

RECOVERY

R/UDAT • A Plan for East Nashville

JULY 16-19, 1999

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The East Nashville community and the American Institute of Architects Middle Tennessee Chapter thank the R/UDAT Team for volunteering their time and expertise to guide us into the new millennium.

Special thanks to David Coode, Lose & Associates, Inc, Nell Levin and the Report Production Team.

REdisCOVERY logo designed by Kara Babin, Assoc. AIA of Tuck Hinton Architects.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The R/UDAT team concluded that there are three primary tasks that the East Nashville Community must undertake in order to effect the changes recommended in this report. They are: *community organizing; development of public spaces and linkages; and adoption of land use policies* that enhance the unique character of this urban community.

Community Organizing

The East Nashville Community must encourage inclusive participation by all of the community's residents to establish a forum to:

- Set community priorities;
- Build on the community's diversity;
- Create neighborhood organizations in the community where none currently exist;
- Exchange skill sets among neighbors;
- Form strategic partnerships with local business associations;
- Speak with the force of numbers to government and public agencies.

Public Spaces and Linkages

This community has a treasure of fine public spaces, streets and parks that frame its distinct architecture and vistas. R/UDAT recommends that the East Nashville Community work with the City of Nashville, MDHA, Tennessee Department of Transportation and other agencies to effect improvements in public space, such as:

- The creation of a new "Civic Square" at the island formed where Main Street and 11th Street merge at Gallatin Road;
- The development of a river side trail from Shelby Park to the Stadium that screens the Steiner-Liff plant;
- The beautification of sidewalks, trail systems and vehicular corridors that connect the neighborhoods and parks, forming

attractive reference points within the community for visitors and residents;

- The enhancement of key gateways, such as Fifth Street at Main Street and Woodland, among others, to let travelers know when they have entered the community;
- The framing of streets, such as Shelby Street, to accentuate spectacular views of downtown and the river.

Residential and Commercial Development

Both regulatory and strategic approaches to amend land-use policy in East Nashville are central to R/UDAT's recommendations. The measures we suggest to take full advantage of existing patterns in the community include:

- Adoption of a 50/50 principle that for every home built in the area, a new affordable home also be built to maintain the economic diversity of the community;
- Adoption of specific Design Regulations and Review Guidelines along Woodland Street and other key corridors to target appropriate projects for the scale and character of the community;
- Reorganization of the Design Review process to yield desired results; and
- Revision of zoning ordinances to relax parking and setback requirements for retail development without requiring a zoning variance.

The detailed sections within the report explain these recommendations in greater detail. The R/UDAT team wishes to express its congratulations to the local R/UDAT Host Committee and the Citizens of East Nashville on the *Rediscovery* of their community!

William A. Gilchrist, AIA
Team Leader
July 19, 1999

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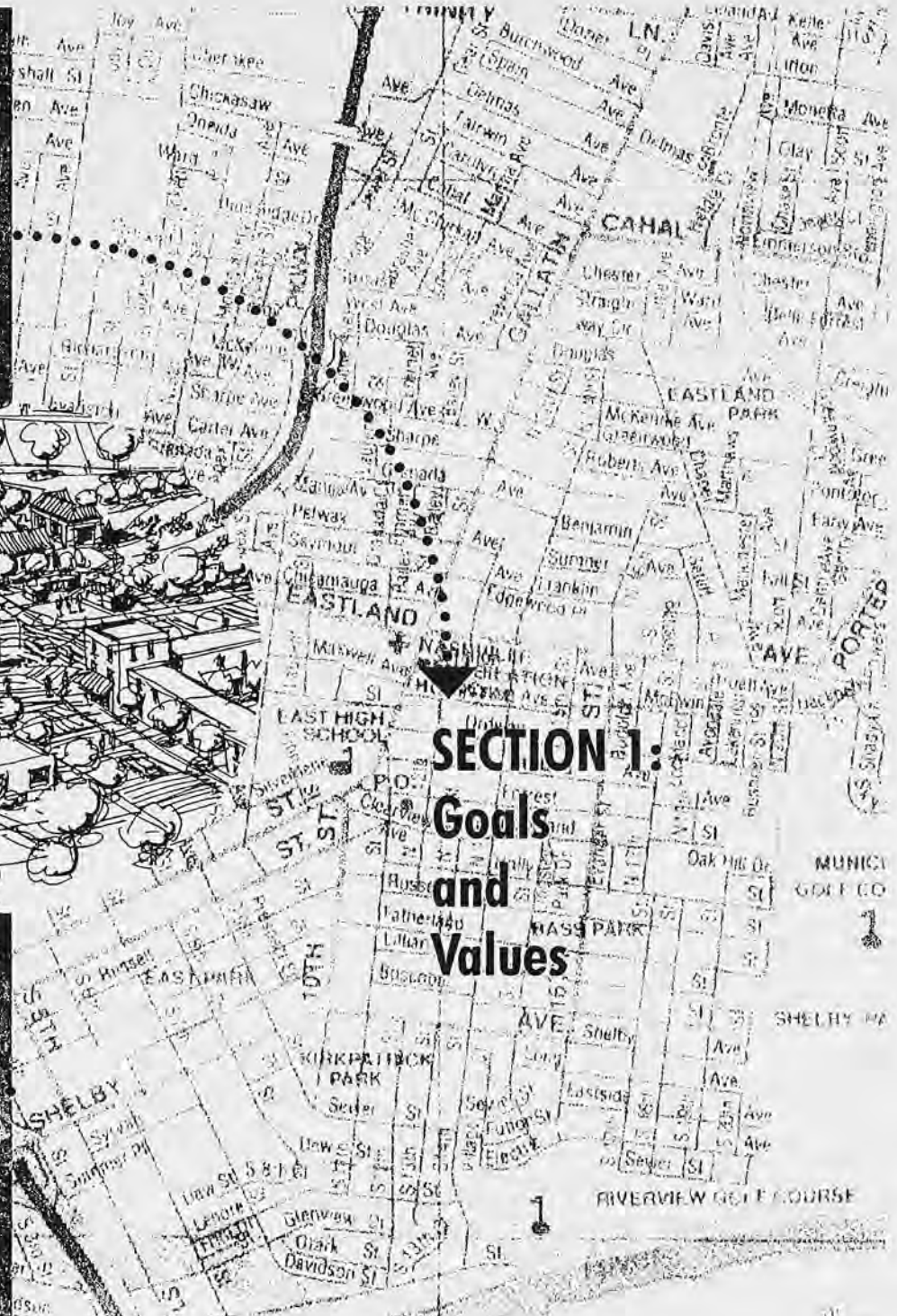
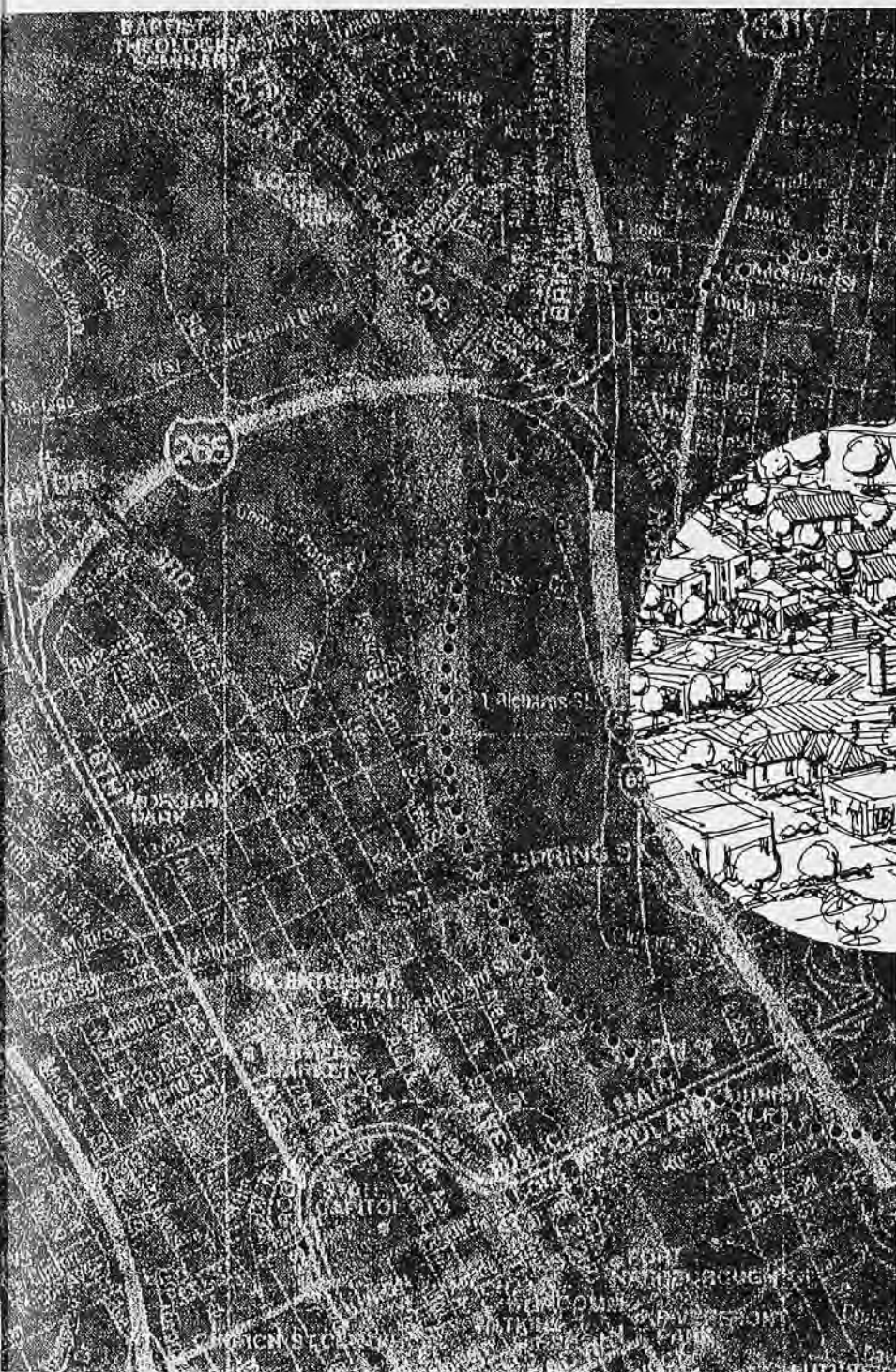
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SECTION 1: Goals and Values

MUNICIPAL GOLF COURSE 1

SHELBY PARK

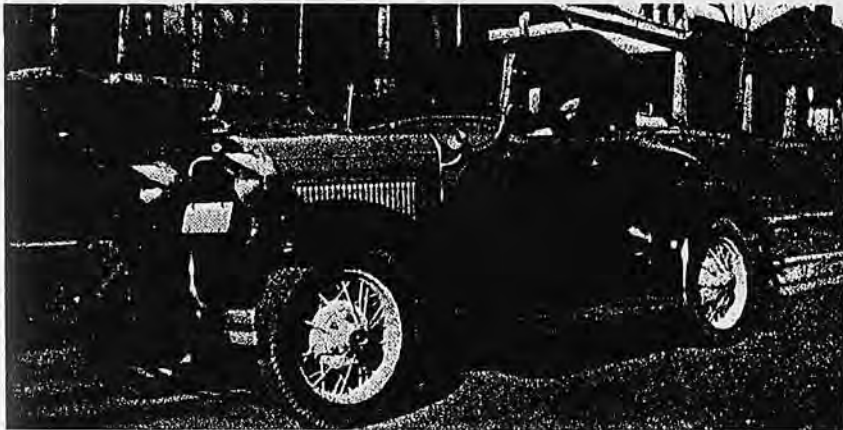
RIVERVIEW GOLF COURSE

REDISCOVERY GOALS

The R/UDAT Team volunteered to accept the assignment to develop a revitalization plan for East Nashville, because we sincerely believe in and are dedicated to the concept that changes can be planned and implemented for the betterment of a community.

The purpose of this report is to project a plan for the ongoing development, improvement, growth, and welfare of the entire community of East Nashville as it productively complements the Metro Nashville area. This report is based on factual information, on-site inspections, and input from various governmental, social, cultural, and educational entities that serve the community as well as comments from a large number of community residents in a public forum from all neighborhoods in East Nashville. The Team took this information and applied their expertise and experience to produce this report.

The R/UDAT team's objective was to address the community's concerns and outline a "doable" plan of action that can be implemented in phases to produce outcomes in a predictable time frame.



R/UDAT

BACKGROUND

The East Nashville community is unique from many significant perspectives: historical, economic, architectural diversity, and political. These characteristics create the extraordinary value of East Nashville's physical environment, its desirability, and simultaneously its vulnerability.

The unique juxtaposition of North South rail lines adjacent to the terminus of navigable waterway at Nashville served "heavy" industries developed on the river's edge because of the economic advantage of barge shipment to that farthest destination within the interior of the Southeastern United States. Topography favored commercial development on the West Bank and created a most desirable location in the city, on the east side of the river, buffered by the river from the "hustle and bustle" of commerce/horse drawn conveyances and "unfamiliar" visitors. The rolling topography and heavily wooded landscape of East Nashville afforded an ideal location to support the growth of residential neighborhoods, which were well-platted with service alleyways that enabled more efficient accommodation. These, in turn, encouraged small "corner grocery" and commercial service establishments within walking distance of the residents to serve their day-to-day needs for convenience goods and services.

Although there were relatively few (and currently next to none) large employers located in the East Nashville community, an extensive network of trolley lines offered access to a full range of diverse employment opportunities on the west side of the river, only one to three miles removed from homes in East Nashville.

The neighborhoods were also provided with parks, schools, churches, and other community-scale civic and cultural amenities within walking distance of their homes.

Given the strength and quality of these traditional neighborhood characteristics, the area has survived the post WWII forces that devastated many other traditional neighborhoods

throughout the remainder of the United States.

Although East Nashville suffered some ravages of urban America's transitions, it managed an amazing resilience through changes in population, transportation and employment.

On April 16, 1998, a tornado came through Nashville, damaging Downtown and inner-city neighborhoods. East Nashville was hardest hit.

The immediate response to the tornado was outstanding, as the community and public sector workers cleared streets, provided emergency help, and restored services. Mayor Bredesen appointed a Tornado Recovery Board in July 1998 to assist the East Nashville community's efforts. With the Mayor's authorization, the Tornado Recovery Board applied for R/UDAT's assistance.

The resulting document attempts to comply with the goal statement mandated in the R/UDAT application: *To create a plan for development that reinforces East Nashville's traditional urban fabric by focusing on its commercial areas and ways they can enhance the surrounding residential neighborhoods while creating an identifiable sense of place. Zoning requirements, land use policies, image perception, investment hurdles, and social challenges to East Nashville's urban development should be addressed.*

However, the goal is not merely to repair the damage caused by the tornado but to repair, restore, and enhance the traditional urban neighborhood fabric damaged by decades of decline and uneven development. The opportunity is not to return to the pre-tornado status quo but to make East Nashville better than it has ever been.

The following is needed to meet these objectives:

1. A commitment by the community to build on the unity that has come out of the R/UDAT process.
2. Strategies for economic development, including:

- financing methods and resources,
 - strategies for developing public/private redevelopment partnerships,
 - a marketing plan to encourage investment in the area.
3. Recommendations that enhance East Nashville's traditional urban character, including:
 - mending the neighborhoods together both physically and socially,
 - identifying neighborhood center locations and focusing on their design and functions,
 - focusing on pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and open space,
 - establishing design guidelines for new commercial, mixed-use, and residential infill,
 - anticipating the effect of the new NFL development.
 4. Transportation recommendations that acknowledge that many citizens do not have cars, that the area is built to a density to support mass transit and other alternative modes of travel if convenient and efficient. Easy passage across the river is crucial in tying East Nashville into the city.
 5. A plan to improve the image and perception of the area while maintaining and strengthening East Nashville's diverse community.

To retain and reinforce the viability of the East Nashville residential community, the recommendations of this report should be implemented.

The R/UDAT team appreciates the excellent support they received from the East Nashville Recovery Board and the many volunteers, the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the citizens of the East Nashville community, who made this challenging task possible in such short time.

DIVERSITY AS A VALUE

R/UDATs typically address challenges affecting the physical character of communities and recommend design solutions. While this R/UDAT report will also advance specific design strategies for improving the quality of life for East Nashville's citizens, before doing so, it must address a more fundamental issue facing the East Nashville community: That issue is diversity.

East Nashville must recognize that its diversity is more than an asset; it lies at the heart of its identity. Inclusion of the full range of that diversity is essential if East Nashville is to succeed in transforming its quality of life.

The diversity that the community offers is a fundamental feature that makes urban areas vital, engaging, and the preferred choice for an increasing number of Americans, as it has been for Europeans for generations. Whether diversity shows itself in the variety of streetscapes, housing types, or entertainment venues, urban life is where it all comes together. In East Nashville, the creation of a cohesive community around its diversity has been elusive.

The fundamental challenge that faces East Nashville as it seeks to improve its quality of life on a sustainable basis is not really a design challenge. The area is rich with opportunities, many of which are already being realized, such as the revival of neighborhood-based retail and the dedication of the Shelby Bottoms Greenway. Design solutions can enhance East Nashville's future but cannot determine or define it. The way in which the community defines itself and each of its component parts will determine East Nashville's future.

The critical question that must be asked is: *How does a community exhibiting great diversity in income, race, and residence recognize the existence of its common needs and see that*

they are met? The R/UDAT Team cannot answer that question for East Nashville; it can be answered only by the community itself. The answer began to emerge at the July 17, 1999, Community Meeting. At that meeting it became apparent first, that diversity is a value recognized by the people of East Nashville; and second, that the community has begun to recognize that change in East Nashville will come about only through the community's citizens communicating their respect for that value to one another.



Eddy King: *"This (R/UDAT) is the first project in ten years which seriously solicited input from people."*

This dialogue is no small challenge; however it is an absolute necessity. East Nashville contains six neighborhood associations that have emerged through the energies and interests of constituents. In many instances, these neighborhoods have significant accomplishments to their credit, including historical or conservation designations, and initiatives that have led to significant investment in the beautification of their areas.

Another part of East Nashville, its public housing projects,

has had elected resident councils for many years; but these councils have not been recognized as peers by the neighborhood associations. Other portions of the community, however, have neither formal nor ad hoc neighborhood representation. Their voices have not been heard as East Nashville has charted its destiny.

Only with the tornado that struck in 1998, devastating East Nashville's urban forest and damaging many homes and institutional buildings, did the community begin to reassess its values. East Nashville discovered that it valued many attributes that are unique to urban neighborhoods and rare in Nashville: diversity of housing types, abundance of sidewalks, and proximity to Downtown. The community continues to struggle to recognize its rich ethnic diversity as an asset. Despite the value of diversity that many residents claim to embrace, the absence of so many East Nashville citizens or their representatives at community meetings and initiatives reflects a continued ambivalence toward diversity within the neighborhood.

Uneven representation and lack of cohesion constrains the community's ability to cultivate the support it needs to achieve its common goals and safeguard its common interest. Many, even most of East Nashville residents, without regard to neighborhood status, race, or income feel that they are their city government's stepchildren. They cite poor or nonexistent response from police, sanitation, codes and other basic municipal services as evidence that they do not enjoy the same level of public service enjoyed by other communities in Metro Nashville. Many East Nashville residents point to the irony of this neglect, literally, in the shadow of the towers of Downtown.

While objective measures well bear out many of the typical East Nashville resident's impressions, the community itself cannot simply look to government as the solution but must look inward if it is to improve its lot. For example, how can the beginnings of cohesion reflected in the recent initiatives following the

tornado through the R/UDAT build toward advocacy for the common interests of Cayce Homes and Lockeland Springs? The 1998 tornado may have fostered a recognition of common values; but as the R/UDAT Community Meeting reflected, despite the many common interests within the East Nashville community, the community has never had the opportunity to share its visions with one another in a public forum. During the course of the R/UDAT forum, the wide range of common concerns and common values became clear. It is now time for the community to begin to build on that common ground.

DIVERSITY AS A COLLAGE OF PEOPLE AND PLACES

Places

The two greatest treasures that East Nashville offers are its diversity and authenticity. Throughout the nation, new "neo-traditional" communities are being planned and developed in the hope of replicating the feeling that this community offers. As one walks through this community, one is impressed by the sidewalks, the historic homes, and the grand vistas to Downtown. The wonderful neighborhood retail corners in Edgefield, Lockeland Springs, and other East Nashville communities provide an amenity for residents that has all but disappeared from other urban neighborhoods. This community offers a rich variety of housing types where a person could move in as a single, marry, raise children, watch them grow up, and retire, all without leaving East Nashville.

The diversity of landscape and topography frame the community with gently rolling hills and valleys; a fantastic, although underutilized and often inaccessible, river edge; and the beautiful Shelby Park. With its irregular, and often confusing street grid pattern, it is an area full of surprises, open spaces, and hidden places. East Nashville, an environment that could never be replicated, has emerged over nearly two hundred years.

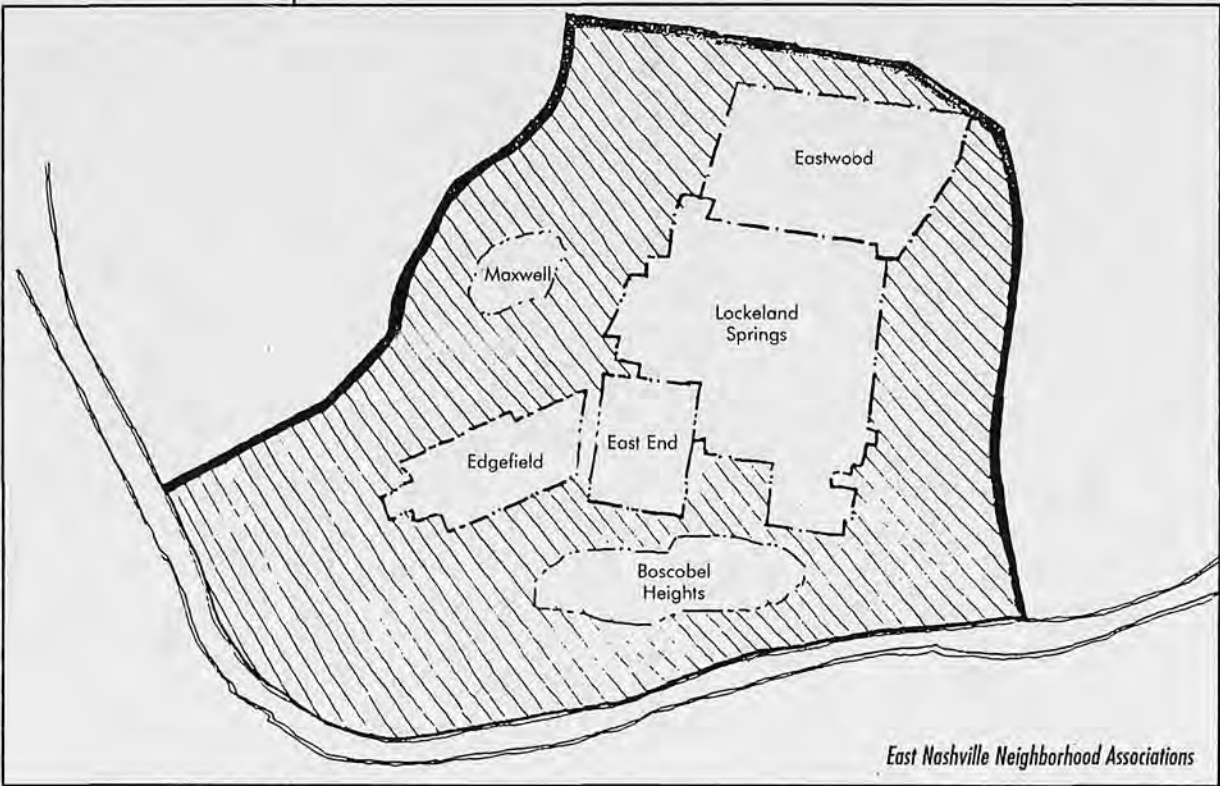
People

The strength of our nation is the diversity of its people. East Nashville's diversity makes it a distinct and vibrant community, in contrast to the homogeneity that characterizes so many American neighborhoods. At the R/UDAT Community Meeting, it became clear that this diversity is of significant value for many residents. For those who enjoy the life that East Nashville offers or dream of what it might be, the diversity of its population is a fundamental ingredient in establishing and sustaining the community's character.

The 25,000 or so people who make up the community include "yuppies," as they are called, urban pioneers, public housing residents, blue-collar workers, and retirees, all reflecting a broad mix of race, ethnicity, and geographic origin. In the truest sense, East Nashville is a town within a city.

A diverse community must rise to the challenge of working as a single unit. Right now participation and representation among the neighborhood associations is limited and uneven. East Nashville should strive to be the one area of Metro Nashville where "everyone, everywhere is in someone's neighborhood!" Every square inch of land should be part of a neighborhood recognized by its citizens, under the stewardship of their own leadership. This does not mean that every neighborhood needs to seek or qualify for historic designation. It does mean that if one lives in East Nashville, one has a body of fellow citizens who will share a single voice with respect to the concerns that define East

Nashville. Every citizen in every part of the community should be engaged in advancing his or her neighborhood's legitimate con-



cerns to government and to one another.

With the completion of the R/UDAT Team visit, East Nashville citizens must become totally involved in two important activities. First, they must fill the voids of representation and communication that now exist in the neighborhood; and second, they must begin to identify the elements of a East Nashville citizens' plan that will reflect the community's concerns and values. Neighborhoods that have already established an association can provide technical assistance to those citizens who do not have an

association, within the framework of a truly inclusive East Nashville Community Council.

A major task will be to get the word out to residents of East Nashville, engaging them in the effort to build a broad, strong base of citizen representation. There are several ways to make this happen:

- Forming contact committees of East Nashville citizens who have met through the tornado recovery, R/UDAT program, or other means;
- Building partnerships with ministers who can publicize this effort at church services and in church bulletins;
- Placing announcements in the East Nashville Public library and at the schools;
- Running public service announcements on radio and television (thereby also letting the larger Metro area know that the community is moving forward)
- Organizing "Know Your Community" events that take place in the existing and potential/proposed neighborhoods, including entertainment, special announcements, etc.
- Staging other special events, such as cleaning up alleyways, planting trees, beautifying streets, installing park playground equipment—anything that engages more than one neighborhood to make something happen through collaboration.

Sandy Cox: "Please see East Nashville as entire community"

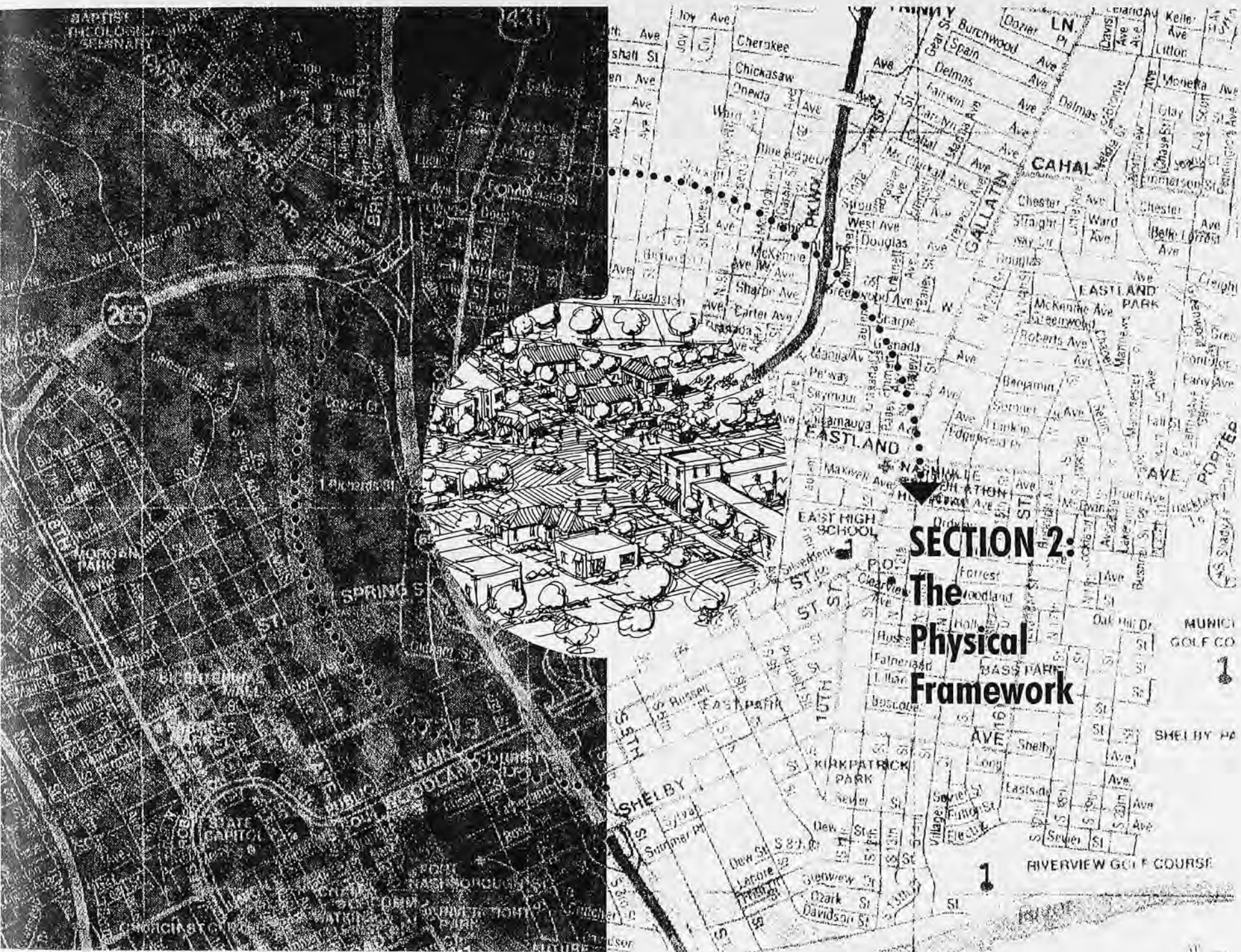
When citizens recognize the value of this effort, and commit themselves to it, East Nashville will become a true community, fully engaged in its future. From this base of organization, East Nashville will have greater capacity to obtain improved public services, attract investment to the community, and carry out such specific projects as:

- Organizing neighborhoods in the community to systematically

assess and prioritize needs;

- Fostering self-help and local initiatives, such as Edgefield's successful alleyway cleanup;
- Creating methods to share information throughout the entire community;
- Creating a forum to carry all neighborhood and community requests to public agencies and service providers, such as police, fire, sanitation, zoning, libraries, or schools; and
- Establishing watch groups, with representation across several neighborhoods, to report zoning violations, street and sidewalk repairs, new project requests, and so forth.

This is just a beginning. The East Nashville Community can build bridges between the residents and neighborhood associations, on the one hand, and the area business community on the other. This community can speak with a unified voice that can be heard by the Mayor and Metro Council. Above all, it should become a community that is a recognized, respected player in the decisions that affect the community. Such decisions may include changes from traffic calming to the creation of new parks and public spaces. Strength is not only in numbers; it is in the unity of vision and purpose that is shared by those making up the community.



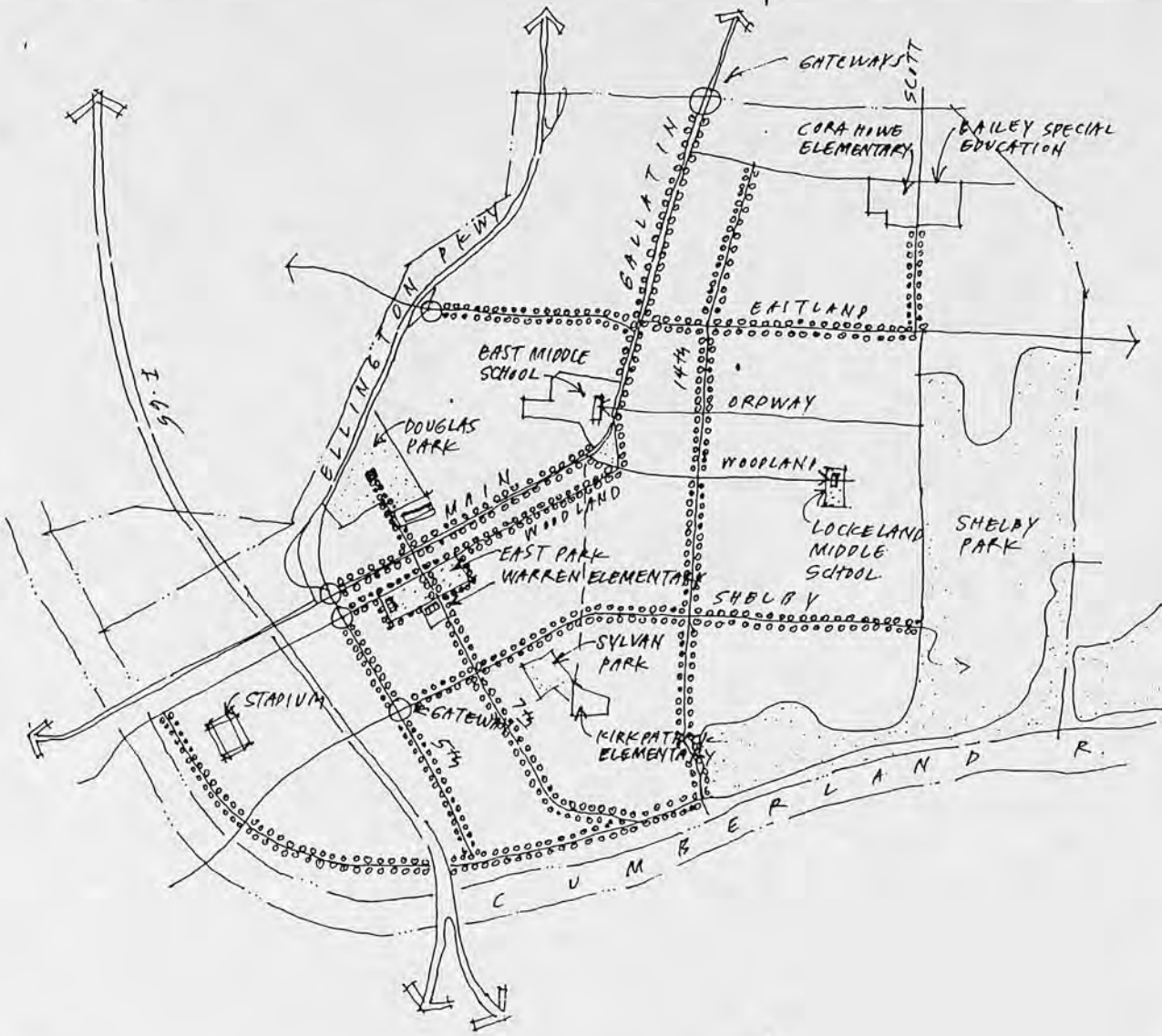
SECTION 2: The Physical Framework

EAST NASHVILLE: THE PHYSICAL FRAMEWORK

East Nashville is a community with a rich bounty of urban spaces, historic architecture, parks, public buildings, and grand vistas of the downtown Nashville skyline. These are assets that

must be recognized, cherished and developed, not only for the benefit of its residents, but as a central part of the ongoing process to build a new identity for the community. The gateways, corridors, public buildings, art, and open spaces of the community all offer distinct opportunities for change and enhancement, integrating East Nashville and linking it with the larger city and region, providing new ways by which East Nashville's residents can perceive their own community

Within the limited time permitted the R/UDAT team, it is not possible to design specific landscape enhancements for all of the potential corridors, gateways and linkages within and around this diverse community, or even to identify all of them with accuracy. It is possible, however, to identify

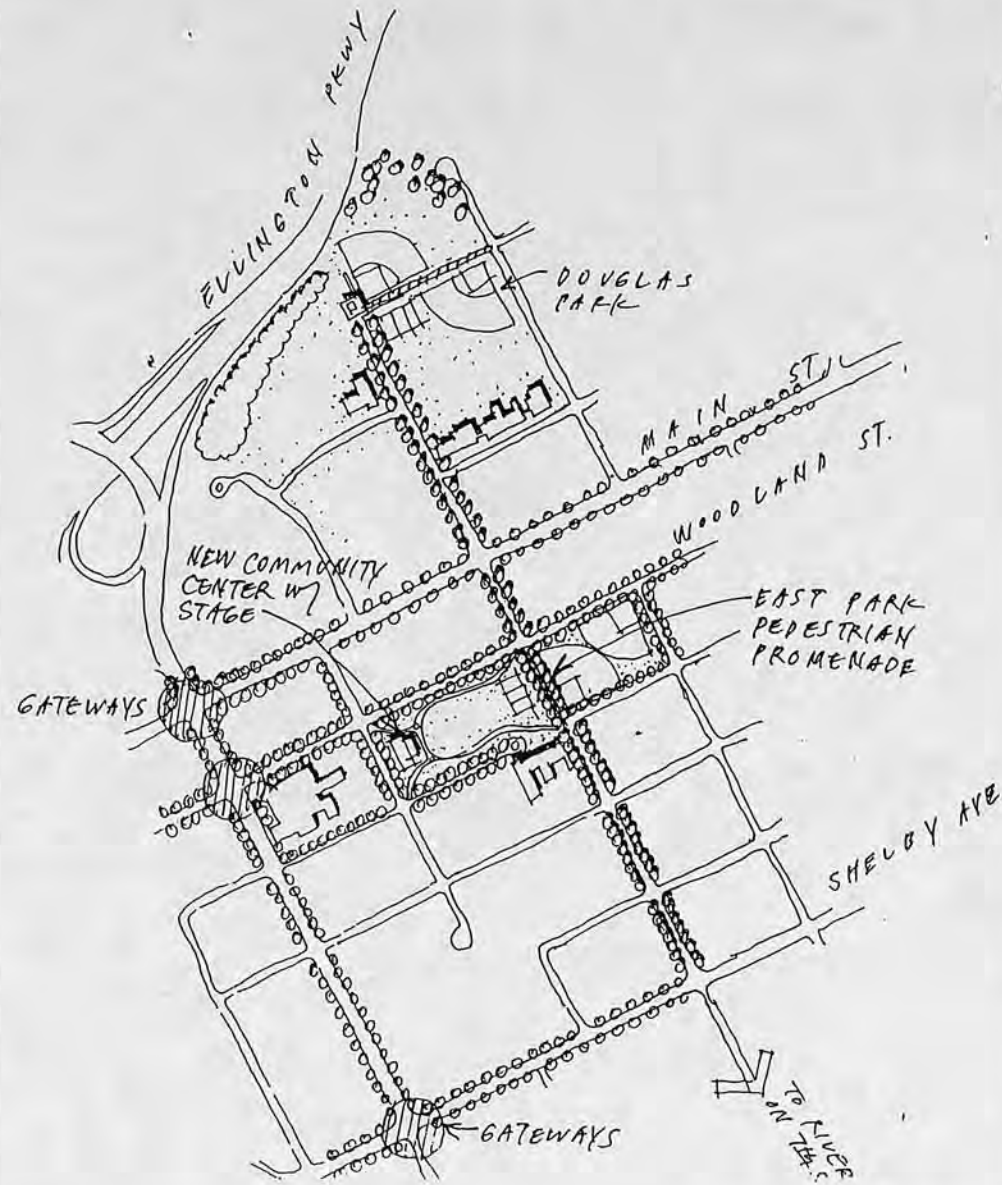


key themes and issues, and to establish certain guidelines and principles on the basis of which the citizens of East Nashville will be able to develop a hierarchy of the most important projects that should be pursued in order to transform this community, both in perception and in reality.

Gateways

East Nashville is an important conduit for traffic moving between downtown Nashville and the eastern sections of the region. The principal gateways from downtown into East Nashville are along Main Street and Woodland Street, both of which cross the Cumberland River and pass under Interstate 65. This edge is poorly defined after one passes under I-65, largely as a result of the manner in which the interstate highway separates the community from the river. This is exacerbated by the demolition of buildings for parking lots, as well as the devastation of St. Ann's Church by last year's tornado. While the Adelphia Coliseum is a major landmark for citizens driving from downtown toward East Nashville, the massive presence of the highway disconnects it from the neighborhood. It is not a landmark that is associated with East Nashville, or one with which the East Nashville community itself can identify.

We recommend that plans be developed to intensify the landscaping, and create new architectural elements along the intersections of Main Street and Woodland Street with South 5th Street. A reforestation program in this area, utilizing trees characteristic of Nashville's rich forest tradition, would be appropriate, as well as the creation of a more formal framed edge defining the entrance into East Nashville.

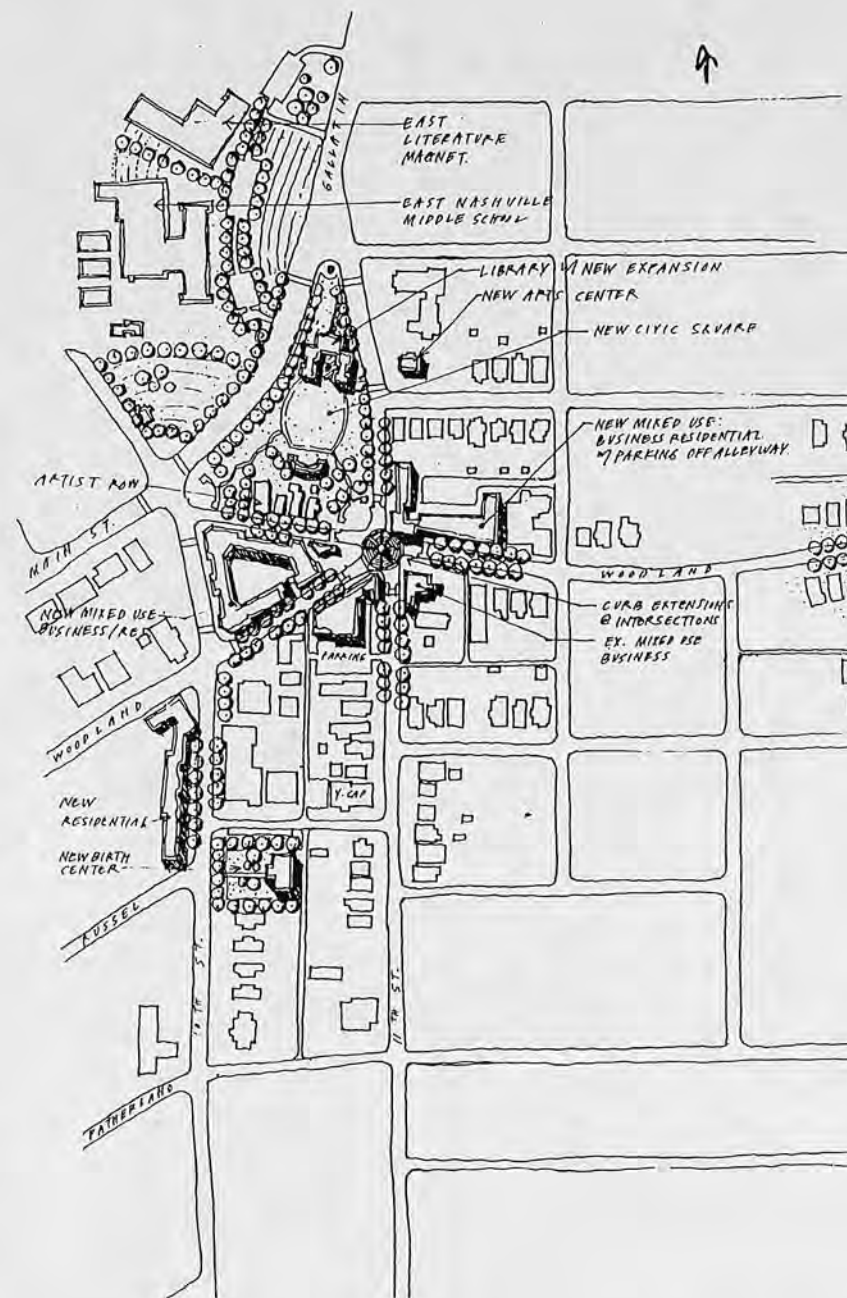


Another significant and neglected vehicular gateway into the community is along Cleveland Street under Ellington Parkway, leading to Eastland Avenue, and eventually to Gallatin Road. This is a principal link to the western part of East Nashville, an area that often appears neglected by comparison to the more visible eastern neighborhoods of Edgefield and Lockeland Springs.

- This gateway offers a key opportunity for architectural enhancements at a more subtle scale, along with appropriate tree planting to define both pedestrian and vehicular movement through this threshold, and announce one's arrival in East Nashville.

Entering East Nashville from the east towards downtown, Gallatin Road bends and turns into Main Street, becoming a key gateway. The prominence of this location, as well as the dramatic vista of downtown from the top of the rise, defines it as a key gateway. The transformation of this space into a Civic Square and a major public realm, along with improvements to Main Street as recommended in the Commercial Development chapter of this report, are designed to create a powerful visual frame for automobile travel the rest of the way through East Nashville, under I-65 and into downtown.

- As one travels along Main Street, the use of pavement, landscaping, street lighting and signage can announce the presence of gateways from Main Street into the neighborhoods that make up the East Nashville community.



Vistas

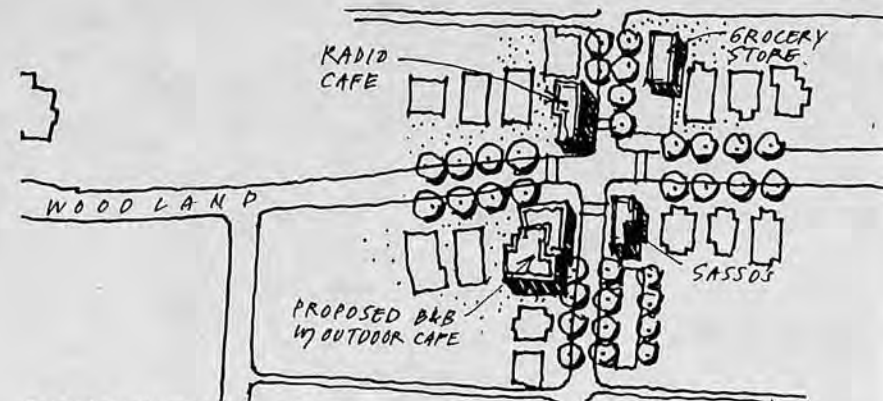
Given the topography of East Nashville and its proximity to the river's edge and downtown, the community offers many significant vistas framed by buildings and natural changes in elevation. These vistas link East Nashville to its immediate neighbors, defining its distinctive character as an urban neighborhood from which one can walk or bicycle across the Cumberland River to downtown. Major east/west street orientations frame skyline views of Main Street, Woodland Street and Shelby Street. The richness of these orientations change with the topography as one approaches downtown through East Nashville, most dramatically at the high point of the proposed Civic Square.

East Nashville has few connections to the Cumberland River, and indeed, the river is rarely visible from within the community.

• Where the river is visible, from streets along the southern edge of the community, these vistas should be enhanced through careful landscape treatment, along with right-of-way improvements framing the path and the river views.

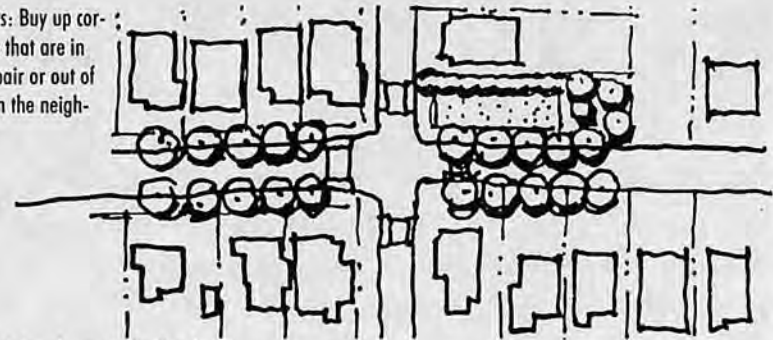
The Civic Square

The high point, where Main Street turns to the left, and becomes Gallatin Road, offers a unique opportunity in East Nashville to create a significant central public space, a space that the R/UDAT Team has named the Civic Square. The East Middle School (formerly the East High School) and the East Literature Magnet School, two school buildings of strong presence and dignity sit on this intersection. The East Nashville Public Library and the important neo-classical Woodland Presbyterian Church are also on this site. The Library, a distinguished building from the turn of the century, dominates the site and acts as a central com-

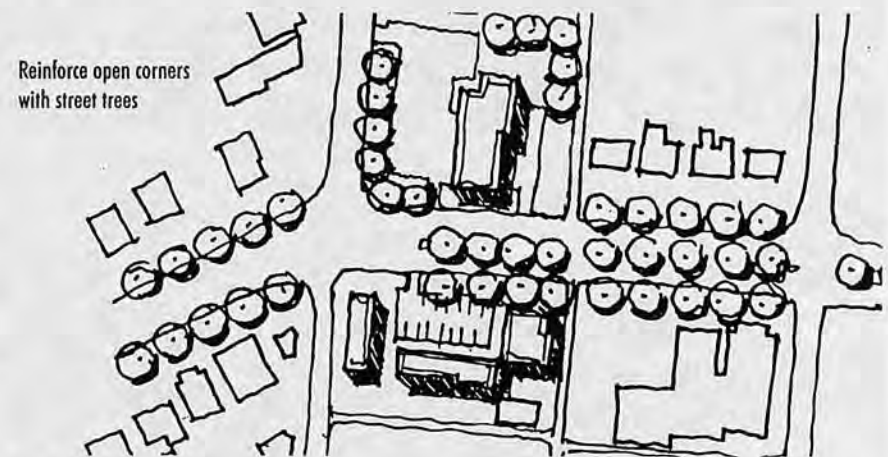


Prototypical neighborhood commercial corner

Mini lot lots: Buy up corner parcels that are in poor disrepair or out of character in the neighborhood.



Prototypical mini-park or neighborhood park.



Transitions at corners

munity symbol. Furthermore, the Civic Square is all but adjacent to Five Points, a location that is highly suitable as the core of a new pedestrian-oriented retail center. The Civic Square also offers a unique opportunity as a venue in which the cultural and artistic life of East Nashville should be showcased.

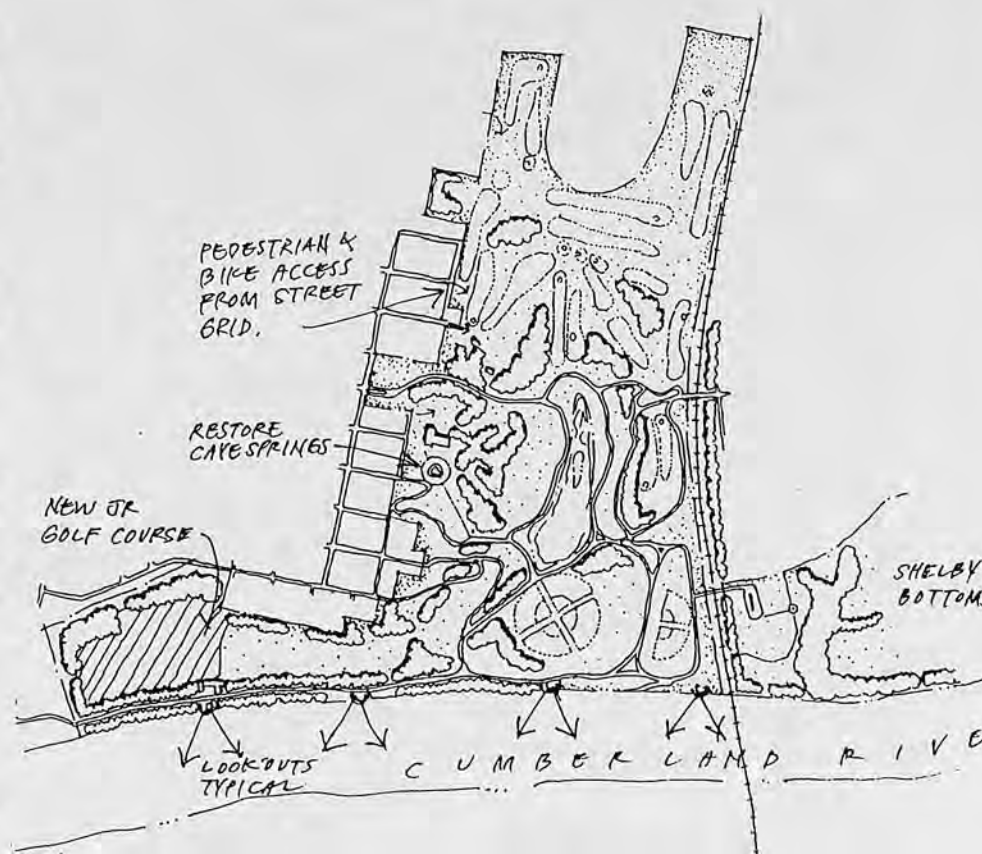
- The Civic Square should be redesigned, closing Forrest Avenue between Main Street and 11th Street in order to create a large and usable public space, and complementing the redevelopment of the Five Points area.

- Within the Civic Square, consideration should be given to (1) development of an open-air performing space within the new open space created by the closing of Forrest Avenue; and (2) use of the vacant building adjacent to the Presbyterian Church immediately across 11th Street from the library as a center for arts activities, including exhibitions and educational activities.

Parks

Parks are a rich and valued resource in any urban community. East Nashville offers a broad range of urban parks, perhaps as fine as any found in urban America. The largest of these is Shelby Park, serving the entire region. While this park already offers a rich and magnificent natural experience in an urban setting, some improvements can be made to establish better orientation and linkages to East Nashville.

- A clearer separation along rights-of-way for pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle traffic should be provided. This can be done by a series of pavement patterns along the edges, differentiating those uses for the slower speed options and where pedestrians can feel safe in their movement.



Although Shelby Park is defined on the map by the Cumberland River, there is only one place at which the park offers full opportunity for users to reach the river, a vital riverway where boats still make passage along a serene corridor within an urban setting.

- Decks, picnic areas and seating tables near the river bank could be added to allow users a wider range of recreational experiences and vistas of the river within the natural setting that Shelby Park has to offer.

- Along the edges of Shelby Park, where it meets the East Nashville street grid, extend new pedestrian and bicycle pathways that integrate with the existing park circulation system. The vehicular and pedestrian-bicycle systems should be separated from each other to avoid conflicts. Traffic calming devices may be required to slow vehicular speeds where pedestrians and bicycles cross the park roadways.

Douglas Park and East Park operate on a smaller scale. Douglas Park is in a central location nestled in the community, but which appears to be both underprogrammed and underutilized.

- Street and pedestrian access to Douglas Park could be improved, and a program developed, perhaps with the assistance of the Urban Design Forum, to reflect the adjoining neighborhood's immediate desire for recreational use.

East Park is a significant link between the historic Edgefield neighborhood and the commercial streets of Woodland and Main, acting as the gateway to the historic houses on Russell. Today, the park is very open, even stark. Part of this is the result of tornado damage, but it also reflects the absence of strong architectural articulation or expression, particularly for a park that is adjacent to an historic urban neighborhood on one side, and that borders a commercial street on the other. With the proposal to strengthen Woodland Street from Five Points toward the river as a pedestrian-oriented commercial center for East Nashville, the urban significance of East Park will increase measurably.

At the R/UDAT Community Meeting, a number of residents recommended that a variety of specific sites around East Nashville be considered for park development. In view of the constraints of the Metro Nashville Parks and Recreation Board, we are reluctant

to recommend any specific new parks without further investigation.

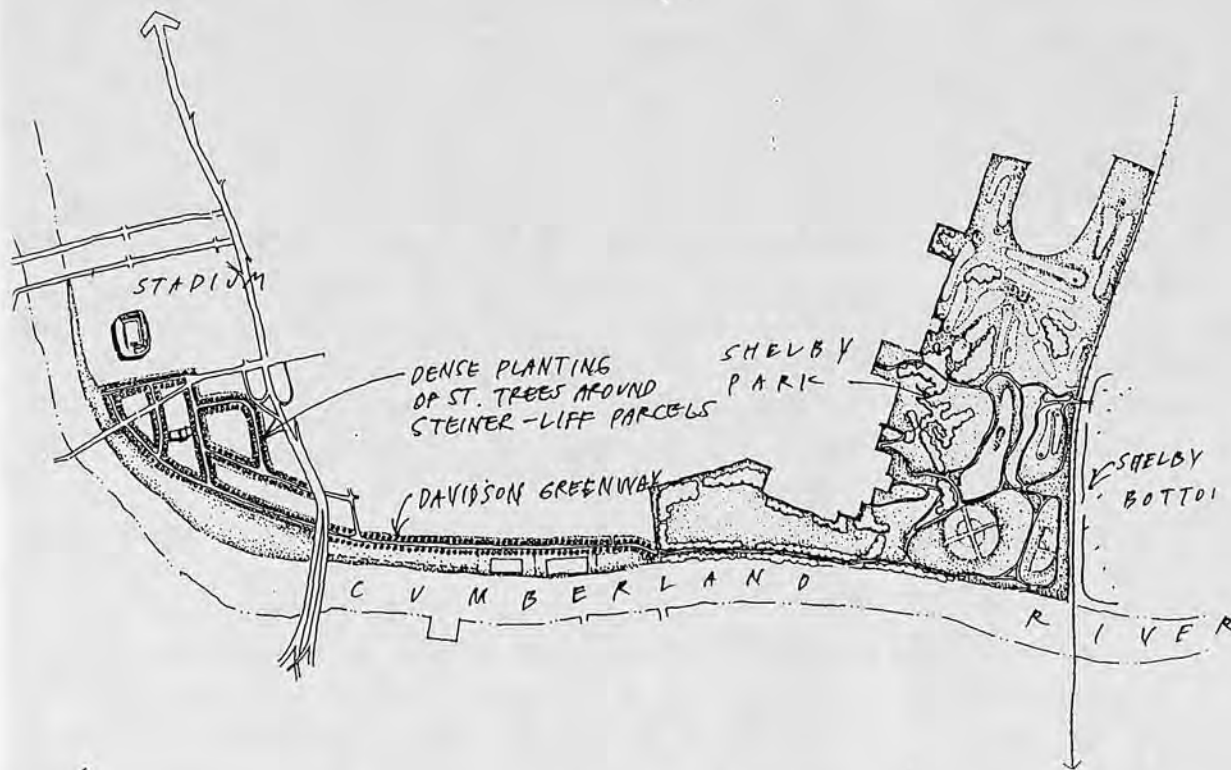
- We recommend that the Parks and Recreation Board, working with the community, prepare an inventory of potential park sites within East Nashville, and evaluate the potential for creating new parks in areas that may be underserved, or which can provide particular recreation or open space experiences needed by the community.

Over a multiyear period, additional parks may be brought on line to meet recreational needs for the residents of East Nashville or to create appropriate buffers between different and conflicting land uses within the neighborhood.

An effective way to change the way a community is perceived is through the thoughtful and expressive development of its public spaces. Each park can contribute to changing the public perception of East Nashville, becoming part of its distinctive signature. The East Nashville community might wish to contact a group like the Urban Parks Institute for the help and support that has brought many urban parks new life and revitalization over the last decade.

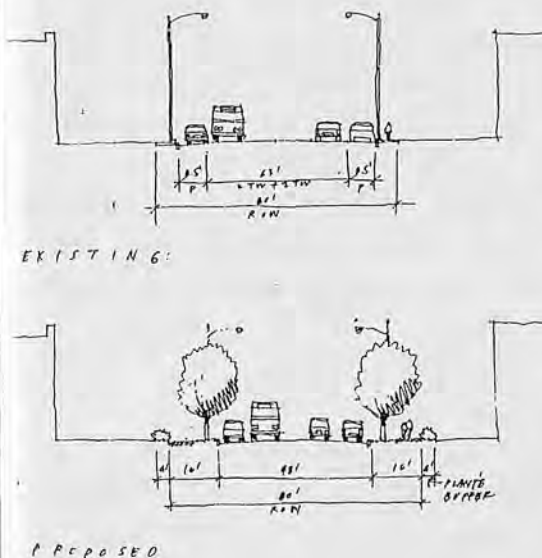
Linkages

A major objective of the R/UDAT study has been to identify the means by which East Nashville may enhance linkages that already exist, or create new linkages, to realize its potential as a community. At the largest scale, the regional greenway that connects Shelby Bottoms to the Percy Priest Reservoir along the Cumberland River through Two Rivers Park is the great regional linkage connecting East Nashville to the Metro area. In fact, East Nashville acts as the urban trailhead for arrivals and departures



Shelby Park to the future Shelby Avenue pedestrian bridge, and under I-65 to the stadium, running parallel to the Cumberland River. While the industrial buildings along Davidson, in particular the Steiner-Liff facility, make it difficult to use Davidson Road as a pedestrian or bicycle corridor, upgrading of the streetscape and signage could address these challenges, and create a visually stimulating urban trail.

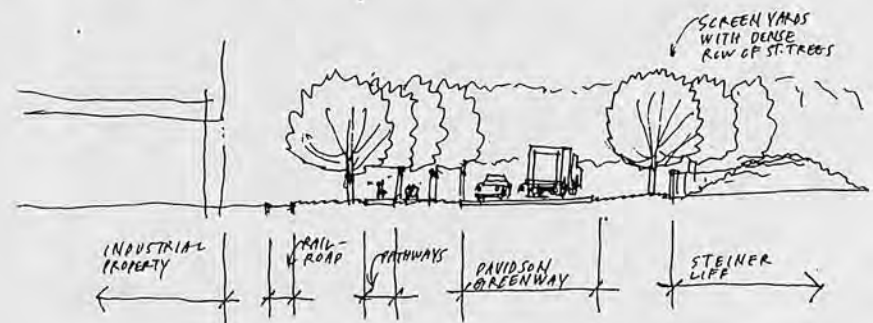
The R/UDAT team recommends a design study for the creation of a pedestrian and bicycle path along Davidson Road, linking Shelby Park with the Adelphia Coliseum, using landscape, streetscape and signage elements.



along this trail system.

Beyond Shelby Park's role as a trailhead, linkages along the Cumberland down-river towards the stadium are more challenging, but can be achieved by using Davidson Road. Davidson Road can link the entrance of

Within the internal fabric of the East Nashville community are many streets and paths that can become important urban greenways linking destinations and activity nodes. Main



Street/Gallatin Road is the primary corridor from East Nashville to downtown and to the neighborhoods to the east. While this street is primarily a through corridor with an uneven pattern of development to the street edge, the street and corridor can be unified visually through strong landscaping and fencing, while permitting the businesses behind them to maintain their visibility.

The design for these enhancements certainly would need to be a cooperative effort of the East Nashville residents, the business community, and the MDHA. Consideration should be given to consolidating parking areas into larger, shared, facilities. These issues are discussed in greater detail in the report's commercial development.

Woodland Street from Five Points toward Downtown, the true commercial street for the East Nashville community, calls for an entirely different treatment than Main. Here a more subtle pedestrian scale of enhancement, including street lights, shade trees, and perhaps even benches and streetscape furniture, might eventually extend along the length of the street. In addition to the linkage potential that Woodland has from the interstate up to Five Points, it also provides a significant transition from residential to commercial uses in a way that is unique and beneficial to neighborhoods south of Main. Moreover, Woodland's higher elevation separates its businesses and the adjoining neighborhoods from the Main Street traffic, which occurs at a lower elevation.

Shelby Avenue is the major east/west connector road which continues to have a principally residential character, and which offers a dramatic view of downtown. While Shelby Avenue had a lush tree canopy before the tornado, the loss of the trees has instead opened up the vista toward Downtown.

- Rather than a intensive replanting of trees along this street, the community may want to consider a selective planting

program, framing particular intersections strategically with landscape, while preserving the vistas of Downtown.

Key destinations within the neighborhoods, including parks, schools, churches and other public facilities can be enhanced by the landscape treatment of key streets that offer direct connections from Shelby, Woodland and Main, or which provide the richest visual experiences of the East Nashville community for people travelling through these neighborhoods. Some of these destinations include the so-called "100 Percent Corners", commercially-oriented intersections within otherwise residential neighborhoods, some of which have begun to attract establishments serving a clientele beyond the immediate area.

- Streetscape treatments that connect the outside visitor to the neighborhoods of East Nashville, including important 100 Percent Corners, should be carefully considered, allowing for attractive access to these destinations while still maintaining integrity, traffic calming and control within the neighborhoods.

- A Streetscape Plan should be developed that identifies the key linkages within the community. The streets should be organized hierarchically as to their transportation and quality of life functions they play within the community and neighborhoods. Linkages must address vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian and handicap access. Traffic calming devices should be used to enhance pedestrian and bicycle access while slowing vehicular speeds within neighborhoods.

- Alternative overhead utility strategies should be developed with the utility companies because of the high cost of underground wires. Only select streets and/or areas such as the Civic

Square should have underground utilities. Alternate strategies could include routing the overhead poles in the alley ways, using steel poles that raise the wires which accommodate smaller trees and also require fewer poles and planting only one side with street trees while keeping overhead wires are examples of alternative overhead utility strategies.

Public Art

Given the rich urban diversity of residents within the East Nashville community, a diversity that includes more than the neighborhood's share of artists and craftspeople, there is strong interest in the community in the creation of opportunities for public art into the area's open spaces. This has been used often in many American cities to define neighborhoods and establish character, as well as orient visitors by key destinations.

· We recommend that the community spearhead, in conjunction with Metro government and area arts organizations, competitions for sculpture or other artwork at key locations defined by the community. The community itself, including - in particular - children, should be closely involved in framing ideas how open public spaces, such as parks, may be articulated with urban art in order to give a sense both of distinctive identity, ownership and creative participation.

Transit Elements

As linkages for public vehicular movement, including buses and vans, and perhaps in the future a light rail system, begin to take shape, it is important to have stops occur at areas that offer important urban design connections, and enhance East Nashville's identity. Five Points is a particularly important location, as the core of the planned pedestrian-oriented retail center. A kiosk or shelter in that location could be more than a transit stop,

and become an enhancement to the location, offering information or distinctive imagery reflective of East Nashville history

· Consideration should be given to developing a distinctive architectural theme for transit shelters, as well as kiosks, signs, trash receptacles, and the like that speak to East Nashville's history and current diversity. Kiosks could also be used as wayfinding points, enhancing the pedestrian experience in East Nashville and directing visitors to key destinations such as Shelby Park.

Because of the diversity of neighborhoods within the East Nashville area, streets take on a key role, both in distinguishing one area from another, while also in binding them. Eastland Avenue is typical, both separating and linking Lockeland Springs and Eastwood. On either side of the streets, one sees a rich variety among the architecture of the homes and the setbacks. While this is not uncommon in an urban environment, it provides a unique opportunity to enhance the connections as well as the distinctions between the neighborhoods through the treatment of the streetscape. Rather than a conventionally symmetrical design, the variation between the two sides may provide an opportunity for tree plantings or other streetscape schemes that vary from one side to the other, creating a unique treatment that becomes a common binding element for the two diverse neighborhoods, and not just a demarcation between them.

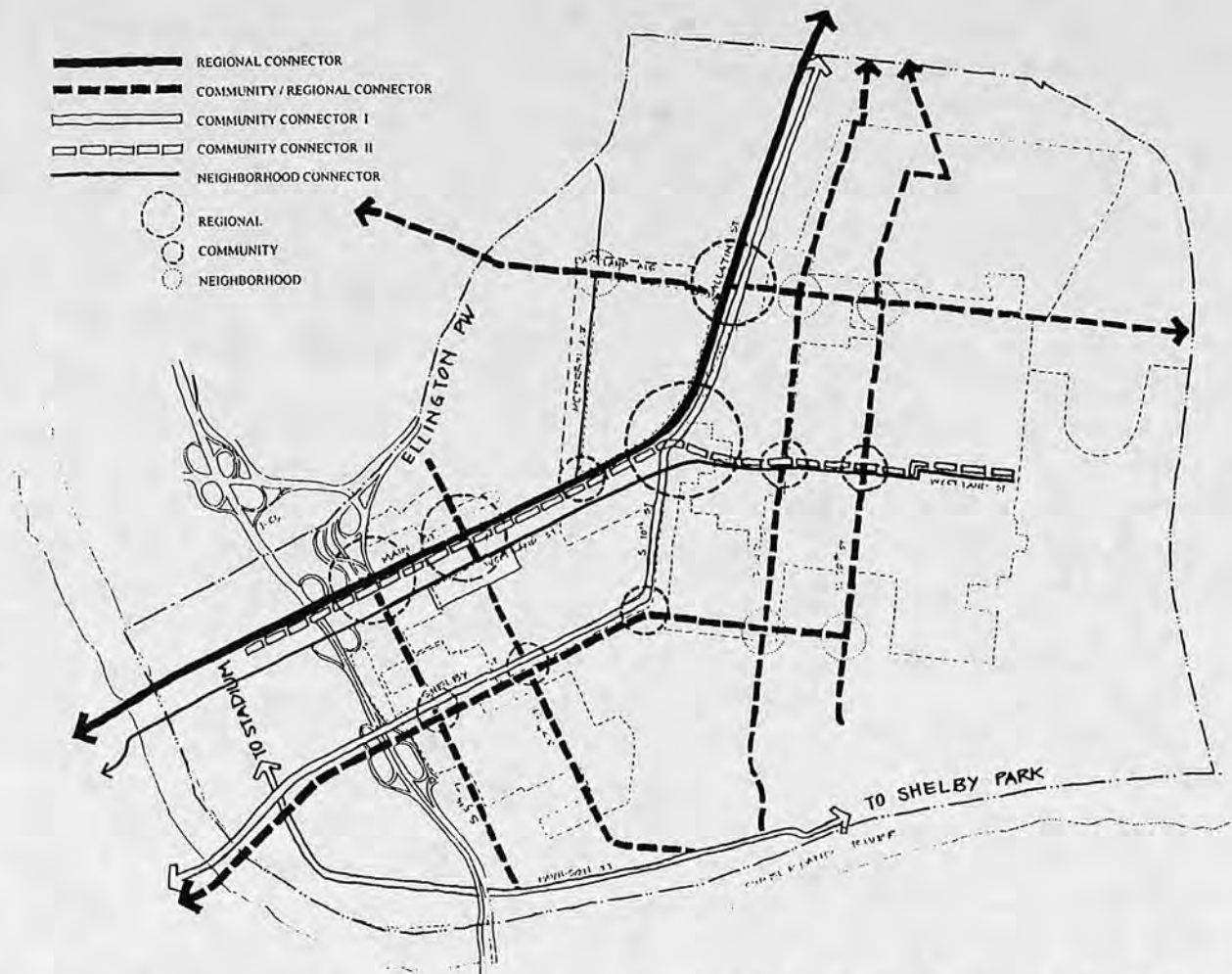
The use of traffic calming elements on key streets must be carefully studied. As destinations within the neighborhood become more popular, it is important to understand that this area remains a series of neighborhoods with a sensitive fabric and scale. Where cars are brought in from the outside, they should move through the area in ways that allow the residents of the neighborhood to feel comfortable as pedestrians along the rights-of-way.

Knitting and Weaving - Connecting Neighbors

The statistical diversity of East Nashville can be transformed to a socially and economically integrated community with the aid of physical connections—public streets and spaces highlighted by gathering places. This report proposes strategies to create new connections, revive historic connections and reinforce existing assets to overcome historic boundaries. Existing grids provide the basic framework for these physical connectors, which permit and invite neighbors to cross boundaries and interact.

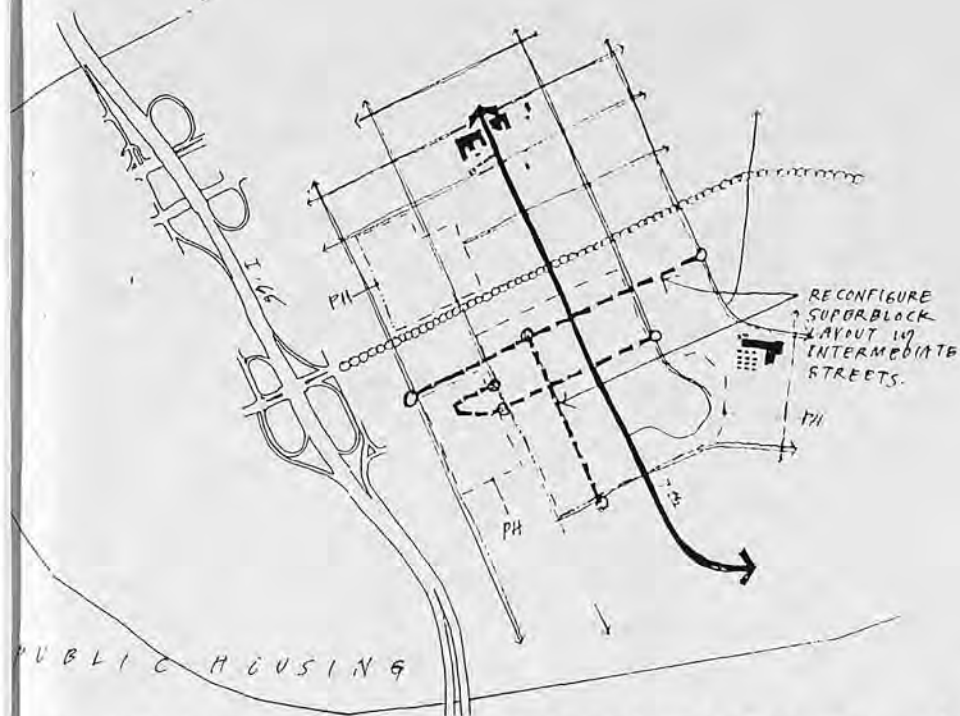
Boundaries/divisions between neighborhoods of East Nashville are drawn along social, economic, ethnic and historic as well as physical and spatial lines. Furthermore, residents have organized around varying neighborhood interests and locations, forming a half dozen neighborhood associations, some with the added regulatory distinction of overlay zones.

Community streets offer key opportunities to collect and connect, particularly at their intersections. Tenth Street is just one of several streets that link neighborhoods to daily needs, to each



other, and on to arteries that lead to greater Nashville. They carry more traffic than neighborhood streets and move more slowly than corridors. Because they link neighbors, they become logical places to locate neighborhood business—usually where they intersect.

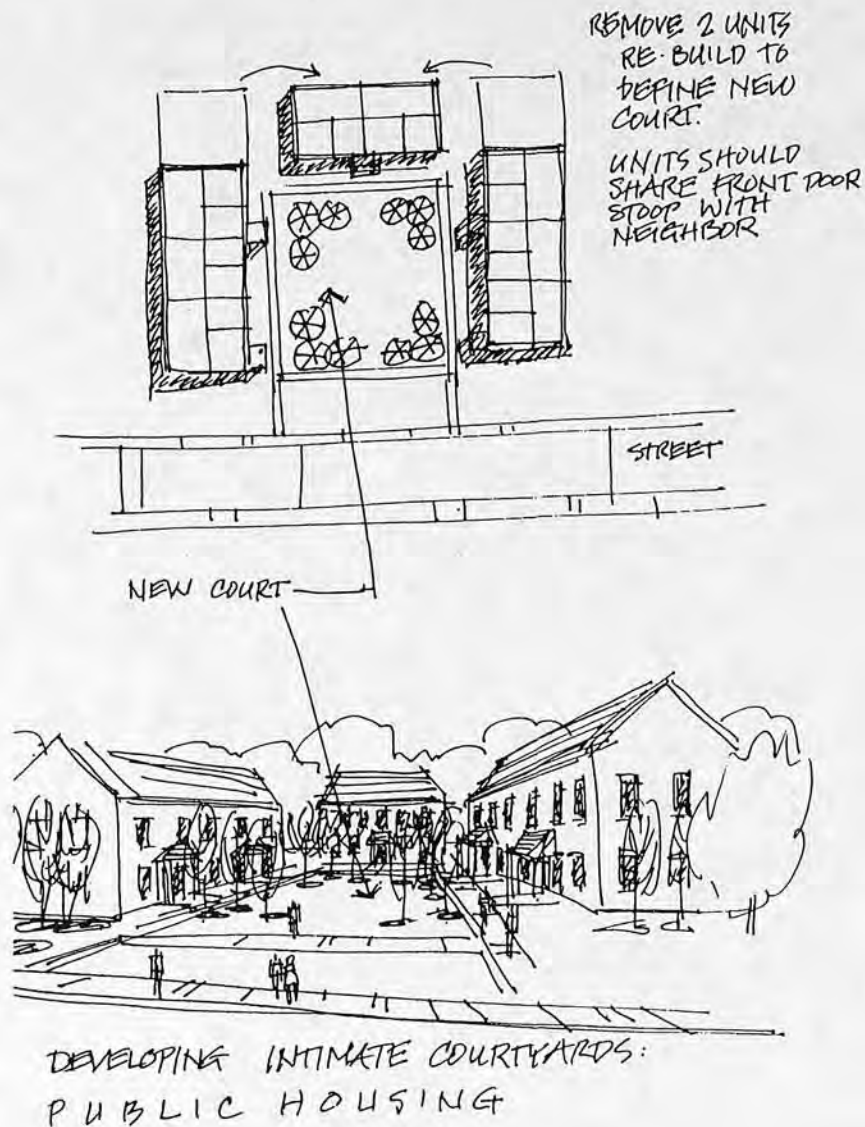
Tenth Street also represents a boundary between neighborhoods, a collision of street grids and a neighborhood frag-



ment without an association. It is bordered by Edgefield and Lockeland Springs neighborhood associations, but belongs to neither. Yet, 10th is a vital, important collector, connecting to important corridors of Shelby, Woodland and Main Streets. The role of 10th Street and other community streets can be enhanced by the following proposals:

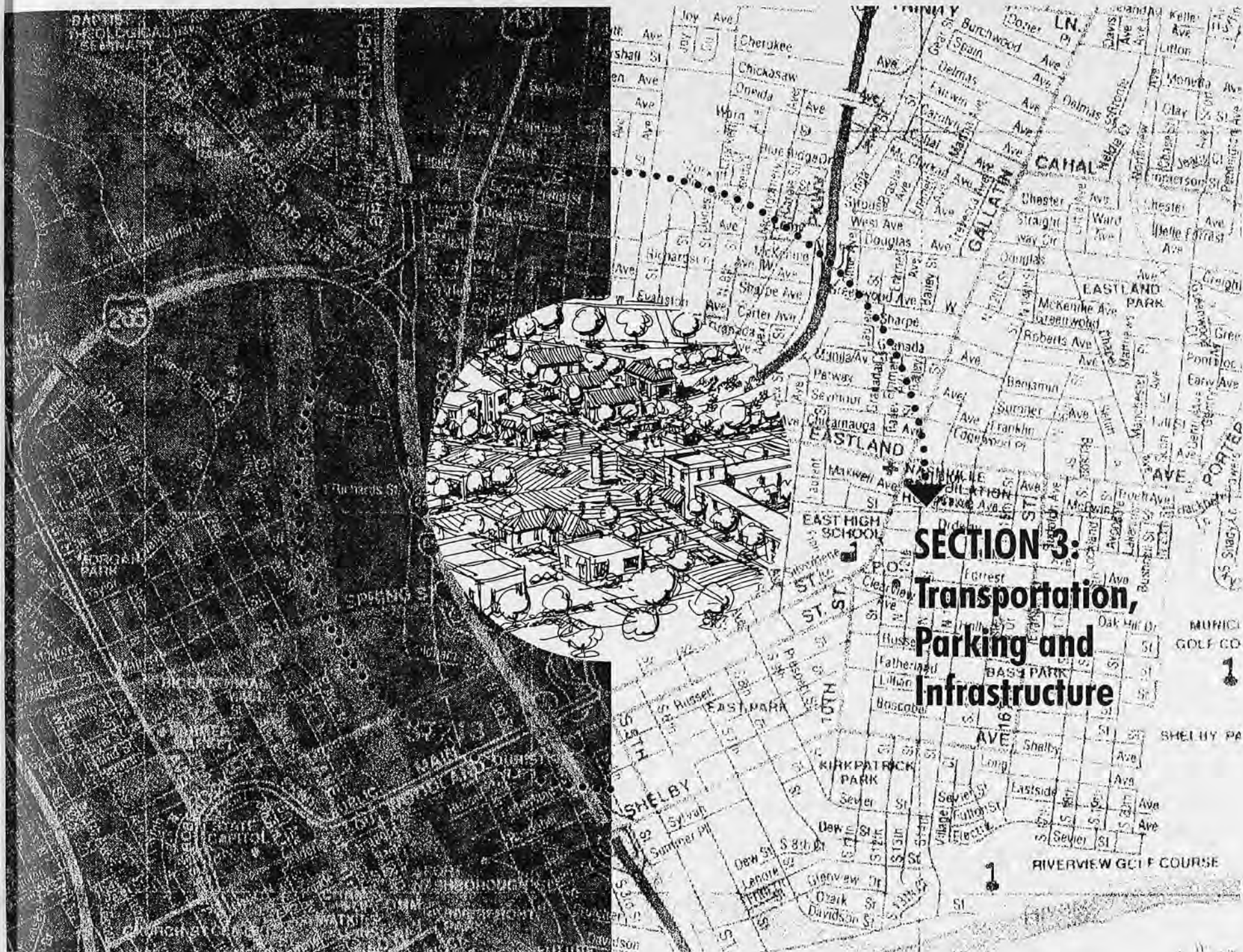
- Enhance Streetscape—clean up sidewalks; plant trees
- Infill Residential Development—higher density (attached) residential toward community retail at Five Points, lower density toward Shelby
- Intersections—neighborhood commercial at Shelby; build on concentration of institutions at Russell; retail/commercial at Woodland.





The current configuration of the Cayce Homes public housing development isolates physically/spatially (through scale, street pattern and orientation) a population that is already isolated socially and economically. The street network and open space should be reconfigured to connect this neighborhood to its neighbors. This reconfiguration strategy introduces new public streets to tie into the network and amenities of the surrounding community. Internal reconfiguration (along with limited demolition) defines semi-private, open space (usable and defensible) that more closely resembles conventional residential pattern.

Every public space, be it a park, through road, or neighborhood street, offers an opportunity to redefine the image of a place. Public spaces offer the opportunity for the visitor to East Nashville to see that something rich, interesting and distinctive is taking place, as well as offering a means for the community itself to find common ground in its public areas, and define itself by the architectural and artistic expression that these places exhibit. It is through this process that these streets become the places that bind, not the spaces that separate.



SECTION 3: Transportation, Parking and Infrastructure

TRANSPORTATION, PARKING AND INFRASTRUCTURE

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation needs to support the accessibility required by mixed-use developments in East Nashville. A system of linkages (streets, sidewalks, pathways) connecting the entrances and activity nodes will provide these needs. These activity centers have been defined and discussed in Section II of the report on Linkages/Greenways/Public Realm.

Hierarchy

Roads are designed differently, depending on their function, while remaining compatible with the adjacent land use they serve. This hierarchy is typically defined by a variable balance between (1) the need to move cars through an area and (2) the need for local access. Arteries are typically intended to provide through-street capacity, while local streets predominantly serve local access needs.

There are an infinite number of combinations of functional design elements (vehicle lanes, bike routes/lanes, parking lanes, sidewalks/paths, auxiliary lanes, and landscape/tree strips) that can be used to integrate with the necessary transportation functions. In neighborhoods, optimum design elements that serve motor vehicles may be compromised to accommodate less intense modes of transportation, such as pedestrian or cyclist. Examples of such treatments include Main Street/Gallatin Road, Shelby Street, and 14th Street.

Main Street should remain a principal artery, with its primary function being to move traffic through the area. Although

the street is wide enough to accommodate on-street parking, curb space is hardly ever used for this purpose. This lack of use appears to relate to the proliferation of driveways and availability of off-street parking. Since traffic volumes on Main have dropped in the past several years, it is suggested that a program to recapture the curb space for green space be developed. Initially, this could be curb bulbs at the corners that would help link the neighborhoods on both sides of the street by reducing the effective pedestrian crossing distances. As driveways are consolidated through redevelopment of properties along both sides of the street, greater portions of the curb face could be reclaimed as a tree-lined boulevard.

Shelby Street from 5th Street to 10th Street should be converted to a three-lane street with a center planting strip and bicycle lane in each direction. This road section can serve the volumes of about 10,000 vehicles per day, provided left turn pockets replace the planted median at major intersections. The median can also serve to reduce cut-through traffic by preventing left turns, except where local access is desired and at intersections with other neighborhood collectors, such as in the area adjacent to the Edgefield Neighborhood. From 10th Street to 20th Street (the Shelby Park entrance), the cross-section would narrow such that the bike lane may need to be simply a signed bike route; and parking could be replaced from one or both sides of the street to permit a tree planting strip. Displaced parking would need to be located in the alleys behind the houses.

Also 14th Street should function as a neighborhood collector street, with two lanes of traffic sidewalks on both sides of the street and a wide tree strip to provide a large tree canopy. The variable road section makes a consistent treatment problematic. The continuity of sidewalks should be a first priority as a minimum.

Bridges

The closure of the Shelby Street Bridge has been devastating for East Nashville, due to the restriction of local access to Downtown and South Nashville. Its rehabilitation as a pedestrian and bicycle facility is a good first step to integrate the greenway design along Davidson Street into Shelby Park.

A vehicle linkage to the Franklin Street corridor, providing scale and edge treatment as it enters into the community, is consistent with the other entry treatments like the one envisioned for Woodland Street.

Neighborhood Traffic Control

Many of these design elements are packaged as neighborhood traffic control or traffic calming measures. In large measure, these techniques are intended to discourage through-traffic or speeding on streets where higher-speed travel would be less comfortable than using a parallel street intended for through-traffic purposes. The city has a program listing such a package of measures but has yet to implement any substantial improvements.

The shortcoming of this program is the implementation process. It appears that city staff may not have resources to respond to the neighborhood requests as identified in these implementation guidelines. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Metro Traffic and Parking follow the process outlined in this program and either retain outside assistance or engage the affected neighborhood representatives to collect supplemental data under Metro supervision to ensure that appropriate neighborhood traffic controls are implemented.

Transit

The Metro Transit Authority (MTA) operates a good tradi-

tional fixed route transit system that is patterned like spokes of a wheel with the hub being the Downtown area. This provides excellent service to the Downtown but requires a transfer to get anywhere else. Several routes serve the East Nashville area: 4, 20, 26. The system largely serves captive riders (elderly, youth, and those without a car).

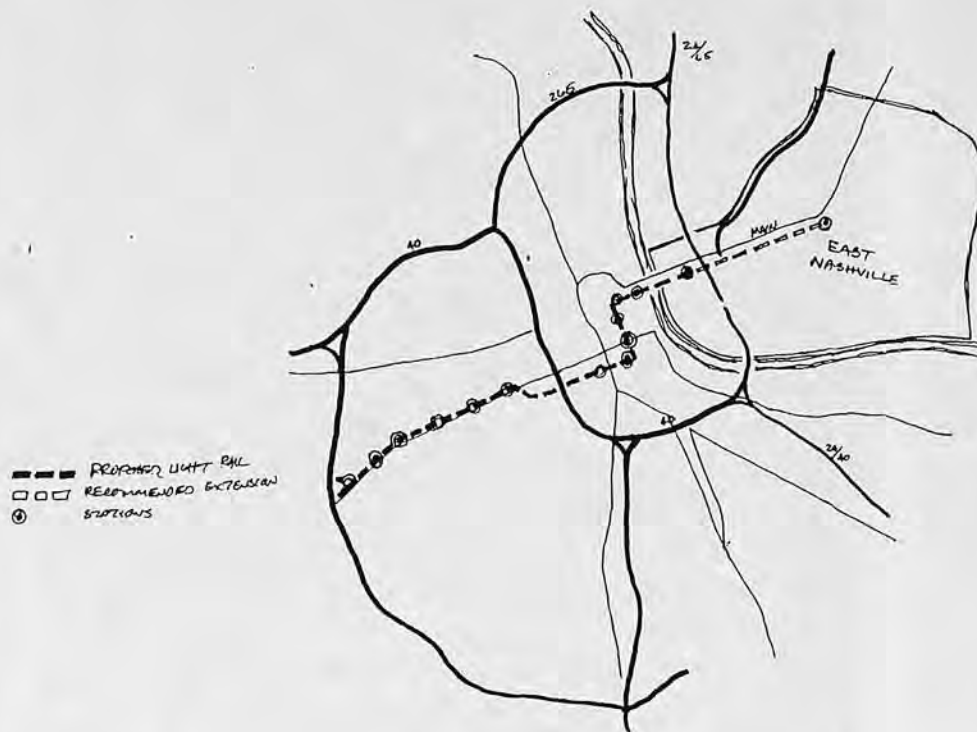
Unlike the road network that has both radial and cross-town (circumferential) linkages, transit is only radial. Furthermore, population densities are generally low. In the East Nashville community, this density is offset in part by a high proportion of captive riders.

Neighborhood Circulator

To facilitate this internal neighborhood transit service, a modified fixed-route system is recommended. This is a hybrid of a Dial-A-Ride transit system and a fixed-route system, traveling along a predefined route with scheduled time-point connections at major bus stops along existing routes that serve the community. Recognizing that no fixed-route circulator transit service could maintain frequent headways (time between buses) and run within one or two blocks of most of the homes, residents would be able to call a central dispatcher to be picked up at their home within a selected range of time. The driver would be provided with this scheduling information and would divert from a predefined route to pick up that passenger.

Key to the effectiveness of this system will be its integration with the existing system. Therefore, route planning would revolve around these timed transfers between the neighborhood circulator and fixed routes.

This type of system is used in areas of moderate density, such as the DART system, used by King County Metro, Seattle, Washington in lower density suburban neighborhoods and



Light Rail

The current proposed light rail system extends from I-440 through Downtown, past Vanderbilt University, to the stadium. The purpose of this system is to provide a convenient shuttle link within the Downtown area in high-volume corridors so that a transfer in the Downtown is not required. The stadium was selected as a logical east terminus for this first leg of the intersection to serve the event traffic, but more important, to serve the commuter office workers who park in the stadium parking lot on weekdays and shuttle into the Downtown and government buildings.

It is recommended that the initial link of any such system be extended to Five Points. The incremental cost of getting from the stadium to Five Points is very small and reinforces potential mixed-use land development in the

Main Street/Woodland Street corridor and links Civic Square with rest of city.

As a test of this system, MTA should consider a trolley system that traverses the same route but uses a rubber tire trolley-type vehicle instead of using a standard bus. Part of the allure of this service needs to be its unique character. This test system would likely be more successful if it were to extend west as far as Vanderbilt University, through Music Row and established commercial areas.

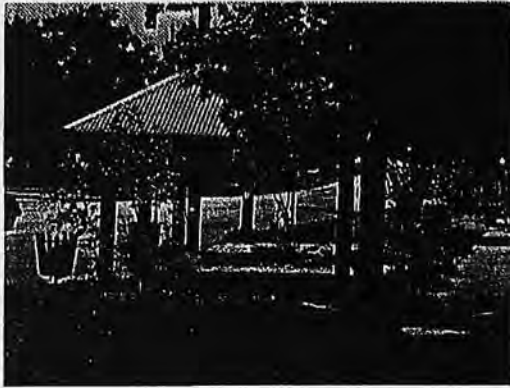
Waiting Areas

Transit shelters are key to encouraging the use of transit, particularly for the rider who has a choice to ride the bus or to

numerous other Dial-A-Ride programs. These systems always attract a higher patronage than a fixed-route circulator service in the same area for only slightly higher costs.

The vehicle should be smaller so that it can more easily travel on residential streets, reduce pavement damage from wheel loads, and correspond with a capacity that matches the patronage. There would likely need to be a moderate surcharge to the base fare for this value-added service, and reservations for pick-up would need to be made in advance so that the driver's route could be planned in advance.

This type of system is used throughout the country to provide feeder systems to express bus, commuter rail, and light rail transit systems and can serve as a pilot test opportunity to the feeder systems that would serve the proposed commuter rail.



drive. When shelters are distinctive and substantial, they can also make a statement about the community and its self-image.

Good examples of transit shelters at different scales but common designs are those located along Shelby

Street and along Route 4. One is a smaller stand-alone structure, while the other is integrated into a pocket park. More of these shelters should be constructed along Route 4 and elsewhere throughout East Nashville as a cohesive visual indicator of a special place. There may be selected areas where the design of the bus shelter is modified to reflect the architectural elements of the neighborhood. An example could be a design that integrates the Victorian character of Woodland Street. These shelters would need to be constructed through a phased program, with the first shelters located on the east side of the route to serve inbound passengers waiting for the bus.

These shelters and all bus stop signs should include strip maps showing the route and a timetable listing the bus schedule. The signing system should be expanded to incorporate a way to find the system to link the community with the bus system and vice versa. At larger stops, trash cans should be provided in an effort to cut down on litter.

Parking

Parking characteristics in urban areas are different from those in suburban or Downtown areas. This neighborhood is urban, with shorter walking distances, more transit service, alley

access, smaller lots, and more fixed or built edges to streets and properties. These features have two implications. First, travel characteristics are different and generally less reliant on automobiles, which suggests that parking requirements can be lower than those in suburban areas. Second, development flexibility is reduced.

To respond to this uniqueness, a set of incentive-based parking regulations should be developed and the zoning code amended for new development or redevelopment in this and other similar neighborhoods. The central principal would be to provide reductions from the citywide minimum parking requirements for development and design enhancements. Examples of enhancements that would warrant lowering minimum parking space requirements include:

- Developing with store fronts up to the back of sidewalk on commercial streets;
- Consolidating driveways to no more than one driveway per lot or constructing driveways at the edges of the property, with a recorded covenant for shared access with the neighboring property when it develops;
- Designing parking lots to provide access to adjacent properties;
- Executing parking lot landscape buffers and internal landscaping.

Another issue is the many open parking lots that exist throughout the area, a condition aggravated by the tornado. Many of these parking lots are used by churches or others with very temporal parking needs. Thus the lots remain vacant a majority of the time and detract from the image of the community. At a minimum, the city's recently passed parking lot landscape requirements should be enforced to provide a minimal buffer.

More desirably, the city and MDHA should work with these property owners to identify joint development opportunities that would permit both the weekend and evening uses of the church-

es and stadium to operate compatibly with other daytime uses, such as offices.

Residents have commented on a desire to protect the parking in their immediate neighborhood. A common technique used in many other cities is Residential Parking Zones (RPZ). These are applied in areas where parking is at or near capacity on a regular basis. These are not intended to ensure that residents have secured a parking space in front of their house each time they return home.

Based on observations made during the R/UDAT visit, parking congestion was not observed to be at levels that warrant such an RPZ system. This is partially due to the moderate density in the community, the lack of parking spillover from adjacent commercial neighbors, and alley access/parking. An RPZ program could be established to ensure an objective evaluation of parking conditions. The more likely benefit of such a program would be its use to address stadium special-event parking conditions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Sidewalks and Trails

A strength of the East Nashville community is that most of its streets have sidewalks. There are some gaps and several entire blocks without sidewalks in the area, for example, east of 14th Street, along Russell Street. The city should incorporate a phased "Sidewalk Missing Link and Major Repair" project as part of its capital improvement program to complete this system and to make annual repairs to a section of this community. This program should concentrate first on the neighborhood collector streets, such as the easternmost section of Shelby Street, leading into Shelby Park, and on routes near schools where sections of sidewalks are in substantial disrepair.

R/UDAT

Alleys

In addition to being a distinctive urban design element, alleys are a transportation asset since they provide residential and commercial parking, service access, utility opportunities, etc. Nonetheless, they can be a place for drug sales, which are a source of community concern in the area. In addition to the maintenance and cleanup that are noted later, improved lighting in the backyards leading to the alleys can be a deterrent to this activity. It may be impractical for Metro to light every alley, but a resident lighting program could provide an acceptable level of security.



The East Nashville community may establish a homeowner lighting program, working with the Nashville Electric Service to resell outdoor floodlights at cost to the homeowners or residents for improved rear yard lighting.

Sidewalk and Alley Maintenance

A major concern expressed by residents was the disheveled appearance of the sidewalks. Most sidewalks have weeds growing in the cracks, and dust and clutter often accumulate against bulkheads and fences. While maintenance may be the legal responsibility of the city, it is impractical for the city to address the volume of maintenance needed.

Since the sidewalk and alley are a virtual extension of the

front and back porches of the homes, it is recommended that the residents take responsibility for cleanup. Neighborhood associations in East Nashville should organize community cleanup days and take advantage of existing Metro Public Works and Sheriff's Office programs to pick up or grind up the larger items, refuse, or branches. This could also be an incentive for other East Nashville residents to create neighborhood organizations.

Lighting and Signals

In East Nashville, traffic signal lighting and communications lines are almost exclusively above ground, creating a very cluttered image. Other parts of the city have some or all of these utilities underground. Many of the signals do not include pedestrian displays.

R/UDAT recommends that all traffic signals be converted to mast arm displays and, concurrently, lighting, power, telephone, cable and other overhead span wires be relocated underground in the vicinity of those intersections. These upgrades will need to be phased in over several years. The first priority should be at Five Points, with subsequent improvements made at the Shelby Street, Woodland Street, and Main Street entrances to the neighborhoods. The clarity of the intersections can be improved immediately with new pavement markings such as those that are being installed as part of the current pavement overlay. Given the historic character of this community, the utility poles should be

historic in style. Nashville Electric Service has a historic pole that they can use for this purpose.

To facilitate coordination of utility installation and the phased under-grounding of utilities in East Nashville, all METRO Departments should use the Geographic Information System that has been established within Metro.



Signs

The many hand-painted signs used by businesses, particularly along Main Street and Gallatin Road, were identified by residents as one tangible contributor to the poor image of East Nashville. A sign ordinance should be established to eliminate the hand-painted sandwich board signs within the neighborhood. More comprehensive guidelines should be established to bring other building signs up to a professional standard.

Metro can set the tone with professionally displayed street name and traffic control signing. Several neighborhood groups have started a good trend with signs designating entrances to their neighborhoods.

Stadium Traffic and Parking

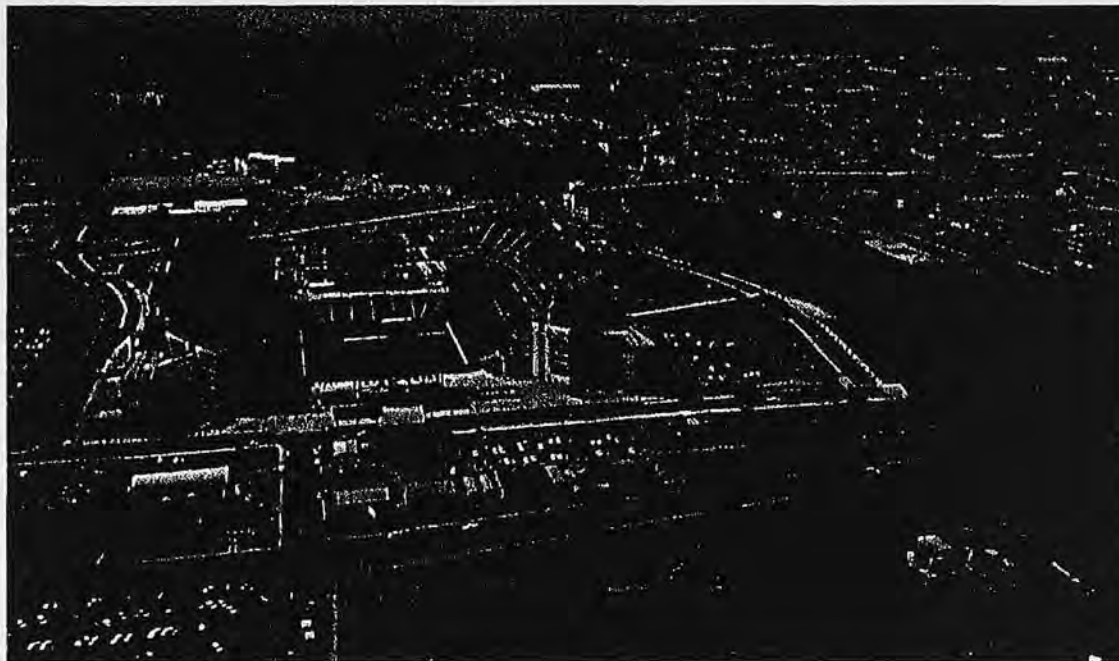
Metro, in cooperation with the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and other public agencies have initiated a stadium Traffic Management Plan (TMP). This represents a traditional plan that will start to address the needs of the event attendee. While these plans are being refined, it is heavily

dependent upon fans doing exactly what the plan prescribes. Experience at numerous other stadiums and arenas have shown that fans often follow the path of least resistance. Constraint on the capacity of the freeway system and its proximity to the parking lots, the relatively high per-person cost for parking and bus service, and the availability of free parking in many areas around the stadium suggests that many fans will seek other access and parking alternatives. These factors, combined with the relatively long closures of streets and intersections, will substantially restrict access to East Nashville.

In response to these conditions, Metro should work with the East Nashville community to develop a comprehensive access plan to provide the East Nashville residents with a reasonable level of accessibility to parking in their neighborhood and access in and out of the area before, during, and after game time. The residents should be provided with a mailer identifying the types of controls that will be in place and the options that they have during game day. For other major events and event facilities, provision of a large list of options for minimizing the traffic affects could include the following:

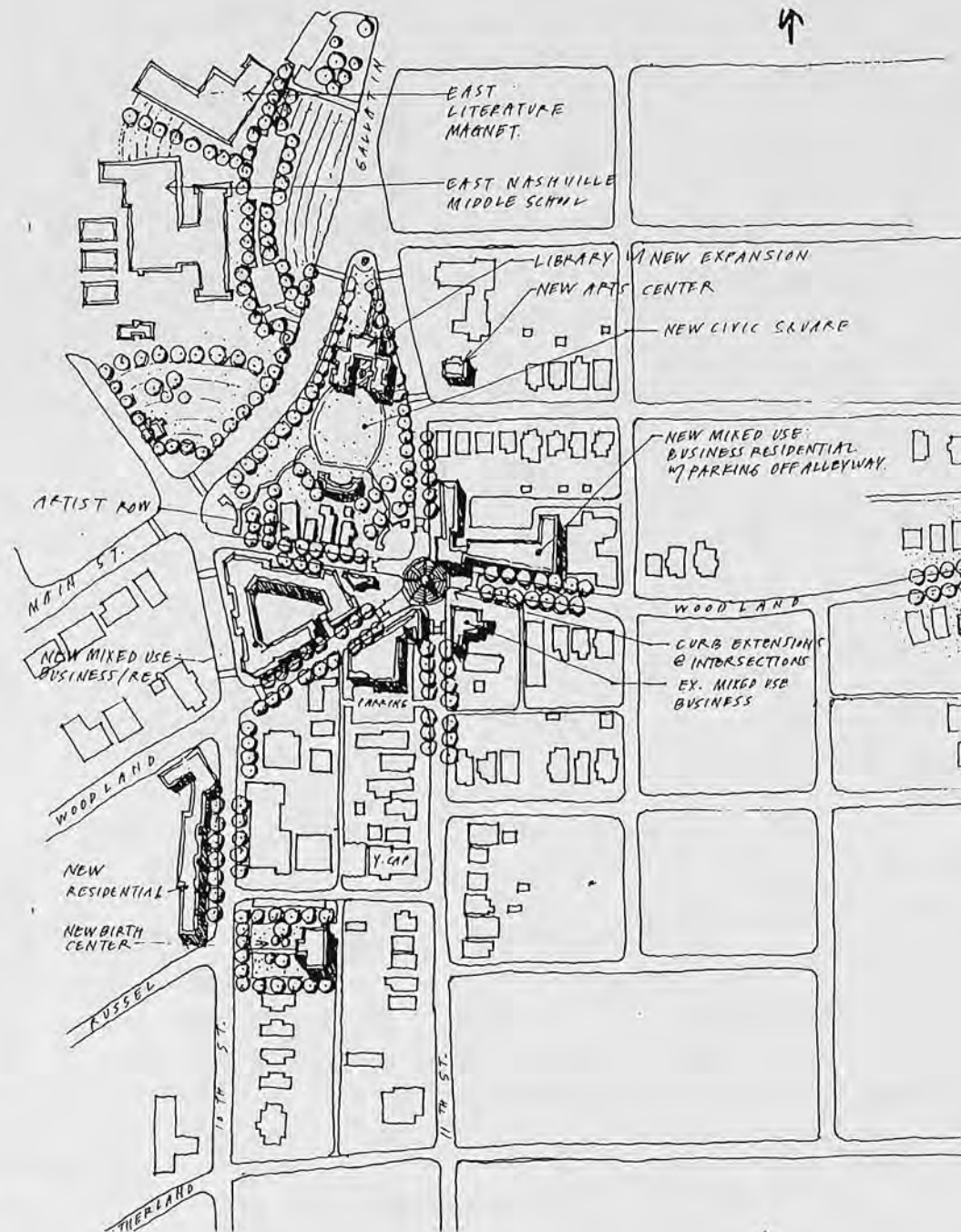
- Making discretionary trips before or after the event;
- Identification of preferred access routes in and out of the area that do not coincide with planned event access routes;
- Determining special access points in or out of restricted or blocked neighborhoods within the community; and
- Planning special events at home or away that do not require travel in or out of the area.

The street closure strategy proposed to protect residential parking will require a substantial amount of Metro Police staffing and will be difficult to manage due to the numerous alley access



opportunities. Accordingly, it is recommended that Metro establish an ordinance for a Special Event Restricted Parking Zone so that residents have greater flexibility and Metro staffing costs can be reduced.

Finally, the process of monitoring and updating the TMP should include representatives from each affected neighborhood to provide input on strategic refinements that have an impact on their parking and accessibility.



RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

The diversity of East Nashville is well represented in the diversity of its housing stock. From public housing to Victorian homes, virtually every type of housing built during the past century or more, is to be found in East Nashville. Even within the single-family homeowner market, houses range from modest bungalows to fine mansions, with values ranging from under \$50,000 to well over \$300,000. With a pool roughly evenly divided between rental and owner-occupied housing, the character of today's housing stock both reflects and supports the economic and social diversity prized by most of East



Nashville's residents.

Within this overall picture, however, several problems can be identified. While few in number, abandoned and boarded houses are noticeable on many of East Nashville's streets. A larger percentage of the area's housing, while occupied, is clearly substandard and in violation of reasonable housing code standards. Many of these buildings are owned by irresponsible landlords, some of whom have also subdivided one- or two-family houses into small apartments or rental rooms, adding overcrowding to the other substandard conditions affecting those units. Some owner-occupants, however, are also living in substandard conditions, often because of the lack of resources to make needed repairs.

Conversely, the success of East Nashville's revitalization as reflected in dramatic increases in property values in many parts of the neighborhood, carries within it the seeds of potential future problems. If current trends persist and home prices continue to rise, homeownership opportunities for moderate-income people that currently exist in the community are likely to diminish. Rental units, affordable although often substandard, will be lost as absentee landlords sell their properties to so-called urban pioneers. These trends could lead to a polarized future, where single-family areas would become overwhelmingly well-to-do, with the less affluent concentrated in the public housing and garden apartment units, located in the southern and western edges of the neighborhood. The R/UDAT team feels, and believes that the majority of East Nashville residents feel, that this would not be a desirable outcome for the community.

Our goal, however difficult it may be, must be to preserve affordable housing opportunities in a neighborhood where gentrification is taking place and property values are on the increase, while permitting the ongoing improvement of the neighborhoods

to continue. On balance, the efforts of middle-class individuals and families to acquire, rehabilitate, and occupy houses in East Nashville are an admirable and positive phenomenon. We have no desire to discourage those efforts. Through a combination of strategies, including a systematic effort to address substandard properties while fostering new housing through infill construction, we believe that those efforts can continue while the concerns of lower income housing can be addressed.



In order to carry out this goal, we call upon the East Nashville community to make a commitment to base the community's housing strategy on the 50/50 principle: For every new market unit created, either through reuse of a formerly substandard property or through new construction, one affordable housing unit should be created through the same means.

SUBSTANDARD PROPERTIES, NUISANCES, AND SLUMLORDS

The problem of substandard housing, generally linked to irresponsible or abusive landlords, is one that is discussed repeatedly in meetings of neighborhood associations and that was cited by numerous people who met with R/UDAT team members. Even a short tour of many East Nashville neighborhoods soon confirms that this is indeed a serious problem. These properties affect the quality of life both of the residents who live in them as well as of

the residents of the blocks on which they are located. The problem extends to other concerns as well. The vacant and boarded houses scattered around the neighborhood have already been noted. While few in number, each one has a significant negative effect on its surroundings. Elsewhere, one finds substandard owner-occupied homes as well as non-conforming uses that are today seen as inappropriate and objectionable in the context of the rest of the neighborhood.

All of these properties should be restored to productive use. In most cases, they are suitable for rehabilitation, while a few may require demolition, in which case the property can either be retained as open space or improved with new housing or other uses. There is a need for a strategy that can address this problem effectively, while ensuring to the extent possible that the low-income families who depend on this housing for their shelter are not unduly burdened. Opportunities for such families must continue to exist within the community. We believe that the strategy outlined below represents the best opportunity to achieve that goal.

Holding Landlords Accountable

Right or wrong, few people in East Nashville believe that code enforcement is an effective strategy to deal with irresponsible landlords. Whether because of the limited resources and capabilities of the system or the long time frame for enforcement and limited penalties exacted for non-compliance, the system does not appear to be effective. It is unlikely that the system will change dramatically in the near future.

Fortunately, there is an alternative. Under Tennessee landlord-tenant law, violations of the Nashville housing code are held to be simultaneous violations of the state law. A tenant can bring suit against a landlord in court. While documentation of the violations in the form of an official report from a Metro code

inspector is desirable, it is not necessary. Such cases, where aggressively pursued on behalf of the tenant, can have far more impact in either compelling a landlord to make substantial improvements or in inducing him or her to sell the property at reasonable cost.

The creation of a mechanism, as discussed further below, to identify problem properties and to work with tenants to bring such suits is essential. As a general proposition, we believe that this should take place under the auspices of a nonprofit corporation, which can integrate this effort into a broader strategy addressing substandard properties and putting them to productive use. This is important, since not only must the cases be pursued aggressively to a conclusion; but furthermore, the organization must be able to provide adequate assurances to the tenants that if the litigation results in the loss of their unit, alternative housing opportunities will be provided to them.

Access to landlord-tenant law is available only to the tenant who is directly harmed by the landlord's abuses. In situations where a neighboring property owner is directly harmed (more than visually) by the adjacent substandard property, the neighbor can bring a nuisance suit against the owner of the substandard property in Environmental Court. This strategy may be particularly appropriate with respect to properties that are vacant and abandoned. The neighbor may be able to demonstrate that the condition of the property is doing him or her harm. Again, a mechanism, including access to qualified legal counsel, must be available to enable such suits to take place without placing undue burden on the individual bringing the suit.

The goal of these suits, whether under landlord-tenant or nuisance law, is to compel recalcitrant property owners to do one of two things:

- Improve their properties; or
- Sell their properties at reasonable cost for productive reuse.

For those landlords who are willing to improve their properties, limited assistance may be available from MDHA. Since in many cases the outcome will be that the landlord will prefer to sell rather than improve, the second step is to have a process in place to buy the properties from the landlord.

Acquisition and Reuse

It can be anticipated that many landlords, faced with not only substantial rehabilitation costs but penalties and court costs as well, may offer to sell their properties. At that point the nonprofit entity must be prepared to purchase it and put it to reuse. The nonprofit entity will carry out that mission in keeping with the overall 50/50 housing goal established as the basic underlying principle of the East Nashville housing policy. To that end, the nonprofit entity will evaluate each property with respect to its location, condition and physical characteristics in the context of the progress of the overall program, select one of the following three alternatives for each property:

- The non-profit will sell the property "as is" to a homebuyer or contractor. This would typically be done for single-family properties that can bring a substantial return in "as is" condition;
- Rehabilitate the property and sell the improved property to a low- or moderate-income homebuyer, utilizing, if necessary, HOME or other public funds for cost writedowns; or
- Rehabilitate the property and maintain it as good quality rental housing. This would apply to properties that are not suitable for single-family occupancy.

It is recommended that at least half of the affordable units created through this strategy be homeownership units. The nonprofit entity would work with the MDHA, the Nashville Housing Fund, and local lenders to raise the funds for the legal actions

R/UDAT

needed to create a soft capital fund for property acquisition and to have access to construction financing and writedown funds. It would be anticipated that Metro would also pass through to the nonprofit entity any properties, both buildings and vacant lots, acquired through tax foreclosure.

This strategy demands leadership from the community as well as effective implementation by a nonprofit entity working closely with the community. We believe that Metro has an important role to play in addressing these issues, but it cannot substitute for the community's own initiative.

Nuisances and Nonconforming Uses

Any older community is dotted with what are known as nonconforming uses. These are property uses that, which legal when initiated, are no longer permitted in their location by today's zoning and land use regulations. They may be uses that are widely considered obnoxious in themselves, such as certain types of heavy industry, or simply uses that are seen as incompatible with the present-day character and aspirations of the community.

Simply put, a prior nonconforming use, as long as it is not a nuisance, is permitted by law to continue to operate despite the change in zoning regulations. Only if it is abandoned or the building demolished in whole or large part, does the continued right to use the property for that nonconforming use lapse.

If the use is a nuisance, however, a property owner who is harmed by the use or activity can bring suit to abate the nuisance or to impose penalties on the owner causing the nuisance in Environmental Court.

Homeowners

Some percentage of the substandard and problem houses in East Nashville are owner occupied. In many cases the owners lack the funds to make repairs on their property. It appears that many such households are unaware that Metro, through the MDHA, makes substantial funding available to lower income homeowners for the purpose of improving their homes, meeting code standards, or making urgently needed repairs. Among the programs offered by MDHA are:

- Community Development (CD) grants, up to \$9,000 to low-income homeowners (no more than \$15,100 for a one person household, up to \$28,500 for a family of eight persons;)
- Health and safety grants, up to \$7,500 for low-income homeowners;
- CD loans, up to \$18,000 at 3 percent for low- or moderate-income homeowners (no more than \$24,200 for a one person household, up to \$45,600 for a family of eight persons;)
- CD special elderly loan, up to \$10,000 for low-income homeowners aged over 55 or disabled;
- CD historical loan, up to \$18,000 at 3 percent or 6 percent for use on exterior of home;
- Emergency rehabilitation grants to correct unsafe conditions, up to \$2,000 for low-income households aged over 55 or disabled;
- PREPP, up to \$10,000, forgivable grant for low-income households; and
- Weatherization assistance, up to \$1,300 grant (no more than \$9,337.50 for a one-person household, up to \$31,737.50 for a family of eight persons.)

The mission of the nonprofit entity charged with addressing the substandard housing strategy, as well as the infill strategy below, should include outreach to the owners of owner-occupied

substandard properties to ensure that maximum use of these programs is made by qualified East Nashville residents.

INFILL HOUSING AND HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The second prong of the residential strategy is the creation of new homes on vacant property. East Nashville's residential neighborhoods are often loosely knit. Many streets contain vacant parcels, some accommodating only a single house and others accommodating 5, 6, or more new single-family houses. Overall, we would estimate that over 100 new single-family houses can be comfortably developed within the area's neighborhoods.

There are good arguments for encouraging infill housing. Talented architects can create new housing plans that are highly compatible with the historic architectural styles, such as the bungalow, typical of many East Nashville streets. Development of new architecturally compatible houses of good quality enhance neighborhoods and stabilize property values while providing opportunities for affordable homeownership. Furthermore, it is clear that at this point, new houses built in many parts of the area are likely to sell for prices that could be highly profitable to developers, in the vicinity of \$100 or more per square foot. While many larger developers are unlikely to be interested, because of the absence of large suburban-like parcels, there are smaller developers likely to show an interest, some of whom have already begun to pursue development opportunities in the area.

Private developers are likely to concentrate on developing housing for the private market. The nonprofit entity that is engaged in dealing with substandard housing, as described above, should be actively engaged in conjunction with the Nashville Housing Fund in acquiring vacant lots and constructing new infill housing for affordable homeownership, maintaining the neighborhood's 50/50 goal. In some cases, however, the non-

profit entity could develop mixed income housing (part market rate, and part affordable) or sell off lots to private developers for market rate housing, thereby raising funds to be used elsewhere for affordable housing.

Ensuring that any new houses built in the neighborhood are both designed and sited in a manner that is consistent with the historic character of the surrounding area is essential if infill housing is to have a positive impact on the area. This is not only a matter that is addressed by design review of building elevations but a matter of ensuring the rhythm of the block, as reflected by front and side setbacks, height, and massing. While the Historic/Conservation Overlay Districts are an essential tool to achieve this goal, it cannot be achieved unless the design review mandated under the overlay districts takes place in a sensitive and highly professional manner.

Along with the 50/50 goal of housing affordability, residential stability can be improved with opportunities for homeownership at all income levels and in all neighborhoods, including Cayce Homes. Homeownership offers residents security of tenure and helps build household wealth. Innovative programs help expand this opportunity and should be employed in East Nashville in order to sustain the community's number one value of diversity.

A lease-purchase option is a further mechanism to be considered in East Nashville. This program could be "managed" by MDHA and nonprofit housing developers. Residents earn the



benefits of homeownership through sustained, on time payment of rent, in lieu of large down payments.

STRATEGY

Many of the residential strategy issues have already been discussed in the context of the specific policy recommendations. It is worth restating or expanding on some of these issues. The heart of the strategy is the partnership between the community and a nonprofit housing corporation to carry out a series of related programs, all furthering the East Nashville residential strategy. The nonprofit entity would be responsible for the following activities:

- Aggressive litigation on behalf of tenants in substandard housing and neighbors harmed by nuisances created by substandard or vacant housing;
- Acquisition of buildings from landlords, as well as vacant sites from property owners, on a negotiated basis;
- Sale, with or without rehabilitation, of properties acquired from landlords;
- Rehabilitation and operation of small multifamily buildings not suitable for owner-occupancy;
- Planning, construction and sale to homebuyers of new houses constructed on infill lots;
- Assistance to tenants displaced as a result of action against irresponsible landlords;
- Technical assistance, including assistance in identifying and securing financial resources, for landlords seeking to improve rental properties;
- Outreach and assistance in identifying and securing financial resources to lower-income homeowners needing to improve their properties; and
- Monitoring of resale controls on owner-occupied affordable housing units.

The last activity is worth comment. Affordable homes may be sold to buyers at prices at or below their fair market value. With property values rising rapidly in the neighborhood, there is a possibility that, without controls, the initial buyer may be tempted to sell within a short period for a substantially higher price to a middle- or upper-income buyer. The result is that the buyer has, in essence, used public sector funds as a means of speculating in real estate and that the unit has been lost to the affordable housing sector. This can be addressed by recording a deed restriction on the property requiring that resales take place only to qualified buyers, at a price that, typically, reflects the initial price along with an adjustment for the Consumer Price Index. Part of the nonprofit entity's mission would be to monitor these restrictions to ensure that the unit remained in the affordable housing inventory.

Availability of funding and a strong working relationship with Metro government are critical to the success of these initiatives. As mentioned earlier, we recommend that this project be carried out in close cooperation with the Nashville Housing Fund and the MDHA, both of whom are key partners. The East Nashville community, the nonprofit organization and the Housing Fund are encouraged to seek additional funding for this venture from the private sector, particularly from key lending institutions.

The selection of the nonprofit organization is critical. It is essential that the organization have the capability to undertake this mission with a high likelihood of success. Rather than pursue creation of a new entity, we would recommend that an existing nonprofit entity undertake this project as a cooperative venture with the East Nashville community. A local organization, Affordable Housing Resources, has been identified as one entity that may be capable of serving in this capacity.

This is not a risk-proof strategy, nor is it one that will yield dramatic results overnight. It will require a high level of cooperation between the community, the nonprofit entity, MHDA, other

Metro government entities, and private sector entities. It will require efficient and sensitive management on the part of the nonprofit, and a long-term commitment on the part of the community. It can be successful. If successful, it has the potential of significantly upgrading the quality of housing and the quality of life in East Nashville in a manner that respects all sectors of the community and honors the community's commitment to diversity.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

BACKGROUND

East Nashville's redevelopment and revitalization has been uneven. While the residential character of the area has been substantially transformed in recent years, with a dramatic increase in the value of single-family real estate, commercial development has lagged behind. A number of facilities have been constructed on Gallatin Road, including stores such as Eckerd Drugs and Payless Shoe Store. This activity has been modest and limited by comparison to the residential transition. As a result, an area of some 25,000 population is significantly underserved with retail facilities. Basic services, including food stores, are inadequate, with the Kroger store on Gallatin Road notorious for its poor quality and slapdash maintenance.

The lack of retail development has a second important consequence for the community. Main Street, for example, which is all that many people ever see of East Nashville, presents a dispirited, disheveled, and bleak appearance. Its undistinguished and often substandard commercial buildings are scattered among stark asphalt parking lots with no apparent pattern or consistency. Five Points, along with Woodland Street, which represents the logical retail heart of the neighborhood, is still, despite some modest improvements during the past decade, a nonde-

script collection of vacant lots and substandard buildings, a service station, and one short row of pleasant but unpretentious storefronts. The character of both Five Points and Main Street have a dramatic, and negative, impact on the way citizens of the region see East Nashville as a whole.

Main Street, with its automobile-oriented stores, and Five Points/Woodland Street represent two of the three types of commercial centers in the East Nashville community. The third type is what might be called the residential/commercial intersection, or the "100 Percent Corners." Scattered throughout the residential neighborhoods are intersections partly, largely, or entirely devoted to commercial use, such as the intersections of Fatherland and 14th Streets, or Woodland and 16th Streets. These intersections contain such valued neighborhood institutions as the Radio Café, Sasso, or the Fatherland Market. However many of these corners also contain vacant lots, substandard or vacant commercial buildings, or threatened residential structures.

The R/UDAT team believes that the commercial revitalization of East Nashville can catch up with, and keep pace with the neighborhood's residential revitalization. We believe that each of the three types of retail area—Main Street, Five Points/Woodland Street, and the residential/commercial corners—has the potential to become a major asset for the members of the community. In the sections below, we describe our vision for each of these three

areas and discuss some of the strategies that should be followed in order to make the vision a reality.



THE VISION

As we discussed, each of the three areas has a distinct character and must be approached in a different way. Main Street is, and will remain, primarily an automobile-oriented district, with a mix of businesses, some serving the neighborhood and some relatively unconnected from the immediate community. Five Points/Woodland Street has the potential to become the retail heart of the community, a rich pedestrian-oriented mix of retail goods, service providers, and office space. Finally, the residential/com-

mercial corners are a distinct neighborhood amenity, providing gathering places and resources within a short walk of each resident's home.

Residential/Commercial Corners

East Nashville has retained a network of "100 Percent Corners," which contain a variety of facilities, including grocery stores, restaurants and cafes, and other services. The commercial character of these corners, as long as it remains tied to the intersection and does not bleed into adjacent residential areas, is a significant enhancement to the quality of life in the community, and should be strengthened and encouraged. The recent opening of facilities such as Sasso or Doris' Cafeteria reflects the continued



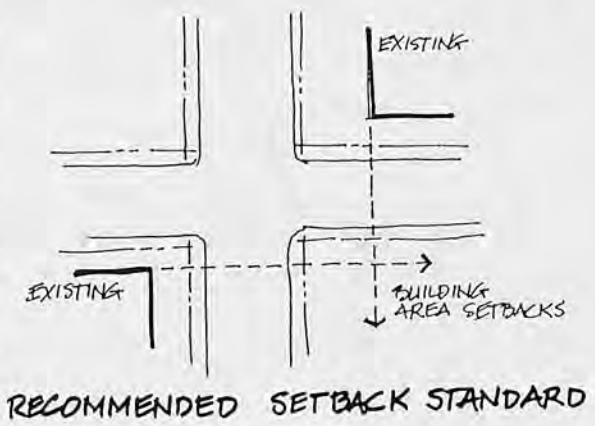
govern the development of corner properties. Properties located off the corner, except where they are already in commercial use, would not be governed by these standards:

- Neighborhood retail, services and office, as well as residential uses should be permitted at residential/commercial corners;
- Retail development, both rehabilitation of existing buildings and new buildings, should be permitted without a requirement to provide off-street parking;
- Existing residential buildings at these intersections can be reused

vitality of these locations. These small, independently-owned businesses are a major community asset.

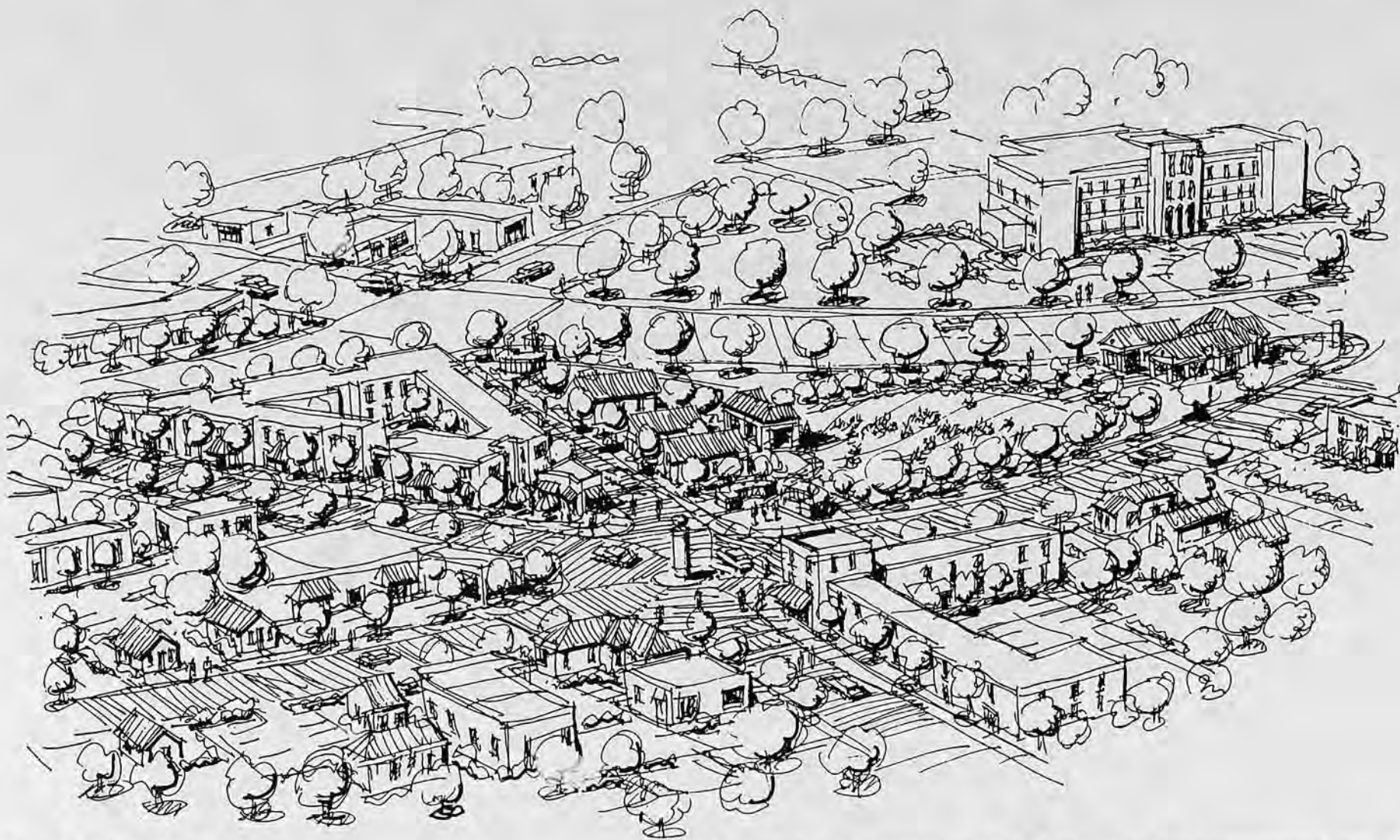
Maintaining and intensifying the vitality of these corners should be encouraged through sensitive land-use regulations that encourage rehabilitation and new construction consistent with the historic character of the surrounding neighborhoods, as well as

the replacement of incompatible buildings with more suitable ones. Specifically, these corners should be identified as a special zoning district, in which the provisions below would



- for nonresidential purposes, as long as the exterior of the building is not altered in inappropriate fashion; and
- Where the corner already contains one or more older commercial buildings (pre-World War II), setbacks for new construction should be defined by the setback pattern of those buildings.
 - Elsewhere, the minimum setback should be no more than 10 feet from the property line, with a maximum setback of 20 feet.

The creation of land-use regulations that encourage, rather than discourage, investment and creation of compatible commercial uses in these corners is the single most important step that needs to be taken. In addition, as with the other commercial districts in East Nashville, steps can be taken, as discussed later, to increase access to financing and technical support for new and growing businesses.



Five Points/Woodland

Unlike many other urban neighborhoods dating from the late 19th century, East Nashville never had a classic Victorian "Main Street." Main Street, indeed, until its destruction in the mid-Twentieth Century, was more of a residential and institutional

(schools, convents and the like) street than a commercial one. The creation of a "Main Street," in the sense of a centrally located, pedestrian-oriented center of retail trade and services for the East Nashville community, is an important step in the broader revitalization of the area. Such a district can serve many purposes:

- It can provide the residents of the neighborhood with a wider variety of goods and services, including specialty stores, than are currently available;
- It can provide a common meeting ground for people from all of the different neighborhoods that make up East Nashville, an area that is shared in a positive and exciting way by everyone; and
- As an area with a distinct and attractive character, a "Main Street" can become an attraction in its own right, bringing in shoppers and visitors from other parts of the city and region, enhancing both the image and the economic vitality of East Nashville.

Such a street would contain a diverse mix of stores and businesses. At street level, stores could include key neighborhood-serving stores such as bakeries, dry cleaners, or travel agents, as well as other stores such as used book stores and antique dealers. These stores would be mixed with restaurants and cafes, and above—most buildings would be two-story buildings—would be a mix of small offices, such as doctors, insurance agents, accountants, or apartments. Attractive sidewalks, decorative plantings, and pedestrian-oriented street lighting would enhance the area, making shopping there as much an experience to be enjoyed as a necessity.

Five Points is the logical place to begin the creation of East Nashville's "Main Street." Located almost precisely in the geographic center of the R/UDAT Study Area, its unique street layout, its location at the head of Woodland Street—the major gateway into East Nashville—and its visibility from many different parts of the community, all work to enhance its potential as a retail center. With the assistance of MDHA funds, a small pedestrian-oriented retail cluster already exists there, along Woodland Street between 10th and 11th Streets. The scale of Five Points itself, as well as the adjacent streets, is modest and pedestrian oriented.

Key vacant and underutilized parcels, moreover, create the opportunity for substantial new construction capable of transforming the character of the area with only limited removal of existing, although incompatible, businesses. Key parcels should be assembled by MDHA and sold to developers under strict design guidelines. Key criteria for new development must include:

- All new construction should be two-story construction. First-floor space should be devoted to retail or service uses, while upper floors can be used for service, offices, or residential purposes;
- All new construction should provide for a strong building presence along the street line (zero setback). The street line should not be broken by off-street parking areas, but at most by a limited number of driveways or alleys leading to off-street parking behind buildings;
- Off-street parking standards should be reduced significantly from standards in the Nashville Land Use Ordinance, and shared parking between multiple users encouraged;
- The MDHA (or some other Metro agency) should consider the acquisition and improvement of an appropriately located site for use as shoppers' parking, in order to address parking needs and further reduce the amount of off-street parking required of individual businesses;
- Strict signage standards should be developed, and all new signs should be strictly controlled. The appropriate entity should work with existing businesses in the area to upgrade their signs to consistency with the standards;
- The existing streetscape improvements should be extended as construction of new buildings takes place; and
- Medium-density residential development consistent in scale and mass with the basic pedestrian and street-oriented character of the area, should be permitted within this area, as well as on adjacent parcels, as a transition to neighboring residential communities.

Particular attention must be given to fostering an attractive transition from Five Points to the "Civic Square," particularly along 11th Street, where the new arts-related facilities are proposed. The Civic Square is discussed in further detail in the Physical Framework section of this document.

As Five Points is transformed as shown on the drawings, the new pedestrian-oriented retail center should be encouraged to grow down Woodland Street toward downtown. Careful attention must be given, however, to concentrating retail development, particularly at first, in order to encourage the creation of a critical mass of pedestrian-oriented activity and avoid the creation of a dispersed scatter of struggling, isolated, enterprises around the area. Landscaping treatments can be used to foster greater connection between existing businesses on Woodland Street as far as 8th Street and the Five Points area.

Main Street/Gallatin Road

Main Street through East Nashville from I-65 to Gallatin Road is a problem in urgent need of a solution. The transformation of this street is essential if East Nashville is to establish a new, positive image and presence in the greater Nashville area. Main Street is not, however, a clean slate on which designers and planners can impose their own vision. Despite its unprepossessing appearance, Main Street is a substantial business center. A large variety of retail and service facilities, ranging from the Nations Bank operations facility to a variety of automobile-related businesses, generally set back behind stark, nonaesthetic parking lots, are irregularly strung along the wide, high-traffic volume street. Here and there buildings from the street's earlier and better days, including the

badly mistreated old plantation home at 931 Main Street, dot the streetscape, further emphasizing the confusion and lack of visual coherence of the street.

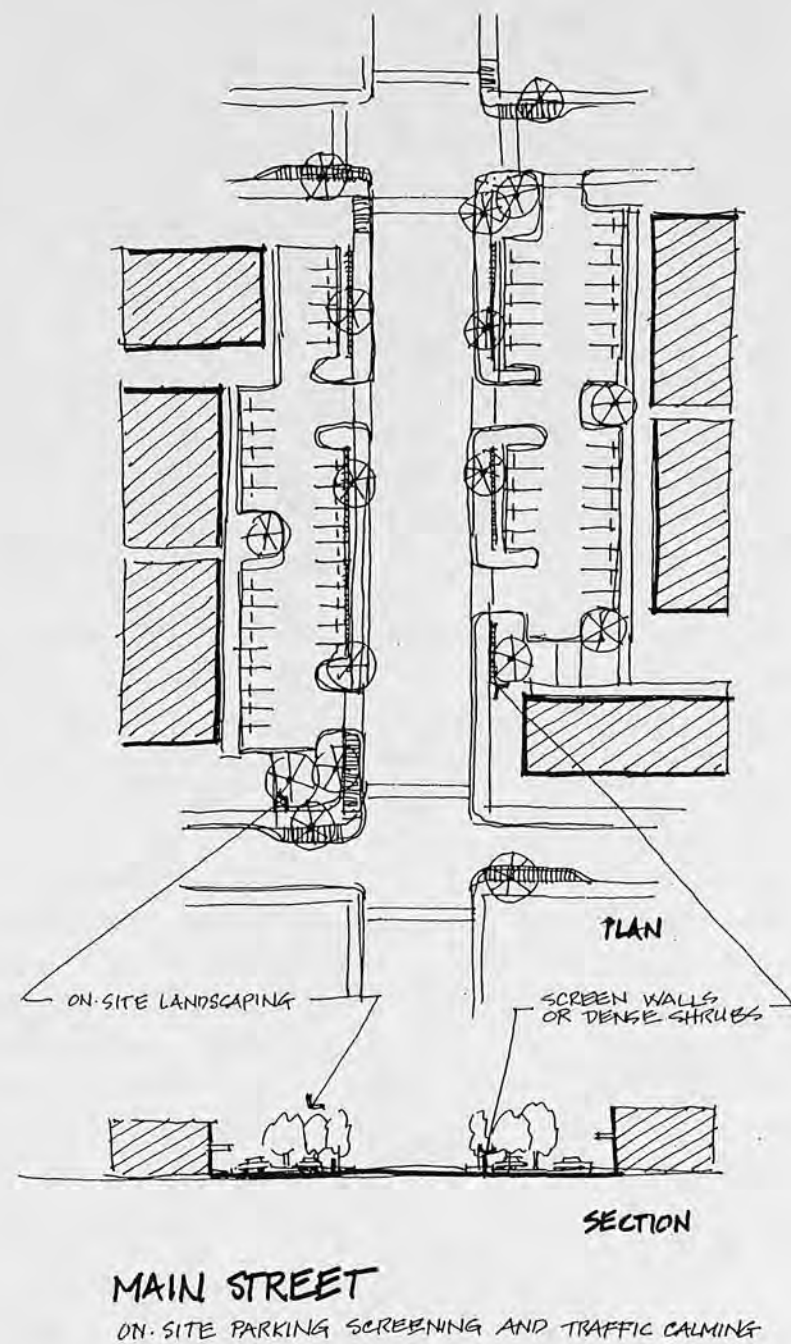


Main Street will never become a pedestrian-oriented street, an old-fashioned "Main Street." The street itself is too wide and carries far too much vehicular traffic, while the volume and variety of existing businesses—many of which provide jobs for area residents—is far too great to render massive acquisition, demolition and reconstruction even remotely plausible. Main Street will remain an automobile-oriented street. It need not remain, however bleak and uninviting. Main Street can become

an attractive, visually enjoyable and dynamic yet automobile-oriented street.

The transformation of Main Street will be gradual, taking place over many years, as new buildings are constructed according to newly developed design standards, parking lots and the street line are transformed through consistent landscaping, fencing, signage and lighting treatment. Traffic calming and other improvements at inter-sections create a sense of place along the length of the street. Improvements to key blocks, however, can begin immediately, visibly demonstrating the commitment of the city and the community to make Main Street an asset, rather than a problem. Basic design principles to guide action include:

- The development of Main Street should be grounded, to the extent feasible, in creating a consistent building setback line within each block. Although creation of a consistent setback line along the entire length of the street might be desirable, it is an unrealistic objective in view of the wide variation from block to block. While some blocks will have development along the street line, in most cases, the buildings will be set back—as they are today—behind a parking area. Strict design standards, incorporated into an overlay zone or into the redevelopment plan, must ensure that new construction conform to the setback line established for each block.
- Uses permitted along Main Street should include retail, service, office as well as multifamily residential uses. Parking lots as a principal use, as well as other uses such as outdoor storage with large ratios of outdoor paved space to structure, should not be permitted.
- Design standards for façade treatments must be adopted. All new buildings must conform to the design standards, while the appropriate entity should work with existing businesses in the area to upgrade their facades to meet the standards. Financial assistance, in the form of matching low-interest loans or grants,



should be provided.

- A landscaping plan must be put into effect to ensure a consistent landscape and streetscape treatment of the entire street, from 5th Street to the Civic Square. New construction approvals must include provision of landscaping according to the plan, along their frontage. The appropriate entity should work with existing businesses along each block to ensure that a consistent block-long treatment is provided.
- Strict signage standards should be developed, and all new signs should be strictly controlled. The appropriate entity should work with existing businesses in the area to upgrade their signs to consistency with the standards.
- Off-street parking should be shared, wherever feasible, and the number of curb cuts and left turn movements along the street reduced.
- A plan for intersection treatments must be adopted, including traffic calming devices at intersections, as well as improvements—landscaping, signage, public art—to increase the sense of place along Main Street and enhance its role as a gateway to East Nashville.

Gallatin Road, north of East Middle School to Douglas, shares many of the problems of Main Street and should be addressed in much the same fashion. Gallatin Road, however, contains a wider variety of neighborhood-serving businesses, including the new Eckerd Drug facility, and exhibits far greater vitality as a retail area. For this reason, as well as in view of its greater significance as a gateway to East Nashville from Downtown, the team believes that the transformation of Main Street should be treated as the higher priority.

THE STRATEGY

The best ideas are useless unless they can be made to happen. The land-use changes and design standards suggested

above will make change possible, but may not bring change unless accompanied by an affirmative strategy. Development opportunities must be created, and developers and end users—responsive to East Nashville's distinctive character—must be found to take advantage of those opportunities. In many cases, assistance, whether financial or technical, can be of great benefit, particularly to small start-up businesses.

Financial Resources

Access to capital is a major problem for small business, as well as small developers. Creating pools of capital that can be used both by developers building in Five Points/Woodland Street, and by small businesses seeking to build for their own use on 100 Percent Corners, is an important element in business success. The Metro Office of Economic Development should be engaged with the East Nashville community in an effort to create such pools, working with the area lending community. It is important to remind banks that their obligations to the community, whether as good citizens or under the more formal requirements of the Community Reinvestment Act, to extend the provision of commercial as well as residential credit.

Funds must be provided as well for the property improvements, including landscaping and streetscape improvements, needed along Main Street and in Five Points/Woodland Street. While some Community Development Block Grant funds may be available, these are not likely to be adequate to address these areas. Since all of these areas are in redevelopment areas, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) should be available. In addition, the community should push for additional funds to be provided through the Metro capital budget process. In addition to the Five Points area, at least one block of Main Street should be considered a high priority for short term, or immediate, improvement.

On Main Street, where the goal is to seek larger-scale

businesses than elsewhere in East Nashville, consideration should be given to modest and limited tax incentives to encourage developers to build and firms to locate there, develop high-quality buildings and provide the amenities—including streetscape and landscape improvements—called for in this report. Such incentives should be for no more than five years and should provide for partial, rather than complete, abatement of taxes during that period.

Site Assembly

Creation of the retail center at Five Points will require the acquisition of key parcels, including the service station, a small number of vacant or underutilized sites within the immediate area, and their sale to developers or end users. Similarly, if perhaps not in the short term, many of the community's goals for the Main Street area may require the assembly of properties for sale to developers or users. Fortunately, both of these areas are within redevelopment areas with respect to which property acquisition has already been contemplated. Working closely with the community, the MDHA should move immediately to identify the key parcels for short-term acquisition in Five Points and Main Street, and acquire them.

Marketing

Obtaining suitable developers and end users, particularly in sensitive small-scale locations such as Five Points or the residential/commercial corners, is difficult. The sites are too small to appeal to large developers or chain users, nor would such parties necessarily be the most appropriate for the area even if interested. Word of mouth, networking, and informal contacts are likely to be most effective in identifying firms that truly belong in these locations. The East Nashville community, through an organizational structure that remains to be established, will have to take

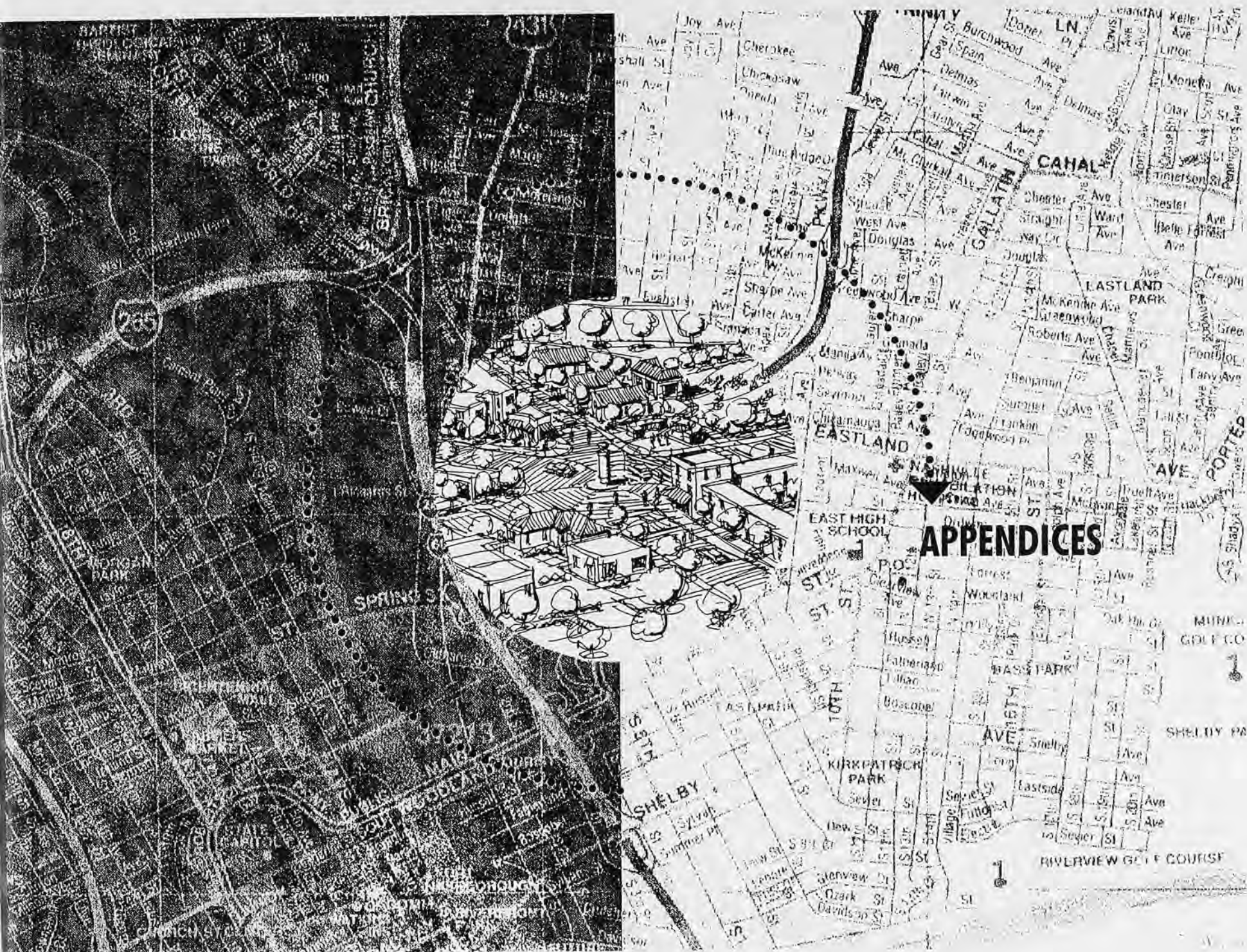
the lead in this effort if it is to be successful.

The situation is somewhat different with respect to potential development opportunities on Main Street. The properties are larger, and the range of appropriate uses, although still limited, particularly by the lack of depth of Main Street properties, is wider. It may be appropriate to seek out larger developers or users for sites that are assembled under the auspices of MDHA. Consideration should be given to developing a more formal marketing package—including site descriptions, demographic information, traffic counts along Main Street, etc.—that would be circulated by the community and MDHA to potential developers.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE PROJECTION

JULY – DEC. 1999	2000-2001	2001-2005	POST 2005
Organizing			
Reactivate Inclusive East Nashville Community Council	Expand grocery offerings		
Develop and Implement Image Building Public Relations Campaign	Continue Public Relations Program		
Program community stadium events	Apply for and obtain share of stadium sales tax rebate		
Establish design review at city with urban design staff	Set guidelines for all existing design districts.		
Clean-up			
Community Clean-up Programs – sidewalk clean-up, etc			
Develop a community police relationship – Neighborhood Watch			
Physical Framework:			
Complete Main Street landscape and parking lot improvement plan	Complete 2 blocks of Main Street streetscape program	Extend landscape improvements into other parts of community. Complete Main Street improvements from Civic Square to 5 th Street.	
	Seek funding for linkage plan(s)	Implement linkage plan and improvements	Continue to enhance linkage plan
Transit			
Apply for transportation and access options	Begin to implement internal transportation improvements	Continue and complete transport and access plan	Improve transport and access system

JULY – DEC. 1999	2000-2001	2001-2005	POST 2005
Update stadium TMP and neighborhood parking plan	Establish neighborhood demand responsive transit circulator	Construct the Franklin Street Bridge	
Establish special event residential parking zones	Convert first intersections from span wire to mast arm displays	Initiate a way-finding system that is integrated with the bus stop	
Initiate neighborhood traffic control evaluation process		Make road improvements on Main Street and other community	
	Rehabilitate the Shelby Street Bridge for pedestrian/cycle access	Complete missing sidewalks	
	Make neighborhood traffic calming improvements		
	Budget, design and construct additional bus shelters with signing and timetables		
	Construct road improvements on Shelby Street		
	Initiate sidewalk missing links program		
	Create a sign ordinance		
Residential Development			
	Implement TIF Program Adopt Plan and Urban Design Overlay for Woodland Street		
Develop detailed implementation strategy	Non-profit entity begins East Nashville project		
Create partnership between MDHA, community and non-profit	15 substandard homes acquired and sold/rehabbed 20 new houses constructed	50 substandard homes acquired and sold/rehabbed 100 new homes constructed	
Commercial Development			
Application to MDHA for Civic Square development	Begin Civic Square Development improvements	Complete Civic Square Development	
Investigate acquisition recommendations for Five Points Apply for Home and CDBG Funds	Five Point Development begins – demolition and new construction begins – rehabilitation starts	Complete Five Point development plan	
Pursue neighborhood business opportunities for commercial corners Adopt zoning changes for commercial corners	Prepare layout schemes for commercial corner	Continue to improve and develop commercial corner	Continue to improve and develop commercial corner



RETHINKING THE DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS IN METRO GOVERNMENT

Government is in a unique position to safeguard and balance interests between the public and private sectors, and among multiple public interests as well. The role of government in the design review process is a classic example of this role, and its application in East Nashville illustrates both its importance and its difficulty. East Nashville contains a rich historic fabric which its citizens have recognized by advocating special regulations, including historic district designation in Edgefield, and the conservation overlay in Lockeland Springs. The physical characteristics of East Nashville, however, are continuous and cannot be segmented within somewhat arbitrary boundaries. What happens across the street from a boundary impacts the "protected" area almost as much as if it were occurring within its perimeter. At the R/UDAT community meeting the point was made the "good architecture and good urban design is a right for all citizens of the community," a statement that received rousing approbation from the audience. Consistent with that premise, many public agencies active in East Nashville have recognized that design issues require an approach going beyond conventional two-dimensional Euclidean zoning practices.

The MDHA maintains a Design Review Committee that oversees design review in redevelopment areas, including, in East Nashville, the East Bank and Five Points redevelopment areas. Metro government, through the Planning Commission, has adopted an Urban Design Overlay (UDO) designation that allows design review for particular developments, primarily to promote mixed use in the area.

In addition to these attempts to introduce design review authority into the development process as a public concern, a group of private citizens have joined together to form the Urban

Design Forum, an organization that is made up of design professionals and who advise agencies and the public about good urban design practices.

There is no question that the quality of the public environment is a public concern. This is clearly recognized both by government and the citizens in Nashville. The manner in which this is taking place, however, has raised questions about whether it is effective in its ability to yield the desired design benefits.

The first issue arises where design corridors have been designated as being subject to design review, but without either clear guidelines or a clear definition of the desired visual image i.e., what the area should ultimately look like. Without one or the other - or preferably both - there is no sound or normative basis on which to judge each individual case. While not advocating an overly restrictive or specific architectural requirement on a building-by-building basis, the R/UDAT team would stress that any design district must have design guidelines in order to be effective. Guidelines should vary on a district-by-district basis reflecting the different degrees of control or specificity appropriate to each district. Some areas may be subject to detailed historic standards, while others may be more relaxed, dealing with a more limited set of criteria. Whatever the level of design control imposed, it is critical to the success of any design review process that effort be exerted in advance, in cooperation with the landowners and the community, to establish clear guidelines and objectives for the physical character to be achieved in the district.

The clear advantage of having adopted explicit design review guidelines for each district is not only that it establishes the framework for the developer or applicant, but that it also gives a clear standard for the design review committee itself in rendering its decisions. Without such explicit guidelines in place for the character of a district or area, the review process can degenerate into an arbitrary discussion of tastes and design orientations, frustrating an applicant who may have to go before a design review committee with several renditions of his or her building plans

before "getting it right."

Our second concern with respect to the design review process in Nashville is its bifurcation between different agencies. Although MDHA has a design review committee in place, the Urban Design Overlay falls within the Metro Planning Commission's jurisdiction. While each of these groups may exercise its design review prerogative with the best of intention, the reality, particularly in a community like East Nashville, is that the continuity of the physical connections may suffer without coordination beyond the boundaries of each design review district. A certain efficiency, given the regulatory relationships involved with buildings, would be gained if there were a single entity to address the design review process.

There are several options to provide better design review coordination given the division of responsibility between the two agencies. The most direct way would be to consolidate design review authority within one agency, through a process that would provide the other with representation. As an example, Metro Government might establish by ordinance a design review board or commission, on which representatives or appointees of MDHA would sit, with design review authority over designated districts, including redevelopment areas. If this process takes place under explicit guidelines, as discussed above, the benefits of such a consolidated review process could be significant. The quality of both MDHA redevelopment plans and Planning Commission Urban Design Overlay districts would be enhanced.

While many cities have such processes, as a rule they also have the urban design capacity on staff to provide professional support services to the design review process. A real concern arises from the fact that there is no in-house urban design specialization identified either within Metro Government or the MDHA.

This situation could be addressed by having either Metro Government and/or MDHA hire individuals with professional backgrounds in planning or urban design to administer this function, or by designating qualified individuals who may currently be

on staff to take on this assignment. The Urban Design Forum, a group of professionals in Nashville, who care about architecture in urban settings may also be able to assist. They could provide training to the public, and to public agencies about urban design, either with respect to the development of Nashville as a whole, or initially in the unique opportunities of East Nashville.

Other sources, such as the Urban Design Center in Chattanooga, could also be made available to provide technical assistance to help Nashville establish a public design review process that citizens and elected officials can understand and appreciate.

East Nashville offers a unique opportunity to apply a strong urban design policy. A key corridor where design review is essential is Woodland Street to Five Points. Although as a redevelopment area it is already subject to MDHA design review, the opportunity to really establish this area as a defining element along the boundary of the Edgefield community and as a transition from Main Street into the southern part of East Nashville is critical.

Without clear and effective guidelines to provide a framework for the design review process, however, this is unlikely to happen. Woodland Street needs explicit and powerful urban design guidelines capable of reshaping the image of this community for the better.

R/UDAT strongly recommends that the Metro Government, the Metro Development and Housing Agency, and the citizens of East Nashville work together to strengthen and enhance the design review process, not just in the interest of historic preservation, but for community sustainability by:

- Establishing design review guidelines;
- Appointing a professional staff with design background to administer the program.

East Nashville R/UDAT Team

July 15–19, 1999

WILLIAM GILCHRIST, AIA

Birmingham, Alabama
Team Leader

William Gilchrist is the Director of Planning, Engineering, and Permits for the City of Birmingham, Alabama. His department oversees the land use, zoning, urban design and infrastructure for the city. Specializing in the linkages between public processes and citizen participation, Gilchrist has worked closely with communities to establish neighborhood development plans, commercial districts, historic preservation districts, and environmental programs. He is a registered architect and studied at MIT.

ALAN FUJIMORI, FSLA

Honolulu, Hawaii
Landscape

Alan Fujimori is an accomplished landscape architect, having worked in various landscape projects across the nation. Currently, he heads a private practice in Hawaii specializing in urban design, master planning, and landscape architecture. Formerly, he was a design partner for nine years with Sasaki Associates, in Dallas, and a senior designer with that firm, in Boston, for four years. His management and design experience includes institutional, corporate, mixed-use, resort, and urban design projects.

ALAN MALLACH, AICP

Trenton, New Jersey
Housing

Alan Mallach is the recently retired Director of Housing and Development in Trenton, New Jersey, where he was responsible for the city's housing, planning, and economic development activities, and is currently active as a consultant and writer on housing and urban issues. He is a specialist in planning strategies for mixed-income communities and inner-city economic development. He is an alumnus of Yale College and has taught at Rutgers University Law School and the New Jersey School of Architecture. Mallach is also a recognized expert in the field of late 19th and early 20th century Italian opera.

DAVID D. MARKLEY, PE

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Transportation

David Markley is founder and principal of Transportation Solutions, Inc., in Redmond, Washington. Through more than twenty-five years of applied experience, he has gained recognized expertise in the fields of short-range transportation planning, traffic engineering, parking analysis and design, and transportation analysis of public assembly facilities. This work has helped to refine an understanding of the relationships between land use and transportation that results in solutions that serve the needs of the general public while remaining sensitive to affected neighboring areas.

DAVID PETERSEN

Tampa, Florida
Venues/Stadiums

David Petersen is a consultant in real estate economic research, financial analysis, and urban venue planning for more than thirty years. He has analyzed a broad range of land uses and facility types. An alumnus of San Jose State University, he has managed economic planning for Booz Allen Hamilton and was executive director of the Lexington Center Corporation. He is now managing director of the Price Waterhouse Sports Convention and Entertainment Facilities Group. He has published numerous papers and articles concerning urban venue and entertainment development and is the author of the Urban Land Institute's *Sports, Convention, and Entertainment Facilities*.

MICHAELE PRIDE-WELLS, AIA

Lexington, Kentucky
Community Networking

Michaele Pride-Wells, director of the University of Kentucky's Downtown Design Center. She has identified and conducted community-serving research projects with focus on community engagement, cross-disciplinary, and cross-agency collaboration in the investigation of neighborhood design issues in Lexington, Louisville, and other Kentucky communities. Pride-Wells, a licensed architect, received her undergraduate degree from Arizona State University and is currently pursuing a master's degree at Harvard University. Before coming to the University of Kentucky, Pride-Wells taught at USC Woodbury University and

UCLA while nurturing a private practice in Los Angeles. She helped lead a group of volunteer design professionals to help rebuild that city after the riots of 1992.

GRACE PERDOMO, AIA

Miami, Florida
Urban Design

Grace Perdomo, director of Wallace Roberts and Todd's Southeast Regional office, is an architect and urban designer skilled at translating principles of new urbanism into pragmatic planning and design solutions, with experience in both public and private sector development. She has assisted in the preparation of Traditional Neighborhood Plans for the redevelopment of inner-city communities in Tampa, Florida; Camden, New Jersey; and Wilmington, North Carolina as part of the Federal HOPE VI community revitalization program. She recently directed the HOPE VI Revitalization Plan for Metropolitan Gardens in Birmingham, Alabama. She also served as project director for the Master Plan for Capitol Center/Downtown Tallahassee.

JOE CHAMPEAUX, FAIA

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Joe Champeaux, a principal at Champeaux Landry Architecture and City Planning, is a member of the National AIA R/UDAT Task Group. Since 1974, he has participated in eighteen

R/UDATs as an urban design participant and has served as team leader for thirteen R/UDATs. Champeaux received his undergraduate degree from Tulane University and his master's degree from Rice University.

HERBERT KOHN

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Urban Retail/Mixed Use

Herbert Kohn is the retired president of Cohn Communities, Inc. (Now Beazer Homes), after a twenty-seven year association with the firm. He served as Executive Director of the Urban Residential Development Corporation in Atlanta, Georgia, to promote low-income and affordable housing. He now serves as a consultant to the Atlanta Development Authority. He has worked on various projects integrating residential and retail/commercial in urban contexts of varying densities and demographics.

ANDRE BITTAS

Birmingham, Alabama

Management Information Systems

Andre Bittas is the GIS Data Base Administrator for the City of Birmingham, Alabama. He also is the MIS Coordinator and Network Systems Administrator for the Planning, Engineering, and Permits Department. Bittas received his B.S. degree in Civil Engineering in 1989 and his Masters of Business Administration in 1998 from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

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