses do not adversely impact one another and that such expansions do not adversely impact adjacent residential areas.
- b. Subdivision Regulations** – The City’s Planning Department should work with the Kanawha County Planning Commission in developing compatible subdivision regulations.
- c. Inflow and Infiltration System (I&I)** – An Inflow and Infiltration System (I&I) should be studied and implemented. Kanawha City’s aging sewer structures currently have problems handling the combination of storm water and sanitary wastes that frequently are mixed together. This combination often floods basements and drives up processing costs at the City’s Treatment Facility. South Ruffner and other localized areas of Kanawha City have frequent problems of sewage backup.
- d. Low Impact Street Lighting** – Revise street lighting throughout Kanawha City from its current high impact format to a low impact format.

##### **2. Community Association**

- a. Greenbelt** – The development of a “greenbelt” area on the hillsides of Kanawha City should be done by Community residents and the City’s Planning Department.

**Chapter 6**  
**ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING,**  
**EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION**

**I. OVERVIEW**

Increased employment opportunities and a viable economic base relate to the ability of residents and business owners to invest within a community. As residents’ disposable income increases and business establishments generate increased revenues, a community will experience an expanded tax base, an improved physical appearance (people will be more financially capable of investing in their personal properties) and an enhanced Quality of Life.

In addition to stimulating its economic activity, a community that is successful in providing comprehensive and community-wide educational programs will experience further enhancement of its quality of Life. Education is the tool by which individuals can enhance personal responsibility and self-esteem as well as develop leadership and communication skills. As a result, education provides opportunities for a community to grow personally and socially, as well as economically.

**II. MISSION STATEMENT**

Develop strategies that stimulate economic development activities which are compatible with the needs and character of the neighborhood, enhance job opportunities, provide skills training and increase the educational opportunities available within Kanawha City.

**III. ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

**A. Purpose**

In order to identify the assets and liabilities of Kanawha City, information from several sources was collected and analyzed. The sources included Census data, market surveys, field inventories and discussions at numerous community meetings.

Using the above assembled information, a list of Kanawha City’s Assets and Liabilities were identified. That list, which follows, provides the framework around which Plan recommendations were developed.

**B. Assets**

**1. Economic**

**a. Transportation Services** – *Transportation services are in place.*

All modes of public transportation are available within Kanawha City, including water and railway services

**b. Accessibility** – *The Community’s accessibility to the local interstate system is a strong marketing asset.*

Unlike many communities that have limited access to major highways, Kanawha City is served by three major Interstate Systems (I-64, I-77 and I-79).

**c. Convenient Location** – *Kanawha City is convenient and accessible.*

Kanawha City is convenient to the State Capitol Complex. State delegates, senators, support staff and visitors to the Capitol often utilize services available in Kanawha City. Also, Charleston’s downtown is a short distance away and Yeager Airport, is available by a ten-minute automobile trip.

**d. Variety of Businesses** – *There are a wide variety of businesses in Kanawha City.*

From professional services to retail sales, the commercial zone along MacCorkle Avenue provides residents with a complete array of businesses.

**e. Maier Foundation Property** – *The Maier Foundation property is available for community purposes.*

The Sarah and Pauline Maier Foundation have land for use for various City needs. The Foundation has been a resource for Kanawha City and Charleston in the past and should be utilized in the future to support beneficial community projects.

**f. Kroger Warehouse Property** – *The Kroger warehouse property is a prime piece of real estate.*

Since Kroger moved its warehouse operations out of the City, its vacant commercial warehouse property stands available as a prime piece of commercial real estate. The City should assure the best

available use of this space that is compatible with the community for future development.

- g. Light Industry** – *Light industry contributes to Kanawha City’s economic base.*

Although not in abundance, light industry in Kanawha City contributes to a healthy and diverse economic base. These industries are supported by an infrastructure that has railroad access.

- h. Rental Property** – *Well-maintained rental property enhances the Community’s image.*

Unlike many communities of its size, the maintenance of Kanawha City’s rental properties is not a problem. Most landlords, and their tenants, take pride in their shared property and this interest reflects in a high quality housing environment. The upkeep of such properties improves the overall image of all property in Kanawha City.

- i. Lending Institutions** – *Active lending institutions allow for businesses and residents to re-invest in Kanawha City.*

Local lending institutions have consistently assisted the community and its residents with the financial means to develop and revitalize the area. Residents and businesses considering a move that would enhance the overall appearance and Quality of Life in Kanawha City should contact one of those institutions for assistance. When money is appropriately invested in a community, things are enhanced from both a residential and economic development standpoint.

## **2. Employment**

- a. CAMC** – *Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) provides medical service and offers numerous employment opportunities to the area.*

The Memorial Division of CAMC is located at 3100 MacCorkle Avenue. Its Director of Public Relations estimates that approximately 2,000 people are employed at the Kanawha City location. The Memorial Division specializes in cardiac and cancer treatment and has 350 beds. Future plans call for the consolidation of part-time services and the relocation of other service providers to the Memorial facility. Any new facility construction expansion, however, will be vertical due to the site being landlocked. Major expansion projects are expected to be completed by the year 2007.

## **3. Education**

- a. University of Charleston** – *The University of Charleston provides educational and employment opportunities to Kanawha City.*

The University of Charleston, a private university located on 2300 MacCorkle Avenue, is an asset to Kanawha City. With an enrollment of approximately 1,500 students and nearly 125 employees, the University’s presence is an economic asset to the area. The institution offers key programs in sports management and nursing, while offering MBA and Human Resources Management programs. The School has access to three interstate highways (I-79, I-64 and I-77). Although it is currently facing difficulties with campus expansion, the school’s board recently approved construction of a new residence hall. Several other renovation projects are also planned. The school is situated between MacCorkle Avenue and the Kanawha River and has a breathtaking view of the State Capitol Complex.

- b. Conveniently Located Schools** – *Schools are conveniently located in Kanawha City.*

Pre-school programs are located at the Church of the Good Shepherd and at Morris Memorial United Methodist Church. Kanawha City has two elementary schools and a junior high school. Kanawha City Elementary and Chamberlain Elementary, with students from kindergarten through sixth grade, are both well-reputed schools. Kanawha City Elementary, with an enrollment of 332 students, was selected as a 1997 West Virginia School of Excellence.

Chamberlain Elementary has 264 students. From elementary school, students go to Horace Mann Junior High which also is located in Kanawha City. It has an enrollment of 322 students in grades seven through nine.

In 1986, representatives from Kanawha City were involved in the development of a Comprehensive Facilities Plan for Kanawha County Schools. That group recommended that the antiquated Horace Mann Junior High School be replaced by a middle school. A reconfiguration of the grades, by moving sixth graders out of elementary schools, would make space available for new State mandates for all-day kindergarten. Property was purchased adjacent to Capital High School for the construction of a new middle school which would combine the students of Horace Mann and Roosevelt Junior High Schools. However, the bond issue for construction of the school failed, and the Kanawha County Board of Education has never requested money from the West Virginia School Building Authority to complete the project.

After junior high, most students from Kanawha City transfer to Capital High School. Others opt for private or parochial education and transfer to such schools. Two private schools located within Kanawha City are St. Agnes and the Montessori School.

## C. Liabilities

### 1. Economic

- a. **MacCorkle Avenue** – *The redevelopment of MacCorkle Avenue is needed.*

The City needs to re-evaluate the highest and best uses of properties along MacCorkle Avenue.

- b. **Commercial Expansion is Limited** – *There are limited opportunities for commercial expansion in Kanawha City.*

Areas for commercial expansion are limited along the highly developed MacCorkle Avenue.

- c. **New Development** – *New development does not always match the character of, and is often incompatible with, existing development in the area.*

A lack of design guidelines has led to a demise of architectural character in Kanawha City. The architectural design of new businesses often clashes in appearance with existing structures.

- d. **Infrastructure** – *Infrastructure problems deter expansion and investment.*

An aging infrastructure serves as a red flag for those looking to invest in the area.

- e. **Inflexible Zoning** – *The current zoning ordinance is inflexible.*

Zoning in Charleston is stringent. The Zoning Ordinance, which is outdated and not a functional document, should be updated.

### 2. Employment

- a. **Employment Assistance** – *There are no programs in place to assist unemployed Kanawha City residents.*

Kanawha City residents seeking employment or desiring training have limited options.

- b. **Business Assistance** – *Businesses are often left without assistance or guidance as they develop.*

Businesses, particularly small businesses, lack help from the City in terms of resources that are available to them.

### **3. Education**

- a. **Declining School Enrollment and Aging Facilities** – *Kanawha City has become a prime target for redistricting toward the Eastern end of Kanawha County as new schools are being built in that area.*

Property values would decrease in Kanawha City if students have to be bused to schools outside of city limits.

- b. **Trash Pick-Up** – *Trash along business and residential streets creates the appearance of blight and slum.*

Many businesses and residents place their trash outside and along curbs days ahead of their scheduled pickup.

- c. **Elderly and Disabled Services** – *A lack of services for disabled and elderly residents is prevalent in Kanawha City.*

A program should be initiated to address the concerns of elderly and disabled residents in Kanawha City.

## **IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **A. Purpose**

The following statements of Goals and Objectives have been developed for the purpose of guiding development of policies and activities in the area of Economic Restructuring, Employment and Education.

### **B. Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1:    Redevelop the existing warehouse at 57<sup>th</sup> Street and Virginia Avenue.**

Objective 1:    Eliminate the storage of hazardous chemicals adjacent to the residential neighborhood.

Objective 2:    Enlighten the community and Fire Department on the handling of potential emergency situations.

**Goal 2:    Participate in the development of initiatives for the Charleston Area Medical Center and the University of Charleston by meaningful community involvement in campus master planning.**

**Goal 3:    The reuse of vacant school properties should be compatible with residential uses.**

**Goal 4:    Community schools and daycare centers should be supported.**

**Goal 5:    An after-school program for elementary and middle school students at the Kanawha City Recreation Center should be established.**

**Goal 6:    Pressure should be brought to bear upon the Kanawha County Board of Education to seek funding for the construction of a new consolidated middle school at the already purchased Meadowbrook site through the West Virginia School Building Authority or other means.**

## **V. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES**

### **A.    Purpose**

In order to implement a comprehensive revitalization strategy, an overall blend of short-range, medium-range and long-range action is required. For a definition of the three levels of action see pages 3-9 and 3-10.

Each of the three sets of activities which follow is broken down to designate the agency (City, Kanawha City Community Association) that has primary responsibility to see that the specified action is taken.

### **B.    Short-range Activities**

#### **1.    City**

- a. **Zoning Education** – Steps should be taken to better educate residents and property owners on both the content and the enforcement of the zoning ordinance.
- b. **Zoning Enforcement** – The City’s Planning Department should develop and enforce new zoning provisions to help maintain the village atmosphere in Kanawha City.
- c. **Design Guidelines** – Design Guidelines should be developed to ensure that development along and adjacent to MacCorkle Avenue does not alter the residential character of the Community.
- d. **Greenbelt** – A “greenbelt” on the hillsides south of the CSX Railroad right-of-way should be established. Development should be restricted on hillsides.

**2. Community Association:**

- a. **Kanawha City Business Council** – Create a Kanawha City Business Council that, working in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce, would sponsor seminars to assist business owners.
- b. **Promote Kanawha City** – The Kanawha City Business Council, along with the residents, should work with the local media to actively promote the Kanawha City Community. In order to achieve positive results, including the reporting of negative events in the Community, the media must have easy, open access to key community leaders.
- c. **Educational and Job Training** – The Kanawha County Board of Education should be encouraged to work with the Private Industry Council to help provide educational and job training assistance to residents of Kanawha City.

**C. Medium-range Activities**

**1. City:**

- a. **Future Zoning** – The recommended content of future zoning ordinances should be designed to reflect specific goals in terms of lot size, setbacks and land use.
- b. **Proposed Developments** – All proposed developments should be prepared in accordance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, this plan and its Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

- c. **Neighborhood Conservation District** – The development of Neighborhood Conservation Districts is needed to preserve the character and improve the appearance of Kanawha City’s commercial corridors.
- d. **Corridor Village District** – A detailed study should be completed to ensure compatible and aesthetically pleasing development along MacCorkle Avenue. Such a study would assist in preparation of a new zoning ordinance for the MacCorkle Avenue Corridor Village District.

2. **Community Association:**

- a. **Support Existing Commercial Uses** – The Kanawha City Community should continue to support existing commercial uses that cater to local residents of the area.
- b. **Encourage Participation** – All commercial endeavors and institutions should be encouraged to participate and be key partners in revitalization efforts in Kanawha City.

D. **Long-range Activities**

1. **City:**

- a. **Village Atmosphere** – All present and future development endeavors should be encouraged to reflect a village atmosphere.
- b. **Design Guidelines** – Design guidelines should be drafted, adopted and implemented. With such guidelines, commercial development would be sensitive to the residential character of the Community.
- c. **Appropriate Commercial Development** – Appropriate commercial development along MacCorkle Avenue should be encouraged in properly zoned areas.
- d. **Services** – Services that assist all age groups, including the disabled, should be provided.

## Chapter 7 LAND USE PLAN

### I. OVERVIEW

The process of designing a future land use plan for Kanawha City involved: (a) evaluating concepts; (b) modeling alternative land uses; and (c) testing compatibility of the preferred plan with Community planning goals. The following narrative summarizes the planning analysis that has been prepared for each of the seven planning areas. The narrative identified the key area characteristics based on land use investigations. These factors and their interrelationships combine to have a direct bearing upon the process of structuring the optimal future land use(s) for any given area.

### II. MISSION STATEMENT

Prepare a future land use plan that reflects optimal land uses for Kanawha City as a long-range, full development scenario for maintaining a village atmosphere. Decisions regarding future land uses must respect this future land use plan, which stands as a graphic expression for physical implementation of the adopted goals and objectives set by residents of Kanawha City.

### III. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### A. Purpose

The following statements of Goals and Objectives have been developed for the purpose of orchestrating the quality, scale and theme of future development steps within Kanawha City. These Goals and Objectives set the physical, social, economic and cultural framework around which the Future Land Use Plan is designed.

#### B. Goals and Objectives

##### 1. Land Use:

**Goal 1: The Future Land Use Plan should seek to maintain a village atmosphere as part of a long-range development scenario.**

**Goal 2: The Future Land Use Plan should provide for an integrated mix of residential, commercial and employment uses in the Community that will accommodate adequate housing, village**

**business district shopping and employment opportunities for present and future residents.**

**2. Business District and Stable Residential Areas:**

**Goal 1: Review Zoning to strengthen and enhance zoning regulations.**

Objective 1: Stop spot zoning

Objective 2: Stop the practice of granting variances too freely.

Objective 3: Improve the placement and appearance of commercial signs.

Objective 4: R-O zoning should be used more selectively and often to protect the Community.

**Goal 2: Strengthen the commercial corridor district and preserve the stable residential areas.**

Objective 1: Protect the existing commercial district and plan for adjacent land uses that do not encroach upon or adversely affect its unique character and ambience.

Objective 2: Preserve and provide revitalization support to stable residential and commercial areas without adversely imposing on the physical and social structure of existing neighborhoods.

Objective 3: Create and implement stronger village design criteria in Kanawha City that focuses on historic preservation, rehabilitation and buffer zone issues.

**3. Transitional Areas and Infill (vacant property) Development:**

**Goal 1: Maintain transitional areas between non-compatible uses and encourage infill (vacant property) development.**

Objective 1: Identify small, undeveloped sites for special planning projects where infill opportunities exist.

Objective 2: Identify redevelopment opportunities within the Community and identify public/private initiatives for the proper development of such properties.

**4. Land Development:**

**Goal 1: Encourage quality land development activities to stimulate revitalization of Kanawha City that is compatible with residential uses.**

Objective 1: Identify and establish land areas for future physical development that have both the strongest urban development potential and the physical attributes, location and orientation capable of accommodating appropriately scaled uses.

Objective 2: Infill strategies shall be reflected in the Future Land Use Plan.

Objective 3: Stimulate future private development compatible with the recommended land uses for each of the seven individual planning areas in the Land Use Plan.

Objective 4: Encourage land uses that are compatible with the projected market demands within Kanawha City.

Objective 5: Identify sensitive land areas that will be conserved and/or protected from future development.

Objective 6: The criteria for the selection of future land uses for the planning areas within the Community, along with their densities and intensities, should be based on: (1) the physical land form, ecology, infrastructure and economic determinants inherent to the planning area, and (2) the application of relevant community goals, objectives and planning policies adopted by the Community.

Objective 7: Development proposals should be prepared in accordance with the Kanawha City Community Revitalization Plan and City zoning and subdivision regulations. Development proposals should be prepared in accordance with the Plan’s methods and procedures for determining the land carrying capacity and development suitability. Private development applications should include the preparation of land use suitability assessments based on the land uses presented in this plan.

**Goal 2: Hillside development and future storm and sanitary sewer requirements should be reviewed very closely.**

#### **IV. EXISTING LAND USE**

Existing land use is comprised of an analysis depicting the extent, type and intensity to which land in Kanawha City has been developed. This land, along with the structures on it, is used to provide housing, retail opportunities, industry and to serve other Community needs.

The land use analysis displays existing patterns of use as well as redevelopment and infill opportunities in the future. It provides insight into areas that are becoming intensified and diversified by use. It further provides a working knowledge of the use and market value determination of the Community.

An important aspect of any community planning effort is to first understand past development trends. Such an analysis identifies basic patterns of land use as well as opportunities for future development. It serves as the basis for a sound systematic plan that will ensure an improved Quality of Life throughout Kanawha City as well as offer productive opportunities for future investment and development.

The use of land has a direct relationship with the structural condition of buildings on the land, infrastructure available to serve the land and the physical environment of the land and surrounding areas. In Kanawha City, and the surrounding area, an inventory was completed to assess existing land uses. Land uses inventoried included single-family detached residential, single-family attached residential, multi-family residential, community facilities, public/semi-public uses, commercial, light industrial and public utilities. In addition, the analysis revealed vacant areas that could be targeted for infill vacant property development.

#### **V. STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS**

The physical condition of existing structures within a community has an effect on property values and future development potentials. Neighborhoods are generally judged by their physical appearance. Owners of properties in an area with only minor physical decline may retain a confidence that their real estate values will hold or rise in the future. Such property owners look to their city leaders and enforcement officials to encourage property maintenance to help stabilize and/or improve their community assets.

The City’s Planning Department conducted a survey of existing Kanawha City structures. The results were analyzed and incorporated into this Plan, to identify ones that exhibited signs of deterioration and decay. Structures inventoried were placed in one of the following five categories: **excellent, acceptable, questionable, substandard and unfit for habitation**. These were subsequently placed into two broad structural condition

classes: **sound** (excellent and acceptable) and **unsound** (questionable, substandard and unfit for habitation).

Structures were categorized as **excellent** if they needed no repair (cosmetic or structural) and normal maintenance was evident. **Acceptable** structures were those that required only cosmetic repairs (painting, cracked windows, or broken screens that needed replacement) and no significant structural repairs were necessary. **Questionable** structures were those where there was uncertainty whether structural repairs were needed but Cosmetic repairs were definitely necessary (usually on roofs, in foundations or on exterior walls). **Substandard** structures were those showing signs of general deterioration and in need of several cosmetic repairs as well as major structural repairs. Substandard structures were habitable. For example, a substandard structure could have had a sagging front porch with missing steps/railings or cracks/holes in its foundation and exterior walls but still be habitable. The fifth category included those structures that were **unfit for habitation**. Such structures were dilapidated, beyond repair and should be demolished. Examples included those with extensive water, fire or storm damage or those missing windows or sections of walls, or even a roof over a large area. Such structures also could have a sagging roof, missing floors and/or walls with boarded up windows and makeshift construction from scrap materials.

The survey of existing structural conditions rated a large number of units as being in **sound condition**. This result indicates that most structures receive visual attention and routine maintenance. From this it is apparent that most property owners and/or occupants are actively involved in maintaining their properties.

The number of **unsound units** identified in the survey was small. Such units are in need of immediate repairs in order to be upgraded to the acceptable category. The units are in a state of transition that could eventually result in excessive deterioration if their cosmetic/structural problems are not addressed.

## **VI. INFRASTRUCTURE ASSESSMENT**

The infrastructure in Kanawha City is comprised of utility services, storm drainage, streets and sidewalks. A survey of utility services in the area indicates that water is supplied by West Virginia-American Water Company, electricity by American Electric Power and gas by Mountaineer Gas Company.

Review of the current stormwater and sanitary sewer system reveals that some sections of Kanawha City have combined stormwater and sanitary sewer systems, which is in violation of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Phase II requirements. The City’s Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of addressing this situation and identifies possible solutions.

In regard to an analysis of streets and rights-of-way throughout Kanawha City, it was apparent that, in general, its residential areas are without sidewalks. Residents of the

Community take full advantage of flat avenues to walk for exercise and enjoyment, particularly in areas that offer a view of the State Capitol and the Kanawha River. The physical environment of Kanawha City has many infrastructure assets, which, if protected and corrected, will continue to display a high residential/commercial Quality of Life. The Community offers thriving commercial areas, the availability of land for residential growth, a solid housing stock and dedicated and committed residents and business owners. These equate to an increase in the investment potential for the area.

## **VII. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

The Future Land Use map is a graphic representation of proposed land uses that have been identified as the highest and best uses of property in Kanawha City.

### **A. Criteria For Planning**

1. Give preferential treatment to housing.

Within developable areas, except where special circumstances may otherwise dictate, residential uses are usually given first consideration. Dwellings will be grouped along circulation roads. Medium to high density housing will be located in close proximity to convenience centers. Concentrations of higher-density housing are best located near freeway intersections, contiguous major employment centers or commercial centers. All dwellings will be physically protected from through traffic, incompatible uses, noise and glare.

2. Promote infill development.

Infill development promotes affordable housing by using existing infrastructure and services as well as locating housing close to job opportunities.

3. Isolate or insulate housing developments.

Residential uses will be encouraged to locate adjacent to, and be screened from, highway and transit corridors, only when adequate shielding is provided by walls or landscaping. Buffer strips should be established between housing and commercial or industrial areas to eliminate visual nuisances or impediments to maintaining property values.

4. Preclude the improper location of residential uses.

The use of land for residential purposes will be prohibited in industrial zones or areas of potential hazard.

5. Differentiate between, and accommodate, various types of commercial use.

Community and neighborhood commercial centers are developed primarily to serve the needs of the local population. They are to be distinguished from commercial district development.

6. Encourage planned commercial clusters.

Strip (linear, multi-tenant commercial establishments) development, commercial enterprises with frontage directly on MacCorkle Avenue, will be regulated from an aesthetic standpoint. Commercial business officespace should usually be located in centers planned especially for that purpose. This pattern can be reinforced by the gradual elimination of the scattered and unrelated business uses in between such centers.

7. Encourage Mixed-Use Planned Employment Centers.

These centers contain a variety of uses such as retail, office/research/institutional, high-density residential, hotel/motel, and light industrial uses. These centers should be planned in a manner that is sensitive to surrounding uses. Besides safe and convenient access, these employment centers will need land for parking and service compounds, attractive landscaping and buffering with adjacent land uses.

8. Group highway services.

Highway-related commercial enterprises such as service stations, garages, automotive supply stores and car or trailer sales lots will be located near intersections or interstate interchanges. These are best clustered around motor-access malls or circulation loops and kept off major roadways. Ingress and egress needs to be located in areas where safety dictates the design rationale.

9. Locate industrial and other employment sites away from areas of dense population.

While there are benefits in living close to ones' work, it is important that housing and employment districts be isolated visually and that access roads and uses be kept separate. It is also important to keep residents safe and undisturbed by taking measures to reduce traffic and noise problems.

10. Integrate industrial uses into self-contained parks.

Regional industrial uses include manufacturing, research and development, wholesale trade and distribution and warehousing and storage. Various combinations of these can be advantageously grouped. These areas must be located near railroads and interstates.

11. Locate institutions to best serve the needs of the Community.

Schools, churches and hospitals should be planned as part of the communities they serve. This cooperation should be encouraged by involving community members in their planning stages.

12. Use regional transit and transportation routes as a multi-modal linkage.

This will include an integrated system of all modes of inter- and intra-regional transit. Freight and diesel trucks should be banned from predominately residential streets. Transportation-transmission routes should be provided through concentrated industrial-commercial areas.

13. Inventory and protect "open-space" land.

Public parks should be built to serve the Community. Where highways or circulation roads are planned as controlled access parkways, their rights-of-way will be considered “open space.” Cemeteries, joint school-park sites and campus type employment centers all make their contributions to the "open space" concept.

## **B. Future Land Use Recommendations**

### *Recommendations*

The overall intent of the Kanawha City Future Land Use Plan is to both improve the Community’s environment for its residents and create a village atmosphere that will not discourage investment. Residential areas historically have been protected from the undesirable aspects of commercial activity, while maintaining easy access to the Community’s vital needs and services. The City has two options when rezoning a specific piece of property: 1) comprehensively rezone the entire Community so that the zoning complies with proposed land uses; or 2) handle zoning changes on a vigorous case-by-case basis to ensure that the intent of recommendations in the Future Land Use map is upheld.

The following section includes recommendations regarding future land uses and justification for changes. These recommendations should be viewed in conjunction with the Future Land Use map. For reference purposes, the area within Kanawha City has been divided into seven planning areas.

### **1. Planning Area 1: West Kanawha City**

This area includes the section of Kanawha City, east of 19<sup>th</sup> Street. Land uses north of MacCorkle Avenue are by nature commercial office and institutional. Land uses south

of MacCorkle Avenue are residential with varying densities. Based on characteristics of the northern and southern portions of the planning area, this Plan recommends that non-residential uses not be permitted to encroach into the residential zone south of MacCorkle Avenue.

## **2. Planning Area 2: University of Charleston**

Planning Area 2 is also in the western section of Kanawha City. It is bound by 22<sup>nd</sup> Street to the west and 27<sup>th</sup> Street to the east. This area contains the University of Charleston. Measures should be taken by the City to protect adjacent residents from the potential expansion of the University into surrounding residential areas.

## **3. Planning Area 3: Medical Campus**

This area is generally bound by 29<sup>th</sup> Street to the west; 33<sup>rd</sup> Street to the east; the alley between Staunton Avenue and Virginia Avenue to the north; and the CSX Railroad right-of-way to the south. The planning area encompasses the Charleston Area Medical Center (CAMC) and related uses. A variety of residential and commercial uses abut CAMC. Measures should be taken by the City of Charleston to protect adjacent residents from the encroachment of CAMC (and its related uses) into stable residential areas. Recent parking problems in the area have resulted in the City adopting an ordinance that exclusively identifies residential permit parking in areas adjacent to the CAMC Campus. This measure should be continued and enforced to protect the parking interests of neighboring residents.

## **4. Planning Area 4: Corridor Village District**

This MacCorkle Avenue business district is generally bound by 33<sup>rd</sup> Street to the west and 57<sup>th</sup> Street to the east; the alley between MacCorkle Avenue and Noyes Avenue to the north; and the alley between MacCorkle Avenue and Venable Avenue to the south.

This Plan recommends visual improvements to this corridor in as much as it serves as the gateway to Charleston from the east. Existing business signs along MacCorkle Avenue should be reduced in height, size, and number, while stringent design guidelines for both existing and future signs should be prepared and enforced. The goal is to provide a quality first-impression “view of the City.”

Warehouses, construction equipment yards and unscreened storage areas should not be permitted. Existing uses of this nature should be required to provide landscaping buffers and screening if they seek favorable governmental action. Industrial uses are considered incompatible to uses either existing or planned for the corridor. Strategies to route commercial traffic around residential areas and measures to discourage vehicles from traveling into residential areas should be adopted.

High quality, visually appealing, commercial development with appropriate design, landscaping and parking layouts should be encouraged to minimize the impact of commercial corridor enterprise on surrounding neighborhoods.

In order to accomplish these objectives consideration should be given to rezoning the MacCorkle Avenue business district as a Corridor Village District (CVD). The CVD would, among other things, address signage, architecture, site planning and streetscape. Its purpose would be to establish guidelines to restructure the pattern of development along MacCorkle Avenue and to provide a more aesthetically pleasing and efficient entryway into the City.

### **5. Planning Area 5: Waterfront**

The waterfront district is comprised of all the land immediately north of Kanawha Avenue in Kanawha City. Emphasis should be placed on focusing attention toward the river, instead of ignoring it. Public access should be carefully maximized. The bike and jogging route along Kanawha Avenue should be improved for bike safety and/or moved to minimize conflicts between bikers, walkers and passing vehicles.

The City of Charleston should commission a study to identify where appropriate public access should be located. Provisions for public safety along the waterfront should be made, including enforcement by the Department of Natural Resources, the City, and the Federal Government.

### **6. Planning Area 6: Owens Industrial Park Area**

The planning area is bound by 57<sup>th</sup> Street to the west; 58<sup>th</sup> Street to the east; the Kanawha River to the north; and the CSX railroad right-of-way to the south. The two primary properties in the area are the Kanawha Mall to the south of MacCorkle Avenue and the undeveloped Owens Industrial Park north of the MacCorkle Avenue.

This planning area currently provides for both regional commercial (south of MacCorkle Avenue) and light industrial (north of MacCorkle Avenue) land uses. At one time the companies that used these lands provided the major source of employment for Kanawha City residents. The Community recognizes the need for light manufacturing employment and its well paying jobs. The Community supports land use in this area that maintains an intensity of use comparable to that of the Community as a whole for a similar acreage.

Any future redevelopment proposals in this area should be master planned, developed at low densities and integrated into the Community in keeping with the village concept. This strategy is consistent with the City’s commitment to the preservation of its existing residential communities while also ensuring opportunities for appropriate economic development.

Relevant planning issues for Planning Area 6 include the provision for independent industry standard traffic studies consistent with the Community’s comprehensive corridor

traffic study. It should also include provisions for quality landscaping, screening and buffering in all commercial development proposals to alleviate concerns from existing and planned residences. Proper site planning and design measures should focus on traffic patterns and village design, river access and the integration of mixed uses, including increased public and green spaces whenever possible.

The area is ideally situated to establish accessible and attractive housing and light commercial, or other less intensive uses where traffic influx is scaled to the existing community uses, and the use of existing residential streets are not impaired. The ultimate use(s) should provide for preservation and continuation of the village concept that is widely endorsed by the Community.

### **7. Planning Area 7: East Kanawha Estates / Highway Commercial**

This area is bound by the West Virginia Turnpike to the west; the City limits at 72<sup>nd</sup> Street to the east; Chesterfield Avenue to the south; and the Kanawha River to the north.

Highway commercial development (such as national chains, motels or hotels, fast food or family-style restaurants, and new car dealerships) is encouraged in this area. This Plan recommends visual improvements in the area inasmuch as it serves as a gateway to the City of Charleston. In order to improve the appearance of the area, the Plan recommends that the corridor be heavily landscaped. This includes defining street edges and improving views along the corridor.

Warehouses, equipment yards, and unscreened storage areas should not be permitted.

Highway commercial land uses should be planned to create a dramatic entrance into the City, while providing adequate shopping opportunities. Adequate traffic control measures should be provided to prevent accidents and congestion.

This area contains a large, stable residential community on the north side of MacCorkle Avenue known as East Kanawha Estates. Commercial development in this planning area has negatively impacted its residential tranquility in recent years. Commercial development should not be permitted to further encroach into this area.

### **C. Conclusion**

Areas not specifically mentioned in the foregoing area planning recommendations are however, graphically designated on the Future Land Use Map found in this section.

The necessity for adoption of implementation strategies that protect residential areas from non-conformance uses and indirect intrusions must be understood and accepted by both Kanawha City and the City of Charleston. The acceptance of this premise followed by adoption of necessary guidelines, regulations and implementation actions will result in achievements of the vision statement found in Chapter 1 of this Community Revitalization Plan