

RESERVOIR AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ZONE PLAN

January 16, 2014

Preliminary Draft for Planning Committee Review



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document was developed by the Reservoir Avenue community in partnership with the City of Bridgeport and BFJ Planning as part of the State of Connecticut Office of Policy and Management's Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Program.

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A special thanks to all the stakeholders and residents of the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood who contributed to the development of this plan:

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“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

- Margaret Mead

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

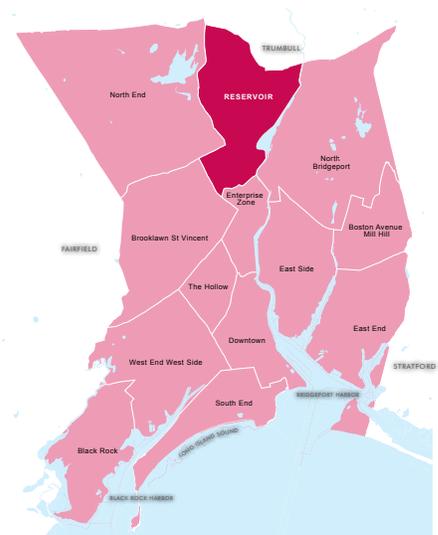
1.1 BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

In 1995, An Act Establishing a Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) Process (P.A. 95-340) was passed by the Connecticut General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Rowland. This law — the first of its kind in the nation — established a collaborative process for communities to work with all levels of government to revitalize neighborhoods. NRZs represent a new kind of partnership and cooperation between local communities and government which shifts the leadership of the planning process to the neighborhood level.

In the City of Bridgeport, an NRZ is established by a resolution of the City Council. The City then works in partnership with the neighborhood to develop a neighborhood revitalization plan. As shown in Figure 1, the Reservoir Avenue NRZ is bounded by Old Town Road to the north, Seltsam Road to the east, the Park Cemetery to the south and Chopsey Hill Road to the west. Within these boundaries is a committed community of homeowners, resident leaders and community organizations who, working with the City of Bridgeport and its consultants, BFJ Planning, have put together this plan outlining their vision for the future of their neighborhood. Through the planning process, the Reservoir Avenue NRZ has begun to organize and build the capacity of its residents who have created this plan and who will work with the City, the Bridgeport Housing Authority and other stakeholders and community organizations to implement its recommendations. This plan will serve as the blueprint for how the NRZ can and will address the challenges it currently faces and become a safe, healthy and beautiful neighborhood.

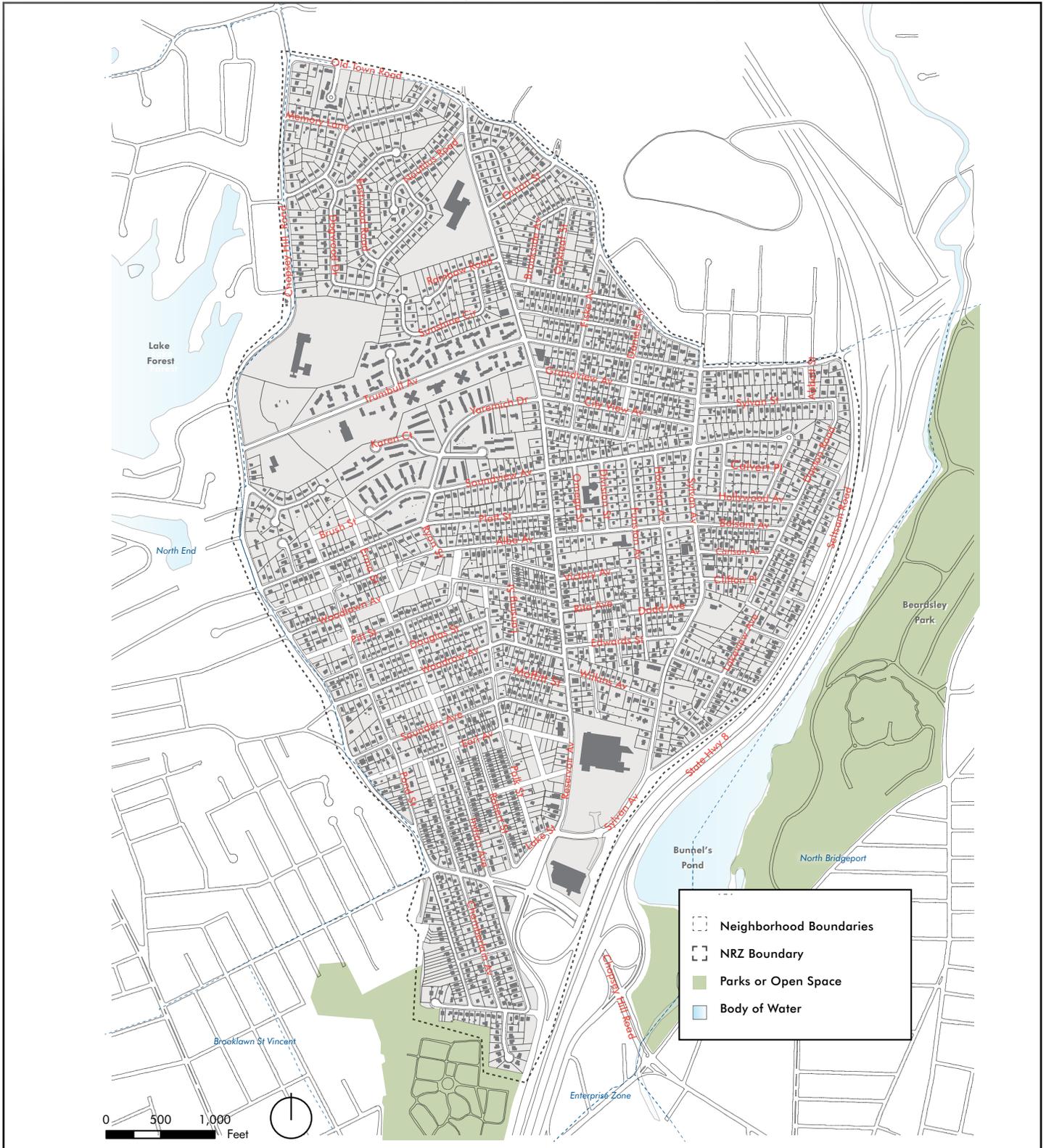
The Reservoir Avenue NRZ planning process began in June 2013 with a kick-off workshop at the Wilbur Cross School. Over the course of the summer and through the fall, stakeholders were invited to attend numerous workshops and meetings to discuss neighborhood assets and challenges and start to imagine a vision for the future. Through this process a group of community leaders emerged who took on a lead role in the planning process and were formally elected as the NRZ's Planning Committee.

The Planning Committee along with other involved residents and organizations worked closely with the City and its consultants to develop this Reservoir Avenue NRZ Plan. The Plan lays out a comprehensive strategy for community revitalization that addresses the inter-related program/service needs and physical improvements necessary for achieving the community's vision for its future.



Reservoir Avenue Neighborhood

Figure 1: Neighborhood Boundary Map



Source: City of Bridgeport GIS

1.2 PLANNING PROCESS/COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Through the plan development process the Reservoir Avenue NRZ has evolved from a zone designated on a map into a community of committed residents, business owners, stakeholders and community organizations. Following the adoption of this plan, the NRZ will be responsible for continuing to organize the Reservoir community to work with the City of Bridgeport and other public, private and non-profit partners to implement this plan and revitalize the neighborhood.

How did the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood achieve this important milestone?

Between the launch of the NRZ in June 2013 through the adoption of the NRZ Plan in 2014, the City of Bridgeport organized a series of public meetings and community workshops, reached out to and met with community stakeholders and organized a Planning Committee who were formally elected by the community to work in partnership with the City to prepare this NRZ Plan. This process, described below, was key to beginning to build neighborhood capacity, encourage emergent community leaders and prepare the neighborhood for the work ahead which is necessary to implement this plan.

Public Meetings and Workshops

The NRZ was launched with a kickoff meeting at the Wilbur Cross Elementary School on June 19, 2013. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the idea of preparing a neighborhood plan to the public and to begin to gather community support for and involvement in the process. At the kickoff meeting residents discussed their vision for the future of the neighborhood and began to identify strengths and challenges. A week later on June 26th the City hosted a bus tour of the NRZ and invited residents and stakeholders to tour the neighborhood and look together at needs and opportunities in the NRZ. Following the bus tour, the City and its consultants began to organize some of these initial observations, as shown on Figure 2, identifying issues including the need for more lighting, new sidewalks, street repairs, property maintenance and addressing loitering and safety. Key assets including Bridgeport Family Health center, Police Community Services, Reservoir Community Farm, neighborhood schools and the high rate of homeownership in the neighborhood were also identified.

The City then hosted a planning workshop on July 24th to review and refine the previous visioning work in order to determine more concrete goals for the neighborhood and specific changes that residents would like to see. This workshop concluded with participants discussing and voting on the most important changes that needed to occur in the neighborhood. Among the highest ranked issues were to improve



Community Kick-Off Meeting- June 19, 2013



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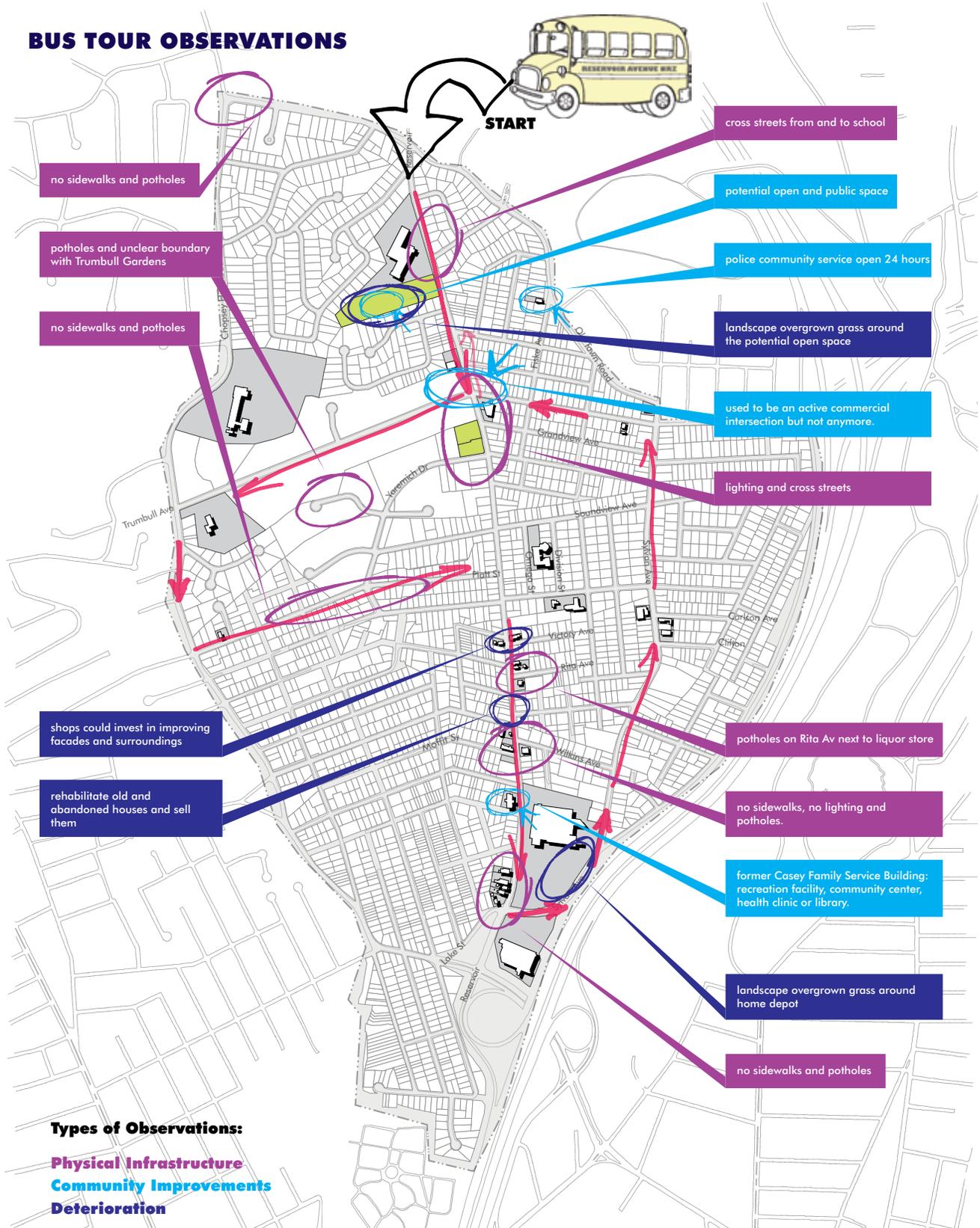


Bus Tour- June 26, 2013



Trumbull Gardens Resident Council Meeting- September 19, 2013

Figure 2: Bus Tour Map



safety, provide programs and services in the community- particularly after school activities for young people- and the need to repair and improve physical infrastructure including sidewalks, lighting and roadways.

At the conclusion of the workshop there was an open discussion of one of the neighborhood's biggest challenges- the Trumbull Gardens public housing development. Workshop participants discussed crime and related safety issues in and around Trumbull Gardens and the need to improve both the quality of the housing on the site and the programs offered to residents. An important issue raised during this discussion was the need to involve Trumbull Gardens residents in the NRZ planning process. It was noted that Trumbull Gardens residents had not been active participants in the NRZ workshops to date and that a concerted effort should be made to reach out to the Trumbull Gardens community and engage residents in the conversation about the NRZ.

Responding to this concern, a special meeting with the Trumbull Gardens Resident Council was held on September 19th. At the meeting residents discussed many issues and concerns and expressed a feeling of being isolated from the rest of the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood. The discussion centered largely on two topics: safety and property maintenance. Safety is a significant concern for Trumbull Gardens residents. Residents feel unsafe being outside within the complex. There was universal agreement that the introduction of foot patrols paid for by the Housing Authority with City of Bridgeport police officers on the site in the summer of 2013 had a significant positive impact on residents' feelings of safety at Trumbull Gardens. Many residents stated that they would only venture outside their apartments when the patrolmen were present. As part of the discussion of safety issues, residents asked that police officers continue to patrol the site on foot and that surveillance cameras be installed in lobbies and elevators. With regard to property maintenance, residents noted that the buildings on the property are in poor condition with broken elevators, loose stairs, poor lighting and trash throughout the complex.

It was noted that the Bridgeport Housing Authority recognizes the significant safety and maintenance concerns on the Trumbull Gardens site. In the long term the Housing Authority intends to redevelop the property into a modern, mixed-income community that better serves residents' needs. In the interim, however, short-medium term solutions to pressing safety and property maintenance issues must be addressed.



Public workshop- July 24, 2013



Public workshop- July 24, 2013



Community Planning Workshop- October 19, 2013



Community Planning Workshop- October 19, 2013

Community Planning Workshop

The City hosted a full day community planning workshop on Saturday, October 19th at the Wilbur Cross Elementary School. The workshop was a tremendous success with approximately 80 residents, business owners, community organizations and stakeholders in attendance. The workshop began with a welcome by the City's Deputy Director for Planning and Economic Development, Ginnie-Rae Clay, and a song by children from the Hallen Elementary School, which is located in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood. Three work sessions were held over the course of the day as well as a children's workshop, where over 50 children worked on their vision for the future of their neighborhood.

The adult sessions addressed key topics that had emerged in the previously described meetings held over the course of the summer and early fall, as detailed below. The outcome of these discussions informed the development of the vision for the future of the neighborhood and the specific projects and programs that are outlined in this NRZ Plan.

- Session 1: A Safe, Healthy Neighborhood

During this session participants broke out into groups to discuss one of the following three topics- neighborhood safety, programs & services, and neighborhood character & property maintenance. Following the group discussions each table reported their findings back to the larger group.

- Session 2: How is Your Neighborhood Looking?

This session focused on discussing ideas for improving the way that the Reservoir Avenue corridor looks and functions. Participants broke into smaller groups to discuss design and infrastructure at three specific locations along the Reservoir Avenue Corridor- Trumbull Avenue, Woodlawn Avenue and Sylvan Avenue. Topics covered included streetscape improvements such as sidewalks, lighting, bus shelters, street furniture and landscaping, improvements to storefronts and parking areas and ways to create and activate public spaces in the neighborhood.

- Session 3: Trumbull Avenue

The final session of the day focused on Trumbull Avenue. The session began with a presentation by the Bridgeport Housing Authority on best practices in public housing design and a conversation on what good public and mixed-income housing design can and should look like. This presentation was followed by a discussion of needs and concerns with regard to Trumbull Avenue, how Trumbull Avenue can become more connected to the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood and ideas for short and longer term solutions for the Trumbull Gardens property.



Community Planning Workshop-
October 19, 2013



Community Planning Workshop-
October 19, 2013



Community Planning Workshop-
October 19, 2013



Community Planning Workshop-
October 19, 2013

While the adults were in the first two sessions, the children participated in their own visioning session on what a happy, healthy neighborhood should be like. They heard a children's book about how we plan for a neighborhood and created a mural illustrating their vision for the future of the Reservoir Avenue community. The children presented their mural to the adults at the end of the second work session.

The participation of the singers from the Hallen Elementary School at the start of the workshop and the presentation of the children's artwork in the early afternoon had a significant positive effect on the tone of the entire day. It helped all of us stay focused on the positive future that we want to achieve and helped move the conversation forward from what is wrong about the neighborhood to how we can build on our assets to create a better future for our children.

As a follow up to the Community Planning Workshop the NRZ hosted a final public workshop on the NRZ Plan on December 12th. The purpose of this final workshop was to review the findings from the October 19th Community Planning workshop and discuss specific projects and implementation strategies to achieve the NRZ's vision for its future. At this workshop residents discussed specific projects that should be undertaken to address the major neighborhood issues identified through the planning process- enhancing public safety, improving and coordinating programs and services available to neighborhood residents and improving the way the Reservoir Avenue corridor looks and functions.

Stakeholder Meetings

As part of the planning process the City and its consultants met with numerous neighborhood stakeholders to better understand neighborhood challenges and opportunities. These meetings were an important first step in identifying the community partners who will be critical to the implementation of this NRZ Plan and understanding the work they do and the obstacles they face. These meetings included conversations with the following organizations and individuals:

- Bridgeport Housing Authority
 - Sharon Ebert and Sharon Lee, Development Office
 - Kate Kelly and Craig Davis, Resident Services
- Bridgeport Police Community Services
 - Captain Roderick Porter
 - Lts. Meekins, Honus and Burdo
- Trumbull Gardens Resident Council, Karen Bracey
- Wilbur Cross School, Principal Meekins
- Hallen School, Principal Santacapita



*Community Planning Workshop:
Children's Workshop- October 19, 2013*



*Community Planning Workshop: Children's
Workshop- October 19, 2013*



*Community Planning Workshop: Children's
Workshop- October 19, 2013*

- Park City Magnet School, Principal Callahan
- Lighthouse, Tammy Pappa

What we found through conversations with these stakeholders was that there are already a lot of people doing a lot of great work in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood. However, there is a lack of coordination between different programs and services in the neighborhood as well as misconceptions about what is being offered, by who, where and why. These meetings were an important first step in recognizing the good work that is already going on in the neighborhood and beginning the discussion of ways that community partners can work together to leverage existing resources.

The Planning Committee

The Planning Committee is comprised of a group of community leaders elected by their peers to lead the development of the Neighborhood Revitalization Zone Plan. This group of leaders emerged through the planning process and is comprised of individuals who are committed to the revitalization of the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood. The Planning Committee has been instrumental in the creation of this NRZ Plan and has worked closely with the City and its consultants to create a plan document that provides a road map for the revitalization of the neighborhood.

The Planning Committee was formally elected on September 11, 2013 and includes the following members:

- Audrey Barr, Chairperson
- Linda Christie, Vice Chairperson
- Traevon Bohannon, Secretary
- Richard Barr
- Deborah Dennis
- Steven Ferreira
- Joyce Hooks
- Ann Rogers
- Kimora Rogers-
- Julia Samuel

One of the first official acts of the Planning Committee was to adopt by-laws that will govern the NRZ. These by-laws define the mission and membership of the Planning Committee. Following the adoption of this NRZ Plan by the Bridgeport City Council, the Planning Committee will be dissolved and an Implementation Committee will be elected to carry out the revitalization projects outlined in Section 4 of this Plan. According to the NRZ bylaws, the Implementation Committee will become a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization to be created to carry out the NRZ Plan.

Insert Photo

NRZ Planning Committee

1.3 THE NRZ'S VISION: ADDRESSING CHALLENGES AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Reservoir Avenue Neighborhood Revitalization Zone (NRZ) is a strong residential community of committed neighbors and stakeholders who have contributed substantial time and energy to the development of this NRZ Plan. Through the planning process they have identified neighborhood strengths and challenges and created an actionable strategic plan for community revitalization that outlines clear, achievable projects that the NRZ, the City of Bridgeport and their public, private and non-profit partners must work together to implement.

The vision for the future of the NRZ builds on the neighborhood's strengths, including its committed residents and community organizations, existing programs and service providers and well established residential neighborhood to address pressing challenges identified by the community. These challenges include neighborhood safety, access to programs and services and the physical condition of the Reservoir Avenue corridor.

Neighborhood safety: There is a high level of crime in the community and many residents do not feel safe walking outside in the neighborhood, particularly on Reservoir and Trumbull Avenues.

Access to programs and services: While there are many institutions in the neighborhood that are providing important community services including schools, churches and after school programs, there is a lack of coordination between service providers and there are gaps between the services that people need and the programs that are offered.

The physical condition of the Reservoir Avenue corridor: The Reservoir Avenue corridor is unattractive. It is the neighborhood's "Main Street" and projects a negative image of the NRZ. Lighting along the corridor is poor. It lacks sidewalks in many places. There are no bus shelters or trash receptacles along the avenue. Many storefronts are in need of improvement and landscaping is overgrown in many places.

The vision for the future of the NRZ is to improve safety, to provide residents with access to the programs and services they need to improve their well being and to make Reservoir Avenue an attractive, pedestrian and business-friendly street with well maintained sidewalks, lighting, landscaping and buildings. This vision is captured in the following vision statement, which will serve as the mission of the NRZ in its work to revitalize the community:

"The Reservoir Avenue NRZ is a healthy and attractive neighborhood with well maintained housing where residents can safely walk to good schools and neighborhood shopping and can easily access the programs and services that they need."



Community Planning Workshop- October 19, 2013, Children's Workshop Visioning

2.0 The Reservoir Avenue NRZ Today

2.1 STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

The Reservoir Avenue neighborhood is comprised of 2,570 parcels, covering approximately 1.1 square miles. The neighborhood is located in the northern portion of the City of Bridgeport and is bounded by Old Town Road to the north, Seltsam Road to the east, the Park Cemetery to the south and Chopsey Hill Road to the west (see Figure 1). Surrounding neighborhoods include the North End, Brooklawn/St. Vincent, Enterprise Zone and North Bridgeport.

The Reservoir Avenue NRZ boundary, established by the City Council, includes Census Tracts 728 and 729.

2.2 LAND USE

The majority of land in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood is residential- 63 percent of land area is composed of single family homes, six percent is 2-4 family residences and nine percent is multifamily housing (see Table 3). Commercial land uses are concentrated along the Reservoir Avenue corridor and account for five percent of the neighborhood’s land area. There is virtually no open space within the community with the exception of playgrounds at the neighborhood schools and underutilized playing fields on the Trumbull Gardens property.

Residential Uses

The neighborhood’s single family homes are typically 2 to 2.5 story detached residences on parcels 1/4 acre or smaller. Multifamily housing is generally concentrated in the area of Trumbull Avenue and Yarmich Drive and includes the privately-owned Stone Ridge coops on Karen Court and Trumbull Gardens on Trumbull Avenue. Other multifamily buildings are scattered within single family neighborhoods. Trumbull Gardens on Trumbull Avenue is the most densely developed housing in the Reservoir neighborhood. Owned and operated by the Bridgeport Housing Authority it contains a total of 402 units within 55 garden apartment buildings and two 8-story high-rise buildings.

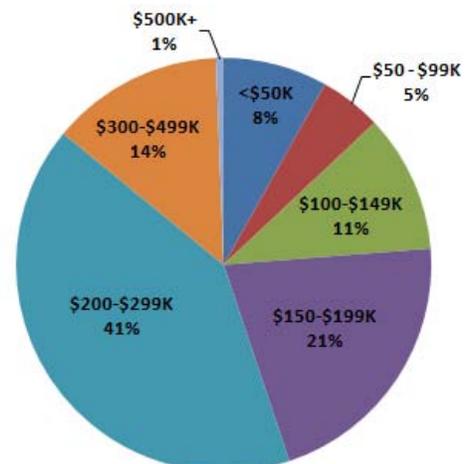
According to the 2007-2011 American Community Survey, of the total 3,640 housing units in the neighborhood, 95 percent are occupied. The neighborhood’s homeownership rate is 69.9 percent and median housing value is \$410,700. 41 percent of owner-occupied homes are valued between \$200k and \$299k, as shown in Chart 1.

Table 1: Land Use

Land Use	Acres	%
1 family	342.1	63%
2-4 Family	33.4	6%
5+ family	51.5	9%
Commercial	25.5	5%
Heavy Industrial	0.2	0%
Institutional	36.0	7%
Light Industrial	0.2	0%
Mixed use	0.8	0%
Open Space	1.4	0%
Parks and Recreation	4.1	1%
Utilities	13.1	2%
Vacant	36.3	7%
Grand Total	543.6	100%

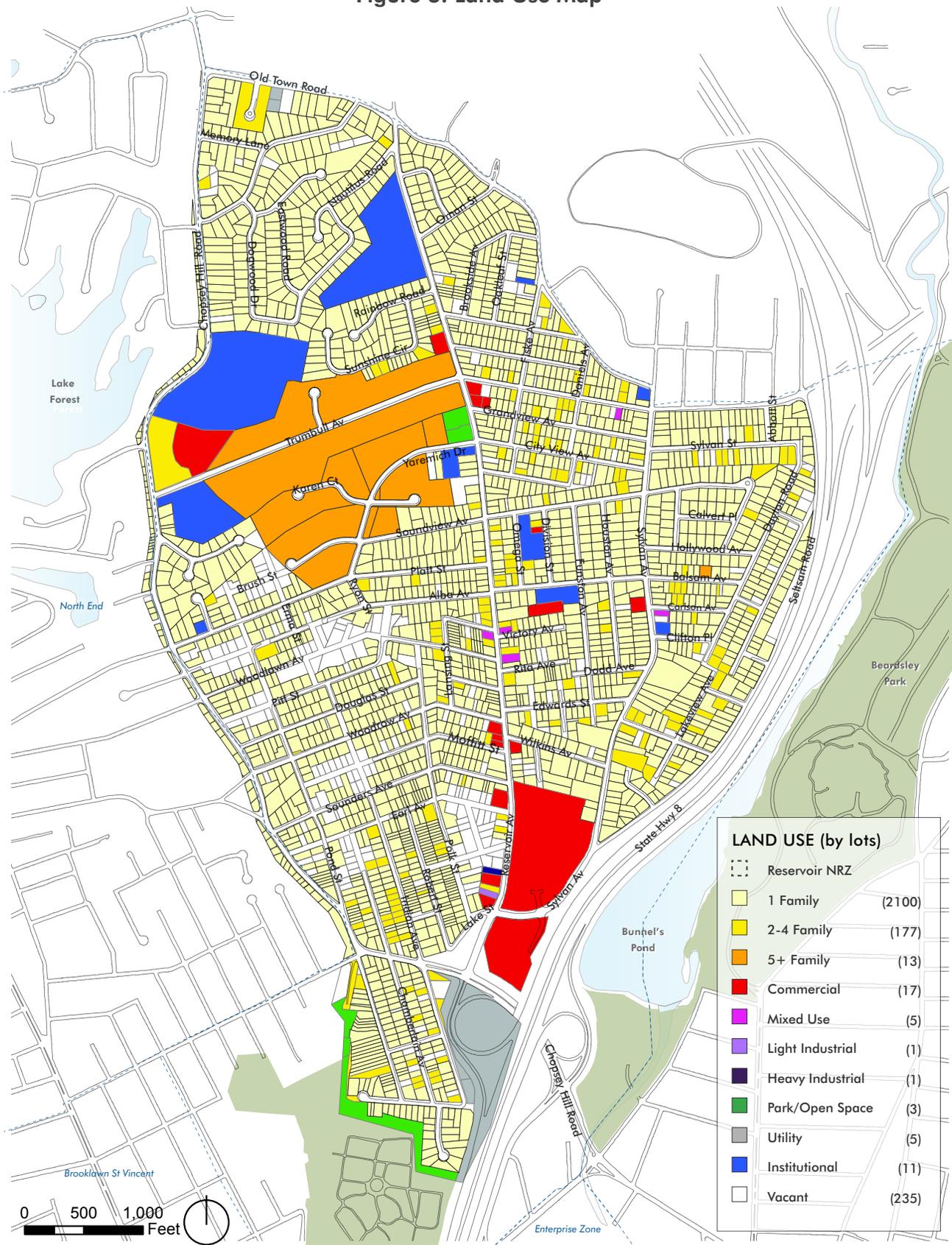
Source: City of Bridgeport

Chart 1: Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Units



Source: American Community Survey, 2007-2011

Figure 3: Land Use Map



Source: City of Bridgeport

Residential Uses



Single-family homes



Multi-family homes



Trumbull Gardens



Non-Residential Uses

Commercial Uses

Non-residential uses are shown in Figure 4. Reservoir Avenue is the NRZ's commercial corridor. Commercial, institutional and office uses are located along Reservoir with a major commercial shopping center at the neighborhood's southern gateway at the intersection of Reservoir and Sylvan Avenues (see Figure 4). This commercial area includes the 55,000 square foot Food Bazaar and a 140,000 square foot Home Depot, Sunnyside Motel and some light industrial uses.

North of this shopping center commercial uses are scattered throughout the corridor and mainly include convenience stores, delis, small food establishments and liquor stores. Most of these stores have limited or no off-street parking. Other notable commercial uses on Reservoir Avenue include a car dealership and a vacant 15,000 square foot office building, formerly occupied by Casey Family Services.

Institutions

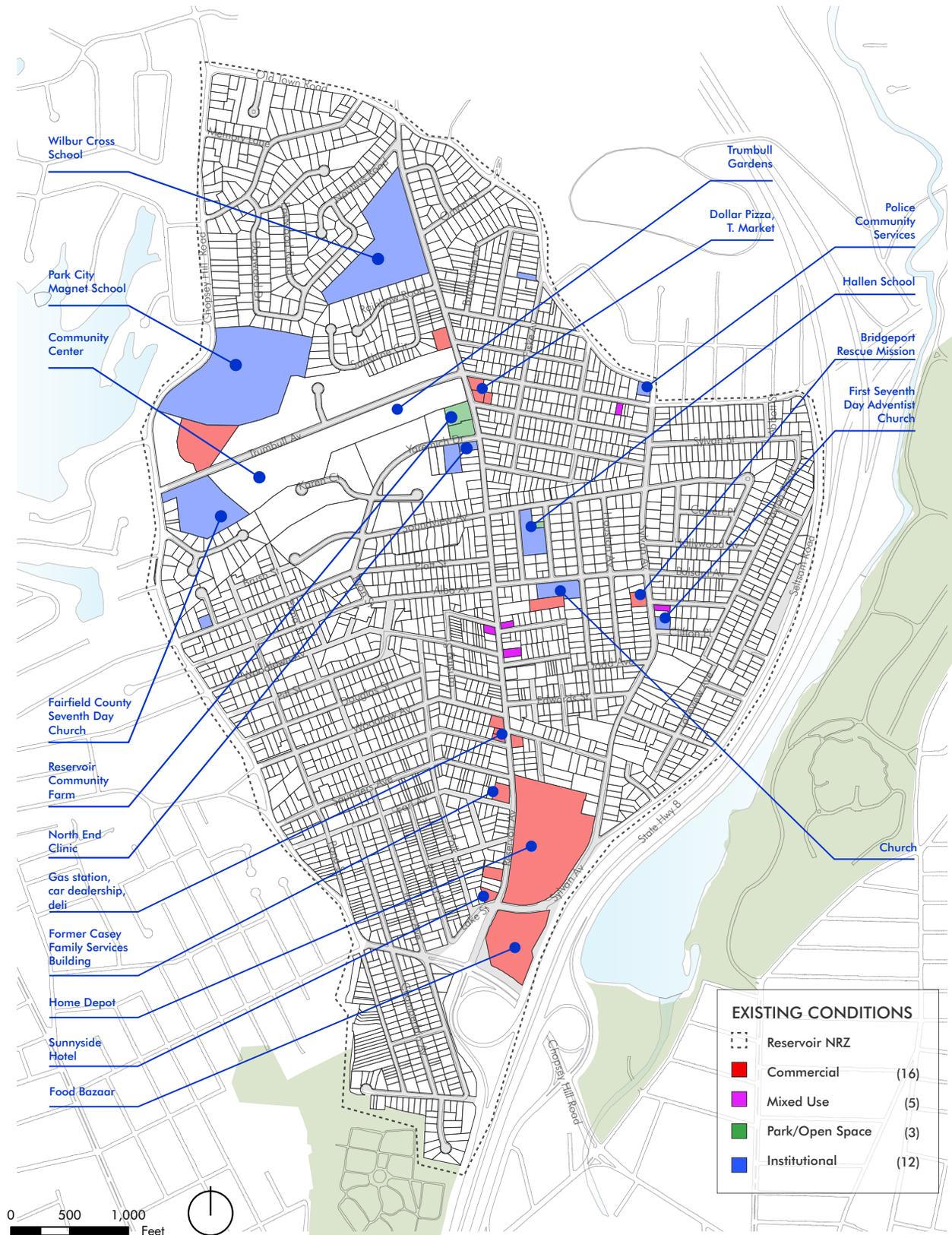
The Reservoir neighborhood has a number of institutional uses including schools, churches and community organizations. As shown on Figure 4 there are three public schools within the NRZ boundary; two neighborhood schools- Wilbur Cross School (Pre K- 8th grade) and the Hallen School (Pre K- 6th grade)- and one magnet school, which draws students from across Bridgeport- Park City Magnet School (K-8th grade). There is also a private school, the Fairfield County Seventh Day Adventist School. The Hallen and Park City Magnet Schools offer after school programming through the City of Bridgeport's Lighthouse program. Wilbur Cross students are eligible to attend Lighthouse at the Hallen School.

There are several churches in the neighborhood including Fairfield County Seventh Day Adventist Church, Pentecostal Church, Life Changing Ministries, Iglesia Adventista Del Septimo Dia, Our Lady of Good Counsel and Mt. Sinai Baptist Church. The Bridgeport Police Department's Office of Community Services has a Community Services station within the NRZ at the intersection of Sylvan Avenue and Old Town Road. Police Community Services oversees a variety of programs including neighborhood block watches, Police Explorers, the senior citizens silver crime patrol and the D.A.R.E. drug prevention program. There is family health clinic located in the heart of the neighborhood at the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and Yaremich Drive and there is a community center located on the Trumbull Gardens property, which provides recreation programs through the Bridgeport Housing Authority. Other community organizations in the neighborhood include the North End Neighborhood Council and North End Progressive Seniors, as well as Bayview, a little known meeting place for educators.

Parks and Open Space

As previously mentioned, there is a lack of open space in the Reservoir neighborhood. The three public schools each have a small playground and there is a playground area and playing fields on the Trumbull Gardens property, but there are no parks or public open spaces within the NRZ. The school playgrounds are hardscapes with playground equipment and the playground and fields at Trumbull Gardens are not well maintained and are generally considered unsafe by residents. There are no parks or green open space areas within the neighborhood. While the City's Beardsley Park is located just east of the Reservoir NRZ, it is effectively cut off from the neighborhood by the multilane Route 8/25 roadway. The one active green space in the neighborhood is the Reservoir Community Farm, a 1.5 acre working urban farm located at the corner of Reservoir Avenue and Yaremich Drive. Opened in 2013 by the Green Village Initiative (GVI) with the support of the City of Bridgeport, the farm is staffed by college and high school interns under the direction of GVI and provides fresh produce to Bridgeport Public Schools cafeterias. The farm also offers plots to residents, has a Saturday farm stand and offers \$5 harvest boxes to the community.

Figure 4: Non-Residential Uses



Commercial Uses

Commercial area at Reservoir and Sylvan Avenues/Gateway to Reservoir NRZ



Home Depot



Food Bazar



Sunnyside Hotel

Neighborhood commercial along Reservoir Avenue



Three Dollar Pizza/T Market



Convenience Store



Wirth Liquor



Deli



Car dealership



Former Casey Family Services Building

Institutional Uses and Open Space



Wilbur Cross School



Hallen School



Park City Magnet School



Police Community Services



Reservoir Community Farm



Sylvan Recovery Center



Bridgeport Family Health



Our Lady of Good Counsel Church



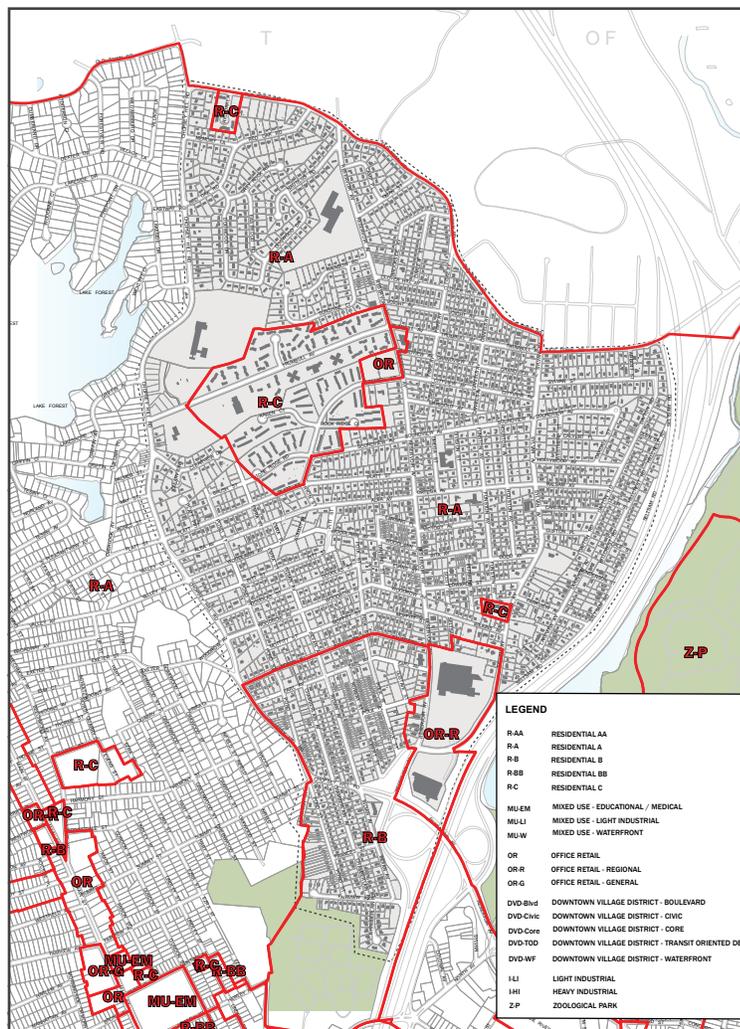
Iglesia Adventista Del Septimo Dia

2.3 ZONING

There are six zoning districts within the Reservoir Avenue NRZ (shown in the figure below): Residential A (R-A), Residential B (R-B), Residential C (R-C), Office Retail (OR) and Office Retail-Regional (OR-R). The majority of the NRZ is zoned Residential A, which permits low-density single family homes. The minimum lot area in the R-A zone is 9,000 square feet for lots with at least 60 feet of frontage and 7,500 square feet for lots with at least 75 feet of frontage. Maximum building coverage in the zone is 40 percent, not to exceed 3,000 square feet. At least 40 percent of the lot must be landscaped. Maximum building height is 35 feet. The southern portion of the neighborhood south of Saunders Avenue and west of Reservoir Avenue is zoned R-B, which is a low density residential district that allows one and two family homes. Minimum lot area and maximum building height in the R-B district is the same as that in the R-A district. Maximum building coverage in the R-B district is 45 percent, not to exceed 3,375 square feet. The Trumbull Gardens property and two other smaller parcels within the NRZ are zoned R-C; this district allows high density residential development. Maximum building coverage in the R-C district is 60 percent; maximum building height is 4 stories/45 feet.

There is limited commercial zoning within the Reservoir Avenue NRZ. The majority of the Reservoir Avenue corridor is zoned Residential A. The only commercially zoned properties in the NRZ are three OR zoned parcels at the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and Yaremich Drive and the regional commercial center at the southern boundary of the NRZ which is zoned OR-R. The OR-R zoned properties include Home Depot, Food Bazaar, Sunnyside Motel and some light industrial and residential uses between Sylvan Avenue and Polk Street. This district allows for large scale retail and office development as well as parks and open space. The OR zoned properties include Reservoir Community Farm, a multifamily residential building and a strip commercial property (T-Market and Three Dollar Pizza); Uses allowed in the OR district include office and retail (at a smaller scale to OR-R) as well as open space.

Figure 5: Zoning Map



Source: City of Bridgeport

2.4 TRANSPORTATION

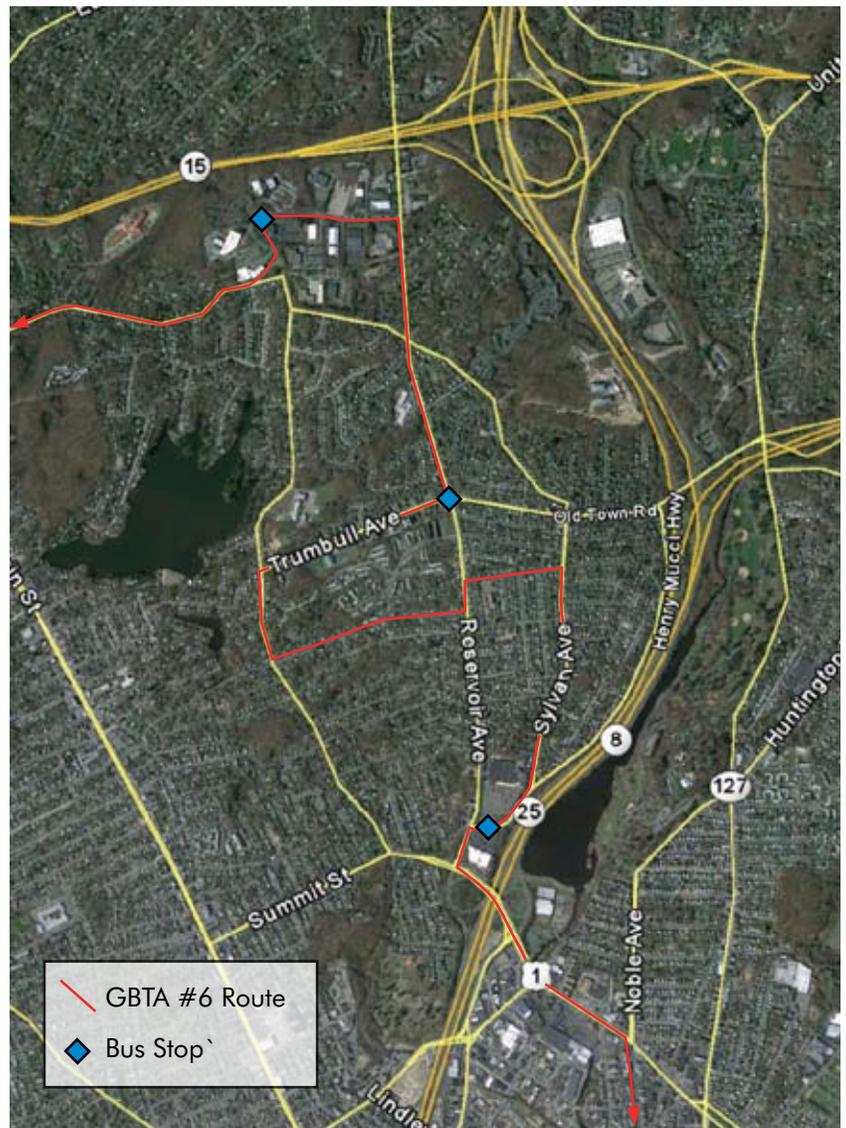
The Reservoir Avenue neighborhood has excellent access to regional roadways including the Merritt Parkway (Route 15), located just north of the neighborhood and Route 8/25, which borders the NRZ to the east and provides access to I-95.

Within the neighborhood Reservoir Avenue, is the primary collector from the east-west local roads. Reservoir Avenue has 2 lanes across it's 1.5 mile stretch in the neighborhood. Trumbull Avenue is a prominent east-west connector road.

Traffic volumes along Reservoir Avenue are highest near Sylvan Avenue, where average annual daily traffic (AADT) is approximately 21,000 vehicles (source: Google Earth). Traffic volumes taper along the corridor to the north, where the AADT is approximately 8,500 vehicles at Soundview Avenue and 3,800 vehicles at Old Town Road. The roadway network within the residential neighborhood primarily consists of local roads, which have relatively low traffic volumes.

There are three Greater Bridgeport Regional Transit (GBT) bus stops in the neighborhood, as shown on Figure 6. These stops provide access to the Route #6, which runs between the Westfield Trumbull Mall and the bus station in Downtown Bridgeport. Bus service on Route #6 runs every half hour Monday through Saturday from 5am to 10pm and once per hour from 8:30am to 7:30pm on Sundays. There are no bus shelters or trash receptacles provided at bus stops within the NRZ. Sidewalks in the vicinity of the bus stops are intermittent and/or in disrepair.

Figure 6: Transportation Network



Source: GBTA; Google Earth



Bus stop on Reservoir Avenue

2.5 DEMOGRAPHICS & SOCIOECONOMICS

Population and Age

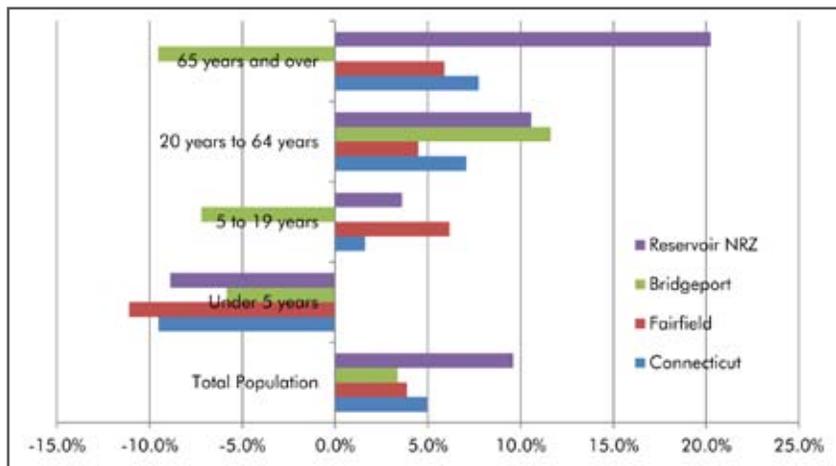
The population in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood increased by 9.6% between 2000 and 2010 from 9,181 to 10,063. This is roughly twice as fast as the rate of population growth in the State of Connecticut and almost three times as fast as the growth rate in Bridgeport as a whole (see Chart 2).

The neighborhood's very young population (under 5) has declined in the past decade by 8.9 percent, consistent with demographic trends in the region and the state. The population between the ages of 5 and 19 has increased by 3.6 percent despite a 7.2 percent decline in that same age group in Bridgeport as a whole. The adult population has also grown with working-age adults (age 20 to 64) growing by 10.6 percent. The senior population (65 and older) in the neighborhood has increased by more than 150 residents or 20.2 percent, while the city's overall senior population has declined by 9.5 percent. This increase reflects the aging in place of the neighborhood's residents. In 2000 it had almost an equal number of residents between the ages of 55 and 64.

Race/Ethnicity

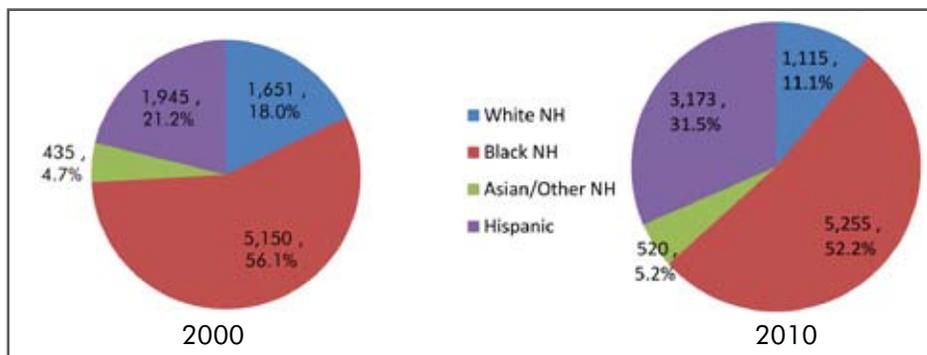
Over the past ten years the Reservoir neighborhood's population has become more diverse. The Hispanic and Asian populations have grown while the White and Black non-Hispanic populations have decreased (see Chart 3). This reflects a notable increase in the number of immigrants living in the Reservoir neighborhood. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of residents born outside the US increased from 1,249 to 2,014 or 63.1 percent.

Chart 2: Change in Population by Age 2000-2010



Source: Census 2000 SF3 and 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Chart 3: Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2000 and 2010



Source: Census 2000 SF3 and 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Educational Attainment

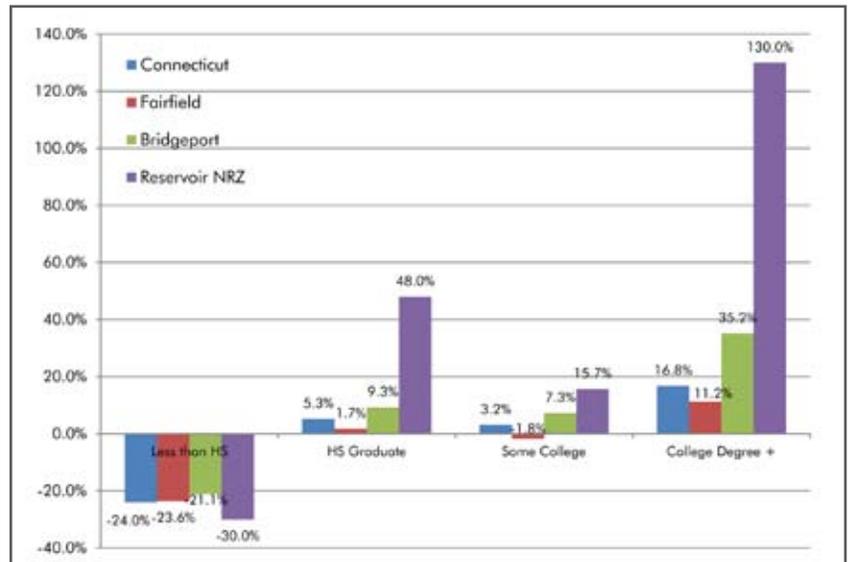
Educational attainment in the Reservoir neighborhood has notably increased over the past ten years. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of neighborhood residents with a high school diploma or more increased from 1,996 to 2,955. The number of residents with a college degree or more increased from 601 in 2000 to 1,382 in 2010. As shown in Chart 4, gains in educational attainment in the Reservoir neighborhood are significant. Neighborhood residents with less than a high school diploma declined by 30 percent, compared to 21.1 percent in Bridgeport as a whole, 23.6 percent in Fairfield County and 24 percent in the State of Connecticut.

School Enrollment

The school-aged population (ages 3+) in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood increased by **x** children between 2000 and 2010. There has been a 25.5 percent increase in nursery/preschool students and a 143.6 percent increase in Kindergarten students. Elementary school enrollment increased by 7.3 percent, while high school enrollment declined by 16.5 percent.

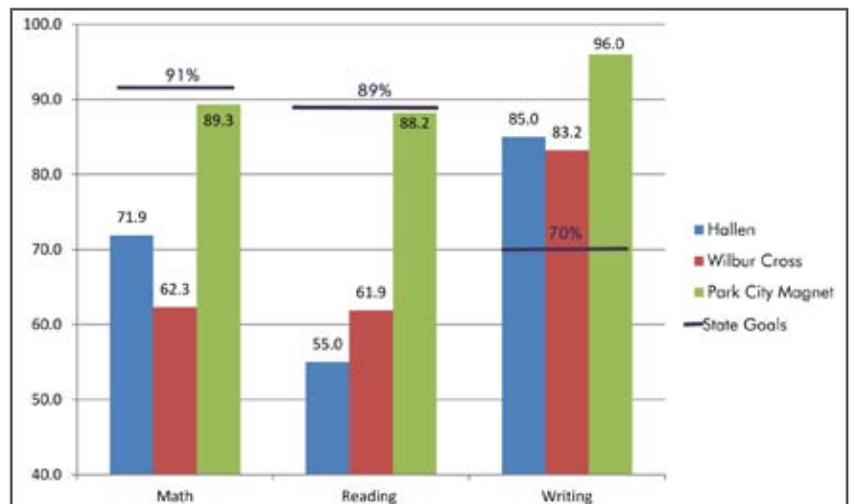
The neighborhood’s three schools (Wilbur Cross, Hallen and Park City Magnet) are identified by the State as being “In Need of Improvement,” based on 2011 CMT scores. However, achievement has notably improved over the past ten years. As of 2010, 100 percent of classes in each neighborhood school are being taught by highly qualified teachers. As shown on Chart 5, all three schools exceed the State goal of 70 percent of students having basic or better writing skills. Park City Magnet School nearly meets State proficiency levels for Math and Reading as well. The Wilbur Cross and Hallen Schools notably lag Park City Magnet in Math and Reading.

Chart 4: Change in Educational Attainment, 2000-2010



Source: Census 2000 SF3 and 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Chart 5: NRZ Schools’ Proficiency Level by Subject



Source: CT State Department of Education School Report Cards

Employment, Income & Poverty

Between 2000 and 2010 the unemployment rate in the Reservoir neighborhood increased from 5.9 percent to 16.9 percent. This notable increase in unemployment is not unique to the NRZ and reflects the impacts of the Great Recession that began in 2008 and its aftermath. In 2010 the unemployment rate in the City of Bridgeport as a whole was 12.4 percent; Fairfield County's unemployment rate was 7.6 percent. Despite a high unemployment rate, average household income in the Reservoir neighborhood increased by 2.6 percent between 2000 and 2010 from \$56,785 to \$58,256. Income in the NRZ is slightly higher than Bridgeport's average income of \$52,147, as reported in 2010. People living in poverty within the NRZ increased by 20.7 percent between 2000 and 2010 from 1,015 to 1,225.

Household Type

The Reservoir Avenue NRZ has a high percentage of family households compared to the State, region and city, as shown in Table 4. 81.2 percent of neighborhood households are family households, compared to 63.6 percent in Bridgeport as a whole, 69.4 percent in Fairfield County and 66.3 percent in Connecticut. 30.4 percent of neighborhood households are female-headed households; of those households two-thirds include children under the age of 18. This is greater than Bridgeport, Fairfield County and Connecticut at 24.2 percent, 12.3 percent and 12.9 percent respectively. Seniors living alone account for 7.8 percent of the neighborhood's population.

Table 5: Housholds by Type (2010)

As Percent of Total Households				
Family households (families)	66.3%	69.4%	63.6%	81.2%
With own children under 18 years	30.0%	33.8%	32.2%	41.5%
Female householder, no husband present	12.9%	12.3%	24.2%	30.4%
With own children under 18 years	7.1%	6.5%	14.2%	20.5%
Non-family households	33.7%	30.6%	36.4%	18.8%
Householder living alone	27.3%	24.9%	29.0%	16.3%
65 years and over	10.6%	10.0%	9.7%	7.8%

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Housing Characteristics

The number of housing units in the Reservoir NRZ increased by 568 between 2000 and 2010 to 3,674 units, according to the US Census. Of these, only 101 units or 2.7 percent were vacant; this is an extremely low vacancy rate. Of the 3,573 occupied units, 69.6 percent were owner-occupied in 2010—a rate almost unchanged from 2000.

Only 3.3 percent of housing units in the NRZ are considered overcrowded (having more than 1 person per room) and 90.3 percent of households have access to at least one vehicle. 24.4 percent of the neighborhood's housing stock was built before 1950; 25.5 percent was built between 1950 and 1959; 27.1 percent was built between 1960 and 1979; and 23.1 percent was built in 1980 or later. Median housing cost of owned housing with a mortgage in the NRZ is \$2,022 per month. This is similar to the city as a whole (\$2,027 per month) and the State of Connecticut (\$2,082), but lower than the Fairfield County median (\$2,759). For rental housing **(to be completed...)** Given the relatively high cost of neighborhood housing and low incomes, affordability is an issue for the 56.7 percent of owners and 64.5 percent of renters who pay more than 35 percent of their incomes on mortgages or rent.

2.6 NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS

Through the community planning process discussed in Section 1.2, the NRZ identified existing neighborhood assets that will serve as the building blocks for neighborhood revitalization:

- Emergent community leaders
- Residents and business owners
- Established residential neighborhood/homeowners
- Institutions, community organizations and service providers

Leveraging these assets and building the capacity of the neighborhood to create positive change will be central to the success of the NRZ. Community leaders will literally lead the way to revitalization, taking ownership of this NRZ Plan and moving it forward by implementing revitalization projects. These leaders include the residents and business owners who have contributed to the development of this NRZ Plan who will work in partnership with the community organizations and City agencies.

Another closely related asset is the NRZ’s homeowners. Nearly 70 percent of the neighborhood’s housing stock is owner-occupied. These homeowners are a tremendous and largely untapped resource. Their quality-of-life and financial interests are directly tied to the success of the revitalization efforts in the neighborhood. Organizing and engaging these homeowners and supporting their efforts to maintain and upgrade their properties presents a significant opportunity to build the capacity of the Reservoir NRZ.

A final community asset identified in this Plan is the NRZ’s institutions, community organizations and service providers (see Table 2). Partnerships between residents, the local schools, organizations such as the Community Farm and Bridgeport Family Health and agencies including the City’s Police Department, the Bridgeport Housing Authority, the City’s Recreation Department and the Greater Bridgeport Transit Authority will be one of the most important assets the NRZ can bring to bear in working for revitalization. These groups who are already actively working in the neighborhood will be essential partners in planning for revitalization.

Table 2: Institutions & Community Organizations

Neighborhood Schools	
	Wilbur Cross School
	Hallen School
	Park City Magnet School
	Fairfield County Seventh Day Adventist School
After School Programs	
	Lighthouse
	Trumbull Gardens Community Center
	Police Athletic League
Police Community Services	
	Block watches
	Police Explorers
	Senior citizen crime patrols
Bridgeport Housing Authority	
	Development Office
	Resident Services
	Trumbull Gardens Resident Council
Reservoir Community Farm	
	Food for Bridgeport school cafeterias
	Resident plots
	Farm stand
	Harvest boxes
Bridgeport Family Health	
	Primary healthcare
Churches	
	Fairfield County Seventh Day Adventist Church
	Pentacostal Church
	Life Changing Ministries
	Iglesia Adventista Del Septimo Dia
	Our Lady of Good Counsel
	Mt. Sinai Baptist Church
Other Organizations	
	North End Neighborhood Council
	North End Progressive Seniors
	Sylvan Recovery Center
	Bayview (Sylvan Avenue)

2.7 NEIGHBORHOOD CHALLENGES

A. Neighborhood Safety

There is a high level of crime in the community and many residents do not feel safe walking outside in the neighborhood, particularly on Reservoir and Trumbull Avenues.

<<Text to be inserted>>

B. Programmatic and Service Needs

While there are many institutions in the neighborhood that are providing important community services including schools, churches and after school programs, there is a lack of coordination between service providers and there are gaps between the services that people need and the programs that are offered.

<<Text to be inserted>>

C. Physical Infrastructure

Vacancies and Property Maintenance

A major challenge in the Reservoir neighborhood is the physical appearance and condition of poorly maintained residential and commercial properties and overgrown landscaping. The Reservoir neighborhood contains many vacant buildings and lots (see Figure 7). Although in some cases these vacancies are properties for lease or sale, many vacancies appear to be abandoned properties or properties in foreclosure. Enduring vacancies are highly detrimental to the neighborhood, impacting community character and negatively affecting property values.

Some vacant properties in the neighborhood have been identified as blighted by the City of Bridgeport. The City's Office of Neighborhood Revitalization provides resources to help communities address blighted properties. In cases where identified properties are a continual nuisance, the city can intervene to acquire the rights to properties, knock down buildings and clean up lots to make room for open space and new housing.

Underutilized Properties

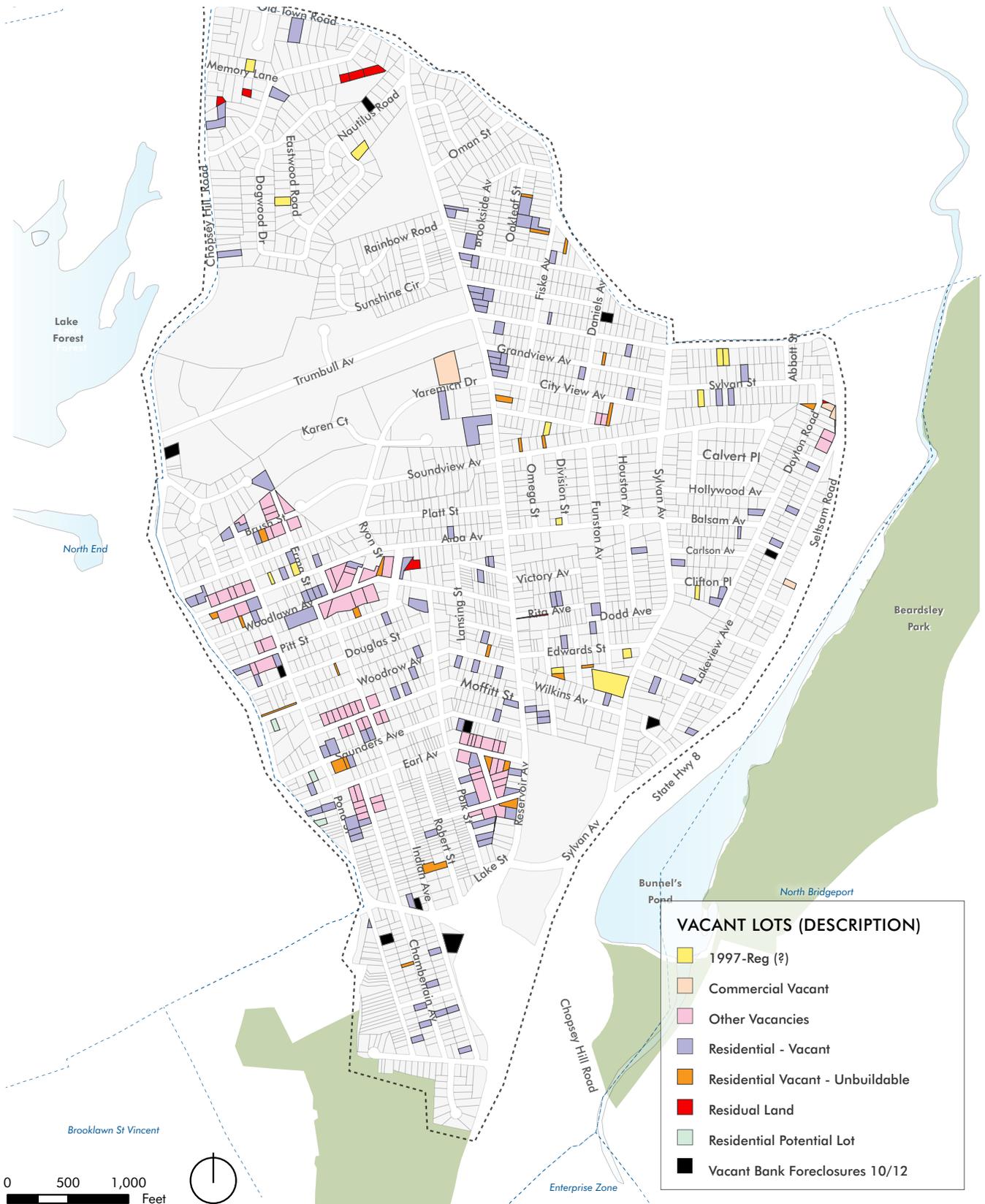
Within the Reservoir neighborhood, and particularly along the Reservoir Avenue corridor, there are many underutilized properties. While these properties are held by private owners, they present important redevelopment opportunities that support the revitalization goals of this plan. These sites include the T-Market/Three Dollar Pizza property at the corner of Trumbull and Reservoir Avenues, undeveloped land adjacent to the Wilbur Cross School and the vacant former Casey Services building on Reservoir near Saunders Avenue. In addition, there are several vacancy clusters within the residential neighborhood that present opportunities for redevelopment with infill housing.

INSERT IMAGES



Vacant/Abandoned Properties

Figure 7: Vacant Parcels



Streetscapes

Another important neighborhood challenge is the visual quality and functionality of the Reservoir Avenue corridor. Reservoir Avenue, which runs through the center of the NRZ from Old Town Road to Chopsey Hill Road, is the spine of the neighborhood. The image of the neighborhood that it projects in many ways defines the character of the community. Improving the way that Reservoir Avenue looks and feels is a key component of this Plan's revitalization strategy. Existing streetscape elements such as sidewalks, crosswalks and bus stops are shown in Figure 8.

Insert images of existing streetscape (sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, etc.)

Improving the pedestrian experience with the following streetscape elements will have a significant positive impact on the way the neighborhood sees itself and the way it is viewed by others, as shown on Figure 9.

- Improve existing sidewalks and add new sidewalks to provide a continuous pedestrian corridor along Reservoir Avenue
- Add new crosswalks in appropriate locations
- Install pedestrian-scale lighting
- Add street trees and landscaping
- Add trash cans and bus shelters at bus stops

These improvements along with the improvements to commercial storefronts and properties and the addition of inviting public spaces in the neighborhood would have a positive impact on both pedestrians and businesses along the corridor.

Reservoir Avenue Streetscape Challenges



Poorly maintained landscaping, sidewalks in disrepair



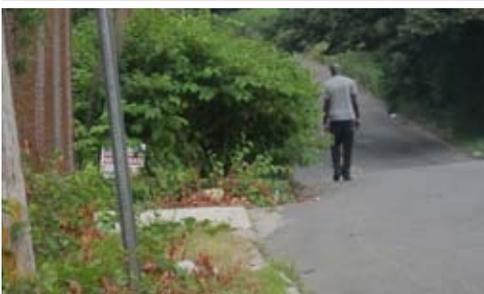
No bus shelter



Open parking lot with poor lighting



Abandoned home



No sidewalk/ no delineated sidewalk/cars parked on sidewalk. Pedestrians forced to walk in street



Poorly maintained storefronts



Poorly defined residential home entrances

Figure 8: Existing Reservoir Avenue Streetscape



3.0 Community Vision for the Future (to be edited)

<<Add introduction on community vision>>

3.1 A SAFE AND HEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD

One of the central themes that arose throughout the community planning process was neighborhood safety and the health and welfare of residents. A safe and healthy neighborhood is one where residents can comfortably walk to good schools and neighborhood shopping and can easily access healthy food and the programs and services they need to support stable family life. Making improvements that provide residents and businesses with the feeling of safety in the neighborhood is the top priority of this NRZ Plan. Revitalization hinges on the neighborhood's ability to become a place where people feel safe to live and work and where they have access to the programs and services that they need to live successful lives. This section discusses crime reduction strategies and community programs and services that will support revitalization of the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood as a safe and healthy community.

A. Crime Reduction Strategies

Improve Police-Community Relations

<<Insert text>>

Implement Block Watches

<<Insert text>>

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Strategies

Real or perceived, crime affects resident's quality of life. The popular "broken windows theory" first proposed by James Wilson and George Kelling in 1982 is based on the idea that areas appearing to be neglected and lacking community cohesion are magnets for delinquent behavior. Places in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood that have been cited by the community as being unsafe or unpleasant to walk along generally suffer from poor lighting, overgrown landscaping, maintenance issues and undefined space. Poorly maintained areas send a message that no one cares for the property and that undesirable behavior will be tolerated.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, first discussed by criminologist C. Ray Jeffery in 1971, is a proven strategy for modifying the existing physical environment to help deter and prevent crime. This popular approach fosters the creation of visible and active streets. Visibility, activity and definition of public and private spaces help to enhance neighborhood safety.

These strategies include the following:

Promote Natural Surveillance

- Illuminate open areas and exterior doors. Consider installing wall-mounted lights outside of doorways and outdoor motion lights for walkways and backyard access areas. Solar & fluorescent lights are inexpensive ways to create natural surveillance.
- Clear obstructions from windows to allow you to observe your property from inside your home.
- Keep shrubbery short to create visibility and remove blind spots or hiding places.

Clearing Define Public and Private Spaces

- Every home should have an address that is clearly visible from the street
- Show pride in private spaces with plantings, ornaments, and yard decorations

Maintain Buildings and Property

- Prune tree branches and keep shrubs short
- Keep property and building exterior clean and tend to needed repairs
- Frequently empty trash receptacles and report code violations

B. Program and Service Coordination

<< To be inserted >>

3.2 A BEAUTIFUL NEIGHBORHOOD

During the neighborhood workshops, residents expressed a vision for a more cohesive, safe and vibrant neighborhood and called for physical improvements along the Reservoir Avenue corridor. This section provides recommendations for streetscape, open space and property improvements and discusses regulatory strategies for encouraging attractive redevelopment.

A. Streetscape Improvements

Pedestrian amenities

- Marked crosswalks and curb extensions to facilitate crossing
- Curb extension allow pedestrians to see and be seen as they begin their crossing.
- Curbs help define the pedestrian environment within the streetscape, curbs in disrepair should be repaired/replaced.
- Curb cuts for driveways should be well defined.
- Street lighting designed at a more pedestrian scale
- Add street trees where feasible, they add an attractive canopy, reduce vehicular speeds and increase comfort for pedestrians
- Bus shelters

Nodes of activity

- Pocket parks and/or playgrounds with benches and landscaping
- Gateway treatment at Reservoir Avenue and Sylvan Avenue to improve sense of place

Storefronts

- Designs should emphasize storefront as focus of building facade.
- Main entrances should be recessed and inviting, allowing for views into indoor commercial areas
- Architectural features such as cornices, prominent display windows are encouraged.

Parking

- Parking lots should be defined and have visually reinforced edges to present a clean, orderly appearance. Landscape screening can help separate lot from street.
- Parking should be located behind the storefront
- Parking lots which are shared between different uses enable spaces to be used more efficiently

B. Parks and Open Space

There are very few parks/open space parcels in the NRZ. In fact, the Reservoir Avenue Community Garden is the only open space in the neighborhood. Trumbull Gardens does have some recreational facilities open to the public including basketball courts, tennis courts and a baseball field. However, these facilities are not used widely by the community.

Increased opportunities for open space was consistently described as a top priority for the community. One opportunity for a playground is the vacant area south of the Wilbur Cross School. This area is somewhat overgrown with shrubbery and is not well maintained. The area has previously discussed by the City as a

potential location for a playground however, no decision has been made to date.

The recreational facilities at Trumbull Gardens are a resource that should be capitalized on. The Youth Center is open to all city residents, however this facility is not used widely outside of Trumbull Gardens. Improved outreach and programming at the rec center could help to attract more people to use the facilities. Some additional programs suggested by the community were computer training and physical and education programs that also target girls and parents.

C. Placemaking and Gateways

The term ‘placemaking’ refers to targeted actions that result in creating a neighborhood identity. There are many strategies involved including neighborhood branding, uniform tree/flower planting or signage, focal areas for community activities that are visible to the public, and hosting regular events.

Creating a stronger sense of arrival could also improve Reservoir Avenue’s sense of place. Gateways and principal arterials in a neighborhood are in effect, the “living room” of the community. If the living room is messy, it sends a signal that the rest of the house (rest of the neighborhood) is unkept and uncared for. How well a community cares for its living room streets sends a message about the entire community fairly or not. Visitors are less likely to venture off the main roads into the community. This is unfortunate because the internal fabric of the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood including the local roads are quite solid.

While Reservoir Avenue is the spine of the community, it is difficult to mark one’s arrival in the neighborhood. More should be done to denote arrival in (and departure from) the neighborhood through the creation of gateways, which can consist of important buildings or identifiable areas. This may include attractive signage or standalone design elements that evoke an important aspect of the area’s history or identity. These should be complemented by landscaping and lighting to make them more attractive and call attention to visitors. Equally effective in creating sense of place is the presence of identifiable urban elements, like a village green or similar physical features to help people associate memorably with a particular location.

There are opportunities to create an improved gateway the intersection of Reservoir Avenue and Sylvan Avenue (Sunnyside Motel site). Landscaping, lighting, sidewalk amenities and road repairs would go a long way to improve the image of this area. In addition, if the Sunnyside Hotel were to be redeveloped, the site design should take into consideration the property’s opportunity to be a gateway to the neighborhood. Redeveloping this property would be make as big of an impact if not bigger than any urban design elements, however the potential to redevelop the property rests with the property owner. The City should consider zoning changes to promote appropriate site design for this area should it ever be redeveloped in the future.

D. Zoning and Site Design Recommendations

The R-A residential district is mapped for the majority of Reservoir Avenue. Commercial uses are not permitted in the R-A district, although a number of small-scale retail and commercial uses do exist as nonconforming uses. Nonconformity in the R-A zone is an issue, as it contributes to the poor condition of certain properties in the area. Property owners may be deterred in making much-needed building upgrades by the prospect of seeking a variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals, or - more significantly, the difficulty in getting bank financing given the property’s nonconformity. Adjust the use requirements for properties along Reservoir Avenue in the R-A zone to better reflect the existing context would allow the current zoning requirements to function as desired. In addition, such adjustments could substantially reduce both the number and degree of nonconformity, making it easier for property owners to upgrade buildings and improve street conditions and quality-of-life for residents.

There are many areas along Reservoir Avenue that could be significantly improved with site design that contributes to a more desirable spatial condition along the corridor. From an urban design standpoint, retail

areas that are friendly to pedestrians and vehicles have buildings that are closer to the road with active uses on the ground floor along the pedestrian right of way. Parking is accommodated to the rear or the side of buildings.

It is important to consider that many of the properties in the study area are privately owned, and although site specific improvements would go a long way to improve the corridor, rebuilding relies on the voluntary actions of private owners. The City of Bridgeport should consider adopting appropriate land-use regulations, including incentives and design guidelines, to encourage and guide future development along Reservoir Avenue. One such approach would be adoption of an overlay district to provide a stronger regulatory framework and greater control over building form such as the design and placement of buildings in a manner that maintains the community character of the district. An overlay district would be especially appropriate at Trumbull Avenue and Reservoir Avenue, which could potentially for the hub for the community. The retail area is currently for sale and an improved regulatory framework would promote a vision for a future built environment that is proactive (reflecting Reservoir Avenue's choices) rather than reactive (reflecting the developer's/owner's choice).



Community activities to show pride/ownership of public spaces



Well lit spaces at a pedestrian scale



Low shrubbery and windows to promote passive surveillance of the street

E. Design Guidelines

Design guidelines may be used to supplement the overlay district to help guide architectural styles, street layout and building form, access and parking configurations, landscape design standards, lighting and signage standards and other design concepts that the City prefers in new development or building renovation. The guidelines would intend to promote harmonious development that:

- Is high quality and visually appealing from adjacent streets and surrounding neighborhoods with an emphasis on building placement and orientation as well as site landscape.
- Has an appropriate mix of uses defined in the zoning district.
- Has open spaces, parking areas, pedestrian walks, signs, lighting, landscaping and utilities that are well related to the site and arranged to achieve a safe, efficient and contextually sensitive development.
- Shows high inter-connectivity between proposed uses and adjacent areas.
- Incorporates crime prevention through environmental design strategies (pedestrian scale lighting, landscaping that avoids hiding places, ground floor activity that provides “eyes on the street”, etc.)



ATTRACTIVE AWNINGS



ENTICING STOREFRONTS



STOREFRONT SIGNAGE AND LANDSCAPING



PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES



BUS SHELTER



PEDESTRIAN SCALE LIGHTING



SIDEWALKS AND CROSSINGS



BENCH/TRASH CAN



BALANCE BETWEEN CARS AND PEDESTRIANS



LANDSCAPED PARKING AREA



LANDSCAPED PARKING AREA



PLANTINGS/LANDSCAPE



PLAYGROUND/OPEN SPACE



ACTIVATE PUBLIC SPACES



NEIGHBORHOOD GATEWAY

F. Activity Clusters

Three main activity clusters (Figure 10) were identified based on their land use and location. These parcels were also chosen because of inherent redevelopment opportunities which could help to achieve the goals expressed above. Participants at the community workshop discussed potential improvements to these areas. Ideas from the workshop are shown on the following page. The illustrations for each cluster are meant to summarize the communities vision and to show how good urban design and careful and sensitive site planning can contribute positively to the corridor’s appearance and enrich the pedestrian environment.

Although redeveloping private property would go a long way to improve urban design, it is important to consider that these improvements are predicated on property redevelopment and property owners’ compliance. Aside from Trumbull Gardens, many of the properties are privately owned and rebuilding relies on the voluntary actions of private owners. To encourage redevelopment along the Reservoir Avenue corridor the City of Bridgeport should consider updating its land use regulations with an overlay district that would allow for commercial and mixed use development and provide design guidelines for the corridor.

Trumbull Avenue and Reservoir Avenue

This intersection, while presenting many challenges has the potential to become a prominent activity center for the community. The intersection is in the middle of the Reservoir Avenue corridor and it is located near Trumbull Gardens, the Community Garden and Wilbur Cross School, all of which generate a lot of pedestrian activity. This area used to be an active retail area. A strip shopping area stood where the community farm now sits. Residents in the community meetings expressed the need for more local retail to return to that location.

Currently, the only retail is an underutilized block-wide strip across the street from the community farm. Retail at this site includes a market and a pizza restaurant. The parcel behind the building is vacant. The building and adjacent parking lot is poorly maintained. Residents have described the area as unsafe with a lot of inappropriate activities that occur in the parking area.

This block could become an important neighborhood center by improving streetscape conditions and connecting the uses of the market, the garden, the health center and the school. Figure 11 shows what the block would look like with a contextually sensitive storefront at the street line. This would make for a more pleasant and attractive environment for pedestrians. Parking would be moved to the rear. Offices or residential apartments on the second floor would provide a passive measure of security by having more “eyes on the street.” The



Reservoir Avenue Community Garden



Opportunity for park next to Wilbur Cross School



Recreational facilities at Trumbull Gardens



Figure 10: Activity Clusters Map

Figure 11: Trumbull Avenue and Reservoir Avenue



- 1 Bike lane
- 2 Community area/Pocket park
- 3 Street crossings
- 4 Pedestrian scale lighting
- 5 On street parking
- 6 Landscape areas
- 7 Sidewalk improvement

second floor was also discussed as a potential location for a new community center.

Woodlawn Avenue and Reservoir Avenue

Mid-corridor, from Rita Avenue to Lansing Place, there are three neighborhood scale retail buildings: a local restaurant, a small market and a liquor store. Along this retail cluster, there are portions of sidewalks in disrepair, no street crossings and street lighting that does not illuminate the entire sidewalk or the store entrances. Residents consistently mentioned that they would like to have quick access to neighborhood grocery stores however, they do not frequent this area. An example of an improved neighborhood retail storefront and streetscape is shown in Figure 12. The building features ground floor retail with upper floor residential and parking in the rear. Alternative to residential, the building could have a day care center which could serve to activate the area by adding vibrancy and safety to the already existing commercial storefronts.

Sylvan Avenue and Reservoir Avenue

This intersection is the gateway to the neighborhood for drivers approaching from Chopsey Hill Road and Route 25. The node is characterized by the presence of two large box retail stores, a Home Depot and a Food Market. While the two stores are located across the street from each other there is no pedestrian connection between them. Another neighborhood landmark, and the first thing seen when driving uphill into the neighborhood is the Sunnyside Inn Motel. Residents have expressed their desire to see a more productive and attractive use on such a prominent corner. The site also presents a traffic hazard as access/egress to the parking lot directly at the intersection. Next to the Sunnyside Motel are a number of light industrial uses, such as small construction and warehouse buildings. The former Casey Family Service building is just north of this area. The office building used to have community based uses however, the site has been vacant for several years.

There are significant opportunities to improve the cluster so that it contributes more positively to the surrounding neighborhood. These improvements are shown in Figure 13.

- The intersection is the gateway to the community and simple improvements such as landscaping and gateway signage could enhance the first impression of the neighborhood.
- The Food Market and the Home Depot are located within the neighborhood, they are difficult to access except by car. Continuous sidewalks, bus shelters, sidewalk lighting and crosswalks are needed to connect the retail center with the rest of the neighborhood.
- Improved pedestrian environment would strengthen access opportunities to the former Casey Family Service building, which could potentially be used as a community center.
- A redeveloped Sunnyside Motel with appropriate site design considerations and parking in the rear would help to alleviate vehicular and pedestrian conflicts at a heavily trafficked intersection.

Figure 12: Sylvan Avenue and Reservoir Avenue



Figure 13: Woodlawn Avenue/Victory Avenue and and Reservoir Avenue



- 1 Open storefronts and shop signage
- 2 Fully illuminated areas around retail
- 3 Plantings
- 4 Sidewalks Improvement
- 5 On street parking
- 6 Parking in the rear

3.3 TRUMBULL AVENUE AND TRUMBULL GARDENS

Trumbull Gardens is a Bridgeport Housing Authority (BHA) owned public housing complex located on Trumbull Avenue between Reservoir Avenue and Chopsey Hill Road. Trumbull Gardens is made up of two 8-story high-rise towers (building 10 and 11) and fifty-five two story townhouses. The towers and the townhouses have 64 and 274 units respectively representing 338 total units. This represents 20 percent of the BHA's total family housing units. There are several community facilities on the site including a multipurpose center, basketball courts, tennis courts, and a baseball field.

Improving the Trumbull Gardens property is key to improving neighborhood safety and quality of life for residents within the complex as well as those living within the greater Reservoir Avenue neighborhood. The buildings themselves are in need of repair. Trumbull Avenue has the general perception as being uncared for, unattractive and unsafe, and is avoided by outside residents despite the fact that there are several community facilities on the site. The development is a super block that does not relate to the neighborhood street grid and the site is essentially cut off from the larger community. Both the highrise and townhouse buildings sit at odd angles and do not relate to the street. Residents do not have street addresses and public and private spaces within the complex are not differentiated.

Reimagining Trumbull Gardens

One of Trumbull Gardens main challenges is its lack defined private spaces. As its names suggests, Trumbull Gardens' site design is similar to a large garden within a superblock with scattered buildings and facilities connected by walkways. These walkways feel isolated as they go deeper into the complex and there is no way to access other streets or neighborhood areas from within. Consequently, inside the complex some roads, open areas and dead-ends are dark and isolated producing opportunities for criminal activities and causing the perception of being unsafe. Natural surveillance is poor and contributes to a diminished sense of ownership. The Bridgeport Housing Authority acknowledges that the buildings' state of disrepair and the living conditions within the development make redevelopment of the property the most effective way to improve the site. The two towers are currently slated for demolition and the Housing Authority intends to eventually demolish all existing buildings on the property and redevelop the site with mixed income housing. This redevelopment will occur in partnership with existing Trumbull Gardens residents who will be relocated during construction and will then have the option to return to the revitalized site upon completion.

<<Insert basic site design recommendations>>

In the meantime, the BHA recognizes that maintenance and repairs to existing buildings are necessary and that improving safety on the site is a priority. In the summer of 2013 the BHA paid the City of Bridgeport's Police Department to provide two officers to patrol the site on foot daily. Residents reported that these walking patrols had a significant positive impact on how safe they felt walking outside within Trumbull Gardens. At the Trumbull Gardens Resident Council meeting that was held in September 2013, several residents reported that they would only go outside when the walking patrolmen were on the site. The BHA was an active participant in the development of this NRZ Plan and supports the idea of a new police substation on the Trumbull Gardens property. The BHA has verbally agreed to provide space for the substation on its property and to coordinate with the Police Department to implement this project.

4.0 How We Achieve Our Vision for the Future

4.1 IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This section provides recommendations for achieving the vision for the future of the Reservoir Avenue NRZ that is described in this Plan. These recommendations fall into several categories: 1) community/organizational capacity building, 2) short-term capital investments, 3) program development and implementation, and 4) long range, large-scale capital projects, as described in Section 3.2 below.

Revitalizing the Reservoir Avenue NRZ will require many coordinated actions over an extended period of time. Some projects such as putting garbage receptacles at bus stops on Reservoir Avenue will be “quick wins” that can be achieved right away. Other projects, such as creating a program that improves safety and enhances the relationship between the neighborhood and the City’s police patrol officers will be more complex and will require a substantial investment in relationship building and program development. As became apparent throughout the public engagement process that led to the development of this Plan, there is a core group of residents and business owners who are enthusiastic about and committed to doing this work. Developing the organizational capacity of these individuals to champion this NRZ Plan and implement its recommendations is essential to the success of the NRZ. The election of the NRZ Planning Committee is the first step in this process. This committee has worked closely with the City and its consultants to develop this NRZ Plan. The next step is for the NRZ to evolve into an organization with the capacity to establish the partnerships, create the programs and obtain the funding necessary to realize the Plan’s vision. The City of Bridgeport has established a leadership program that...(to be inserted)

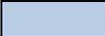
Working together with other NRZ’s in the City of Bridgeport as part of the leadership program, the Reservoir Avenue NRZ will have a voice in how scarce resources are allocated within the City’s neighborhoods to implement capital improvement projects. Through this program the Reservoir Avenue NRZ will have input into where the City’s capital improvement funds are spent and will be able to direct some of those funds to the Reservoir neighborhood. At the same time, the NRZ will need to pursue additional funding sources and develop creative public-private partnerships with City departments, the Bridgeport Housing Authority, community organizations, non-profits and the private sector to develop the community programs described in this Plan and undertake larger scale projects. Training community leaders and building organizational capacity will allow the NRZ to achieve both these objectives.

An important part of this capacity building will be to create subcommittees of the NRZ who will be responsible for implementing different aspects of the plan. As will be discussed in Section 3.2, the projects outlined in the NRZ’s implementation plan fall into three general categories: Community Capacity Building & Programming, Safety, and Urban Design. Projects under these categories will be assigned to subcommittees, as determined by the NRZ. Appropriate subcommittees to address these projects might include a safety subcommittee, a programming subcommittee, an open space subcommittee, and an urban design subcommittee.

4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS: PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS

This section describes recommended projects and programs to be undertaken by the NRZ in coordination with the City of Bridgeport, the Bridgeport Housing Authority, community organizations, non-profits and private sector partners to achieve the objectives of this Plan. These actions are categorized as short term (to be carried out within 1-2 years), medium term (to be carried out within 3-5 years) and long term (to be carried out within 5+) years.

Table 7: Projects and Programs

-  = Community Capacity Building and Programming
-  = Safety
-  = Urban Design

	Project	Timeframe	Responsible Party
1	<p>Community Leader Training/ Organizational Capacity Building Build capacity of emerging community leaders to organize the community and establish the NRZ as an organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ to participate in Citywide NRZ Leadership Program ▪ Designate a program coordinator for NRZ 	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Neighborhood Revitalization
2	<p>Neighborhood Event Programming Build capacity and develop the neighborhood’s identity with frequent, recurring events, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The NRZ should partner with the City and community organizations to sponsor neighborhood clean-up events ▪ The NRZ should partner with the Reservoir Community Farm to develop events related to community farming and healthy food ▪ The NRZ should partner with neighborhood schools and local artists to develop an annual public art event 	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ with community partners
3	<p>Police-Community Relations Program Develop a program that improves communication and creates partnerships between neighborhood residents and police patrol officers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistent patrol officers should be assigned to neighborhood ▪ Increase police presence in neighborhood with patrol cars and walking patrols. Locations to consider should include Karen Court, Soundview Avenue and the intersection of Trumbull and Reservoir Avenues ▪ Police patrol officers and Police Community Services officers should participate in community meetings 	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police Department, Patrol Division ▪ Police Community Services ▪ Bridgeport Housing Authority ▪ NRZ/neighborhood residents ▪ Trumbull Gardens Resident Council
4	<p>Block Watches Establish and coordinate block watches in collaboration with Police Community Services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Determine block watch locations ▪ Organize/engage community to coordinate with Police Community Services 	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Police Community Services

5	<p>Safety Infrastructure Improvements: Lighting, Fencing & Cameras</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Install appropriately scaled lighting in dark, crime-prone areas, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Karen Court - Stone Ridge - Sunshine Circle - Trumbull Gardens at Park City Magnet property line - Yaremich Drive at Soundview Avenue, Rockridge Circle and Reservoir Avenue - Grandview Avenue at Reservoir ▪ Install security cameras in high crime locations identified above and vulnerable areas such as gas stations ▪ Install fencing or other trespassing control measures at Karen Court, Stone Ridge and Sunshine Circle 	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Bridgeport Police Department ▪ Bridgeport Housing Authority ▪ Trumbull Gardens Resident Council
6	<p>Police Substation at Trumbull Gardens</p> <p>Establish a police substation at Trumbull Gardens.</p>	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Police Department ▪ Bridgeport Housing Authority ▪ Trumbull Gardens Resident Council
7	<p>Bus Stop Improvements</p> <p>Install garbage cans and bus shelters and upgrade sidewalks at all bus stops in the Reservoir Avenue neighborhood.</p>	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Business owners ▪ City of Bridgeport ▪ Greater Bridgeport Transit
8	<p>Public Space at Community Farm</p> <p>Work with Community Farm to create public space for passive recreation (eg. benches, tables) and neighborhood events.</p>	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Reservoir Community Farm
9	<p>Residential Property Improvement Program</p> <p>Investigate existence of local programs that help homeowners access available national, state and local programs that provide assistance for property improvement in the form of grants, loans and tax incentives.</p>	Short	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport
10	<p>Coordinate After School Programming</p> <p>Create a program that coordinates existing after school programs and identifies additional after school program needs in collaboration with the local elementary schools (Wilbur Cross, Hallen & Park City Magnet), existing after school program providers (Lighthouse, Bridgeport Department of Recreation and Bridgeport Housing Authority) and other community organizations. After school programming should include academic programs, computer training, sports/physical education programs and programs targeted gender specific programming.</p>	Short-Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Wilbur Cross, Hallen & Park City Magnet Schools ▪ Lighthouse ▪ Bridgeport Department of Recreation ▪ Bridgeport Housing Authority ▪ Police Athletic

<p>11</p>	<p>Education and Job Training Expand residents’ access to education job training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Investigate local job training programs that prepare neighborhood residents for jobs in the City of Bridgeport and the region and develop strategies for connecting residents to existing programs. ▪ Develop new job training programs, as necessary, to meet neighborhood residents’ needs and explore creative partnerships with the private sector to fund such programs. ▪ Develop supportive educational programs for families around topics such as baby care and parenting, healthy eating and financial management 	<p>Short- Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Bridgeport Public Schools ▪ CT Works ▪ Private sector partners ▪ Bridgeport Parent Center ▪ Reservoir Community Farm ▪ Bridgeport Family Health
<p>12</p>	<p>Improve Transportation Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improve frequency of bus service, particularly on weekends ▪ Implement new shuttle service that provides access to shopping 	<p>Short- Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport ▪ Greater Bridgeport Transit ▪ Business community
<p>13</p>	<p>Blighted Property Improvement Program Investigate existence of programs that actively address vacant and blighted properties in the neighborhood.</p>	<p>Short- Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Neighborhood Revitalization
<p>14</p>	<p>Reservoir Avenue Streetscape Improvement Program Develop a coordinated streetscape improvement program that addresses sidewalks, street trees, lighting, landscaping and street furniture (benches, trash cans, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <u>Sidewalks</u>: Repair existing sidewalks and add new sidewalks to make sidewalks continuous along Reservoir Avenue from Wilbur Cross School to Chopsey Hill Road; also add sidewalks along Sylvan Avenue from xxx south to Reservoir Avenue. ▪ <u>Street Trees</u>: Plant street trees at appropriate locations along Reservoir Avenue. Species used should be wind resistant, salt tolerant and should not interfere with power lines or heave pavement. ▪ <u>Pedestrian-Scale Lighting</u>: Install pedestrian-scale lighting along Reservoir and Sylvan Avenues. ▪ <u>Crosswalks</u>: Consider new crosswalks at the intersections of Reservoir Avenue and Trumbull Avenue and Reservoir Avenue and Sylvan Avenue and other appropriate locations. ▪ <u>Street furniture</u>: Add landscaped areas, garbage cans and benches at appropriate locations along Reservoir and Sylvan Avenues. 	<p>Short- Medium</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Planning and Economic Development ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Neighborhood Revitalization ▪ City of Bridgeport Department of Public Works ▪ City of Bridgeport Tree Warden

15	<p>Reservoir Avenue Overlay Zoning District</p> <p>Create an overlay district along the Reservoir Avenue corridor to allow for and possibly incentivize commercial and mixed use development (the corridor is currently zoned for residential). This would bring existing commercial buildings into compliance as to use and would encourage improvement of those properties. Design guidelines should be implemented as part of the overlay district as discussed in this Plan.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Planning and Economic Development
16	<p>Commercial Façade Improvement Program</p> <p>Investigate existence of façade improvement programs that could assist commercial property owners in upgrading their properties consistent with the overlay district described in 15 above.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Planning and Economic Development ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Neighborhood Revitalization ▪ Property Owners
17	<p>Improve School Playgrounds</p> <p>Improve school playgrounds to provide more open space area and updated equipment.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ Bridgeport Public Schools ▪ City of Bridgeport Department of Parks and Recreation
18	<p>Create New Neighborhood Park</p> <p>Create a new neighborhood park on the vacant parcel of land adjacent to the Wilbur Cross School. This parkland could include passive recreation areas as well as a playground with a splash pad.</p>	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ ▪ City of Bridgeport Parks Department
19	<p>Create a Community Center</p> <p>Create an inclusive community center that is welcoming to all residents. The center should serve a variety of ages and purposes, serving as a learning center, youth center and senior center as well as a general community gathering place. The center could host a variety of community programs and services including a parent center, daycare, after school programs, job training, computer lab, financial management classes, ESL classes, tutoring, etc.</p>	Long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NRZ with the City of Bridgeport and other public and private partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lighthouse - Bridgeport Housing Authority - YMCA - Others
20	<p>Redevelop Trumbull Gardens</p> <p>Work with the Bridgeport Housing Authority and Trumbull Gardens residents to redevelop the Trumbull Gardens property as a mixed income community that is integrated into the surrounding neighborhood.</p>	Long	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgeport Housing Authority ▪ Trumbull Gardens Resident Council ▪ City of Bridgeport Office of Planning and Economic Development ▪ NRZ

4.3 FUNDING STRATEGIES