

Avondale Neighborhood Plan

LAND USE PLAN

ADOPTED BY
THE
CHATTANOOGA
CITY COUNCIL
JULY 13, 2004



The Avondale Neighborhood Plan emerged from a series of visioning sessions held in coordination with community stakeholders and the City of Chattanooga's Department of Neighborhood Services. This document serves as a condensed collection of land use recommendations in narrative and illustrative formats.

The Plan functions as a general policy guide for future community improvements and zoning requests, however, it is NOT a guarantee for future funding or zoning. Area residents must continue working in conjunction with each other, their elected officials and government agencies to fully realize the vision and initiatives set forth by the plan. The local government must still approve funding for the recommended capital improvements.



Acknowledgements

The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency would like to thank all of the residents, business owners and other stakeholders in the Avondale Neighborhood for their participation in the planning process. Special thanks goes to the Avondale Neighborhood Association for its participation in the public meeting series. Additional thanks goes to all of those who participated in the "Avondale Housing Roundtable Discussion."

Finally, thanks also goes to the following City of Chattanooga departments for providing valuable expertise during the planning process:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Avondale Neighborhood Plan is the product of a collaborative planning effort by residents, elected officials, Regional Planning Agency staff and other stakeholders in the community. The resulting product from the planning process serves two purposes.

First, the plan provides residents and policy makers detailed information on the current conditions in the Avondale neighborhood. Second, the plan serves as a guide for future growth and redevelopment in the study area.

1.1 WHAT IS A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN?

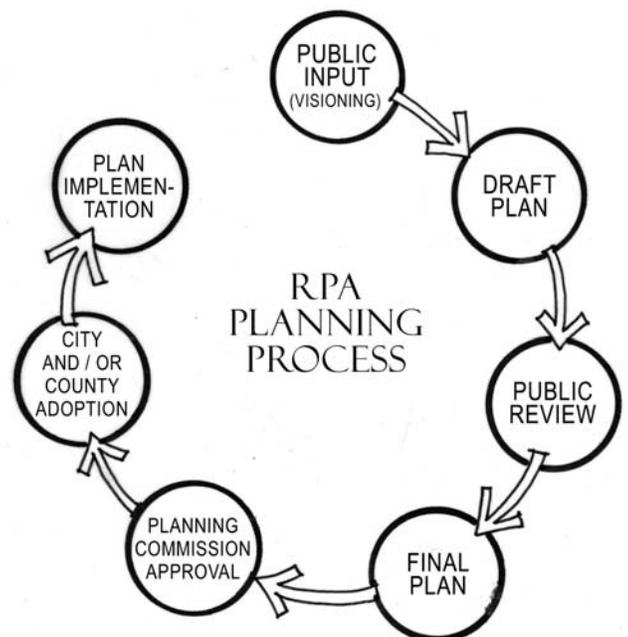
A land use plan serves as a guide for how, when and where new growth, redevelopment and preservation should occur in a particular area.

Policy makers will use an adopted plan as a general guide when making decisions involving future community improvements and rezoning requests. A neighborhood association can use a plan as a concise way to present its vision for the future for area residents, businesses, potential community partners and investors.

Because a neighborhood plan is a guide, its adoption does not guarantee that community improvements or zoning changes will occur. Committed citizens must still work together with elected officials, the appropriate government agencies and the private sector to fully realize the vision and initiatives outlined in the plan.



Public participation is key to effective neighborhood planning.



2.0 STUDY AREA PROFILE

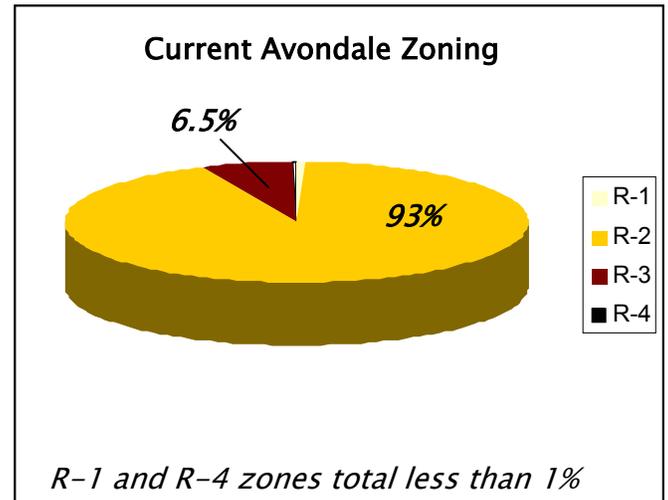
An integral part of the planning process is the collection of background information about the study area. This section provides important data including a brief history, demographic census data, civil infrastructure, environmental conditions and existing land use patterns. The information is obtained from a range of sources including field study by Regional Planning Agency staff, census reports, newspaper archives and interviews with member of the Avondale community.

2.1 STUDY AREA LOCATION

The Avondale Neighborhood lies along the western slopes of Missionary Ridge northeast of downtown Chattanooga. The study area boundary extends from Glass Street east to the slope of Missionary Ridge. The study stretches from the intersection of Glass Street and North Chamberlain Avenue on the north to Citico Avenue to the south. The total study area consists of approximately 2055 parcels. The study area is located entirely within the Chattanooga city limits.

2.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As Chattanooga's industrial base expanded in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, residential development followed. Once the home of rolling farmlands; the area on the western side of Missionary Ridge became prime residential real estate with the construction of the Chattanooga Union Railway Belt Line.¹



Area flooding in 1917

¹ Livingood, James W. *A History of Hamilton County, TN*. Memphis, TN: Memphis State Univ. Press, 1981 p. 269-270

1863	Civil War Battle of Missionary Ridge
1884	First public school opens near Avondale
1887	Avondale Addition and Woodlawn subdivisions platted
1889	Union Railway passenger line through Avondale completed
1900	Glass Street commercial corridor begins to develop
1902	Electric trolley lines serving Avondale completed
1904	Buster Brown site developed
1907	Avondale Grammar School constructed
1924	Avondale annexed by City of Chattanooga
1931	Wilcox Tunnel constructed
1947	Avondale trolley line, last in Chattanooga, ceases operation
1953	Harriet Tubman homes constructed
1961	Chattanooga Zoning Ordinance Passed, R-2 zoning is now common in Avondale
1964	Woodlawn apartments constructed
1993	28 th Legislative District CDC chartered
	Avondale Recreation Center built
1998	Buster Brown closes
2001	Hardy Elementary constructed
2004 (tentative)	Wilcox Tunnel rehab begins

First platted in the late 1880's and early 1890's, Avondale first began to develop along with other neighborhoods such as Sherman Heights and Highland Park during a boom period in Chattanooga during the 1890's. In 1884 the area's "first store, schoolhouse, and post office" opened.² A hosiery mill at the former Buster Brown site began operations in 1904; Avondale Grammar School was completed in 1907. The 1900 census gave the population of Avondale as 842.³

Passenger rail and trolley lines played an important role in the development of Avondale. In 1902 the competing Rapid Transit Company and Chattanooga Electric Railway operated competing lines through Avondale. Though by 1906 one line would be closed, the remaining line would stay in service longer than any other in the City, ceasing operations on April 10, 1947.⁴

In 1924 Avondale was annexed into the City of Chattanooga, along with the other east side suburbs. Annexation provided services to the neighborhood that were not otherwise available.

Growth slowed after annexation, resuming again in the 1950's and 1960's. New housing starts declined significantly following 1970.

2.3 DEMOGRAPHICS

The Avondale study area falls within sections of Census Tracts 2, 3, and 4. These tracts provide the best available source for population, housing and income statistics for planning purposes.

² Livingood 374

³ Livingood 305

⁴ Steinberg, David H. *And to Think it Only Cost a Nickel!* Chattanooga: No pub. 1975. p. 31-64

Population

In 1990 the population was 6318. Since that time, the population has declined by 14.3%. At the same time, Chattanooga's population increased by nearly 2%.

Although population counts have dropped across all age categories, the percentage of children under age five increased from 37% to 41%. The percentage of elderly residents (65+) remained relatively stable at 13%.

Income

Households receiving retirement income from Social Security increased slightly from 11.7% to 14.0% between 1989 and 1999.

The number of households receiving public assistance declined from 25.5% in 1989 to 12% in 1999. However, the number of individuals living below poverty level increased from 43% to 49% in the same period. The percentage of children age five and under living below the poverty level increased from 69.5% in 1989 to 86.4% in 1999.

Education

Four public schools serve the study area: Hardy and Orchard Knob Elementary Schools, Orchard Knob Middle School, and Brainerd High School.

Brainerd High School had a 2003-2004 enrollment of 1004 students, 76% of its capacity of 1322. Orchard Knob Middle, with 354 students, operated at a similar capacity; enrollment dropped by 179 from the previous year. Orchard Knob Elementary, with 366 students, operated at 59% capacity, while the new Hardy elementary (opened 2001) had 573 students, operating at 140% of capacity.



New Hardy Elementary School

One private school, Avondale Seventh-Day Adventist, had 32 students in K-8 for the 2003-2004 school year.

The percentage of people in Avondale over the age of 25 with a high school diploma has increased moderately in the last decade, from 52.26% in 1990 to 59.28% in 2000. This is still significantly below the city-wide percentage of 68.96%. The percentage of those with a 4-year college degree or better has remained fairly constant, increasing slightly from 3.83% to 4.36%. The city-wide percentage is 18.24%.

2.7 TRANSPORTATION

Streets

Avondale is served by three principal and seven minor arterials, as follows:

- **Principal Arterials**
 - Dodson Avenue: 1.47 mi (2 lane)
 - Glass St: 0.35 mi (2 lane)
 - Holtzclaw Avenue: 0.45 mi (4 lane)
- **Minor Arterials**
 - Glass St: 0.27 mi (2 lane)
 - Glenwood Dr: 0.04 mi (2 lane)
 - Sholar Avenue: 0.38 mi (2 lane)
 - N. Chamberlain Ave: 1.22 mi (2 lane)
 - Orchard Knob Ave: 0.34 mi (2 lane)
 - Roanoke Ave: 0.95 mi (2 lane)
 - Wilcox Blvd: 1.17 mi (2 lane)

In addition to these roads, Avondale contains approximately 15 miles of two-lane local roads. These roads vary in width and quality; on-street parking is unavailable in some areas. The streets leading up the ridge (McRae St, Olive St, Pearl St, portions of Ocoee, and others) are typically very narrow and in poor condition.



Streets leading up Missionary Ridge

The Wilcox Tunnel provides access to Avondale and downtown through Missionary Ridge. Built in 1931, the tunnel is 24 feet in diameter; a sidewalk on one side has resulted in clearance for the westbound lane being limited to 10' 10." The tunnel is currently scheduled for rehabilitation pending the receipt of federal funding.

Traffic volumes in Avondale over the past decade have remained fairly constant, decreasing at some points and increasing at others.

**Average Daily Traffic Volumes in Avondale:
Selected Locations**

Location	1993	2003	18 Yr Avg
Wilcox Blvd (east)	18612	16208	16284
Wilcox Blvd (west)	16169	19742	18532
North Chamberlain Ave	8153	7617	7532
Holtzclaw Ave	14527	13401	14916
Dodson Ave (north)	9933	7420	7766
Dodson Ave (south)	11099	9744	10517



Wilcox Tunnel Entrance

The intersections with the highest six year accident rates are Wilcox Blvd @ Dodson Ave with 53 accidents, Wilcox Blvd @ Holtzclaw Ave with 46 accidents, and Dodson Ave @ Citico Ave with 44 accidents. The accident rates are fairly constant and appear typical, given traffic counts on those streets.

Railroads

Railroads play an important role in and around Avondale. The west side of Avondale is bounded by Norfolk Southern's Debutts Rail Yard, while the Tennessee Valley Railroad's western terminus is east of North Chamberlain Avenue. A class III rail line operated by the East Chattanooga Belt Railway Co. crosses the study area from southwest to northeast; it is used periodically by the Tennessee Valley Railroad to provide connection services between the Norfolk Southern rail yard and rail customers to the northeast.



Rail line near Bragg Street



The purple section represents areas within one quarter mile of a CARTA transit stop.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Most of Avondale south of Wilcox Blvd has sidewalks of varying quality, with the notable exceptions of Arlington Ave and Wheeler Ave. Avondale north of Wilcox Blvd generally lacks sidewalks, with the exceptions of Wilcox Blvd, Dodson Ave, Roanoke Ave, Glass St, and the streets in and adjacent to Harriet Tubman Homes.

No bicycle routes exist in the study area. The Chattanooga Bicycle Facilities Master Plan recommends the addition of a bike lane to Wilcox Blvd and the designation of Orchard Knob Ave/Roanoke Ave/Glass St as a bike route.

Public Transportation

Three Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA) routes serve Avondale with 119 bus stops. All of Avondale is served by public transit with the exception of the area shown at left. CARTA's offices and bus maintenance facilities are located in Avondale at the corner of Wilcox & Sholar.

2.8 COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

Fire and Rescue

Avondale's fire protection is provided by Chattanooga Fire Department Station 4, located at 2110 Bragg St. Hamilton County EMS Medic Station 14 serves Avondale from 2900 Riverport Road.

Police

Avondale is inside the Chattanooga Police Department's Sector 2 Echo Patrol Zone, operating from the Police Services Center at 330 Amnicola Highway.



Fire Station Number 4

Library

The closest public library to Avondale is the main branch of the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Bicentennial Library, located downtown at 1001 Broad St.

Post Offices

The closest post offices to Avondale are the East Chattanooga station at 2200 Amnicola Highway, and the Highland Park Station, at 511 South Hawthorne Street.

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

The Avondale Recreation Center is operated by the City of Chattanooga's Department of Parks, Recreation, Arts, & Culture at 1305 Dodson Ave. The center includes a playground, community meeting room, computer lab, 2 youth baseball fields & 1 adult baseball field, indoor & outdoor basketball courts, game room, and full kitchen.



Avondale Recreation Center

A public park is located adjacent to the southern boundary of Avondale off of Citico Ave, and playground equipment is available at Hardy Elementary at 2100 Glass St.

Utilities

Utilities are provided by the following:

Electricity: Electric Power Board of Chattanooga

Water: Tennessee American Water Company

Storm & Sanitary Sewers: City of Chattanooga
Department of Public Works

3.0 LAND USE PLAN

This section contains the recommended land use plan for Avondale in illustrative and narrative formats. The land use recommendations are based upon comments and ideas received from the various stakeholders in the neighborhood. This valuable input, coupled with a detailed survey and analysis of the study area form the base the land use plan is build upon.

A land use plan serves as a guide for future growth and development in Avondale in a manner that will help improve the long-term livability of the community. The future land use map on the following page shows the preferred future land use patterns for the Avondale neighborhood using the following land use classifications:

- Single Family Residential
- Light-Density Residential Mix
- Medium-Density Residential Mix
- High-Density Residential Mix
- Light Business Mix
- Medium Business Mix
- Heavy Business Mix
- Office / Residential
- Heavy Industrial

The land use map should be used in conjunction with the text. The classifications are meant to be broad enough to provide flexibility in the implementation of the neighborhood plan while at the same time offering clear direction in making informed zoning decisions. Residential uses may be compatible with all classifications listed above with the exception of “Heavy Industrial”.

Avondale Neighborhood Land Use Plan Categories

Single-Family Residential

Light-Density Residential Mix

Single family dwellings dominate-some exceptions made for townhouses, patio homes and two-family dwellings

Medium-Density Residential Mix

Single family dwellings, townhouses, patio homes, two, three and four family dwellings

High-Density Residential Mix

Single family dwellings, townhouses, patio homes, two, three, four and multi-family dwellings

Light Business Mix

Neighborhood Commercial, Office, Limited Residential, or similar uses

Medium Business Mix

Convenience Commercial, Neighborhood Commercial, Office, Residential, or similar uses

Heavy Business Mix

Convenience Commercial, Neighborhood Commercial, Region-Serving Planned Commerce Center, Office, Residential, Light Industry, Warehouse, Wholesale, or similar uses.

Office / Residential

Offices, any residential

Heavy Industrial

Manufacturing & processing

3.1 RESIDENTIAL LAND USES

Residential Issues

Residents expressed particular concern about the continued viability of single family residences. The number one concern voiced by neighborhood residents was the proliferation of duplex housing at the expense of single-family residences.

Within the Avondale community, the 1961 City Zoning Ordinance designated almost all of the residential parcels R-2 or R-3. This zoning designation allowed the construction of numerous duplexes among existing single family homes. This trend continued unabated until the early 1970's when the minimum lot size requirement for duplexes was increased.

The pace of duplex construction eased somewhat as developers sought larger parcels for new construction. Today, there are around three hundred duplex structures within the study area boundary. Area residents, however, still believe the rate of duplex construction in Avondale comes at the expense of single-family housing. Given the current R-2 zoning ordinance requirements for new duplex construction, there are over three hundred parcels that *could* potentially be developed into duplexes for a total of six hundred new dwelling units.

In general, area homeowners hold negative opinions of duplexes due to the inherently low rates of owner-occupancy. Residents also note that most of the duplexes are held by absentee owners who fail to properly maintain their properties. According to the City's Department of Neighborhood Services data, over 65% of the codes violations recorded in the last three years were given to non-owner occupied properties.

Although duplexes are often viewed in a negative light, most stakeholders felt that if properly sited, planned and managed, multi-family developments are preferred to a scattering of duplex dwellings. The North Chamberlain Avenue Apartments were often cited as a preferred model for multi-family development.



Avondale Duplex Dwelling



Multi-family Housing on Chamberlain Ave

However, residents were generally leery of additional densities in the neighborhood. Appropriately, the Chattanooga Housing Authority (CHA) is planning a selective “de-densification” in the community. CHA applied for a demolition grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to remove the Reverend Johnson apartments on Dodson Avenue and portions of the Harriet Tubman Development near Southern Street. Ultimately, CHA hopes to complete the work by late 2004.

Since housing is a top concern of community stakeholders, the Regional Planning Agency hosted a “housing roundtable” on May 5, 2004 to bring together organizations that employ varying approaches to provide affordable housing. The discussion panel consisted of representatives from organizations ranging from the Chattanooga Housing Authority and Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise to the Avondale Neighborhood Association and Habitat for Humanity.



Single Family Home

R-1 zoning is rare in Avondale. Even though the total area zoned R-1 is less than 1%, single-family uses account for nearly 55% of all land area in Avondale.

Residential Goals and Strategies

Goal 1 – Protect the integrity of single-family residences.

- Discourage excessive variances for duplex construction.
- Examine the appropriateness of current R-2 and R-3 zoning through a comprehensive zoning study.
- Explore innovative programs that encourage renovation and owner-occupancy of existing duplexes.
- Utilize the Chattanooga Housing Roundtable participants in crafting innovative solutions to housing issues in the community.
- Use substantial vegetative buffers to protect residential areas from the scale, noise and lighting impacts of new commercial or industrial development.

R-2 zoning is abundant in Avondale. Of all residential parcels, almost 93% are zoned R-2.



Portion of Abandoned Rail Right-of-Way

Goal 2 – Pedestrian Connections. Maintain and enhance Avondale’s established grid network of streets and sidewalks.

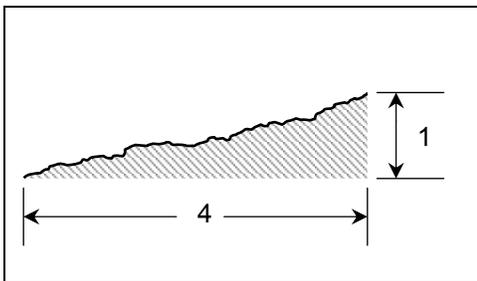
- Encourage new development to incorporate sidewalks and/or pedestrian access.
- Investigate the acquisition and use of the abandoned Chattanooga Belt Railway as a “safewalk”.
- Extend existing sidewalks to serve schools, transit stops and commerce centers.

Goal 3- Beautification. Encourage beautification and clean-up of neighborhoods.

- Notify the City of Chattanooga Department of Neighborhood Services of trash and dumping violations.
- Hold a community clean-up and beautification day

Goal 4 – Environmental Protection. Minimize the negative impacts of new residential development on the environment.

- Ensure that development in areas with steep slopes conform to current city, state and federal legislation.
- Develop a formal relationship between the Neighborhood Association and the Department of Public Works, Storm Water Management Section to monitor flooding and runoff issues.



Steep slopes are those with a rise to run ratio of 1 to 4 (25%) or greater.



Neighborhood Commercial on Dodson Avenue

3.2 COMMERCIAL LAND USES

Commercial and Office Issues

Planning session participants indicated dissatisfaction with the range of commercial services available to them. In particular, residents frequent the lack of gas stations and a convenient grocery store.

While stakeholders cite a lack of commercial services, the study area contains three existing

commercial development nodes. Potentially, a fourth node is located at the old Buster Brown site on North Chamberlain Avenue.

Commercial and Office Focus Areas

Area 1 centers on the region between the Johnson Homes site and the intersection of Wilcox Boulevard and Dodson Avenue. Most residents referred to this area as the “heart of Avondale”. Indeed, the area does approximate the geographic center of the study area. Revitalization efforts within Avondale should begin here.

Strengthening the social, physical and economic value of this area is very important to the health and vitality of the neighborhood. Since there is a fairly well-established history of multi-family housing in the area, a mixed-use commercial-residential center is appropriate.

Development should maintain a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere of moderately dense housing such as townhomes, single family houses and multi-family dwellings coupled with commercial opportunities of reasonable scale. Appropriate uses might include: restaurants, shops and neighborhood services.

To minimize the impact on residential areas, the intensity should gradually lessen toward Bratt Street. The use of natural and planted vegetative buffers is needed to shield the residences on Bratt Street from undue impact. On the eastern side of Dodson Avenue, land use intensities should moderate toward Arlington Avenue. Single family residential use should be maintained east of Arlington Avenue.

The abandoned Chattanooga Beltway rail line could potentially be acquired for reuse as a safewalk and serve as a pedestrian conduit to and through the commercial-residential center.

Area 2 includes a long-established commercial corridor along Glass Street between Dodson Avenue and North Chamberlain Avenue. According to property tax records, this development began in earnest around 1920.



Avondale Plan “Focus Areas”



Historical Commercial use at Glass Street



Glass Street Today

Unfortunately, many of the storefronts are now underutilized or vacant altogether. Still, there is still a viable infrastructure that could once again support a vibrant commercial district. Recently, developers announced plans to operate a cooperative grocery store in an old furniture showroom at the corner of Glass Street and Dodson Avenue. If the store proves to be successful, it would serve as the southern anchor for the district.

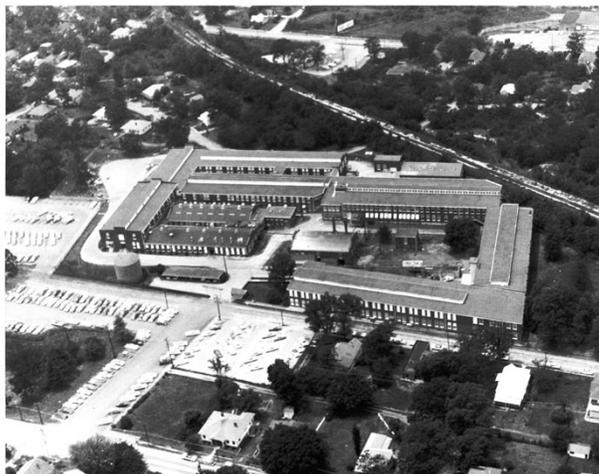
The *Medium Business Mix* designation is most appropriate for the area of Glass Street. Less intense residential uses should be maintained south of Glass Street in the vicinity of Crutchfield and Cheek Streets.

As redevelopment occurs, care must be taken to preserve the look, feel and scale of the district. Existing structures should be renovated instead razed. Because the Glass Street district lies on the boundary between Avondale and East Chattanooga, both neighborhood associations should coordinate any redevelopment activity in the area.

Area 3 lies along Dodson Avenue south of Wilson Street to the southern edge of the study area at Citico Avenue. Consisting primarily of “strip” retail development, the area is appropriate for the *Medium Business Mix* classification. The commercial uses should remain in a scale compatible with the surrounding residential areas. West of Dodson Avenue, the abandoned Chattanooga Belt Railway line could serve as buffer between more intense commercial uses and residential areas.

Area 4 consists of the old Buster Brown Apparel manufacturing site on North Chamberlain Avenue. Built in phases starting in the early 1900’s, the structure originally housed United Hosiery Mills. Buster Brown operated the plant from 19XX until 1998 when all operations ceased.

Although a carpet installation firm currently occupies the property, only a portion of it is actually used. The site offers over twenty acres of underutilized property in several tracts that could be used for a multitude of purposes. Since the area has a long history of manufacturing, there is ample



Historic Aerial View of the Buster Brown Site

precedent for intense uses at the site. For this reason, a *Heavy Business Mix* designation is appropriate.

Still, care must be taken to avoid excessive impact on adjacent residential areas. To accomplish this, surrounding land use intensity should “step down” to lighter uses. Higher intensities should not extend south of Gilbert Street.

The current owners indicated interest in adaptive reuse proposals. Use as retirement housing has already been suggested by one developer. Ideally, any new uses will utilize the existing structures.

Commercial Area Goals and Strategies

Goal 1 – Renew existing commercial nodes.

- Form a merchant’s association within Avondale that will seek to improve depressed and blighted commercial areas.
- Utilize the City of Chattanooga Commercial Façade Program, available through the Office Community and Economic Development, to improve commercial buildings in the area.
- Utilize a shared parking overlay to increase the number of parking spaces available to merchants and customers.

Goal 2 – Growth. Encourage the growth of existing businesses and the establishment of new businesses in designated commercial nodes.

- Concentrate commercial development in existing commercial areas and along Dodson Avenue, rather than expanding into residential areas.
- Form partnerships with the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and the Chattanooga African-American Chamber of Commerce
- Aggressively market vacant commercial properties



Commercial Node at Wilcox and Dodson



Newer Commercial/Office Building on Dodson Avenue

Goal 4 – Beautification and Signage. Improve the attractiveness of gateways and commercial nodes.

- Work with the City of Chattanooga Wayfinding Committee to ensure a coordinated signage system.
- Apply select streetscaping to main commercial focus areas.
- Consider gateway improvements on Wilcox Boulevard.

3.3 INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

Industrial Land-Use Classifications

For the purposes of this plan, industrial uses are included in two land use categories:

Heavy Business Mix

Light industry, warehouse, wholesale or similar uses

Heavy Industrial

Manufacturing and material processing

Industrial Issues

Industrial uses occupy less than 6% of the total land area in Avondale. The lack of industrial employment is a concern to the community. Many stakeholders expressed the need for more employment opportunities outside of the service sector. Although the closure of the Buster Brown plant left Avondale without a large employer, several smaller firms maintain facilities in the area. Recently, a developer expressed interest in locating a warehousing operation on Holtzlaw Avenue near the Norfolk Southern Classification Yard.

Since industrial activities are generally more intense in nature, they should be screened and buffered as much as possible from surrounding less-intense uses. Preferably, industries should be concentrated near the rail yard and away from residential areas.

Outdoor salvage and material processing operations should particularly be monitored for undue environmental impacts on the surrounding area.



Industrial Site on Sholar Avenue

Industrial Goals and Strategies

Goal 1 – Attract new industries to Avondale

- Promote the area’s access to rail transport
- Use the Buster Brown campus as an incubator for small manufacturers
- Provide new (or maintain existing) infrastructure to accommodate new growth.

3.4 INSTITUTIONAL LAND USES

Institutional Land Use Classification

Institutional This designation is intended to accommodate public facilities and those of non-profit organizations including schools, religious facilities, medical clinics, government services and other similar uses.

Institutional Issues

During the public planning process, many residents commented on the strength of the neighborhood’s institutions. The community is served by twenty-seven churches, three schools, the Dodson Avenue Health Center and the Avondale Head Start.



Thankful Missionary Baptist Church



Rock Island Baptist Church



Dodson Avenue Community Health Center

TRANSPORTATION / CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This section contains the recommended transportation/capital improvements plan for Avondale in illustrative and narrative formats. As with the land use plan, the recommendations are based upon comments and ideas received from the various stakeholders in the neighborhood. This valuable input, coupled with a detailed survey and analysis of the study area form the base upon which the transportation/capital improvements plan is built upon.

The transportation/capital improvements plan is designed to promote a comprehensive, long-range circulation strategy that will in turn promote the efficient movement of people and goods and support the community's land use and economic development goals.

Avondale is a neighborhood with over a century of history and well-established infrastructure. As such, the transportation and capital improvement recommendations included in the plan are generally broad in nature.



Wilcox Boulevard looking East

STREETS & PEDESTRIAN REALM

Issues

Avondale is, historically, a first-ring suburb of the City of Chattanooga. Its street network is grid-based, and provides generally excellent connectivity and more than adequate capacity to handle future development.

Sidewalk availability and quality in Avondale varies widely; much of the southern and western portions of Avondale have sidewalks of generally good quality, while much of the north and eastern portions lack them entirely.

Stakeholders indicated that a lack of sidewalks and sidewalk disrepair were major issues of concern. They also noted that street maintenance was an issue.

Several intersections were identified as problematic, either by stakeholders or through observation. North Chamberlain @ Ocoee and Arlington @ Wilcox & Monroe, and Ocoee @ Roanoke should be analyzed.

Stakeholders also recommended streetscaping at community gateways and commercial nodes.

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1 / Street Safety: Improve key problem intersections.

- Study needs for intersection improvements for North Chamberlain @ Ocoee, Arlington @ Wilcox & Monroe and Ocoee @ Roanoke, Gilbert @ Dodson.

Goal 2 / Pedestrian Connectivity: Provide and maintain a network of sidewalks and greenways that provides access to residential neighborhoods, commercial nodes, schools, and community assets.

- Extend sidewalks on North Chamberlain from Wilson Ave to Glass St & on Ocoee St from Roanoke Ave to Dodson Ave.
- Study feasibility of conversion of abandoned rail line to pedestrian greenway connecting southern Avondale to Rec Center and commercial areas.



Dodson Avenue looking south



An old railroad viaduct limits sight distances at the intersection of Dodson Avenue and Gilbert Street.

Goal 3 / Maintenance: Improve the condition of existing streets & sidewalks.

- Repair, resurface, and stripe deteriorating streets.
- Grind, repair, and replace deteriorating & minimally functional sidewalks.

Goal 4 / Bicycle Access: Integrate bicycle facilities into the area's transportation network.

- Promote implementation of Chattanooga Urban Area Bicycle Facilities Master Plan
- Study installation of bicycle warning light system for Wilcox Tunnel

Goal 5 / Gateway & Streetscape Improvements: Provide gateway treatments & streetscape improvements where appropriate.

- Form a neighborhood beautification committee within the neighborhood association to identify and develop community gateways and to maintain streetscaping.
- Provide streetscaping at Wilcox/Dodson commercial node.



Wilcox Boulevard streetscaping

RAILROADS

Issues

Avondale benefits from close proximity to the Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum. The museum operates periodically on the East Chattanooga Belt Railway line that crosses Avondale from northeast to southwest. The museum continues to explore possible increases in service to better utilize the line. The possibility of regular service to downtown has been discussed. In the event of increased frequency of service, the museum is interested in improving the line within the existing railroad right-of-way to provide grade separations where possible. This creates the possibility of locating a greenway or safewalk on the location of the former line, an option that should be explored if relocation of the line ever occurs.



Rail crossing at N. Orchard Knob Ave

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1 / Rail Improvements: With increased rail traffic, improve existing track safety and provide for pedestrian amenities.

- Work with East Chattanooga Belt Railway to explore possible greenway or safewalk on rail right-of-way pending discussion of rail relocation.
- Work with East Chattanooga Belt Railway to improve rail safety along existing track, pending increased traffic.



CARTA headquarters

TRANSIT

Issues

Avondale is very well served by public transit, with CARTA headquarters located at the western edge of the study boundary. The pending closing of the sidewalk through the Wilcox Tunnel does present challenges, however, for resident mobility through the tunnel, and CARTA has agreed to install bus shelters and provide free service through the tunnel to help alleviate the problem

Goals & Strategies

Goal 1 / Wilcox Tunnel Improvements: With closure of sidewalk through tunnel, provide alternate transportation through for pedestrians.

- Install bus shelters and provide free CARTA service through the tunnel on a regular basis.



Wilcox Tunnel

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A plan is much like a house; this plan document and the work that went into completing it are a framework upon which great things can be built. But, just as a house with a framework alone is incomplete, so is this plan without implementation: the crucial steps that turn the words in this document into a tangible reality. The success of this plan is utterly dependent upon the support it receives. It is the role of the Avondale community, through the neighborhood association and other stakeholders, to move the plan towards implementation.

Formation of an implementation committee, comprised of various community stakeholders, can be a crucial first step towards implementation. The committee can help to initiate priority projects listed in the plan and help sustain the momentum generated during the planning process.

Project	Strategy	Schedule			Cost	Partners
		5 yrs	10 yrs	15 yrs		
Intersection Improvements	Analyze North Chamberlain @ Ocoee intersection	X			--	RPA, Traffic Engineering
Intersection Improvements	Analyze Arlington @ Wilcox & Monroe intersection	X			--	RPA, Traffic Engineering
Intersection Improvements	Analyze Ocoee @ Roanoke intersection	X			--	RPA, Traffic Engineering
Sidewalk Improvements	Extend sidewalks on North Chamberlain Ave from Wilcox to Crutchfield	X				Public Works
Sidewalk Improvements	Extend sidewalks on Ocoee St from Roanoke to Dodson		X			Public Works
Safewalk	Study feasibility of conversion of abandoned rail line to pedestrian greenway	X			--	RPA, Trust for Public Land
Street Maintenance	Repair, resurface, and stripe deteriorating streets	- Ongoing -			--	Public Works
Sidewalk Maintenance	Grind, repair, and replace deteriorating sidewalks	- Ongoing -			--	Public Works
Bicycle Master Plan	Promote implementation of Chattanooga Urban Area Bicycle Master Plan	X	X		--	RPA, Public Works, Bicycle Committee
Tunnel Warning Lights	Study installation of bicycle warning light system for Wilcox Tunnel	X			--	Public Works
Neighborhood beautification committee	Form a neighborhood beautification committee within the neighborhood association	X			--	Neighborhood Association
Community Gateways	Identify and develop community gateways	X	X		--	RPA, Neighborhood Beautification Committee
Streetscaping	Provide streetscaping at Wilcox/Dodson commercial node		X		--	City of Chattanooga
Rail Improvements	Work with East Chattanooga Belt Railway on rail improvements	Dependent on increased traffic			--	RPA, Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum
Safewalk	Explore possible safewalk on East Chattanooga Belt Railway right-of-way	Dependent on rail line relocation			--	RPA, Tennessee Valley Railroad Museum
Wilcox Tunnel Pedestrian / Transit Improvements	Install bus shelters	X				City of Chattanooga, CARTA
Wilcox Tunnel Pedestrian / Transit Improvements	Provide free CARTA service through tunnel after sidewalk removal	X				CARTA