Reinventing Avondale

A Framework Plan 2009

Neighborhood
Avondale Group 3

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Vision Statement

It is the intention of this developmental framework to develop a resilient neighborhood structure that better serves the needs of the community residents and employees from major employers and other nearby institutions. This is done through strengthening housing and community services, commercial districts, and transportation accessibility and connectivity, while considering sustainable alternatives. We believe that through growth in Avondale’s commercial districts at different capacities through sited Transit Oriented Development, the creation of a Neighborhood Business District, and building a suburban office base in an urban infrastructure amongst a resultant burgeoning commercial sector near the MLK interchange will increase community investment, create a more resilient residential fabric and sustainable economic base.
Methodology

Prior to the construction of this report the group identified seven subareas within the Avondale neighborhood; however, these subareas are not completely contained within the neighborhood boundaries. The rationale for identifying these areas is that by doing so we can more closely examine each area and the most prudent issues which pertain to them. Because each subarea is different some issues are more important than others and indeed some issues are irrelevant in certain subareas as compared to others. To examine the neighborhood only on-the-whole would be negligent as information can be lost and the most important issues confused. This stated, after examining each subarea, the team observed the neighborhood as a whole to understand the relationships between subareas and issues which may need attention because of these relationships.

While examining the subareas we categorized issues into one of four sections; economic development, neighborhood redevelopment, environmental, or transportation and infrastructure. From there we addressed particular issues which will be described later in the report. These issues were examined through a sustainability kaleidoscope. This kaleidoscope included the “triple bottom line,” looking at issues as they pertain to the social, economic, and environmental sustainability. Using information collected in the field and by doing research we described the examined issues as they stood at the time through the sustainability spectrum. After reviewing these descriptions we completed further research and work so as to create a prescription for them.

This report is formatted so as to breakdown each of the four original topic issues of economic development, neighborhood redevelopment, environmental, or transportation and infrastructure. From there, the sub-issues which were examined are listed. From there goals, strategies, and actions are listed which pertain to the sub-issue. We used the current descriptions which we completed to devise goals which pertain to the sub-issue and we used the prescriptions to devise actions to be used to meet the goals. From there we determined the necessary strategies to help get the neighborhood to these goals.
1. Neighborhood Redevelopment

Avondale is a community in transition. Due to this it is important for the neighborhood to find a way to stay true to its original character while keeping pace with the changes. Neighborhood redevelopment plays an important role in the future of Avondale, because without it the transition would be destructive. This is why it is necessary to ensure that housing is in line with the community needs, neighborhood business districts provide the necessary services for high quality of life, that residents feel a sense of belonging, and that there is adequate gathering space for individuals of all age to enjoy.

i. Housing

Goal #1: Increase homeownership to establish a less transient neighborhood.
Avondale is considered to be a temporary place of residence for those who are down on their luck and need affordable housing. Because of this much of the housing stock has been cut into neglected multi-family units. This is not only detrimental for housing conditions, but also for the neighborhood framework as low homesteading increases overall deterioration of physical and perceptive conditions.

Strategies:
• Reduce the high number of rental units
• Provide adequate affordable housing
• Improve the quality of available housing stock
• Ensure there are services to provide opportunities

Actions:
• Utilize programs which turn multiple family units back into single family.
• Provide assistance through subsidies and build new, cheaper.
• Rehab existing housing through agencies and residents.
• Create a one stop housing resource center.

Goal #2: Ascertain funding sources and groups to support home rehabilitation. The neighborhood currently recognizes the need for improved housing services and conditions. The housing stock is a great mix, but can often be costly to improve. However, it is vital to maintain the character of Avondale through rehabilitation, rather than through new development.

Strategies:
• Petition for city participation in programs.
Develop a network of resources to ensure that opportunities are made known.
Prioritize residential units in terms of need and prospect.

**Actions:**
- Network and communicate with city officials and council to make them aware of issues in the neighborhood
- Create a one stop housing resource center
- Perform a housing survey based off of scale of poor, fair, good, and excellent to recognize housing conditions

**Goal #3: Enhance the physical appearance of housing units and the neighborhood.** The physical appearance of a place plays an importance role in the feel, safety, and perception that exists. Without a sense of belonging and pride, a community can become an undesirable place to be.

**Strategies:**
- Reduce the number of vacant and neglected units
- Enlist the aid of residents in developing improved appearance
- Maintain the character of the community in physical improvements

**Actions:**
- Establish financing options for residential units to be purchased and/or rehabbed
- Create a community action team in charge of beautification and safety projects throughout the neighborhood
- Restore what can feasibly be improved rather than constructing new

**Goal #4: Reduce the high number of vacant residential and commercial units.** Vacancy, like many transient neighborhoods, is a great obstacle. For a community to turn around there must be a vital core who works to improve not only the physical conditions of the neighborhood, but what goods and services are able to be provided.

**Strategies:**
- Ensure affordability of units
- Develop methods to attract new occupants
- Increase connectivity of the neighborhood to allow for a desirable urban fabric
- Remove units that cannot be redeveloped and are eyesores for the community

**Actions:**
- Provide assistance through subsidies and build new, cheaper
- Improve quality of life opportunities
• Construct larger, pedestrian friendly sidewalks, eliminate dead ends/cul-de-sacs, and increase modes of transportation that make stops in the neighborhood
• With the help of the survey for rating residential units, determine those in poor condition and remove those that cannot cheaply be redeveloped

ii. Neighborhood Business Districts

Goal #5: Provide the necessary services to assist residents with their daily needs. Many times community services are under serving residents because they are not the needed ones. This mistake arises when evolving places lose touch with what the new definition of the community is. To aid residents in overcoming their obstacles it is necessary to ensure that their accurate needs are met.

Strategies:
• Define community service needs
• Enable residents to live, work, and play in Avondale
• Allow residents to feel a sense of belonging in their community
• Connect residents to their city

Actions:
• Create community resource centers based off of defined needs
• Make new businesses accessible to residential areas by placing them in nearby locations and that serve their needs
• Make a right turn on Forest Avenue with new development, rather than a left, to connect with more Avondale residents
• Improve transportation options to and from the downtown through a new transportation hub

iii. Cultural and Civic Amenities

Goal #6: Establish space for civic and cultural activities, important to the residents, to occur. Cultural and civic institutions are often the heart and soul of any community. Without quality and accessible activity centers residents lose important gathering space that is vital to everyday quality of life.

Strategies:
• Allow residents to feel a sense of belonging in their community
• Give the community center a replacement for what the new interchange will take
• Ensure accessibility to activities
• Enhance the existing cultural and civic activities
Actions:
- Plan cultural and civic amenities based off of residents interests
- Expand on the plans of the Pride Center to encompass the services taken by the old community center
- Improve transportation between activities and ensure residents are made aware of the hours of operation
- Create a cultural district which allows civic and cultural centers to network and pull resources

iv. Programmed Parks and Recreation

Goal #7: Build the community around existing and developed green spaces. Avondale has a good mix of green space in the community, with the Cincinnati Zoo and the Civic Garden Center. However, much of the space lacks the appropriate affordability, accessibility, and programming that make successful green spaces. Much potential lies in the community with the number of vacant and underutilized land.

Strategies:
- Update existing facilities to meet the needs of the community and to ensure use
- Maintain green space and infrastructure to improve safety and conditions
- Ensure green space and recreation complexes are accessible to residents
- Establish programming within these spaces to allow for greater use and gathering space

Actions:
- Invest money and work into parks that are utilized most by the community and phase out parks that cost but do not serve purpose
- Spend money and time cleaning and repairing space to show presence
- Create or enhance facilities within a quarter mile distance of all residential units
- Connect with institutions and organizations to maximize the use of recreational facilities as well as develop a presence within the community

Goal #8: Improve resident’s access to fresh produce. The Avondale neighborhood lacks an important amenity by not having a local grocery store. Due to this, residents often are cut off from fresh fruits and vegetables which are important to healthy living. Working in Avondale’s favor is the high number of vacant lots and organizations with the necessary skills to overcome this produce obstacle.

Strategies:
- Create a gathering space for residents
• Form educational opportunities for residents on the importance of good nutrition

Actions:
• Define where a potential garden site could be and implement an urban garden based off of the predetermined needs of the community
• Link up with preexisting organizations, such as the Civic Garden Center, to develop programming opportunities

Neighborhood Redevelopment Rationale

There is a great housing stock in Avondale however it faces large numbers of residential vacancy. Much of this is due to the fact that it is a transient neighborhood, a stepping stone for those who are looking for somewhat affordable housing while they build on their savings to move into a nicer neighborhood. Not only is vacancy an issue in the neighborhood, but so is the quality condition of much of the available residential units. This disrepair often causes additional disinvestment because it is expensive to maintain and affordability is already an issue for these residents. Despite the poor conditions for housing in Avondale the neighborhood has great potential when it comes to housing options.

Residents of any community need a place to come together and belong. In a neighborhood where the business districts consist of auto-oriented businesses, disconnect from the streets, large numbers of vacancy, and uses for institutional employees one is likely to feel at loss for where to belong. Due to the lack of services in Avondale residents must go elsewhere to do their business therefore losing the sense of community that neighborhood business districts, if successful, offer. This economic disconnect that residents feel within their community is largely due to the inefficiency of developers to bring in businesses that are within the needs of the residents and that are accessible. All this being said though, there is ample space for business investment for the community.

Cultural and civic amenities are often the backbone of a community. Without these places, individuals have less of an opportunity to become involved with their neighbors, creating a greater level of disconnect. This is why it is not only important to provide a diverse grouping of amenities, but they must be accessible, affordable, and of interest to residents if they are going to be successful. A solution for transience is to improve the cultural and civic amenities, providing residents with an opportunity to create their own sense of community.

Parks and recreational complexes aid in the concept of quality of life. The more accessible these amenities are the more an individual feels as though they belong within the community. Without these activities residents are left with little outside of their homes. The Avondale community currently has a wide variety of parks however many of them are not in line with the needs of the community therefore remain underutilized. Another issue is that some of these facilities are not the most accessible, as there are underserved residential regions of Avondale, and some of the facilities cost a fee to use, such as the Civic Garden Center and the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical
Garden. If the community is to grow it must find a way to overcome obstacles of affordability, quality, and accessibility.

**Neighborhood Redevelopment Framework Plan**

To solve many of the problems surrounding housing it is necessary for there to be financial investments; from the city, neighborhood, residents, and stakeholders. These financial investments will ensure the future residential stability of the neighborhood. Much of this funding should be dispersed through a neighborhood housing resource center. The funding will be distributed based off of program need. Programs that will receive funding will include home rehabilitation which not only improve the condition of the units but also converts some back into single family units, as well as work towards providing subsidies for affordable housing. This is in effort to bring costs down, make housing options more attractive, and homestead the community. Coinciding with the financial aspects of this resource center a study should be done to gain a true understanding of the condition of the housing stock. Knowing the ranking of residential units will aid resource center workers in focusing rehabilitation or demolition projects in these areas.

In order for the neighborhood to be successful it is important for residents to have pride in their property. However, due to the high number of rental units many lack this and housing continues to be rundown. With the instillation of a community organization action team residents will have the opportunity to work actively in developing pride and community within their neighborhood. The tasks of this “team” will be to create beautification projects for lawns, or housing units. They will also be in charge of neighborhood safety surveillance in an attempt to show presence in the neighborhood.

For residents to feel a sense of belonging in their community it is important that the neighborhood has found and developed its cultural and civic niche. The relationships that come out of these activities tend to have a large impact on the neighborhood as a whole. It is for these reasons that it is important for there to be planned civic and cultural events and amenities based directly off of the residents interests. This being said, a cultural and civic district is set to be developed in the Rockdale Avenue region, linking Rockdale Academy to South Avondale Elementary. The purpose for this is there are currently many organizations and institutions located nearby, it will be in close proximity to the new business district on Forest Avenue, and it is in the heart of the residential region of Avondale. There is also ample room within the site for future developments. Creating a district here allows activities to be more accessible for residents, but more importantly they will be able to pull together for larger events as well as be able to share resources. Refer to framework for district location.

**Redeveloped Community Pride Center**
Another important aspect of this site will be the expansion of the Community Pride Center. Currently the neighborhood lacks a centralized community gathering space. With the new interchange the city will be losing space for existing activities and will need to find a replacement, as many of the services provided are essential to many residents. This is why the Pride Center will now encompass these services, along with be a space for community gathering, and a home base for these various resource centers that are being proposed. By creating this one stop shop, residents will have access to all of the amenities that make any neighborhood a success.

The neighborhood currently has a variety of parks and green space that serve the needs of many residents. For the most part these facilities are accessible to all residential units, in terms of distance. However, some residential units are underserved and some green spaces are underutilized. To overcome this obstacle the neighborhood needs to work with the city parks board to identify the needs of the community, in terms of parks and green space. By correctly recognizing what the needs are of the community, the city will better be able to invest their time and money. With this information the city will work to develop the existing green space to fit these new community goals. In some instances this may mean removing a park altogether, changing its uses, and developing affordable options for users of facilities like the zoo and the Civic Garden Center.

This will also be an opportunity to link organizations to the outdoors as well as make fresh produce accessible for residents. The first task would be to locate a potential site for the urban garden which would probably see the most success in the civic and cultural district. This success would be based off of close proximity to those who could maintain the site as well as being in the heart of the residential area. From there an organization will be created to establish the goals of the garden, ensuring that all stakeholders are on the same page for the success of the site. This will not only be an amenity that gives something back to the community, fresh produce, but it will also serve as a way to connect organizations and develop new educational opportunities with programming.
Potential Garden Site Locations

Source: CAGIS
Garden Development Processes

Source: City Barn Community Garden Facebook
2. Environmental Improvements

Avondale has areas of significant environmental concern, and other areas that need minor improvements, but overall Avondale is an area that has the potential of introducing small scale sustainable alternatives in this redevelopment that will increase the environmental health of this community. An area with significant environmental concerns would be the proposed transit-oriented-district near the upper northwestern corner of Martin Luther King and the I-71 overpass. Due to the past industrial use of this area it will be critical to mitigate all brownfield sites and find safe and sustainable ways to reduce run-off problems caused by the large amounts of impervious pavements, while accessing the importance of the existing natural areas that can be found in this area. Brownfield sites are also scattered across the proposed areas for commercial redevelopment on Burnett and Forest, this area also has important potential as we look to future commercial redevelopments that can incorporate green streetscaping options to improve environmental health. Avondale also has an asset that unfortunately to often remains unexploited; The Civic Garden Center of Cincinnati can help in community involvement and education to form a more sustainable, safe, and healthy future for Avondale.

i. Green Infrastructure: Natural Areas

Goal #1: Use non-invasive practices to preserve existing natural area while harnessing their potential to serve the community. Very few natural areas exist in Avondale at this time, and those that do exist appear to be polluted and forgotten. Natural areas in urban environments can be used in many ways to service not only the existing ecosystems, but the surrounding residents. Natural areas help keep urban environments clean and sustainable, in return making the area more livable and workable. Despite the initial appearance of these natural areas, they remain important to this urban community; whether they function as buffers from surrounding high traffic areas or as on-site stormwater retention, they remain a vital part of this urban framework that needs to be preserved through this redevelopment.

Strategies:
- Limit future development to areas which does not negatively impact or disturb existing natural areas.
- Use existing natural areas to buffer increased traffic.
- Preserve remaining natural areas incorporating them into a functioning urban-fabric.
- Incorporate existing natural areas into stormwater management plan, as retention and pollution prevention zones.
- Focus on preservation through education and non-invasive development practices.
Actions:

- Limit future development in the transit-oriented-district to areas which do not negatively impact or disturb the natural areas.
- The natural area around the transit-oriented-district will also be critical in stormwater management to reducing the impact of the impervious surfaces and possibly contaminated run-off and to make use of all resources we have in preventing any drainage problems in this area.
- Use natural areas to buffer in and around the transit-oriented-development, and also on the northern side of Martin Luther King, protecting the residential areas from the increased traffic due to the interchange. Link the Civic Garden Center of Cincinnati with neighborhood residents and other stakeholders to create a better cooperation and effort of education on the importance of natural areas and practices to preserve them.

i. Green Infrastructure: Stormwater Management

Goal #2: Use sustainable “best-practices” in stormwater management

Proper stormwater management is critical in redevelopment to produce an environmentally healthy community that incorporates sustainable alternatives for a lasting positive impact on the surroundings. Proper stormwater management is a simple first step in establishing areas that have an interest in a sustainable future, where resources are reused or otherwise sanitarily disposed of. Proper stormwater management is also essential in construction of complete green streetscapes that can be incorporated in ways that improve functionality with adding to the overall aesthetics, further increasing development incentives. “Best-practice” stormwater management has positive effects through all phases of redevelopment, from construction and into the lasting future of the site.

Strategies:

- Place incentives and work with developers to achieve regulatory compliance in green stormwater management.
- Emphasize low-impact development in all redeveloped areas to ensure that proper erosion control measures have been implemented in the construction phase of development.
- In large areas of development, take advantage of pervious surfaces to reduce run-off into sewer system
- Work to reduce run-off contamination from the large residential areas.

Actions:

- Examine existing LEED guidelines in erosion control and management, and implement comparable standards on construction sites.
• Make proper stormwater management a pertinent aspect of development in the transit-oriented-district. Due to its nature as an impervious area and past industrial use, emphasized transit-oriented-district as a risk in the redevelopment process. Identify the possible contamination sites from previous analysis in the brownfield mitigation study and direct run-off into areas that allow this run-off to be cleaned on-site. Using identified natural areas which can filter contaminants from the run-off and return to water cycle.
• Due to the large size and nature of proposed redevelopment in transit-oriented-district implement pervious pavements where possible.
• In new commercial redevelopment areas work to manage all stormwater run-off at its source, using “green streets” which consist of vegetated facilities in the streetscape that manage stormwater run-off at the source.
• Work with The Civic Garden Center of Cincinnati in reduction of run-off in residential areas and stormwater contamination on an individual and community basis, providing outreach and incentives to reduce run-off into the combined street sewer system in residential areas.

ii. Brownfield Mitigation

Goal #3: Ensure proper remediation to all brownfield sites in the redeveloped areas. Avondale has a number of recognized brownfields sites, and sites that very likely fall into this category. Brownfield sites not only pose significant health and safety concerns, but also consist of underutilized land that has social and economic benefits to the surrounding community. Redeveloping these past industrial and commercial sites will contribute to the overall quality of life in Avondale, through restored environments and business opportunities in these critical areas. Brownfield mitigation is a sustainable redevelopment option that will positively affect the future of Avondale.

Strategies:
• Perform historical land use studies in areas that pose brownfield threats.
• Ensure that proper mitigation guidelines are followed in brownfield redevelopment. Follow the six phase brownfield mitigation technique or a comparable technique approved by City’s engineering and planning departments.
• Place incentives on commercial redevelopment of these areas through funding opportunities from a number of public and private entities including the US EPA.

Actions:
- Mitigate brownfield sites in the transit-oriented-district, which will be an area of critical contamination concern due to its past industrial use and its future high traffic potential.
- Ensure that the brownfield sites around the proposed commercial redevelopment area are properly mitigated, including the two identified sites on Burnett avenue

Brownfield Location Map

Source: CAGIS

3. Transportation and Other Infrastructure Improvements

A good transportation system is needed for the community of Avondale for both short and long term success. The current system requires people who live, work, or go to school in the Avondale area to take the Taft Road exit and travel north on the arterials like Reading Road, Burnet Avenue, or Highland Avenue. This causes many traffic delays especially during morning and evening peak hours. It is necessary to alleviate this traffic by giving the opportunity to motorists to choose an alternative route. The most sensible way of doing this is to create an interchange on the eastern end of Martin Luther King Drive. The proposed interchange is a full access at Taft Rd. / McMillan Ave. and
MLK which is Alternative BR-1 Braided Ramps from the Uptown transportation study. This will allow drivers whose destination is northern part of uptown to take the MLK exit and allow drivers whose destination is southern part of uptown to take the Taft Rd. exit. The new interchange will reduce the number of vehicles on the north and south connectors and make it easier for drivers to navigate through the uptown area.

i. Highway Design

Goal #1: Create minimum disturbance on the surrounding communities with the construction of the new interchange at Interstate-71 and Martin Luther King and any sub-sequential lane braiding. It is important to minimize disturbance of the community because the people/businesses affected may just relocate out of the Avondale area.

Strategies:
- Choose an alternative highway design with the highest cost to benefit ratio to the neighborhood.
- Identify ways to minimize destruction of houses and businesses that are in good condition.
- Minimize lane braiding as much as possible because of the greater disturbance.

Actions:
- Implement construction of highway interchanges by using Alternative BR-1 Braided Ramps.
- Remove existing overpass bridges on Oak St. and Lincoln Ave. due to the braided ramps.

Goal #2: Create an aesthetically pleasing interchange. It is important for MLK to bring in business rather than just being a “drive through.” Our goal for this area is to create a “gateway”, a place of destinations rather than just a place to drive through.

Strategies:
- Identify any businesses that would make the area thrive especially on MLK and Taft/McMillan.

Actions:
- Construct several businesses for motorists to go to with good access to each of them.

ii. Street Network
Goal #1: Reinforce the street hierarchy. Interstate 71 is a primary roadway to the neighborhood; however, currently it has little direct impact in Avondale. With the new interchange it will drastically alter egress and ingress to the neighborhood. Martin Luther King Drive is already a primary artery in the area and the new interchange will further its stance as so. Reading Road which partially acts as an alternative route to the interstate will see less traffic in general; however, the roadway will see increased traffic in case of an accident or construction on the interstate. It is important to have a street hierarchy as it has a large impact on movement and traffic in the area. With a street hierarchy we can better control the flow of traffic in, out, and within Avondale.

Strategies:
• Use streetscaping techniques to help slow traffic.
• Control access to streets which limited access is wished.
• Alter speed limits on roadways to control vehicles.

Actions:
• Set Martin Luther King, Reading, Vine, and Forest to 35mph.
• All other roadways except the interstate are to be set at 25mph.

Goal #2: Increase east/west connections (especially over Interstate-71). The reason the connection is so poor is because I-71 cut straight through the neighborhood. It is important to better the east/west connections along I-71 so the affected areas are not so secluded.

Strategies:
• Identify where the east/west connection is poor along I-71.

Actions:
• Add a pedestrian friendly overpass bridge on Tuxedo Place to encourage traffic from Walnut Hills to the Avondale area.

Goal #3: Use full access interchanges to reduce the use of side-streets as “cut throughs” from MLK and Taft/McMillan. The reason there are so many “cut throughs” is because currently there is only an interchange at Taft/McMillan, requiring drivers whose destination is somewhere on MLK to use the side-streets to reach their destination. By using full interchanges at both MLK and Taft/McMillan most of the traffic will travel east or west to their destination instead of north and south.

Strategies:
• Identify which side-streets are most affected by “cut throughs.”

Actions:
• Construct full interchanges at both MLK and Taft/McMillan.
Goal #4: Create a more cohesive street network between the future transit-oriented-development area and Reading Road. It is important to have a cohesive street network in this area because a multimodal station is proposed there. There will be a number of people walking to and from here and a number of shuttle buses commuting to and from here.

**Strategies:**
- Identify ways to improve the street network at this location.

**Actions:**
- Purchase land to widen and extend Whittier Ave. to Blair Ave.
- Purchase land to widen and extend Fredonia Ave. to Blair Ave.

### iii. Bus and Rail

**Goal #1: Create a light rail station along the blue line.** By adding a light rail station in the area will be an alternative to driving. Other reasons to add light rail transit are that it attracts new riders, reduces transit costs, reduces pollution, and strengthens the downtown.

**Strategies:**
- Identify an alignment for the light rail to travel.
- Identify a location to put a light rail station.

**Actions:**
- Add a multimodal station would support traffic from both the streetcar and the light rail.

**Goal #2: Create a streetcar route to provide service in the area.** By adding a streetcar route in the area will be an alternative to driving. Streetcars are a form of green transportation because they run on electricity and not gasoline. Streetcars also support high density development.

**Strategies:**
- Identify areas to implement the street car route.

**Actions:**
- Add a streetcar route that would run up Jefferson Ave. / Vine St. to the zoo. It would also branch off from Vine St. to Goodman Dr. through the superblock of the hospital to a multimodal station located on the corner of Whittier St. and Fredonia Ave.
- Add a multimodal station would support traffic from both the streetcar and the light rail.
Goal #3: Enhance bus service in the area. Presently, there are an abundance of bus routes serving the needs of many without any other form of transportation in the Avondale area. However, most of the routes run north and south along the major corridors like Reading Rd., Burnet Ave., and Harvey Ave but limited east/west connection. With a proposed business district running along Forest Ave., a major goal is to have a route along Forest to make it easier for shoppers.

Strategies:
- Identify areas to improve bus service.
- Identify a better east/west connection.

Actions:
- Add a bus route along Forest Ave. to better serve the needs of people wanting to travel east or west.

Goal #4: Use private institutions to create a shuttle network to large employment institutions in the area. It is important for large employment institutions like the University of Cincinnati and the hospitals to create a shuttle network from because many of the riders of the light rail will be employees or students.

Strategies:
- Identify which institutions should supply a shuttle network
- Identify the route each will take from the light rail station to the institution

Actions:
- Create a shuttle to the University of Cincinnati and to each of the hospitals in the area.

iv. Freight

Goal #1: Eliminate the use of residential streets as connections for trucking. There are no future plans to use freight in this area because it is not needed. Areas which are currently industrial will be in the future, a transit-oriented-development.

Strategies:
- Identify any current uses of freight in this area.

Actions:
- Relocate any uses of freight in this area.
- Eliminate the current industrial zones just east of Reading road and north of MLK.

v. Bicycle and Pedestrian
Goal #1: Create a bicycle path-shared road which connects the eastern area of the city to the neighborhood and particularly the university and hospitals. It is important to create a bicycle path because it will reduce traffic, improve air quality in the area, and better one’s physical health. This path needs not to follow a major arterial just a local road for bicyclists to reach their destination.

Strategies:
- Identify an alignment best suited for bicycle travel.
- Identify locations where residents bike to work and locations where they would like to bike but there is not a location to safely secure their bicycle.

Actions:
- Add a pedestrian friendly overpass bridge on Tuxedo Place.
- Extend Tuxedo Pl. to Stanton Ave. on the east and Winslow Ave. on the west.
- Construct a bicycle route that starts at Tuxedo Pl. and connects to University Ave heading east.

Goal #2: Increase bike racks near local businesses. If bike racks are placed near businesses it will give the consumer an incentive to bike there instead of trying to fight traffic using a vehicle. Also, if there are more bike racks in the city ridership will increase. This will save the rider more money by not paying for other means of transportation.

Strategies:
- Identify locations where residents bike to work and locations where they would like to bike but there is not a location to safely secure their bicycle.

Actions:
- Construct a bicycle route that starts at Tuxedo Pl. and connects to University Ave heading east.
- Place bicycle racks at proper locations within the Avondale community.

4. Economic Development

Upon reviewing the current status of Avondale, it is evident that the area lacks a true economic center. In addition, it currently contains few places where residents can go to obtain their necessities. Currently the area is made up of sparse and very scattered commercial areas. Overall the residents could benefit from a central business location.

i. Retain/Expand/Remove Existing Businesses of Any Type
Goal #1: Establish a centralized commercial area to serve Avondale’s residents. Avondale currently has various scattered, blighted businesses. It is important for the neighborhood to have a centralized business district. Overall the residents could benefit from a central business location.

Strategies:
- Work with local establishments and residents to determine the most suitable businesses for the area.
- Provide much needed neighborhood oriented businesses to support residents.
- Encourage businesses to employ residents.

Actions:
- In order to remove scattered, blighted business, we will create a neighborhood business district on Forest Ave that would focus on the commercial needs of the local residents and would aim to employ as many Avondale residents as possible by creating and then using an Avondale Job Placement Organization.
- Remove and re-zone commercial land along Reading Road in phases.

ii. Support Clean or Green Industry Opportunities

Goal #2: Support clean or green industry opportunities and improve blighted areas. As new development takes off in Avondale, it is important for building efficiency and the overall environment to support clean industry. If certain standards are not put into place for new buildings now, it could affect the area in the future. It is also important to take the older outdated facilities and homes and update them. These updates will improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills.

Strategies
- Work with businesses and builders and encourage green and efficient building.

Actions:
- Require new businesses to meet certain expectations and standards.
- Provide tax incentives for small business owners to install “green” infrastructure especially in the southern portion of Avondale.

Goal #3: Increase tax revenue by establishing new area specific commercial centers. One of the best ways for Avondale to increase its tax revenue is to find ways to keep money from moving out of the area. As people continue to
go elsewhere to spend money, Avondale misses out on bountiful opportunities. By identifying and capitalizing on potential capital growth regions in the area Avondale can grow along with it.

**Strategies:**
- Determine possible locations for new commercial opportunities small and large within Avondale.
- Utilize vacant space to create vibrant commercial districts that support residents and outsiders.
- Capitalize on needs of the hospital to create a hospital specific commercial area.

**Actions:**
- Increase auto-oriented businesses along MLK
- Create NBD along Forest Ave
- Market NBD for businesses and residents.

### iii. New Institutional Employment Center Opportunities

**Goal #4: Identify new institutional employment center opportunities within Avondale.** Many of the community stakeholders expressed concern because despite the numerous institutions located in Avondale, the residents have a high unemployment rate. By creating a connection between local institutions and employment centers it could be possible to show institutions many residents are capable of meeting their needs. It is possible to provide job training for residents and focusing on education by working with local institutions within the neighborhood to establish co-op programs for residents. These could lead to full time employment.

**Strategies:**
- Work with local institutions to assess their employment needs.

**Actions:**
- Create program between local intuitions and job training centers or high schools to provide job training for local residents.
- Create a proactive job facilitation team to work with local institutions to create a network that utilizes the local community for available positions.
Economic Development Rationale

The economic health and development of the Avondale Community is vital for both long and short term success. Taking advantage of the community’s current and future assets will help strengthen the community as a whole and make it a more vibrant and attractive neighborhood. The community contains the Hospital District and is adjacent to many of the city’s universities all of which are a major source of employment for the city’s residents. Residents need not only to have better access to job training programs but the sources of employment as well. By employing more residents of Avondale, the community can increase personal capital. Once personal capital is increased, residents can begin to attract more business investors which will both provide economic assets and improve property value. The community already contains countless institutional and cultural assets, many of which are underutilized. According to the Avondale Asset Inventory the neighborhood boasts forty-five churches, historical buildings, organizational centers, and a variety of parks and recreation locations. It is also showing promise as many new developments are springing up in the community. The interchange proposed to go at the eastern end of MLK has the potential of bringing more auto-oriented business into the area. Also by creating a neighborhood business district on Forest Ave between Burnett Ave and Reading Rd the community would have more central locations that would provide their basic needs. With the changes coming to this area as the hospitals continue to expand and the interchange is put in, the community can position itself to take advantage of the changes and turn Avondale around.

The stakeholders emphasized including residents in any changes. Input from residents would be most beneficial and would result in the most positive changes. Keeping them in the loop would ensure that all changes were passed over by residents. Overall, stakeholders emphasized on traffic changes and they also were concerned about the new traffic the interchange will create. They also wanted to minimize the impact on the overall community. Overall the stakeholders wanted to minimize the social changes that would result in the new interchange. However they wanted to capitalize on the economic potential the increased traffic would bring. But both of those should be done with the environment in mind. The stakeholders also wanted to take the proposed light rail track into account when making our changes to the community. The light rail was considered when we made our proposed changes. The proposed plan calls for an increase in auto oriented business along the interchange. This would bring about positive economic revenue to the area while keeping social changes to a minimum. The changes proposed also takes the light rail path into account and capitalized on those changes as well. Overall, much has been put into place to make the most out of existing conditions and proposed changes. The increase in social gathering points, gateways and green buildings keep social and environmental implications in mind.

The proposed I-71 and I-75 changes are being reviewed by the proper parties and though a final plan has not been named, a few designs have been narrowed down. The overall concern from the plans is the elimination of residential homes in the interchange area. Overall, the plan that would meet the needs of the highway and traffic flow but had minimal impact to the community would be most favored. Some stakeholders also mentioned that the interchange could go on Victory Parkway and this might be able to solve the traffic problem. However, no studies to our knowledge have been done on implementing an interchange on Victory Parkway as opposed to MLK. Historical homes in the area are also a concern and should also be taken into consideration when deciding a final design. By keeping impact to the area minimal while capitalizing on the
changes it is possible to keep increase the tax revenue into Avondale, increase local employment of residents and make a more environmentally friendly area.

As stated in the above paragraphs all changes to the area have been made while keeping the current city wide plans in mind. The major emphasis was on the City Light Rail Plan and streetcar proposal as that was a major concern of the community stakeholders. By keeping the proposed changes in mind we can be sure to introduce new changes and not repeated plans. This helps new ideas build off of proposed ideas, making a more complete system.

**Economic Development Framework Plan**

Taking proper steps to prepare and capture business new to the area while building off of that success and creating a neighborhood business district is critical to the Avondale community. The success of the new businesses along MLK shows that the potential is certainly present. It is possible to have businesses to attract both residents and the travelers both of which would improve the overall economic situation.

According to the Avondale Strategic Plan, 13% of the buildings in Avondale are vacant. These numerous vacancies, especially the vacant storefronts, provide potential for businesses to move into the neighborhood. The community also has very distinctive architectural features that are unique to the area. The Forest Ave neighborhood business district could provide a hub for the residents and also offer an incentive for new residents to live in the area.

With the current institutions within Avondale and the higher than average unemployment rate of 14% the pairing of training and education could help encourage the institutions to capitalize on the potential of the nearby accessible workforce. The collaboration of the institutions and the community could create a working community.

The community lacks an Avondale specific high school as the available high schools for residents are Hughes, Walnut Hills and Woodward none of which are in Avondale. Some feel that creating a high school would provide a community focal point. But the more importing issue is the improvement of job training programs within the high schools. By creating job training or co-op programs in connection with the institutions the high schools could provide career specific programs and improve employment rates by working with institutions to train students and potentially employ them in the future. This would also encourage higher education. The new middle school provides a good start in helping to create and educations hub on Forest Ave.

By partnering with the hospitals and other major institutions within the community and encourage them to employ local resident the opportunities for residents will improve. The issue is not that Avondale lacks employable institutions it is that those institutions do not hire many residents of Avondale. Also, the residents they hire do not tend to move into Avondale to be closer to work opting rather to commute from other neighborhoods daily into work. The partnering with major institutions is a key factor for improving the economic forecast of Avondale residents.
The Reading Road Corridor is a main artery of the Avondale Community. The road is a major thoroughfare connecting residents from most major highways to the hospital/university district. In the past Reading Road was considered a major business district of the community. However, as traffic has increased and the road has become an artery and not a destination street the condition and need for businesses along Reading Road has declined. The interchange of Reading Rd and MLK is a major gateway into the Avondale Community but currently is not marked. Currently Reading Road is a vibrant mix of institutions, residential communities, business districts, parks, schools, churches and organizations. Unfortunately as the road becomes busier, it would be better to focus the commercial districts away from this road. By both creating a neighborhood business district along Forest Ave, that would serve the resident, and increasing the auto-oriented businesses along MLK to capture the travelers off of I-71, Avondale could become more prosperous.

The current potential of transforming Forest Ave between Burnett Ave and Reading Road into a neighborhood business district is huge. This could become a focal point of the neighborhood as well as a selling point to encourage new residents. By creating this district and having it play off of the parallel community avenue along Rockdale a vibrant center boasting facilities to accommodate the needs of the residents for both necessity and please could be created. The stores could consist of restaurants, a flower shop, and other services the community needs but is currently lacking. Improving the streetscape along Forest and making the area more walk able would only bolster the success of the district.

The implementation of the interchange along I-71 and MLK is only going to increase the traffic moving along MLK. Positing more auto-oriented businesses along this stretch to specifically catch the traffic moving in and out of the area would improve the economic condition and provide some smaller places of employment for residents. The implementation of a gateway at the corner of Reading and MLK would help create a sense of place within the community. By capitalizing on this change, which would cause minimal disruption to the surrounding community, it is possible to create another economic hub within the community in an effort to have more money spent in the area instead of leaving the area.
Bibliography


City Barn Community Garden Photos.  
