

# South End Revitalization Plan

## PHASE 2



*Funded by:*

2011 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant

City of Springfield

DevelopSpringfield

Springfield Housing Authority

Local Partners

May 2014 **DRAFT**

## Letter from Mayor Sarno

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# Executive Summary



Chapter I

# Executive Summary

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## Chapter I

# Executive Summary

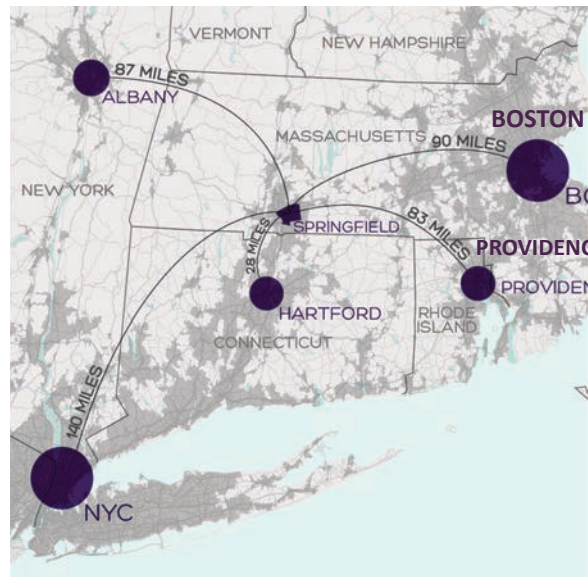
The *South End Revitalization Plan: Phase 2*, funded by a 2011 Choice Neighborhoods planning grant and locally leveraged funds, continues the revitalization effort in the South End neighborhood in Springfield, Massachusetts. Once a bustling tight-knit community of Italian-American homeowners along the residential streets, with restaurants and neighborhood businesses along Main Street, today the South End suffers from long-term disinvestment and more recently a devastating tornado that tore through the heart of the city in June 2011. Based on community and stakeholder input, this plan builds off of earlier plans to guide the holistic transformation of this key Springfield neighborhood. Detailed strategies have been developed, metrics have been identified to measure progress towards preferred outcomes, implementation partners are in place, and a variety of funding sources have been identified to continue the South End revitalization effort. There is strong momentum in place to move these strategies from vision to reality.

## A. Target Site and Neighborhood

The South End neighborhood is the smallest of Springfield's 17 neighborhoods with a population in 2010 of 4,386 residents. It is the southern gateway to Downtown Springfield and is bounded by Maple Street to the east, Mill Street to the south, the Connecticut River to the west, and Bliss Street to the north. Main Street, which runs

north-south through the neighborhood and leads to the heart of the city, is a major connector and a prime but deteriorated commercial corridor that is slowly rebuilding itself with the help of the City and a recent substantial investment in new streetscape along Main Street.

The two targeted housing sites for the CNI-funded planning effort are the HUD-assisted properties—Concord Heights and Outing Park Apartments (collectively known as Outing Park)—and the Springfield Housing Authority's Marble Street Apartments, adjacent to Outing Park. This configuration has resulted in a dense concentration of approximately 350 deeply subsidized units in a neighborhood with a 45 percent poverty rate. The area has long been the target of regional drug dealers who sell to both wholesale and retail buyers and, as a result, the South End has a violent crime rate that is nearly three times higher than the rate for the City as a whole. This is the number one issue for residents and community stakeholders.



State context

## B. Recent South End Planning and Implementation Initiatives

The City has targeted the South End for a multi-year revitalization effort since 2007 when a ULI Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) developed a redevelopment strategy that focused on the area to the east of Main Street where vacant land was plentiful and the distressed Outing Park Apartments were driving neighborhood renters and owners out of the area. A key outcome of the TAP report was the creation of the South End Revitalization Coalition (SERC) to engage a broader group of residents and stakeholders in the redevelopment process. The recommendations from the report set the stage and direction for the work in the South End that continues today. To reinforce the City's focus on revitalizing this neighborhood, it has been a designated Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) since 2008 and a Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) area since 2009. The South End Urban Renewal Plan was amended in 2009 to allow for the expansion and redevelopment of Emerson Wight Park, which is now complete. Main Street streetscape improvements were completed in 2010 and the former Gemini site was remediated to make way for future development.

In June 2011, a tornado ripped through downtown Springfield and cut a mile swath through several neighborhoods, including the South End. A broad-based and inclusive planning process ensued which involved multiple stakeholder conversations and public meetings attracting more than 3,000 residents. The resultant recovery master plan was detailed in the ReBuild Springfield Plan, with separate plans prepared for three impacted districts. District One plan covers the downtown area and the South End neighborhood.

With the award of a 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, the City has been able to continue more detailed planning, using the ReBuild Springfield Plan as the foundation, and therefore has entitled the CNI Revitalization Plan as a Phase 2 document. Since the earlier plan focused more on neighborhood improvements, this Phase 2 Revitalization Plan includes more detailed planning for the Housing and People components. These two revitalization plans have also been informed by and coordinated with the regional Sustainable Communities planning effort led by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and the CDBG-DR Action Plan prepared for the \$21.9 million disaster recovery effort.

## C. Highlights of the Revitalization Plan

The *South End Revitalization Plan: Phase 2* provides a detailed roadmap for continuing the planning and implementation process that is already underway. In Table I-1, key goals for each of the critical components of a viable and sustainable neighborhood—Neighborhood, Housing and People—have been articulated with input from the community. Highlights of each of these components follow.



**Table I-1. Key Goals for the South End Revitalization Plan: Phase 2**

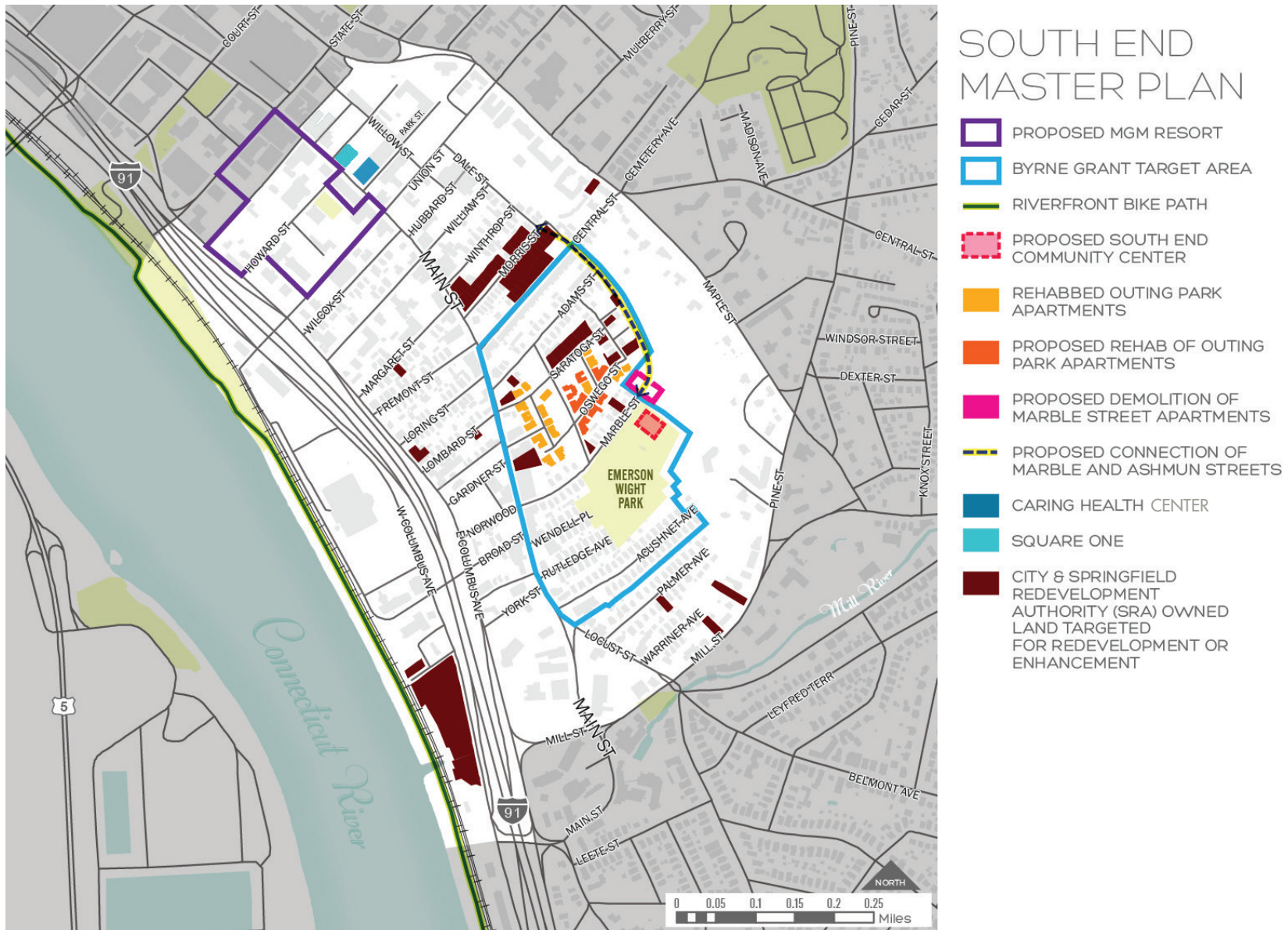
Neighborhood	
<b>N1</b>	Residents and visitors view the South End as a safe place to live, work and shop.
<b>N2</b>	Main Street returns to a vibrant commercial district supporting the needs of residents and visitors.
<b>N3</b>	Open space and recreational opportunities are available to and used by all ages.
<b>N4</b>	The South End attracts an economically diverse residential population.
<b>N5</b>	Improved connectivity within the neighborhood benefits both access to amenities and public safety.
Housing	
<b>H1</b>	The substantial rehabilitation of Outing Park Apartments is completed.
<b>H2</b>	Marble Street units are demolished and replaced in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation.
<b>H3</b>	A responsible relocation plan for Marble Street residents is developed and implemented.
People	
<b>P1</b>	Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.
<b>P2</b>	Children, youth and adults are physically and mentally healthy.
<b>P3</b>	Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career”.

### Neighborhood

The Neighborhood Strategy represents a finetuning of improvements and initiatives that were recommended in previous plans, especially the Rebuild Springfield Plan. Several investments have already been made including streetscape improvements to Main Street, redevelopment of the Emerson Wight Park, remediation of a Brownfield site, and the acquisition and demolition of blighted properties. Other projects in the planning and design phase include the extension of Ashmun to Marble Street, the construction of a new South End Community Center, and façade improvements and the expansion of the Business Improvement District (BID) along Main Street.

Most importantly, hearing the community’s number one priority of improving public safety and reducing crime, the City has applied for and been awarded a Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant to implement in the South End the successful community policing initiative piloted in another neighborhood. The Counter Criminal Continuum (C<sup>3</sup>) Policing strategy is grounded in community outreach, youth and parental workshops, business and community leadership development, and law enforcement operations. Still in the assessment and planning stages, full scale implementation of the C<sup>3</sup> initiative will begin in early 2015.

**Figure I-1. South End Master Plan**



The single project with the most catalytic impact on the South End neighborhood, however, is the proposed MGM resort casino, an \$800 million development effort located across 15 acres in the northern portion of the South End neighborhood adjacent to the downtown. Local approvals are in place and the Massachusetts Gaming Commission is expected to issue a casino license in the near future – pending a possible state repeal of the casino law. Potential community benefits include new entertain and restaurant venues, hotel, skating rink, cinema, bowling alley, job opportunities, market-rate housing, and financial support for community-based services and programs.

**“Taking a page from the design of modern retail malls, such as Providence Place in downtown Providence, MGM plans to build amenities, such as restaurants and shops, on the outside of the resort, facing the streets, to encourage foot traffic downtown.”**

*Boston Globe, May 20, 2014*



### Housing

The Housing component focuses on two deeply subsidized developments adjacent to one another: Outing Park and Marble Street. Outing Park is comprised of 3-phases of HUD-assisted housing owned and operated by First Resource Development and Management companies. The first two phases of substantial rehabilitation have been completed and the final phase is awaiting an expected tax credit allocation this year, with construction completion targeted in 2015. The \$68 million rehabilitation project has already improved the appearance of the neighborhood and contributed to a safer environment for adults as well as children. A new leasing office/community building provides space for residents to meet with each other as well as service providers in the area.

Marble Street, a 46-unit public housing development, remains severely distressed and targeted for demolition and replacement in a mixed-income development(s). An updated residential market study recommended that mixed-income housing not be developed in the South End at this time because of the weakness of the market and the concentration of assisted housing. There is a fear that tax credit rents, Fair Market Rents (FMRs), and market-rate rents are effectively the same and therefore any new mixed-income development would soon serve only assisted households.

**Figure I-2. Outing Park Historic District Master Plan**



As a result, SHA and the City are exploring housing replacement options in other opportunity neighborhoods less impacted by high concentrations of poverty and racial segregation. The City's recently approved Analysis of Impediments looked carefully at the demographics of Springfield's 17 neighborhoods and at the Kirwin Institute's report on the geography of opportunity throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This report clearly highlighted that poverty in western Massachusetts is heavily concentrated in the City of Springfield; the surrounding communities are much more diverse economically and racially. SHA and the City are exploring replacement housing opportunities both within the City as well as in surrounding communities.

**Over 50% of the city's rental housing (26,513 units) is occupied by a household with a housing subsidy (including Housing Choice Vouchers).**

### People

The People strategy relies heavily on the robust network of service providers in the neighborhood and/or serving its residents. The CNI-funded planning effort allowed for a series of detailed discussions with three working groups focused on Health and Wellness, Workforce Development, and Education. Strategies were developed based on an in-depth survey administered to residents at both Outing Park and Marble Street. Community meetings were held to present the resident needs assessment and to prioritize strategies for improving outcomes for residents. In the past six months, two key anchor institutions in the South End – Caring Health Center and Square One – reopened their doors on Main Street and are outreaching to South End residents to encourage active use of their services. In addition, a new charter school serving K-8 grades has been approved and is looking for a site in the South End to open in Fall 2015.

Residents at Outing Park and Marble Street are first priority for these services, with other South End residents also targeted in outreach efforts. The new community building/leasing office at Outing Park is ideal for resident meetings with service providers. A service coordinator position is funded out of the operating budget to assist residents with making connections to needed services. At Marble Street, SHA will continue to run its resident services program on site until

demolition is approved. The City is funding providers to deliver employment training to residents in tornado-stricken neighborhoods, with a priority for the South End. Identifying funding for case management services for the hard to house population is also underway. The goal is to formally establish a providers network to oversee the coordination of services to residents and to monitor the impact of these services on improving quality of life.

## D. Implementation

As the result of earlier planning efforts, numerous implementation projects have already been completed or are in the design stage including: expansion and redevelopment of Emerson Wight Park, streetscape improvements along Main Street, creation of the Outing Park Historic District and rehabilitation of most of the Outing Park units, and extension of Ashmun Street through to Marble Street to improve connections within the neighborhood and public safety. This revitalization has created strong momentum for continued investment in the South End using the strategies in this Phase 2 Plan to guide future and ongoing efforts.

### Lead Partners

The lead partners in the South End's continued transformation are the City of Springfield and the Springfield Housing Authority. The City oversees many of the resources – including funding and/or tools – that are essential to neighborhood revitalization including designation of the South End Urban Renewal Area, the targeted NSP area, and the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategic Area. SHA will lead the effort to replace the 46 public housing units targeted for demolition. This will include preparing a demolition application and relocation plan for approval by HUD, and once approved, applying for tenant protection vouchers. Using its current voucher authority,

SHA will then use the RFP process to project-base 46 units so there is no diminution of affordable housing resources. SHA has already procured a developer for replacement housing but may also pursue other developers once a replacement plan is in place.

The South End community-based organizations (CBOs) are also key partners in the revitalization effort. HAPHousing has deep roots in the neighborhood and is actively facilitating community building activities funded by the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant. The South End Revitalization Coalition, established in 2007, is a sounding board for any new projects or initiatives in the neighborhood. The City's South End project manager liaises regularly with this group, facilitates meetings, and maintains the website for the South End revitalization project. Key service providers include Caring Health Center and Square One, devoted to quality early childhood education and parental supports, are located on Main Street, providing easy access for all South End residents. All of these partners – from the City to SHA to the multitude of CBOs – have a long history of working together and will continue this collaboration and coordination using the Phase 2 plan as a roadmap.

### Financing

The City has strategically used its limited resources including CDBG, HOME, and NSP funds to invest in the South End in impactful ways. These

sources will be supplemented by some of the \$21.9 million allocation of CDBG-Disaster Recovery funds as well as FEMA funds to repair the damage resulting from the 2011 tornado and subsequent winter storms. Housing rehabilitation and replacement will be funded with tax credit equity, state and city housing funds, private mortgages, and project-basing resources. A potential and substantial new source of funding for the City is the Host Community Agreement executed between the City and Blue Tarp redevelopment LLC, an affiliate of MGM Resorts International. This agreement calls for \$15 million in advance payments to the City and at least \$25 million in annual revenue once the casino is operational. This is a potential source of funding for early childhood learning programs, case management services, and other amenities that would benefit the South End.

### Schedule

Implementation is already underway in the South End. The design and engineering work for the street extension and the South End Community Center are in process with construction scheduled for 2016/2017. The Main Street façade improvement program and extension of the Business Improvement District south on Main are under discussion. The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant is funding planning and community building work in the South End this year with the goal of implementing the C<sup>3</sup> policing

and community engagement model next year. SHA will soon start preparing the demolition application for HUD approval, which will include a detailed replacement housing plan and a relocation plan, with the goal of replacing the units in mixed-income communities within the next 2-4 years. CDBG-DR funding for employment training programs will be distributed via RFPs to local providers before the end of this year. Live Well Springfield is implementing its community-wide campaign to promote healthy eating and physical activity where the South End is one of three target neighborhoods. This initiative has added South End stops to the Go Fresh mobile market and is working with the city to complete a bike plan that will include improvements in the neighborhood. By mid-summer, MGM should know whether it will be issued a gaming license so detailed design and construction can begin.

### **Measuring Change**

The ability to demonstrate incremental positive change at the community level is a powerful tool to keep stakeholders engaged and funders at the table. The City already uses Efforts-to-Outcomes software to report on its federally-funded programs and will encourage other providers to adopt this software as well. The City will take the lead in finetuning the metrics for the South End revitalization effort and will coordinate with the Byrne grant researchers and other providers who have adopted their own set of metrics. The goal is to host an annual data summit to measure progress being made against the priority outcomes and to revisit strategies that are not effective in delivering positive outcomes.





Chapter II

# Setting the Context



# Setting the Context

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## Chapter VI

# Setting The Context

## A. City Context

Located on the eastern bank of the Connecticut River, the City of Springfield is situated mid-way between Boston and New York City in western Massachusetts. Established in 1636, Springfield became a prominent manufacturing center in 1777 when George Washington founded the United States' National Armory in the City due in large part to its geographic location and access to major trade routes in the northeast. Between 1777 and the mid-20th century, Springfield was a hotbed of innovation and invention, earning it nicknames like "The City of Firsts", "The City of Homes", and "Hoop City."

Starting in the late 1960s as the United States entered into the post-industrial era and the concurrent decommissioning of the U.S. Armory, Springfield experienced a decades-long decline characterized by a loss of population and manufacturing jobs, and increases in unemployment and crime rates. The demographics of the City shifted as well, from primarily white non-Hispanic, to a very multi-cultural community where white non-Hispanics only account for 37% of the population today,



### Prominent Inventions, Businesses and People

- First American-English Dictionary (Merriam Webster)
- Discovery and patent of vulcanized rubber (Charles Goodyear)
- Invention of basketball (Dr. James Naismith)
- First American gas-powered automobile (Duryea Brothers)
- Childhood home of Theodor Seuss Geisel, aka. Dr. Seuss

### Founded in Springfield

- Friendly Ice Cream Corporation
- Good Housekeeping Magazine
- Milton Bradley Company
- Sheraton Hotels and Resorts

and persons of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity make up almost 40%. The influx of Hispanics and Latinos, primarily of Puerto Rican descent, in search of employment in seasonal agriculture and blue collar industries as well as more affordable housing than was available in New York, helped to mitigate the population loss that was otherwise experienced by other Northeastern cities.

Today, the City of Springfield is invested in reversing the negative trends of the last few decades – which includes capitalizing upon its geographical location and assets, preserving the historic fabric of the community, building upon the intellectual and

research resources in the region, and celebrating the multi-cultural richness of its resident population. Efforts and direction to reposition the City got re-energized with the convening of an Urban Land Institute (ULI) National Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) in Summer 2006 to evaluate the City’s assets and understand its challenges. The outcome was recommendations for how to capitalize upon the City’s location, leverage its strengths, and prioritize planning and development efforts. Two subsequent ULI TAP efforts were completed for Downtown Springfield and the South End neighborhood, which informed and

continue to guide redevelopment efforts in those areas today.

On June 1, 2011, a tornado tore through the heart of the City, damaging buildings and trees, and displacing hundreds of residents and businesses, including Downtown and the South End. The subsequent rebuilding efforts, guided by the Rebuild Springfield planning process completed in early 2012, provided the opportunity to revisit the existing redevelopment activities and ensure that future investments continued to move the City towards its vision for the community.

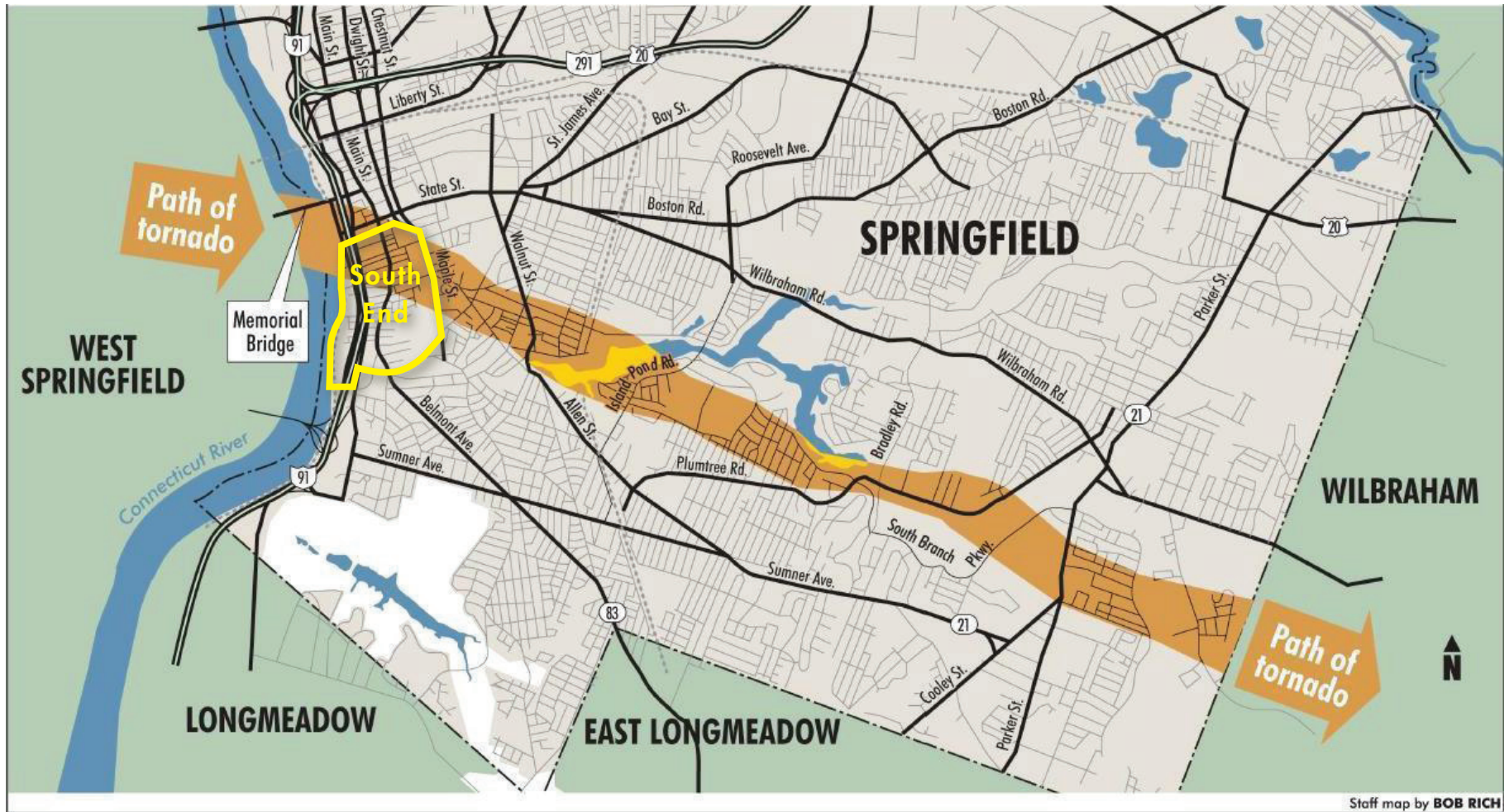
**Table II-1. City of Springfield Demographic History**

	Total Population	White	Black	Hispanic/Latino	White, Non-Hispanic/Latino
1940	149,554	98%	2%	NA	NA
1950	162,399	96%	4%	NA	NA
1960	174,463	92%	8%	NA	NA
1970	163,905	87%	13%	3%	84%
1980	152,319	76%	17%	9%	74%
1990	156,983	69%	19%	17%	64%
2000	152,082	56%	21%	27%	49%
2010	153,060	52%	22%	39%	37%

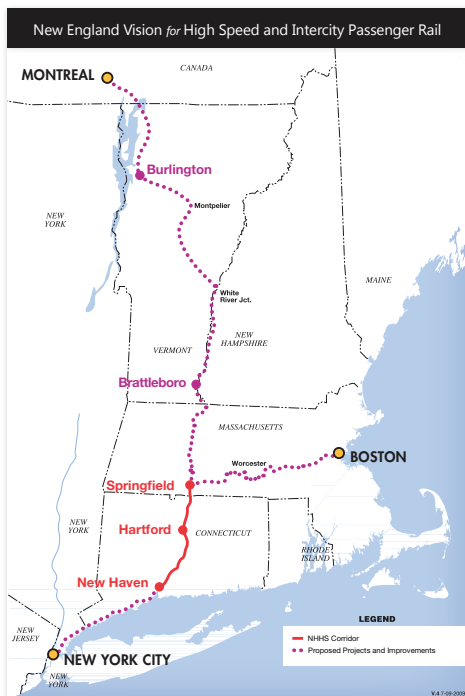


*Tornado damage at Main and Hubbard Streets*

Figure II-1. Springfield Tornado Path



The City has also been involved in regional efforts to bolster the economy of the area, including the ongoing work to bring enhanced commuter rail service along the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Corridor, which would serve as a connection to points south down to New York City, and northward and eastward eventually to Montreal and Boston, respectively, through Springfield. The enhanced rail service is expected to launch in late 2016.



Enhanced rail corridor

Springfield is also a member of the Knowledge Corridor Consortium, which was awarded a \$4.2 million FY 2010 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant focused on how to use planned new investments and other regional assets to expand opportunity to all residents in the region. With a goal of building a sustainable, economically competitive, and equitable Knowledge Corridor, the Consortium is working on a Regional Action Plan that will knit together updated regional plans into a coordinated and sustainable road map that makes best use of the resources and synergies in the region, including the location of 32 universities and colleges in the area.

The most recent socio-economic data for the City demonstrates that there are still many challenges to overcome – median household income is \$30,000

less than the State (\$34,628 vs. \$64,509), the poverty rate is two and a half times higher (27.6% vs. 10.5%), unemployment rate is twice as high (14.2% vs. 7.4%), and percent of residents with a college degree is half that of the State (10.6% vs. 21.9%). (See Appendix for South End Neighborhood Factbook.) However, the City has committed itself to continuing to invest in the community, as shown by the ongoing project work occurring throughout the City, including the most distressed neighborhoods like the South End.



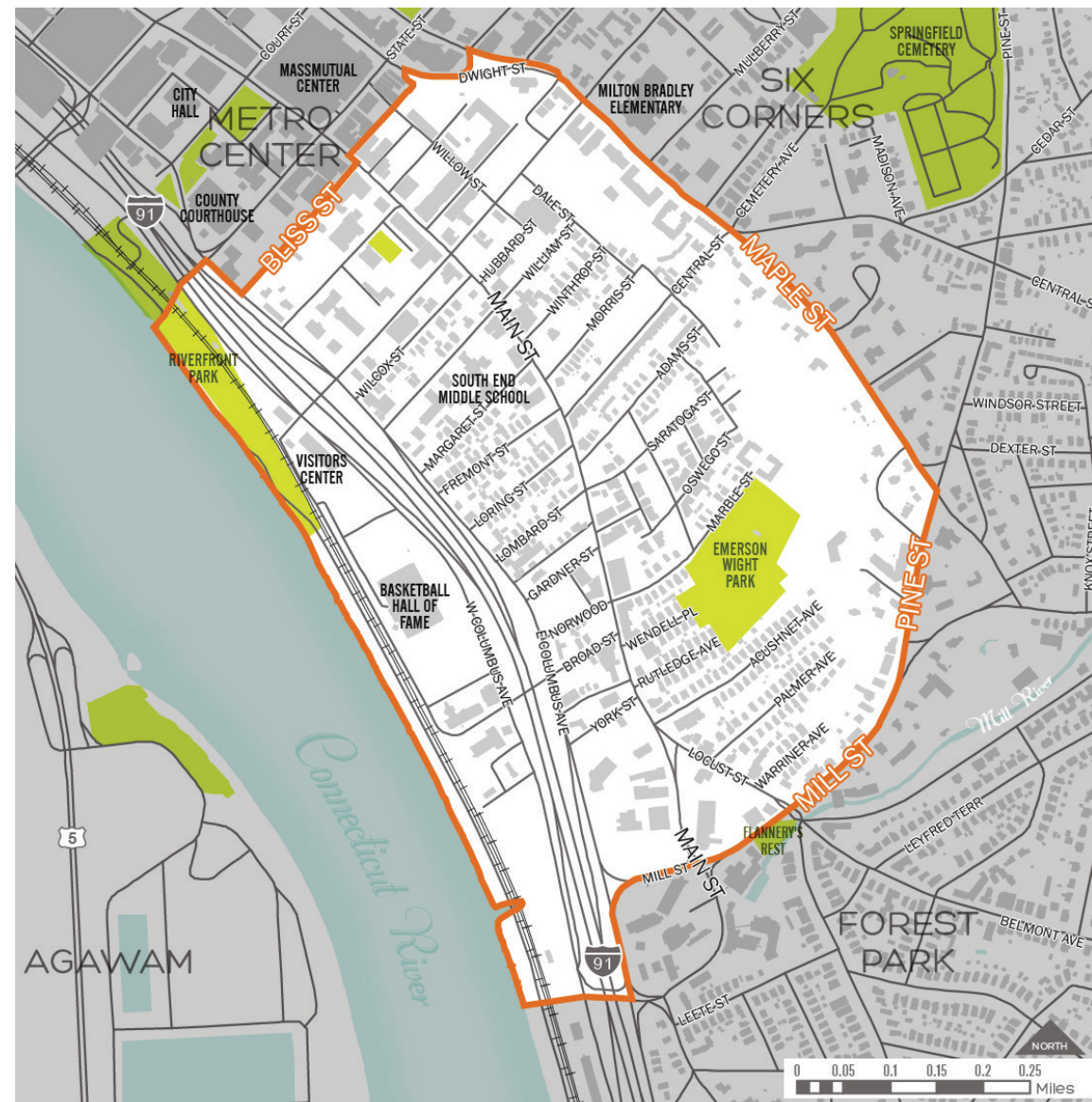
Knowledge Corridor

## B. South End Neighborhood

As the southern gateway to Downtown Springfield, the South End neighborhood is the smallest of all of the city's neighborhoods and is historically known for its tight-knit community of Italian-American homeowners along the residential streets, with restaurants and neighborhood businesses along Main Street. Bounded by Maple Street to the east, Pine and Mill Streets to the south, the Connecticut River to the west, and Bliss Street to the north (to correspond with census tract boundaries), the community's Italian roots are still evident by the numerous well known Italian restaurants and pastry shops in the area and the continued popularity of the annual Catholic Feast Days. Residents of the South End worked in traditional blue collar jobs and in the service industry.

Prior to the tornado of 2011, two events dramatically altered the landscape of the South End neighborhood. First, the great flood of 1936 devastated the community and other neighborhoods along the Connecticut River. High flood waters hit Springfield again in 1938 due to the New England Hurricane. As a result of these two floods, large portions of the South End neighborhood and others on the Connecticut River no longer exist. Second, in the 1960s, the decision was made to construct Interstate 91 over the areas affected by the great

Figure II-2. South End neighborhood



floods. This elevated highway created visual as well as physical barriers to the river, dislocating residents and effectively cutting the area off from this amenity. The resulting dislocation plus the decline of the industrial economic base destabilized the community and prompted the exodus of residents to the surrounding suburbs. Many of the residential units were converted to subsidized housing that attracted low-income renters, including the growing population of Hispanic immigrants.

Through the 1980s and 1990s, the South End has struggled with high crime rates, much of it linked to the drug trade and gang violence, and high rates of poverty. In 1982, the City created the South End Urban Renewal Plan (SEURP) in an attempt to stimulate the revitalization of the area, with a focus on housing rehabilitation, land assembly for new housing construction, the elimination of blight, the expansion of open space, and the provision of additional off-street parking. The redevelopment was opportunistic in approach, which resulted in limited investment and impact.

### C. Recent South End Development Initiatives

Subsequent to the 2006 city-wide ULP TAP work that identified the South End as the number one priority neighborhood project, a separate ULI TAP Panel was convened in 2007 that targeted the Hollywood-Gemini area in the South End. The recommendations from this report set the stage and direction for the work in the South End that continues today. These initially included the creation of the South End Revitalization Coalition (SERC) to engage a broader group of residents and stakeholder in the redevelopment process; the issuance of bonds to improve Main Street infrastructure through the South End; and environmental clean-up of the Gemini block. In 2008, GLC Development Resources completed a more detailed study of the retail and housing market conditions in the South End and provided an action agenda targeted at improving the quality of life and housing choice for local residents.

Since then, the City in partnership with the Coalition and other stakeholders has been actively working on executing priority projects in the South End. In 2008, the City was awarded Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding, which is targeted to a concentrated area in the center city and includes a portion of the South End neighborhood. NSP funds are being used to purchase and redevelop abandoned or foreclosed homes or residential properties for

households whose incomes do not exceed 50% of the area median income (AMI). The SEURP was updated in 2009 to expand the boundaries of the SEURP Project Area to include Emerson Wight Park and identified properties for acquisition to strategically expand the Park. After numerous community meetings and design charrettes, the park was completed in 2012 along with streetscape improvements to Dwight Street Extension which intersects with the park.

After the devastating tornado that tore through the center of the city in June 1, 2011, Rebuild Springfield initiated a large-scale community-based rebuilding effort for the three districts suffering the most destruction, including District One which is comprised of the Downtown Center and the South End. Recommendations resulting from this planning effort continued to reinforce the economic and housing revitalization of the South End. As this planning effort was coming to a close, a FY 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grant was awarded for the South End targeting the Springfield Housing Authority's Marble Street Apartments and two HUD-assisted projects (Concord Heights and Hollywood Apartments, renamed Outing Park). Recently a FY2013 Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program Grant was awarded for the Outing Park district within the South End to replicate a Counter Criminal Continuum (C<sup>3</sup>)



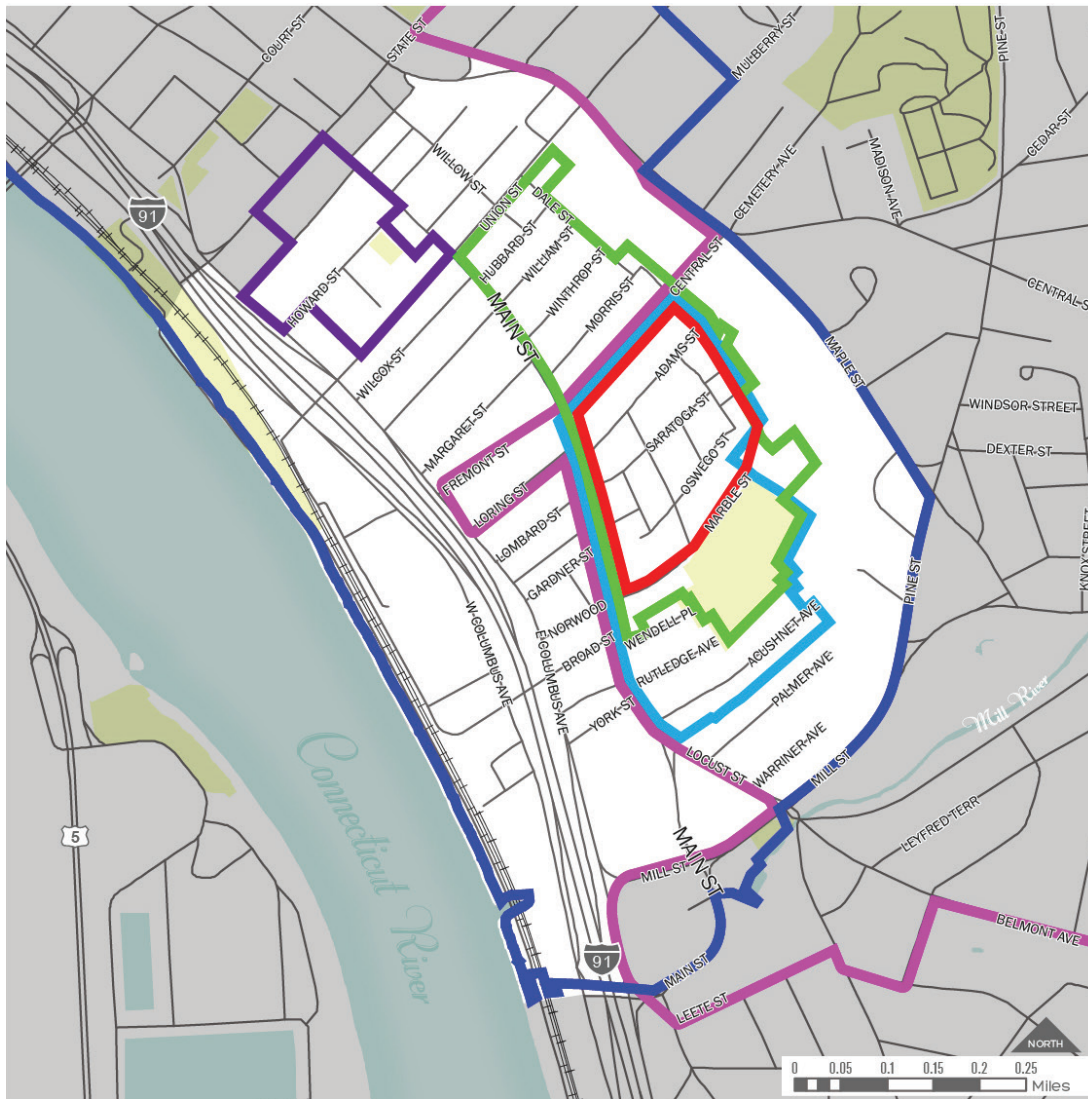
**Figure II-3. Recent South End Timeline**

<b>2006</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ULI City-wide Report</li> <li>- \$6.1M City bond approved for South End neighborhood improvements</li> </ul>
<b>2007</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ULI Technical Assistance Panel report for the South End</li> <li>- \$1.1M CDBG funds allocated for South End improvements</li> <li>- \$200K EPA Clean-up Grant awarded for Gemini site</li> </ul>
<b>2008</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- South End Revitalization Coalition (SERC) is created with residents and business owners</li> <li>- GLC market research reports</li> <li>- Gemini site environmental clean-up completed</li> <li>- \$75K State DHCD's Gateway Cities Plus Action Grant</li> </ul>
<b>2009</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- South End Action Plan fully developed for Public Realm, Housing, and Retail</li> <li>- \$100K State DHCD's Priority Development funds</li> <li>- Main Street streetscape design meetings</li> <li>- South End Urban Renewal Plan Amendment approved</li> <li>- City acquires 9 homes on Marble Street, relocates families, and demolishes for park</li> </ul>
<b>2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Main Street streetscape improvements completed</li> <li>- \$35K Gateway Cities Park Grant for design of Emerson Wight Park</li> <li>- Emerson Wight Park design charrettes with UMass LARP students</li> <li>- Gemini site improvements</li> <li>- \$500K Park Grant awarded for Emerson Wight</li> </ul>
<b>2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dwight Street Extension design meetings</li> <li>- \$1.2M MassWorks Grant award for park</li> <li>- <b>June 1, 2011 Tornado</b></li> <li>- \$300K HUD FY 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant awarded</li> </ul>
<b>2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rebuild Springfield (post-tornado) planning process</li> <li>- Emerson Wight Park construction completed</li> <li>- Dwight Street Extension streetscape improvements construction completed</li> <li>- First Resource completes rehabilitation of Concord Heights housing (Phase 1)</li> </ul>
<b>2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Construction of turn-around areas at the park and neighborhood landscape improvements</li> <li>- First Resource receives tax credit award for Outing Park I (Phase 2)</li> <li>- Springfield Police Department receive \$1M Byrne Grant for South End</li> <li>- City referendum approves casino; South End is only location in western Massachusetts</li> </ul>

model comprehensive crime strategy that has been so successful in Springfield's North End neighborhood.

Most significantly, in July 2013, voters approved the host community agreement between the City of Springfield and MGM Resorts International to pursue a state gaming license for an \$800 million resort casino complex to be built in the South End. It is hoped that these recent initiatives and development opportunities will be the catalyst to finally return the South End to a vibrant and safe community for residents, businesses and visitors.

**Figure II-4. Planning Initiatives**



ADDITIONAL PLANNING EFFORTS

- PROPOSED MGM RESORT
- REBUILD SPRINGFIELD
- BYRNE GRANT INITIATIVE
- NSP3 TARGET AREA
- ULI TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL
- SOUTH END URBAN RENEWAL PLAN

### Highlights of the Casino Project Plan

800,000 SF of mixed-use commercial and residential destination casino resort development including:

- One-level casino with slot machines and gaming tables
- Glass-façade 4-star tower hotel with 250 rooms
- 7 restaurants/cafes accessed off Main, Howard and State Streets
- Retail space opening on Main and State Streets
- 54 market-rate apartments in mid-rise accessed off Main Street
- Midrise retail building including cinemas, bowling alley, and pedestrian-scale retail space on Main and Union Streets
- Childcare center with outdoor play area

**Figure II-5. Proposed Casino Development**



Today, the South End remains a primarily residential neighborhood with a predominantly Latino population. The Main Street spine offers some commuter-serving retail including banks, specialty food stores, store with fresh produce (AC Produce), and retail clothing. This activity along Main Street is also reinforced by the reopening of two key stakeholders – the Caring Health Center and Square One Early Education Center. Commercial uses are located closer to the highway, and there is an entertainment area, including the Basketball Hall of Fame, situated on the west side of the highway adjacent to the Connecticut River. The community is extremely walkable; with a WalkScore of 78, the South End is the most walkable neighborhood in Springfield and most errands can be accomplished on foot. Close by amenities include the Springfield City Central Library, five museums, and Symphony Hall.



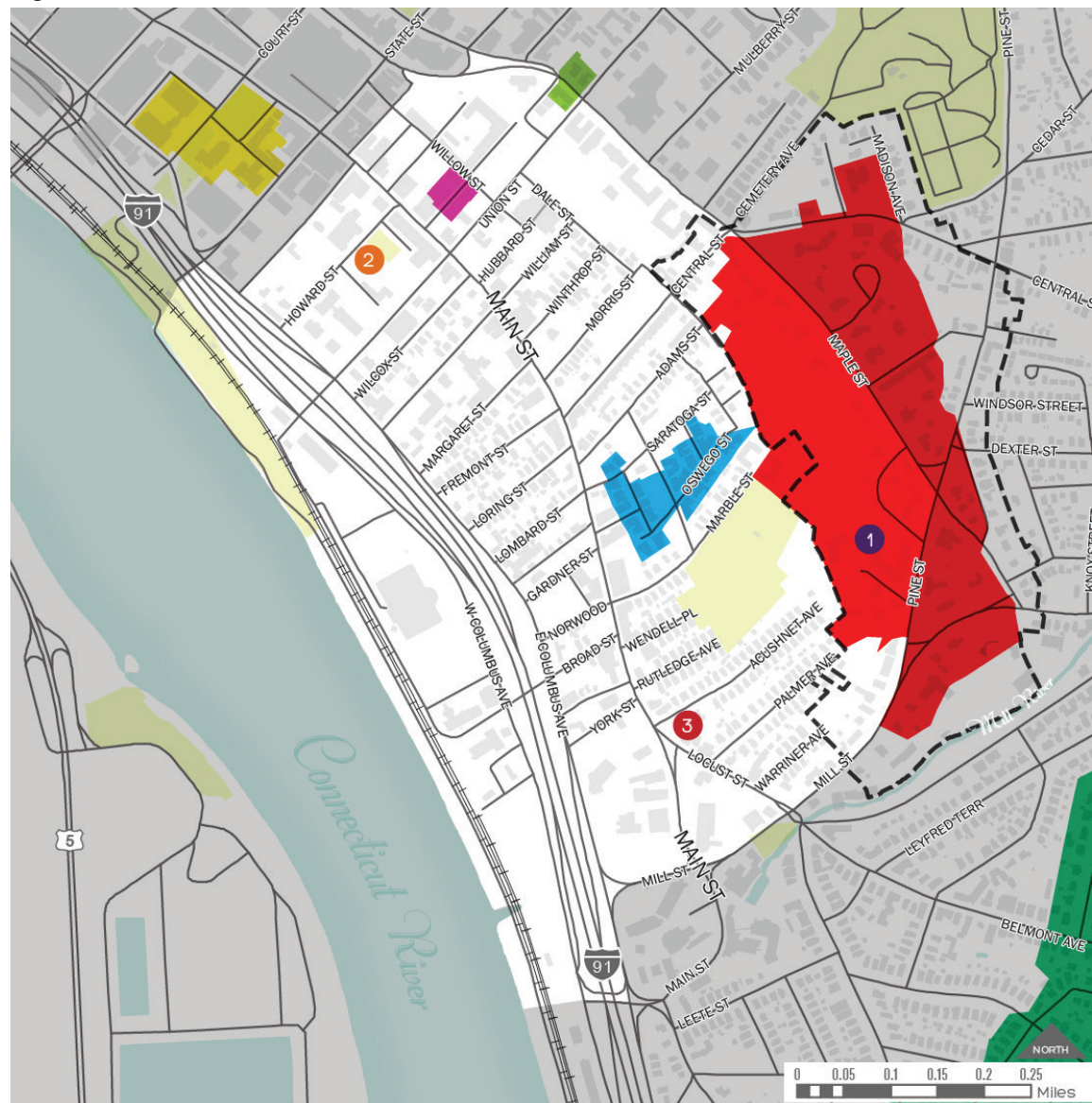
*Basketball Hall of Fame*



*Outing Park Historic District Sign*

The community boasts attractive architecture and historic buildings. Three structures in the South End are listed on the National Register – State Armory, Mills Stebbins Villa, and South Main Street School. A fourth historic listing -- the Hale-Mills-Owen Block -- was destroyed by the tornado. In 2012, as part of the revitalization of Concord Heights and Hollywood Apartments, the area including these housing developments was designated as the Outing Park Historic District. The District includes a collection of 23 4-story apartment buildings built between 1914 and 1926 along Niagara, Oswego, and Bayonne Streets, plus a few buildings on Dwight Street Extension and Saratoga Street.

**Figure II-6. Historic Sites**



## HISTORIC SITES

### NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT

- AMES HILL - CRESCENT HISTORIC DISTRICT
- OUTING PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT
- MAPLE- UNION CORNERS
- COURT SQUARE HISTORIC DISTRICT
- SMITH CARRIAGE COMPANY DISTRICT
- FOREST PARK HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT

### LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

- MAPLE HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

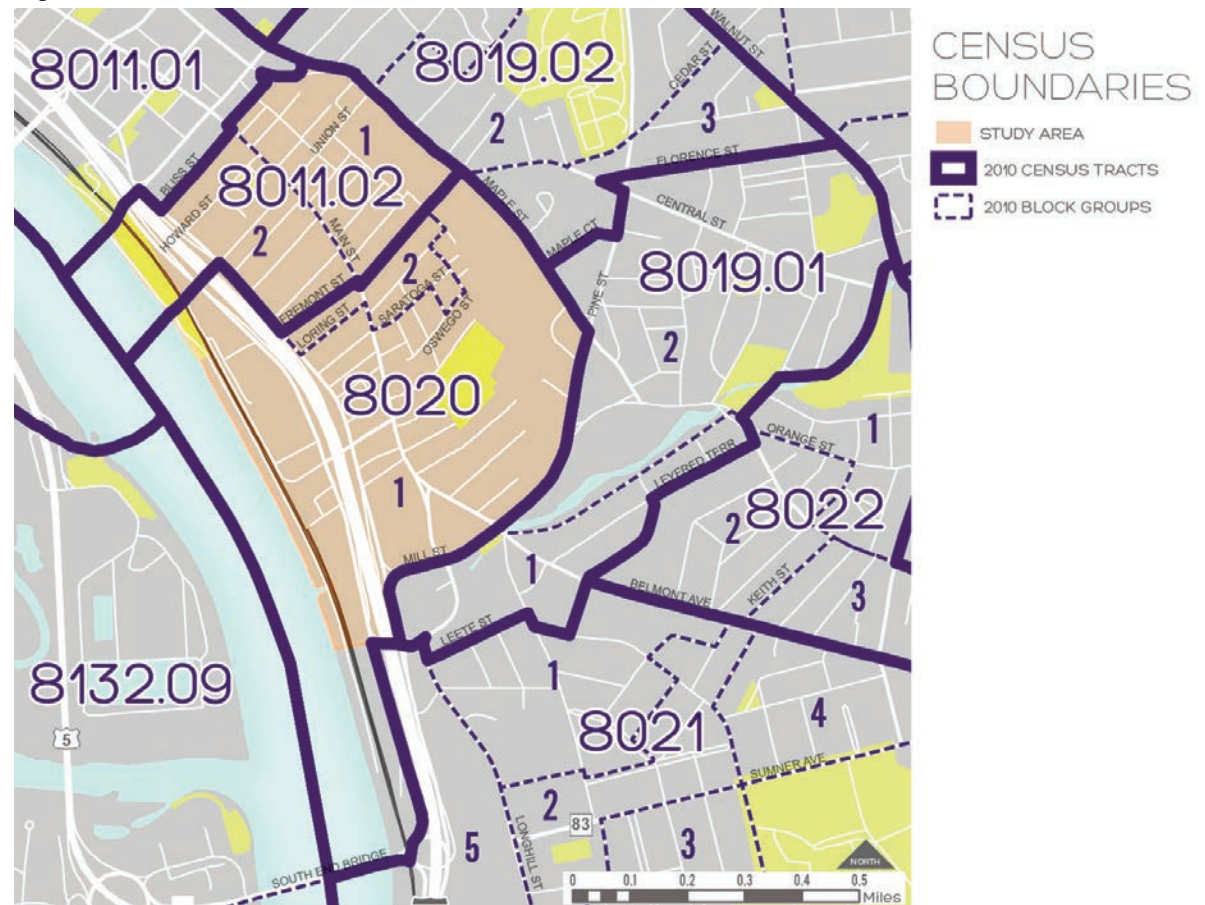
### NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC PLACES

- 1 MILLS- STEBBINS VILLA
- 2 STATE ARMORY
- 3 SOUTH MAIN STREET SCHOOL

### D. Demographic Profile

The South End neighborhood has a significantly higher Hispanic/Latino population, higher poverty and unemployment rates, lower educational attainment, and lower median household income than the City of Springfield as a whole. However, according to Census data, for the two census tracts that comprise the South End (Tracts 8011.02 and 8020), the socio-economic distress is concentrated in Census Tract 8020. The residents adjacent to downtown in Census Tract 8011.02 are better off financially and the area actually saw its resident population increase over the last decade, which may be indicative of the desirability for downtown/urban living and what could be possible for the rest of the South End.

**Figure II-7. Census Boundaries**



**Table II-2. Demographic Comparisons**

	Census Tract 8011.02	Census Tract 8020	South End Neighborhood	City of Springfield	State of Massachusetts
<b>Total Population</b>	1,537	2,849	4,386	153,060	6,547,629
% Change 2000-2010	+2.3%	-11.6%	-7.2%	+0.6%	+3.1%
<b>Race</b>					
White	52.0%	38.5%	41.9%	51.2%	80.4%
Black	19.6%	16.6%	17.6%	23.3%	6.6%
<b>Ethnicity</b>					
Hispanic/Latino	39.2%	71.6%	60.2%	38.8%	9.6%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$25,333	\$14,244	—	\$34,628	\$64,509
<b>Poverty Rate</b>	31.0%	63.1%	45.0%	27.6%	10.5%
<b>Educational Attainment</b>					
High School Diploma	24.7%	32.3%	29.4%	33.9%	26.7%
College Degree	12.0%	6.6%	8.7%	10.6%	21.9%
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	10.7%	18.8%	—	14.2%	7.4%

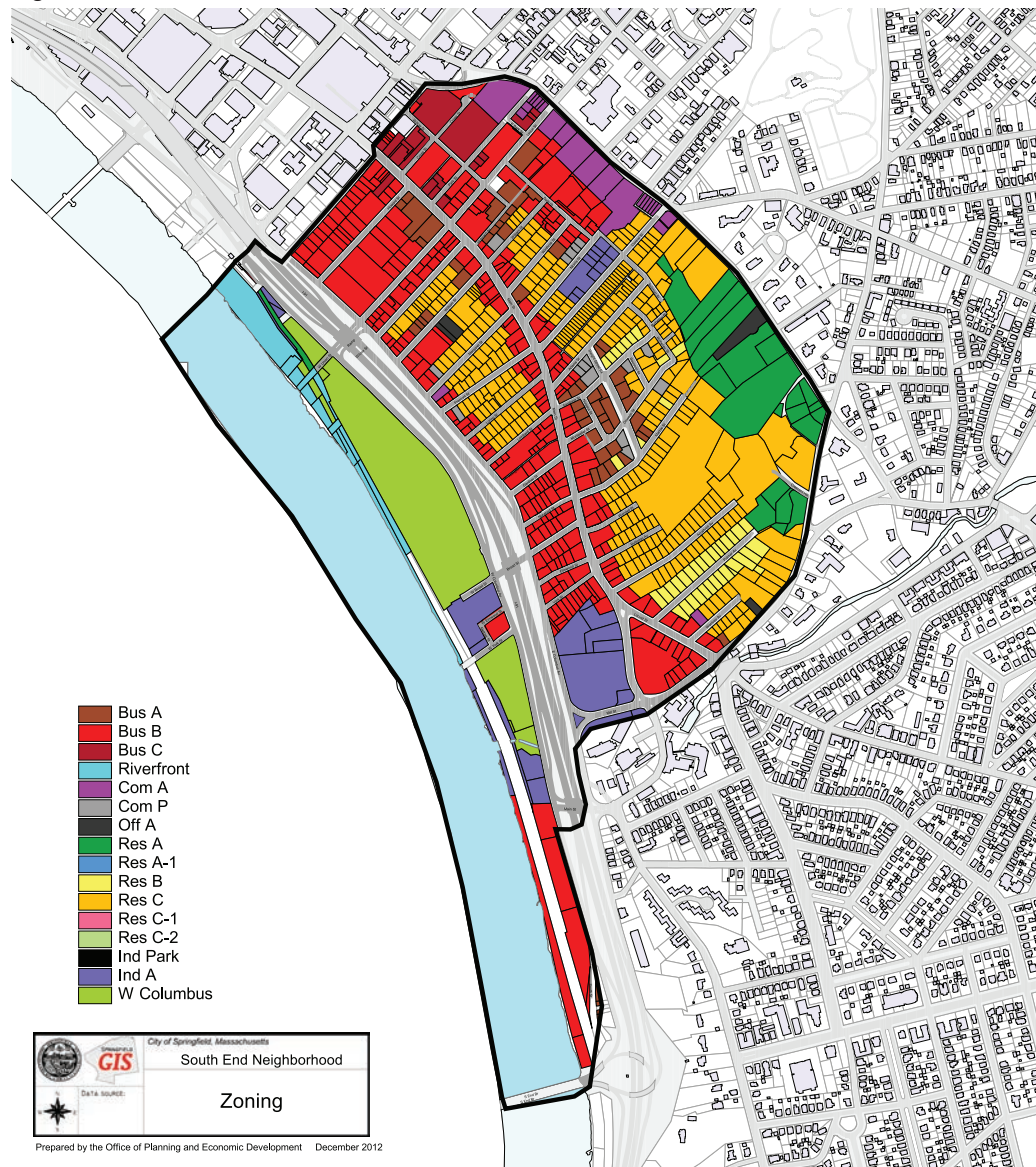
Source: *Neighborhood Fact Book of 2010 Census Data*

## E. Existing Conditions

### Zoning and Land Use

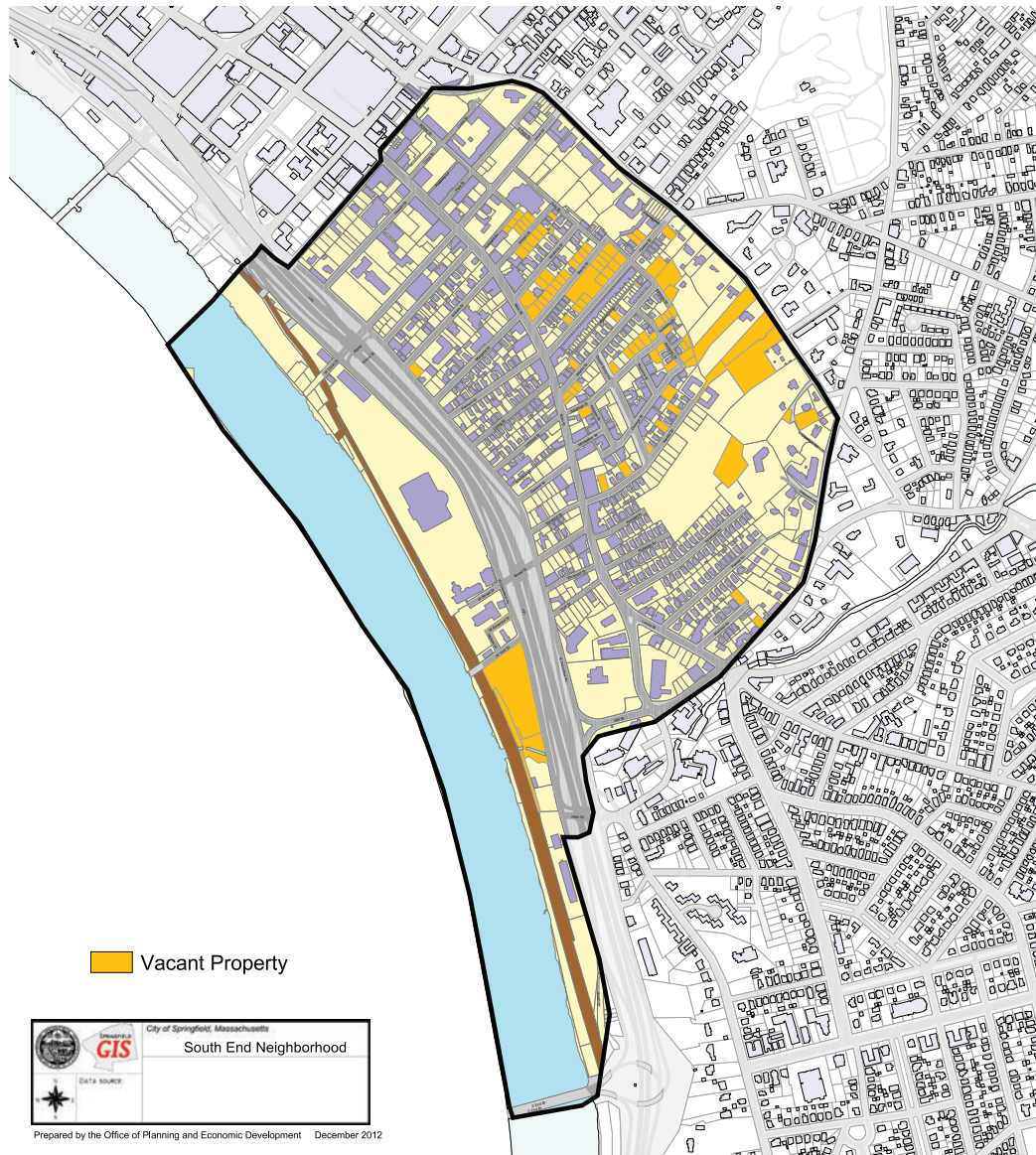
Most of the South End is zoned for residential use, except along Main Street and the areas closer to downtown and the Connecticut River where business and commercial uses dominate. Most of the residential areas are comprised of 2-3 family homes with a smattering of single-family houses, and concentrations of multi-family units. Emerson Wight Park is the only major open space in the community. A significant amount of land is owned by the City or Springfield Redevelopment Authority (SRA), especially in the middle of the neighborhood, much of which is currently vacant awaiting redevelopment (e.g. Gemini site). These sites, in conjunction with the other vacant land in the neighborhood, significantly disrupt the fabric of the neighborhood.

**Figure II-8. Zoning and Land Use**





**Figure II-9. Vacant Land**



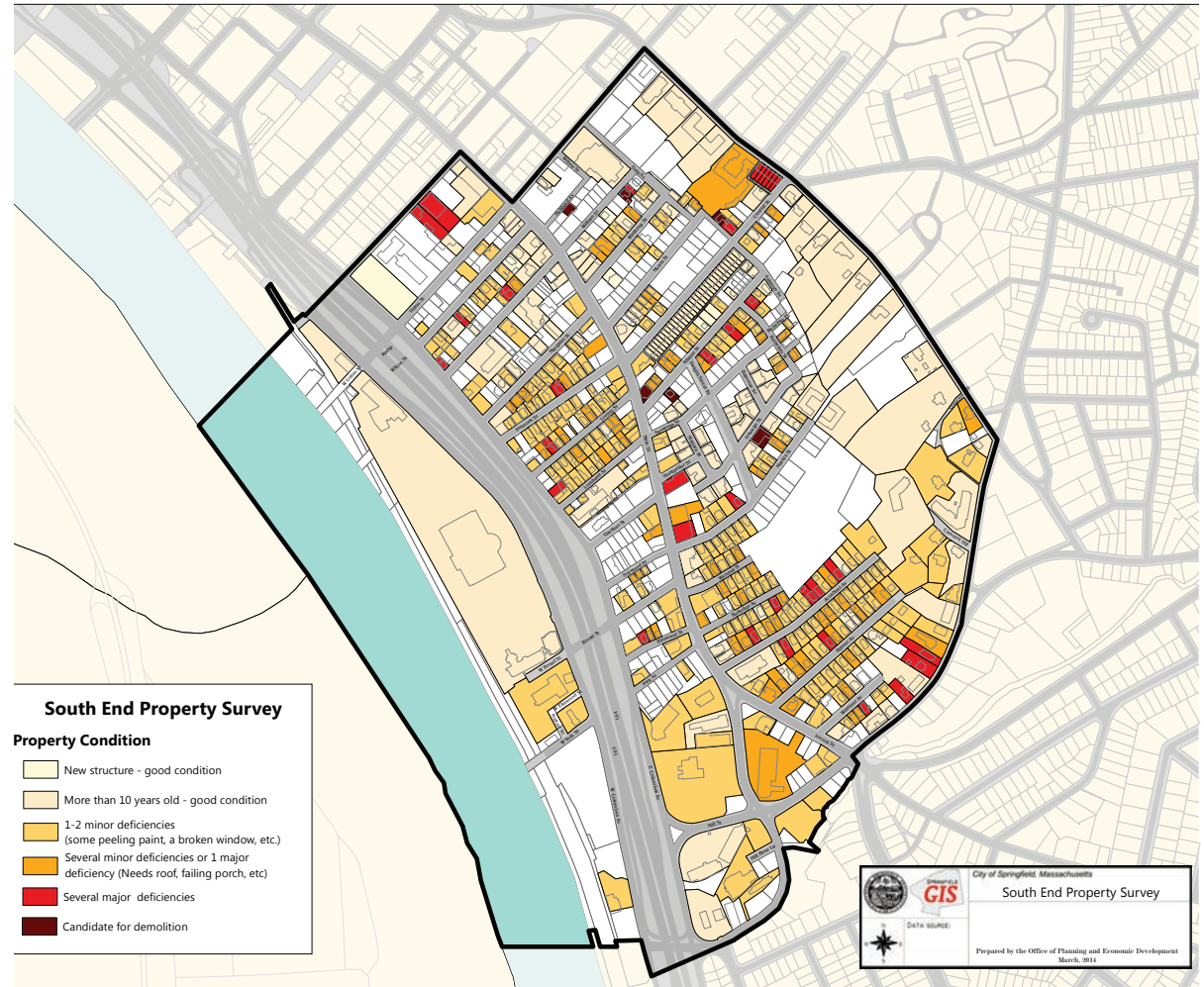
Now vacant Hale-Mills-Owen block

### Building Conditions

The South End suffered from disinvestment and deteriorating building conditions long before the tornado exacerbated the problem in June 2011. Code enforcement has been ongoing in the South End and in recent years the city has actively acquired and demolished some of the more distressed and abandoned properties. Poor building conditions plague both residential and non-residential structures, along Main Street and back into the more residential areas of the neighborhood.



**Figure II-10. Property Conditions**



### Commercial/Retail

The South End has two distinct retail zones – the area closest to downtown, which is more walkable and where most of the Italian-American retail businesses are located; and the southern portion towards Mill Street, which is more commuter-oriented. In comparison to other revitalizing neighborhood retail districts in the region, the South End has a relatively high amount of retail square footage per household, and a relatively high vacancy rate for existing spaces. The South End is not considered under-served from supermarket developer’s perspective, but the community may be able to support a small grocery, especially with additional residential and business development. AC Produce on Main Street is an important community asset that provides fresh produce to area residents.

According to CBRE’s New England 2011 Market Outlook, Main Street in the South End could probably accommodate about 110,000 to 160,000 square feet of neighborhood retail, which would serve not only residents, but also daytime employees and visitors to the area. The building at the intersection of Union and Main Street in the South End (979 Main Street) was significantly damaged during the June 2011 tornado, and this building and other key surrounding buildings should be rebuilt to help anchor the Main Street corridor in the neighborhood.



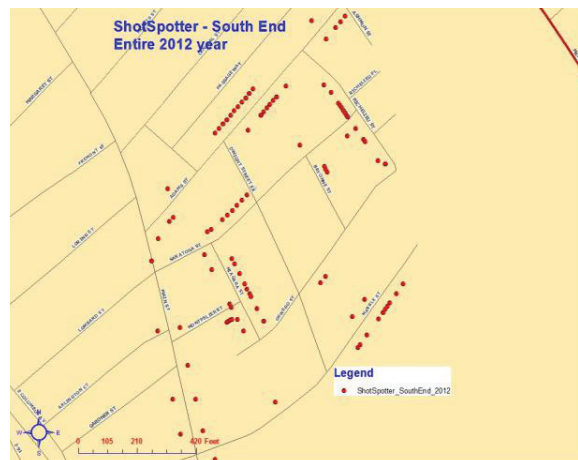
Figure II-11. Local Assets



### Crime and Safety

The prevalence of crime in the South End is the number one issue for residents and community stakeholders, and the target of a FY2013 Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program grant awarded to the city. Situated mid-way between Boston and New York City and at the intersection of two interstate highways (I-90 east-west and I-91 north-south), Springfield sits at the nexus of the major drug trafficking routes in New England. The worst crime problems are concentrated in the densely populated urban areas in and around the central business district, and are predominantly linked to the drug trade and associated weapons and gang violence. This is further exacerbated by negative influences in the built environment and among community actors, including liquor stores, locations that support drug dealing, and nuisance stores or uses. Between the years of 2003 and 2010, the City had the 2nd highest homicide rate in the State for persons under the age of 24.

The South End has a violent crime rate that is nearly three times higher than the rate for the City as a whole. Data from the Springfield Police Department, as well as on-the-ground experience by police officers, indicate that much of this crime is concentrated in the ¼-mile square Outing Park district within the neighborhood. Open air drug trading of heroin and other drugs to whole sale and retail buyers is the primary driver of crime in this area.



**Table II-3. Part 1 Violent Crime Rate per 1,000 persons**

	2010	2011	2012
South End	41.8	29.1	31.9
City of Springfield	13.7	10.4	10.5

Source: Springfield Police Department

**Table II-4. South End Target Area Incidents**

	2010	2011	2012
Aggravated Assault	37	21	21
Arson	0	5	0
Larceny	46	40	52
Malicious damage	46	56	43
Threats/Intimidation	49	45	30
B&E/Burglary	45	42	27
M/V Theft	15	15	11
Murder	0	0	0
Robbery	12	8	9
Weapons Law Violations	5	4	3
Shots Spotter Activations	29	24	22
Shots Fired Calls	15	5	14
<b>Totals</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>265</b>	<b>232</b>
<b>Total calls for service</b>	<b>2,576</b>	<b>2,579</b>	<b>2,475</b>
Total drug arrest	13.7	39	58

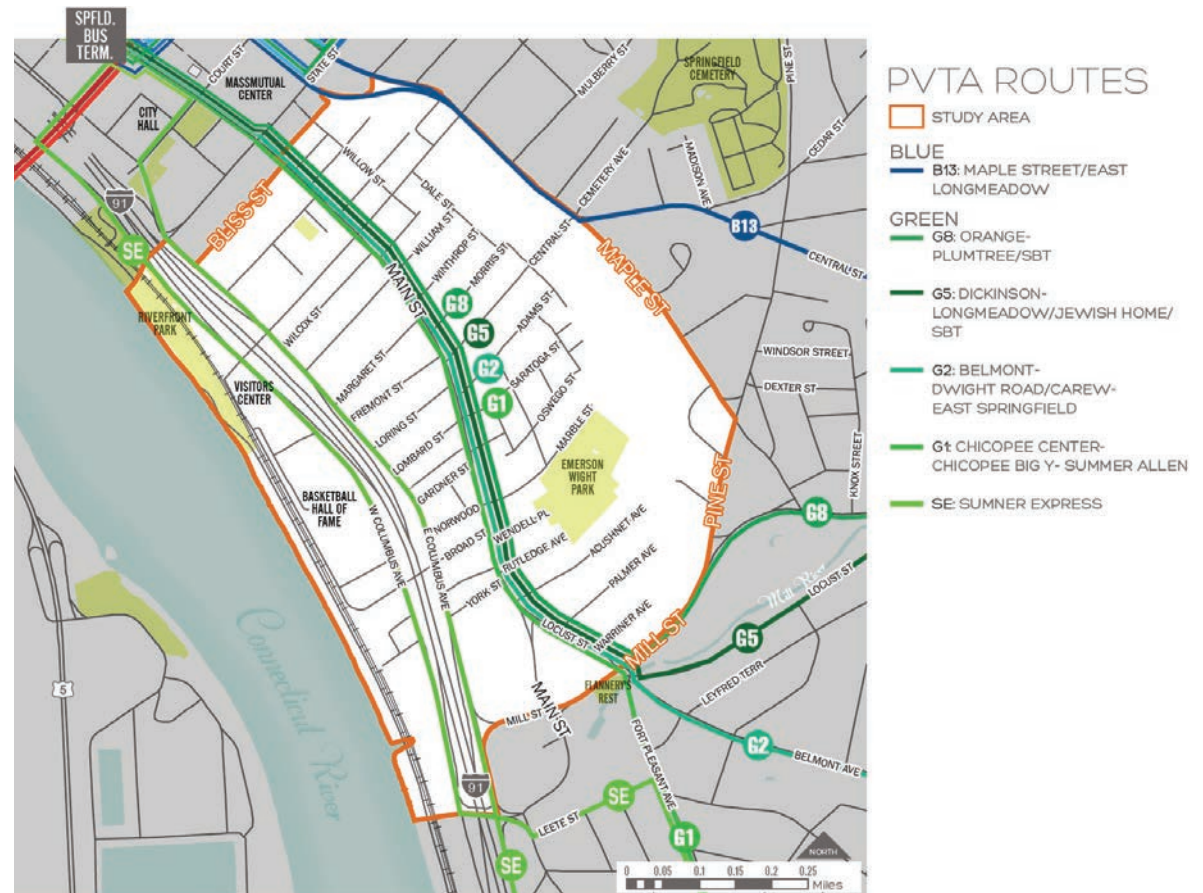
According to a survey of Outing Park and Marble Street residents, 68% indicated that crime occurs “frequently” in the neighborhood, 46% report feeling unsafe in the neighborhood, and 70% are unlikely to allow their children to play outside. Residents are reluctant to report crimes due to fear of retaliation, which impacts their willingness to cooperate with the police.

### Public Transportation

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) provides public transportation in Springfield and to 24 other communities in the Pioneer Valley region. Four public bus routes run down Main Street in the South End (G1, G2, G5, and G8), one bus route runs down Maple Street on the eastern edge of the neighborhood (B13), and one bus route runs on the western edge along East Columbus Avenue (SE).



Figure II-12. PVTA Routes



The G1 route provides access to shopping destinations (Walmart, Stop & Shop) through downtown Springfield and operates from 6:00am to 10:00pm with approximately 15 to 20 minutes headways on weekdays, and on a more limited schedule on the weekend. The G2 route operates from 5:30am to 9:30pm during the week on 20 minute headways and provides access to local hospitals, employment centers, and social services; 30 minute headways on Saturdays, and a very limited schedule on Sundays. The G5 route operates from 6:00am to 6:00pm during the week and on Saturday with one hour headways and provides access to high schools located east of downtown and community services to the south. The G8 route operates on a similar schedule to the G5 with access to high schools to the east and Nathan Bill Park. The Sumner Express operates only during morning and evening rush hour during the week on one hour headways, and serves the Baystate Medical Center just north of downtown and the Five Town Plaza to the south. Residents have expressed concerns about the timing of the bus trips and that current routes are not convenient in accessing areas and services needed. PVTA is currently reviewing these routes with the goal of improving access for residents.

As noted previously, the City of Springfield is part of the effort to bring enhanced commuter rail service along the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Corridor. Union Station in downtown Springfield, which was mostly decommissioned starting in the early 1970s due to the construction of I-91, is currently undergoing an \$81 million renovation to transform it into an intermodal transportation center. As the northern terminus of the New Haven-Hartford-Springfield Commuter Rail Line, the station will have the train platform rebuilt and extra tracks installed. Additionally, a 23-bay bus terminal and 400-space parking garage will be constructed along with retail and office space. The first phase of renovations was recently fully funded by MassDOT, and renovations are expected to be completed by 2016 in time for the launching of the enhanced rail service. This expanded rail service is intended to provide Springfield and its residents with greater economic opportunities across the region.



*Union Station*



*Union Station Under Construction*

### Infrastructure, Streets and Bicycle Paths

In recent years, as a part of the South End Revitalization Project, major infrastructure improvements have been completed along Main Street and more recently the Dwight Street Extension to make these thoroughfares more pedestrian-friendly, including new sidewalks, lighting, curb cuts, planters, and realigned parking. Other major street work planned is the connection of Marble Street to Ashmun Street to address the lack of through connections in the Outing Park district that is seen as a contributor to the crime in the area.



*Planters on Main Street*



*Main Street Streetscape Improvements*



*Landscaping on Main Street*



*Dwight Street Extension*



The first designated bike lane was recently opened in November 2013 in the City of Springfield on Plumtree Road. The City is in the process of developing a bicycle and pedestrian plan as a part of a larger initiative to promote healthy eating and active living being funded by a \$2 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The only other bike path in the City is the Connecticut River Walk and Bikeway. This 3.7 mile path, providing scenic vistas of the Connecticut River, the City's skyline, and Memorial Bridge, passes through Riverfront Park and offers direct access to the new Basketball Hall of Fame via a pedestrian bridge. However, there are very limited access points to the River Walk and Bikeway due to the presence of the elevated I-91, curtailing the value of this amenity to South End and other City residents as a whole.



River Bikeway

### Parks and Recreation

Aside from the River Walk and Bikeway, the only other major open space in the South End is the 7.3 acre Emerson Wright Park. This park was recently enlarged and revitalized as a part of the SEURP with better access and a newly created gateway. Opened in August 2012 and offering a playground, water fountain, basketball court, baseball and soccer fields, a running track and a picnic grove, the park still lacks programming and organized sports, which is currently under development.

The existing South End Community Center was destroyed during the June 2011 tornado. Offering athletic/recreation activities, sports clinics, and space for community meetings and special events, a new South End Community Center is planned as a part of the redevelopment for the neighborhood.



South End Bikeway



Emerson Wight Park Gateway



SECC Feildhouse, tornado damage

### Housing Profile

In 2010, there were a total of 2,038 housing units in the South End, a decrease of 5.3% over the last decade. Of these units, 160 or 7.4% are vacant, an increase of 16.3% since 2000. The homeownership rate is 7.8% compared to 49.8% in the City, which is reflective of the predominance of multi-family, subsidized units in the neighborhood. Concentrated in the center of the South End east of Main Street, there are 364 below market-rate federally-assisted rental housing units including Marble Street Apartments, Concord Heights Apartments, and Hollywood Apartments (now called Outing Park). Other below-market units include the 149-unit Northern Heights located on Main and Central Streets, and the Gentile Apartments, a public housing development for seniors. As a result, nearly 60% of the housing stock is concentrated in buildings with five or more units. Slightly over 4% are single-family detached houses, 3.5% are single-family attached units, just under 12% are duplexes, and 21% are in three- or four-unit buildings.



*SHA's Gentile Apartments*



*Acushnet Street, looking toward Main Street*



*Palmer Street*

According to the City's housing office, 42 residential structures containing 200 housing units in the South End were damaged in the tornado. Distressed housing is found throughout the neighborhood, particularly at back of the Outing Park section. The City has been demolishing distressed housing, which has resulted in a number of empty lots throughout the neighborhood. Outing Park Apartments has been under renovation, with two phases complete and the third phase anticipated to be completed next year.

A recent residential market study (2013) for the South End found that current market rents do not support development of new unassisted rental housing. Even in some of the healthy, market-oriented developments profiled, the lower rents in market rental buildings overlap with Fair Market Rents for Section 8 vouchers and eligible rents for Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) units which serve up to 60% of area median income. Because of the equity available to developers from the LIHTC program among others, under some conditions, this overlap may create a disincentive for market rental development. With a mix of higher and moderate income rents, owners can position their properties to take advantage of both the market and the benefits of mobile Section 8 vouchers, while positioning themselves for an improved rental market by retaining the leasing flexibility unavailable from LIHTC. In the South End, the direct cost to construct new ownership housing exceeds the market sale price. Homeownership units cannot currently be constructed without subsidy.

### Education and Health Facilities

The Caring Health Center, a federally-qualified health center located on Main Street in the South End, was recently expanded and includes a retail pharmacy. As a primary care facility, the Caring Health Center offers adult medicine, obstetrics and pediatric care along with dental/oral health care to South End residents since February 1995.



*Caring Health Center entrance*

Springfield Public Schools operates the public school system in the city. Elementary and middle school students are assigned to schools based upon where they live. On the other hand, all of the high schools are made as options under the High School Choice Plan for students. The district also has several Magnet school options for students that have a strong interest in one of the unique programs offered. With the exception of a few Magnet schools, 30% of the seats are made available to students that live outside of the school's boundary.

There is currently no elementary school in the South End neighborhood. However, the Massachusetts Board of Education has recently granted approval to the Springfield Prep Charter School to open in the fall of 2015 and the school is currently looking for a location in the South End. In the interim, according to Springfield Public School enrollment data for the 2011-2012 school year, South End students are bussed to 11 different elementary schools around the City.

Those with the highest South End enrollments include: Daniel B. Brunton (26%), Homer Street (13%), Washington (13%), Mary M. Lynch (10%), White Street (9%) and Dryden Memorial (8%). Of these schools, only Dryden Memorial is high performing, ranked in the 80th percentile statewide. The other five elementary schools do not perform well, ranking anywhere from 3rd to the 28th percentile in the state.

In contrast, 90% of middle school students from the neighborhood attend the South End Middle School that was reopened in the fall of 2011 and is accessible by foot. While still too new to earn an accountability and assistance level rating, according to the 2103 report card, South End Middle School students did not score as well as their district peers on standardized tests and they rank well below their state counterparts.

Enrollment data also indicates that South End high school students attend one of four high schools: Putnam Vocational Technical High School (31%), Science-Tech High School (29%), High School of Commerce (22%) or Springfield Central High (18%). Commerce and Science-Tech appear to perform below the average district performance and well below the state on most indicators. In contrast, while Putnam and Central are only level 3 schools, low-income, Black and Hispanic students at these schools performed better than their peers state-wide on the standardized tests.

Square One, originally founded in 1883 by the daughter of Charles Merriam of Merriam-Webster Dictionaries, provides high quality early education and care at four centers in Springfield and Holyoke, home-based care settings located throughout greater Springfield, and out-of-school-time care for elementary school age children. Headquartered in the neighborhood for more than 100 years, the organization's South End facility was destroyed in the 2011 tornado. However, in the summer 2013, Square One reopened its headquarters in a new location on Main Street next to the Caring Health Center. In addition to providing an early learning classroom for 20 students, Square One also launched a new initiative—Family Square—which offers a safe, lively space for parents to gather and participate in activities and services to develop their parenting, educational and basic life skills which result in healthier more self-sufficient thriving families.

Chapter III

# Community Engagement



Source: Square One

# Community Planning & Engagement

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## Chapter III

# Community Planning & Engagement

The CNI planning process has built upon a robust history of planning and community engagement activities in the South End neighborhood to bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to discuss and plan for the future of the neighborhood, the replacement of the Marble Street Apartments, and the redevelopment of Outing Park Apartments. Outreach and engagement activities have included public meetings and information fairs, conversations with established neighborhood groups, meetings with Marble Street and Outing Park residents, Task force and Working Group meetings, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, resident surveys, and a neighborhood newsletter and website. Community feedback has consistently supported the need for a comprehensive transformation of the South End neighborhood that will improve the quality of life, safety, and economic conditions for existing residents and will create a neighborhood of choice and opportunity that will encourage new families to move to the neighborhood.

This chapter describes the multi-faceted engagement strategy that the City, the Springfield Housing Authority, and their partners have implemented during the CNI planning period to ensure a transparent and inclusive planning process. The City sought to capitalize on the prior planning efforts and build strong relationships with community members and stakeholders in order to develop and sustain long-term, productive partnerships committed to implementing the programs and supports presented in this Transformation Plan. The City will continue and expand outreach efforts to ensure a representative set of stakeholders is engaged as the Transformation Plan evolves over time. The following section describes the planning structure, methods of engaging the community, communication methods, community feedback received and its impact on the Transformation Plan, and ongoing engagement and capacity building in the community.



### A. Prior South End Planning Processes

In 2006, the Urban Land Institute (ULI) prepared a report entitled, “Springfield, Massachusetts: Strategies for a Sustainable City.” This report identified the revitalization of the South End as the City’s highest near-term neighborhood redevelopment priority. In response to the ULI report and to encourage input from a diverse group of stakeholders to plan for the future of the South End neighborhood, the South End Revitalization Coalition (SERC) was established. This group represents about 80 stakeholders including neighborhood residents, property owners, representatives of business and institutions, as well as elected and appointed government officials. The initial meetings of the SERC focused on the development of an overall South End Action Agenda and then, over time, involved discussion and refinement of specific implementation initiatives such as the design of the Main Street public improvements and the expansion of Emerson Wight Park.

When the June 1, 2011 tornado ripped through the City of Springfield and the South End, in particular, the City sought to rebuild bigger, better and stronger. A public-private partnership between Develop Springfield and the Springfield Redevelopment Authority was established to engage nearly 3,000 citizens across the city in a systemic, 6-month planning process that resulted in the Rebuild Springfield Plan. Rebuild Springfield

included both citywide recommendations as well as district recommendation for the three areas most directly impacted by the tornado. The South End and Metro Center, which have a shared destiny along Main Street, comprise District One. Three public workshops were held at SHA’s Gentile Apartments Community Room and the South End Middle School in October, November and December 2011 to develop a vision for the District One plan, discuss potential alternatives, and review and comment on the proposed recommendations. Spanish language outreach materials were provided and translation was available at the meetings. Dozens of interviews and small group meetings also informed the planning process. The resulting vision for District One seeks to establish strong partnerships to rebuild a more livable, sustainable and inclusive community with the resources to offer expanded opportunities for everyone in a vibrant, historic and walkable Metro Center and South End.



### B. Planning Structure

The City of Springfield, working closely with the Springfield Housing Authority, received a 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant in January 2012 to develop a Transformation Plan for the South End neighborhood including the rehabilitation of the Outing Park Apartments, a distressed Section 8 property, and the replacement of the Marble Street public housing development. The City procured EJP Consulting Group as the Planning Coordinator to work alongside the community to conduct a needs assessment, develop a vision for the neighborhood, layout a detailed set of strategies, and outline an implementation strategy to transform the South End into a neighborhood of choice and opportunity.

In order to meaningfully engage a diverse group of stakeholders in the CNI planning process, the Planning Team worked closely with the existing South End Revitalization Coalition (SERC) on the development of the Neighborhood and Housing Plans.

- *December 18, 2012:* Meeting at Gentile Apartments to provide CNI update, introduce the Michaels Development Corporation procured as Master Developer for Marble Street Apartments, and review various South End projects including Outing Park rehabilitation as well as the rebuilding of Square One and the South End Community Center.



- *January 28, 2013:* Meeting at the Office of Planning and Economic Development to solicit input on how best to locate a myriad of proposed uses on city-controlled land.
- *March 27, 2013:* Meeting at the South End Middle School to review recent projects in the South End and discuss potential locations for new housing.

The work in these areas largely built upon prior planning efforts and principally refined priorities and strategies that had emerged previously.

As a result, much time and attention during the CNI grant period was spent developing the People Plan since limited planning around education and services had been undertaken as part of the earlier efforts. To this end, the City convened a group of local service providers, educators, civic leaders, funders, and community residents with specific interest and experience in the areas of Workforce Development and Financial Literacy, Health and Wellness, and Education and Youth. The People Task Force met numerous times over a 10 month period to help develop a comprehensive People Plan that addresses all three of the priority service areas.

- *June 27, 2012:* Kick-off meeting at Gentile Apartments to introduce CNI and review the resident survey results.

- *August 9, 2012:* Follow-up meeting focused on Education and the potential cross-section with the Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant application.
- *September 2012-Januray 2103:* Series of Working Group meetings discussed in more detail below.
- *April 11, 2013:* Report on the outcomes from the Working Groups and discussion of next steps.

#### People Working Group meetings

##### **Workforce Development & Financial Literacy**

September, 26, 2012  
 October 31, 2012  
 December 7, 2012  
 January 25, 2013

##### **Health and Wellness**

September 18, 2012  
 October 16, 2012  
 November 27, 2012  
 January 9, 2013

##### **Education and Youth**

September 13, 2012  
 October 26, 2012  
 December 17, 2012  
 February 4, 2013

## C. Methods of Engagement

Many tools and strategies were used over time as the planning process evolved to ensure the meaningful participation of a wide range of stakeholders. The initial phase of the planning process emphasized data gathering and analysis in order to understand the needs of the community; as planning continued, focus shifted to establishing priorities and soliciting feedback during strategy development.

### People Working Group Meetings

Given the range of needs that the People Task Force was tasked with addressing, three Working Groups were established as a way to drill down on priorities identified through the community needs assessment: Workforce Development and Financial Literacy, Health and Wellness, Education and Youth. Each working group held a series of four meetings in the fall 2012/winter 2013 to analyze the needs related to each particular service area and then identify strategies and partners to address these needs.

### Service Provider Stakeholder Survey

By design, a relatively small core group of partners participated in the People Working Groups that helped to identify priority needs and develop the initial set of strategies. To reach a broader set of stakeholders and solicit additional feedback on the priorities, proposed strategies, and potential

partners coming out of the Working Groups, the Planning Team developed an innovative electronic survey tool using Survey Monkey. Three brief electronic surveys containing no more than 13 questions each were emailed to the full CNI stakeholder list. More than 60 individuals participated in one or more of the surveys. A summary of the results of each survey is available in the Appendix.

### What are your Priorities?

#### 6/23/2012 Community Information Fair

##### Public Safety:

Community Policing  
Demolish vacant houses  
Enforce rules for loud music  
Keep neighborhood clean

##### Neighborhood:

Rebuild South End Community Center  
Grocery Store  
Family Entertainment  
Stronger Code Enforcement

##### Education and Services:

Job Readiness/Employment Counseling  
Parenting Classes  
After-school/summer programming

### Public Meetings

The Planning Team hosted three public meetings that were designed to provide an update on the status of planning efforts, maximize engagement and solicit ideas from a broader audience, answer questions, and give notice of upcoming planning activities.

- *April 2, 2012:* Kick-off meeting at the South End Middle School to announce the grant award and introduce the planning process.
- *May 10, 2012:* Public Safety Meeting with discussion facilitated by Alliance to Develop Power (ADP).
- *June 23, 2012:* Community Information Fair held at Mt. Carmel Society to share resident survey data and solicit feedback about priority concerns. Barbeque, music and raffle prizes were offered to encourage attendance and participation. A summary and copies of the handouts are included in the Appendix
- *March 26 and April 30, 2014:* Public meetings held at the South End Middle School to provide a CNI update, announce the award of the Byrne grant and solicit feedback about the nature of crime in the neighborhood.

All public meetings were held in accessible buildings in the neighborhood. Spanish interpretation was provided. Additionally, food and childcare was offered to maximize participation from a cross section of residents.

While the meetings were open to the general public, specific outreach was conducted to reach the large Hispanic/Latino segment of the South End, particularly those who are renters. In addition to the distribution of bilingual flyers to rental building managers, businesses and other locations, HAP Housing and Alliance to Develop Power (ADP) conducted door knocking to increase the turnout. Task Force members, business owners, civic leaders and other key stakeholders were also invited.

**South End BBQ & Neighborhood Information**

Please join us on June 23<sup>rd</sup> to learn more about the progress to date of the South End neighborhood revitalization & Choice Neighborhoods project

Where: Corner of Main & Morris Streets  
(Rain location: Mt. Carmel Society, 13 Winthrop Street)

When: Saturday, June 23, 2012  
12:00 noon – 2:30 p.m.  
Questions? Call: 413-787-6525

**BBQ en el South End y Información para el Vecindario**

Únase a nosotros el 23 de junio para aprender más sobre el progreso realizado en el proyecto de revitalización del South End y "Choice Neighborhoods"

Dónde: En la esquina de las calles Main y Morris  
(Si llueve: Mt. Carmel Society, 13 Winthrop Street)

Cuándo: Sábado, 23 de junio 2012  
12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.  
¿Preguntas? Llame: 413-787-6525

### Resident Meetings

The Springfield Housing Authority keeps Marble Street residents apprised of the redevelopment process via periodic meetings held at the site. Additionally, the City and HAP Housing held a series of meetings specifically for residents of Outing Park to provide CNI updates, encourage participation in the broader public meetings, and engage residents in community building activities.

### Stakeholder Interviews

Additional community outreach included one-on-one interviews with key community members and organizations. One-on-one interviews allowed Planning Team members to hold more focused, detailed conversations with targeted individuals or groups that proved valuable not only in collecting information to advance the needs assessment and strategy development, but also in garnering support from potential partners, funders, anchor agencies, and local champions.

### Resident Survey

A detailed household-level survey conducted with residents of Marble Street Apartments and Outing Park/Hollywood Apartments was the highlight of the needs assessment phase. The survey was administered door-to-door by City staff during April/May 2012. Residents were offered gift cards to a local fresh food establishment (AC Produce) as an incentive to participate. Ultimately, the City achieved a response rate of 70%, reaching

### Summary of Resident Survey Findings

- **It is a young population.** More than half of the residents (57%) are children (0-18 years). Only a few seniors live in these developments.
- **Household income is extremely low.** 77% have an annual household income of less than \$10,000.
- **High unemployment rates.** Only 32% of Marble Street and 23% of Outing Park households report employment income.
- **Barriers to employment.** Childcare is the most cited barrier. 41% of respondents do not have a High School Diploma/GED. Most desired programs include computer training, GED/ABE and ESL classes.
- **Computer access is desired.** More than 1/3 of households do not have access to the Internet. 2/3 of residents would like to see a computer learning center in the neighborhood.
- **Financial services needed.** 47% of respondents need credit repair services.
- **Childcare.** 50% of children aged 0-5 are enrolled in Early Education Programs, but participation in after school programs is very limited.
- **Health care needs.** Most respondents reported their own and their children's health is good, but also reported very high rates of chronic disease: 55% have a child and 32% have an adult with asthma; 35% have an adult with depression. Dental (40%) and eye care (40%) were cited as the main health care needs. Mental health counseling and services to alleviate stress, anxiety and depression are also highly needed.
- **Public safety.** While 53% of respondents say the South End neighborhood is somewhat to very safe, all other responses indicate serious issues with crime and safety.
  - Only 28% are likely to let their children play outside
  - 39% feel unsafe everywhere
  - 78% feel somewhat to very unsafe walking alone after dark
  - 65% say crime occurs very frequently
- **Recreation opportunities needed.** A basketball court (79%), a gym (71%) and playgrounds (72%) were the most desired amenities. 84% said outdoor and 81% said indoor recreation space is very needed.
- **Housing preference.** Very few residents expressed an interest in returning to new replacement housing in the South End. Most either do not want to return or need additional information.

164 of 232 possible household respondents. Data was gathered on household composition; income, employment and public benefits; adult

education and training; economic development; supportive services; special needs; children and youth/education and services; adults and children's

health; neighborhood and safety; housing preferences and civic engagement. A summary of the survey results is incorporated into the Resident Needs Assessment chapter. Highlights of survey findings were presented at community and Task Force meetings.

### Focus Groups

The City worked with Alliance to Develop Power (ADP) and HAPHousing to conduct several focus groups as part of the South End CNI planning process. The focus groups offered the opportunity to clarify data from the resident survey and other sources and to elicit additional information from residents of the HUD-assisted sites as well as the broader South End neighborhood on key aspects of the plan. Each focus group was conducted by an experienced facilitator who had knowledge of the CNI planning process and familiarity with Marble Street and Outing Park residents or similar low-income Springfield residents. Focus groups with parents were conducted in both English and Spanish.

- *October 12, 2012* - Parents of elementary school children to explore experience and perceptions of elementary education, in-school and out-of-school supports and parental engagement
- *October 25, 2012* - Parents of children ages 0-5 to explore experience and perceptions of early

### Focus Group Findings

#### Parents:

- Insufficient bi-lingual support for parents and students
- Insufficient support for students with special needs
- Too much emphasis on suspensions as a response to problems
- Concerns about school bus safety
- Elementary school is too far away
- Need more out-of-school-time programs

#### Youth:

- Feel unsafe at school and walking to and from the South End Middle School
- Greater police presence needed
- Very limited participation in after-school programs
- Interested in recreation programs and open gym time
- Rebuild the South End Community Center

education and school preparedness, education and supports for parents and reading and early literacy

- *December 18, 2012* - Youth ages 12-14 to explore experience and perceptions of the South End Middle School, the South End

Community Center and other out-of-school time programs and public safety

- *December 18, 2012* - Youth ages 17-24 to explore experience and perceptions of school and employment, the South End Community Center and public safety



### Integration with Other Outreach and Engagement

City and SHA staff participated in a range of local initiatives that focused on issues relevant to the South End neighborhood transformation. Their presence increased awareness of the South End CNI initiative but also informed the Planning Team about key initiatives with which the CNI strategies should align. For example:

- ***Springfield Reading by 4th Grade:*** In 2009, after startling statistics revealed that almost 66% of Springfield 3rd graders were not reading proficiently, the Irene E. & George A. Foundation launched the Reading Success

by 4th Grade (RS4G) campaign, a public awareness campaign to share the importance of this educational milestone for children. Following the launch of the campaign, the foundation convened a group of community partners for early childhood education, public schools, higher education, community-based organizations and government that created *Reading Success by 4th Grade: A Blueprint for Springfield*. The Blueprint contains strategies to improve children’s language and literacy development from birth to age nine in order to achieve the City’s shared goal of 80% of 3rd graders reading proficiently by 2106. The initiative continues to work with many community partners to align promote and support the work which will enhance children’s early literacy development and their ultimate academic success.

- **Live Well Springfield:** Live Well Springfield is a community based coalition that includes over 20 organizations working in Springfield. The coalition supports a grassroots movement towards health equity through improving access to healthy eating and active living opportunities. In 2012 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) received a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) from the Center for Disease Control to further this movement. The current work includes the Go Fresh Mobile Farmer’s Market, developing plans for a full

line grocery store in Mason Square, rowing and biking programs on the Connecticut River at North Riverfront Park, and the development of a comprehensive plan for a more walkable/ bikeable Springfield.

- **Springfield Food Policy Council:** The Springfield Food Policy Council is an independent body with endorsement from the Mayor and City Council. The purpose of this Council is to oversee the coordination of public and private efforts to improve access to nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, fresh, and safe foods for all residents of Springfield.
- **Knowledge Corridor Consortium:** The City of Springfield is a member of the Knowledge Corridor Consortium which consists of three regional planning agencies - Capitol Region Council of Governments, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency – representing some 80 communities. Awarded a \$4.2 million FY 2010 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant, the Consortium has been meeting regularly to create a Regional Action Plan that will knit together updated regional plans into a coordinated and sustainable road map that makes best use of the resources and synergies in the region, including the location of 32 universities and colleges in the area.

**South End Update**

Join Us for the next **Community Discussion at a Neighborhood BBQ**  
**Saturday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
**12:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**  
**Corner of Main and Morris Streets**

**What Happened in the Public Safety Meeting on May 10?**  
 A group of residents met to discuss what’s good, what we’d like to see change and how we could work together to improve the South End. Here are some things people identified for Public Safety in the South End:

- Crime Watch
- Increase of Police Presence
- Better lighting on Side Streets
- Public Education
- Youth Engagement
- Collaboration with all South End Partners
- Build the South End Community Center
- Increase Community Organizing
- Create Productive Re-entry Programs

Out of everything that was discussed, residents voted on their top three priorities:

- 1) Neighborhood Crime Watch
- 2) Planning of Youth Activities/Opportunities
- 3) Rebuilding of the South End Community Center

Community Task Forces are being organized to address these priorities. If you are interested in participating:

**What’s Next?**  
 Choose the What’s you Over the li residents i this effort.  
**How can I g**  
 Call: Kelvin Website: v

**SUMMER IS COMING!**

Would you like to hear more about...

- Summer youth programs
- Kindergarten Registration
- Springfield Parent Academy
- Home • City • Families

**Join us at our next Community Meeting at the First Resource Management Office**  
**37 Saratoga Street**

**Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**11:00 AM – 2:00 PM**  
**Lunch will be provided at 12:00 PM**

If you plan on attending, please contact  
 Lizzy Ortiz, (413) 836-5029, [lorizzo@springfieldcityhall.com](mailto:lorizzo@springfieldcityhall.com), or  
 Kelvin Malino, (413) 233-1669, [kmalino@pvhousing.org](mailto:kmalino@pvhousing.org)

### D. Communications

To make the planning process as transparent as possible, the City posted Choice Neighborhoods announcements, presentations and materials on its website at <http://www3.springfield-ma.gov/planning/southendproject.0.html>. In addition, the City routinely produces South End Update newsletters. An extensive list of CNI stakeholders was created and continually refreshed enabling email updates to be readily disseminated as needed. All outreach for public meetings was conducted in both English and Spanish, the primary languages in the neighborhood and at the targeted housing sites. Extensive door-to-door canvassing was completed by bi-lingual staff at HAP Housing to encourage residents who are least likely to attend public meetings to participate. Meeting announcements were also made on the local Spanish-speaking radio station.

### E. Impacts on Revitalization Plan from Community Feedback

The planning process is structured to incorporate continuous feedback along the way. Input provided by the community and its stakeholders guided the development of the Plan. The following are three specific ways in which the Plan responds to community input garnered via community meetings, focus groups and survey findings.

- Public Safety.** Throughout the process and via many different forums, community members consistently raised public safety as the number one concern in the neighborhood. To address this issue, the City engaged several local partners to apply for Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program funds to secure additional resources to adapt the highly successful C3 initiative from the North End to address crime in the South End. After a failed first attempt, the City was awarded of \$1,000, 000 in 2013. With its research and community partners, the City is just beginning to launch this program and will be working with the community to better define the nature of crime in the South End and determine how best to adapt the North End program to fit the South End context.

Related to the public safety issue, parents of elementary school children expressed concerns

## SOUTH END COMMUNITY MEETING

## REUNIÓN DE LA COMUNIDAD DEL SOUTH END




**WHAT IS NEXT FOR THE SOUTH END?  
QUE ES LO PRÓXIMO PARA EL SOUTH END?**

Join us at the next South End Revitalization Coalition meeting to find out.

Acompañenos en la próxima reunión de la Coalición para la Revitalización del South End para averiguar los planes futuros para el South End.

<b>Who:</b> All South End Residents Business Owners, Landlords, etc...	<b>¿Quien?</b> Residentes, dueños de negocios y de edificios en el South End
<b>When:</b> Monday, April 2, 2012 5:30 p.m. - DINNER 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	<b>¿Cuándo?</b> Lunes 2 de abril de 2012 5:30 p.m. - COMIDA 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
<b>Where:</b> South End Middle School 36 Margaret Street Springfield, MA	<b>¿Dónde?</b> South End Middle School 36 Margaret Street Springfield, MA

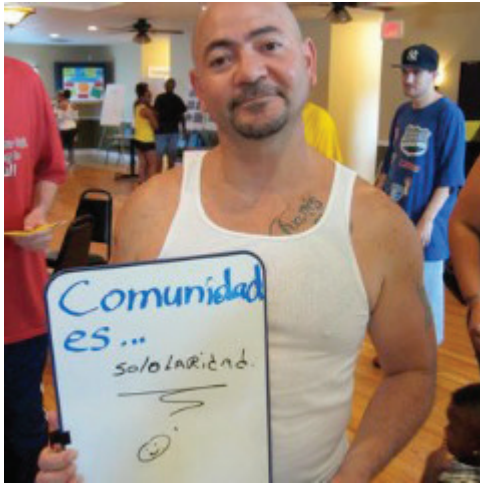
Dinner will be served. Square One will be on site providing childcare.  
NEED A RIDE? Please call us at 413.787.6525.  
INTERESTED IN THE CHILDCARE? Please call 413.233.1723 to let us know how many adults and children will attend.  
Se servirá comida. Square One va a proveer cuidado para niños en la escuela.  
NECESITA TRANSPORTACIÓN? Llámennos al 413.787.6525.  
¿LE INTERESA EL CUIDO PARA NIÑOS? Llámennos al 413.233.1723 y déjenos saber cuantos adultos y niños van a la reunión.

about children travelling to and from the school bus stop given the prevalence of drug dealers and prostitutes in the neighborhood. Additionally, at focus groups, older youth also expressed concerns about walking to and from the South End Middle School. As a direct result, the Revitalization Plan includes a strategy to develop a Walking School Bus like the one that has proven so successful at the Brightwood School.

- **South End Community Center.** Destroyed by the tornado, the South End Community Center was once an important neighborhood amenity that provided both recreation facilities and out-of-school time programs for children and youth. Four (4) out of five (5) residents surveyed indicated that indoor and outdoor recreation space is very needed. Basketball courts and a gym were among the most desired amenities. And aside from public safety, South End residents in attendance at the June 2012 Community Information Fair identified rebuilding the South End Community Center as the top priority for the neighborhood. This sentiment was echoed by parents and youth at the focus groups who said programs for youth were insufficient and in great demand. As a result, the City has prioritized funding for rebuilding the South End Community Center in Emerson Wight Park. This location will provide ample space for SECC and help to activate the newly refurbished park to maximize the productive use of this important amenity which should further other public safety goals.

- **Parenting Support.** Parenting classes and supports were identified as a high priority at both the Community Information Fair and in the parent focus groups. In response, the Plan includes a myriad of strategies to promote parental engagement and provide family supports. In particular, Square One, one of the City's anchor early education partners who actively participated in the planning process sought to address this need in their new South End facility. Opened in summer 2013, Square One's new South End location includes an innovative new program called Family Square. In addition to providing an early learning classroom for young children, the new facility seeks to provide comprehensive programs and supports for the whole family. Current offerings include parent cafes, a parent-helping-parents support group, Narcotics Anonymous (NA) groups for mothers of young children, a food bank mobile market, fitness programs, health fairs, financial literacy workshops, a family advocacy group and more. Over time, and in collaboration with partners, Square One hopes to expand the program offerings and grow Family Square into a hub of activity and support for all South End parents.







Chapter IV

# Neighborhood Strategy



*Source: Live Well Springfield*

# Neighborhood Strategy

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**Table IV-1.** Goals, Outcomes and Metrics

## Chapter IV

# Neighborhood Strategy

## A. Overall Vision for Neighborhood

With the backdrop of a long-term legacy of a community rich with services and amenities, the vision for the South End is to re-establish this in-town neighborhood as a desirable and vibrant mixed-use community that offers residents and visitors access to a wide range of goods and services. Building upon the investments currently underway, the South End neighborhood strategy furthers these initiatives by focusing on key challenges faced by the community, including safety, economic development, housing opportunities, and connectivity.

The Neighborhood Plan goals are as follows:

- Resident and visitors view the South End as a safe place to live, work and shop.
- Main Street returns to a vibrant commercial district supporting the needs of residents and visitors.
- Open space and recreational opportunities are available to and used by all ages.
- The South End attracts an economically diverse residential population.

- Improved connectivity within the neighborhood benefits both access to amenities and public safety.

These goals will be achieved by:

- Capitalizing upon the existing momentum and interest to improve the South End neighborhood;
- Channeling additional resources to the community to create synergies among the collective investments; and
- Harnessing the will and desire of current residents and business owners to re-create a cohesive community.

The Neighborhood Strategy for the South End is fully aligned with the goals and activities contained within the Rebuild Springfield, South End Revitalization Urban Renewal Plan, and planned MGM casino, and seeks to foster additional momentum to see these efforts come to full fruition.

## B. Summary of Neighborhood Priority Needs

Through community meetings and surveys, residents and business owners identified the following as the key challenges for the neighborhood that must be addressed:

- *Violent and quality of life crime* – Public safety is the number one issue for the community. The crime rate in the South End is three times higher than the City-wide average. Whether crime is real or only perceived, either will prevent the neighborhood from achieving its full potential regardless of any other steps taken to improve the community.
- *Struggling business corridor lacks vibrancy* – Main Street, which is more walkable to the north and auto-related to the south, suffers from vacant storefronts and, for existing businesses, visible signs of deferred maintenance. Some businesses have still not made full repairs from damages sustained in the 2011 tornado. These characteristics signify to residents and visitors alike a depressed commercial corridor in need of a strong marketing and business improvement program to re-energize the area.

- *Limited access to open space and recreational programs* – There is only one park in the neighborhood; access to the riverfront bikeway is cut off by the interstate; and the neighborhood community center was destroyed by the June 2011 tornado. The community center needs to be rebuilt and existing recreational assets need to be better utilized.
- *Distressed housing stock with few to no market-rate options* – Almost 10% of the neighborhood’s housing units were damaged by the June 2011 tornado. Coupled with an increasing vacancy rate, extremely low homeownership rate, and high percentage of subsidized units, much of the existing housing stock is in need of repair and the community would benefit from a greater diversity of housing options across all income levels.

### C. Goals, Outcomes, Metrics, and Strategies

The Neighborhood Strategy for the South End directly addresses the priority needs identified. A summary of the Neighborhood goals, outcomes and metrics is provided in Table IV-1.



View of proposed casino from Main Street

**Table IV-1. Goals, Outcomes and Metrics**

Goals	Outcomes	Metrics
<b>N1</b> Residents and visitors view the South End as a safe place to live, work and shop.	Reduce actual number of crimes reported	# Part I crimes
	Increase in number of residents reporting feeling safer in their neighborhood	
	More residents actively engaged in public safety initiatives	# Calls to police reporting potential criminal activity
	Physical environment supports both actual public safety and the perception that the neighborhood is safe	# Reported perceptions of public safety and effective initiatives aimed at increasing safety
<b>N2</b> Main Street returns to a vibrant commercial district supporting the needs of residents and visitors.	Vacant storefronts are leased up	
	Store owners invest in making their storefronts more attractive	# Building permits and value of improvements on Main Street
	Business owners take a collective interest in the health and appearance of Main Street	# Active members of the South End Business Association
<b>N3</b> Open space and recreational opportunities are available to and used by all ages.	More residents walk and bike to amenities in the South End	# Residents using the Riverfront Bikeway and Emerson Wight Park
	The South End Community Center reestablishes itself as a vibrant social and recreational amenity for the community	# South End children utilizing the South End Community Center # Programs targeted to different age groups
<b>N4</b> The South End attracts a more economically diverse residential population.	Market-rate rental housing opportunities are developed	# Market-rate rental units
	More homeowners buy in the South End	# New for-sale units
	Existing housing stock is improved and blight is removed	# Code enforcement and blight violations # Residential building permits
<b>N5</b> Improved connectivity within the neighborhood benefits both access to amenities and public safety.	Increased bus ridership by South End residents	# Bus ridership counts
	Police can more readily patrol isolated areas that attract criminal activity	# Part 1 crimes
	Improved biker and pedestrian experience throughout neighborhood	



## Residents and visitors view the South End as a safe place to live, work and shop.

### **Implement a C3 public safety initiative similar to the successful initiative in the North End.**

A FY2013 Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program Grant was awarded to the City of Springfield for a target area within the South End neighborhood. The Byrne Grant will be used to implement the Counter Criminal Continuum Policing (C<sup>3</sup>) strategy, which has been effective in reducing crime by 62% in Springfield's North End neighborhood. The C<sup>3</sup> strategy works to disrupt the roots of crime versus the symptoms of criminality after they occur. Using building blocks grounded in community outreach, youth and parental workshops, business and community leadership development, and law enforcement operations to name a few, C<sup>3</sup> will reshape the community environment to be inhospitable to gang, drug, and criminal activity. Implementation of this initiative will include the presence of a project director, a community organizer, and a housing and neighborhood specialist in the South End; increased police presence; and committed partnership with many social services and law enforcement agencies.

### **Engage police in youth activities centered around the South End Community Center.**

When the South End Community Center (SECC) is rebuilt after it was destroyed in the June 2011 tornado, the Springfield Police Department will work in partnership with SECC's leadership to implement programming focused on youth development, increasing trust between law enforcement and residents, and channeling youth into productive directions as an alternative to becoming engaged in the drug trade or gang activity.

### **HAPHousing to work on community building activities focused on crime prevention.**

A tight-knit community where residents are connected to one another through mutual respect and understanding and recognizing the commonalities shared by otherwise disparate groups, creates an environment where residents are supportive of and look out for each other. Through this collective framework, criminal activity is less likely to thrive because of the strong networks people have with one another. Community building activities to be pursued include neighborhood cleanup, crime watch, neighborhood beautification projects, and community celebrations. HAPHousing will take the lead on these activities. HAPHousing, based in the South End, is a nonprofit organization with over 40 years of experience has been collaborating with other community-based organizations to create affordable housing and to revitalize neighborhoods in western Massachusetts.



## Residents and visitors view the South End as a safe place to live, work and shop.

### Support surveillance and reporting of public safety issues associated with crime hot spots in the community.

Using crime data and reports from neighborhood residents, several crime hot spots have been identified in the South End. There are particular concerns about drug dealing at specific addresses and prostitution and drug use in certain parts of the neighborhood. The Springfield Police Department will heighten patrols in and around these hot spots, and provide residents with information about how to report concerns through safe channels—primarily through expanded use of the Text-a-Tip program.

### Remedy physical problems associated with neighborhood crime and disorder.

Community members have catalogued many items that seem to contribute to crime and disorder in the neighborhood, including illegal dumping, lack of sufficient lighting, abandoned buildings, stray cats, etc. The City of Springfield will convene a multi-department team to create sustainable strategies to address these issues. This will include protection of vacant city-owned land, either by identifying uses for land (e.g., community gardens, development) or by creating strategies that will prevent dumping (e.g., interim greening, fencing). It will also include proactive code enforcement, which will consist of property-by-property quality-of-life code enforcements sweeps and follow-up enforcement.

### Conduct annual survey to gauge residents' perception of public safety issues.

As the number one issue for residents, it is important for the community to gauge the impact of the public safety initiatives as they evolve. Through regular check-ins, the City and its partners will be able to make modifications to their approach as needed to be responsive to residents' concerns. This survey will be designed by the City's criminal justice research partner for the Byrne grant, Windsor Woods Research Associates, and carried out by City staff.

## N1 GOAL

### **Organize a walking school bus for children who attend the neighborhood school.**

Starting in 2010 with the award-winning Brightwood Elementary School Walking School Bus program located in the North End, the Springfield Public Schools has been working in collaboration with its partners, including the Springfield Housing Authority, to establish additional Walking School Bus programs at other Springfield schools. In the South End, stakeholders want to recreate the success the Walking School Bus program had in the North End. In addition to providing a Walking School bus to the South End Middle School, which is the only neighborhood school, it is also about helping kids get safely to and from bus stops since all elementary school kids attend school outside of the neighborhood, and ultimately to try to extend this to walking to and from after-school programs at the South End Community Center. The program's other benefits include decreasing chronic absenteeism, daily exercise to reduce childhood obesity, and community engagement.

## N2 GOAL

### **Main Street returns to a vibrant commercial district supporting the needs of residents and visitors.**

#### **City to use RFP process to seek appropriate and interested developers for city-owned properties on Main Street.**

The City of Springfield and the Springfield Redevelopment Authority have site control over several parcels on Main Street. Due to their prominence on the retail corridor and the negative impact these missing “teeth” have on the vibrancy of the district, the City will issue an RFP to obtain proposals from qualified and interested developers in these properties.

#### **Market the existing Main Street façade program and Small Business Loan Program specifically to South End businesses**

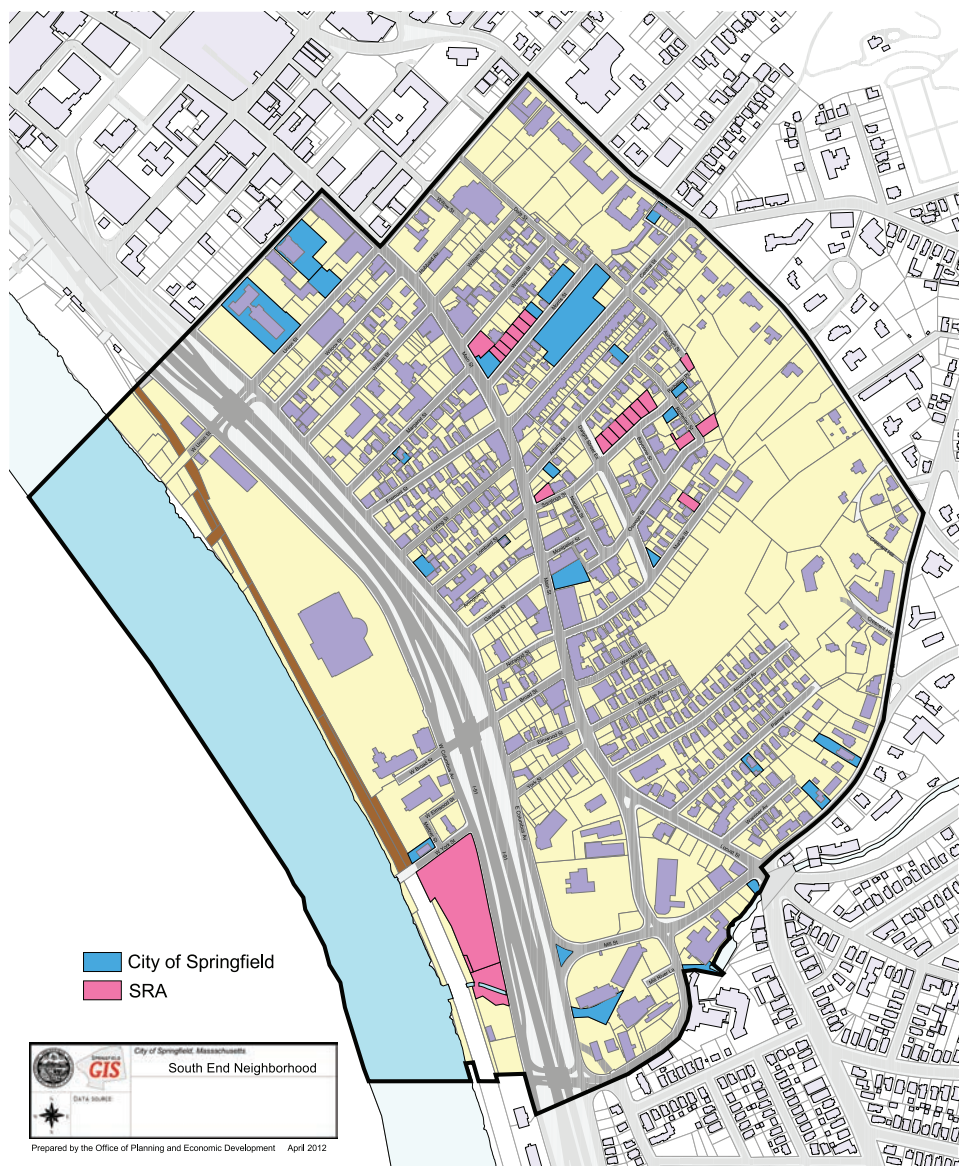
The existing physical condition of the retail storefronts on Main Street contributes to the perception that the southern half of Main Street as it extends from downtown is a depressed area. The City will undertake targeted marketing to South End businesses for façade grants and small business loans. The façade improvement program, operated by the non-profit entity DevelopSpringfield, provides grants of up to \$10,000 per storefront for exterior improvements to first-floor businesses on Main Street. The City's small business loan program offers 1% interest loans of up to \$15,000 to eligible small businesses, and half of this amount is forgiven when work is completed and payments are made on time.



*Main Street, Southern end*



**Figure IV-1. Map of Publicly-owned Property in the South End**

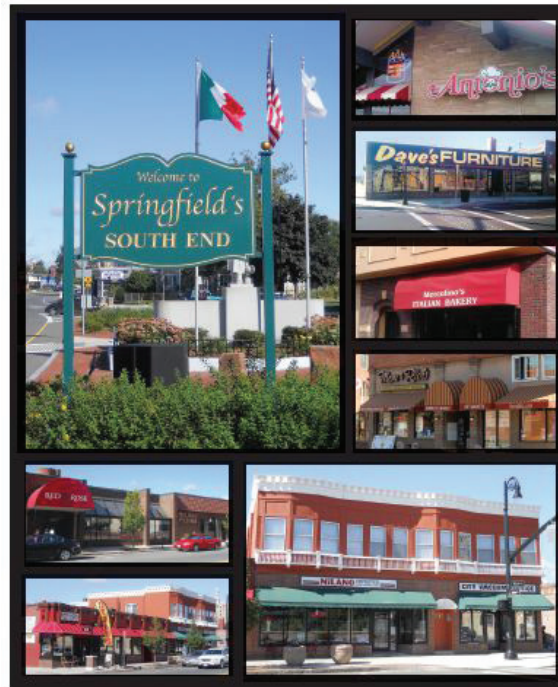


## N2 GOAL

### Main Street returns to a vibrant commercial district supporting the needs of residents and visitors.

#### Coordinate with and support the activities of the South End Business Association.

The South End Business Association (SEBA) is a group of neighborhood business owners working together to rebuild and promote the business district. Serving as the collective voice for businesses, the City will work in partnership with SEBA to identify new business development opportunities and improvements, including the RFP for city-owned properties on Main Street, to shape the future of this area. SEBA is currently working to identify new locations for businesses that will move as a result of the casino which is expected to be built on Main Street at the north end of the neighborhood.



#### Consider expansion of the City's Business Improvement District to include the South End's Main Street.

To support capital improvements, security, street cleaning, pedestrian and streetscape enhancements, and marketing efforts, the City and neighborhood business owners will explore the expansion of the City's existing Business Improvement District (BID) to include the South End Main Street corridor. In addition to other public and private sources that may be available, the BID is funded through an additional tax on member businesses.



## N2 GOAL

### Main Street returns to a vibrant commercial district supporting the needs of residents and visitors.

#### Support anchor institutions as they rebuild in the South End.

The June 2011 tornado devastated the South End, and many facilities that were destroyed have either been rebuilt (e.g. Caring Health Center and Square One), or have been identified as the next priority when funding becomes available. One key community asset and anchor institution that awaits a new structure is the South End Community Center (SECC). A beacon for youth programming, SECC currently operates programming in temporary space provided by other community-based organizations like the YMCA but much is located outside of the South End due to limited options in the neighborhood. The sooner the SECC is rebuilt, the sooner it can return to being a significant hub of activity for the neighborhood.



*Caring Health Center*

**N3**  
GOAL

Open space and recreational opportunities are utilized by all ages.

**Rebuild the South End Community Center in Emerson Wight Park.**

The South End Community Center was destroyed in the June 2011 tornado. Rebuilding this valuable community resource for youths and adults is a top priority for the City. With the recent improvements made to Emerson Wight Park, the new Community Center will be located at the Park, which will allow for expansion of programming offered to the community.

**Figure IV-2. Option for Siting the New South End Community Center in the Park**



**N3**  
GOAL

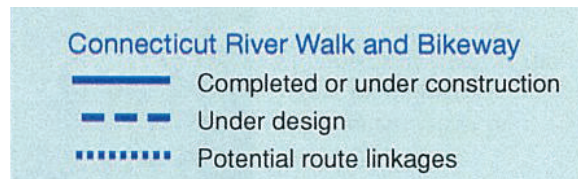
**Open space and recreational opportunities are utilized by all ages.**

**Develop indoor and outdoor programming for the SECC and the park that is responsive to residents' needs.**

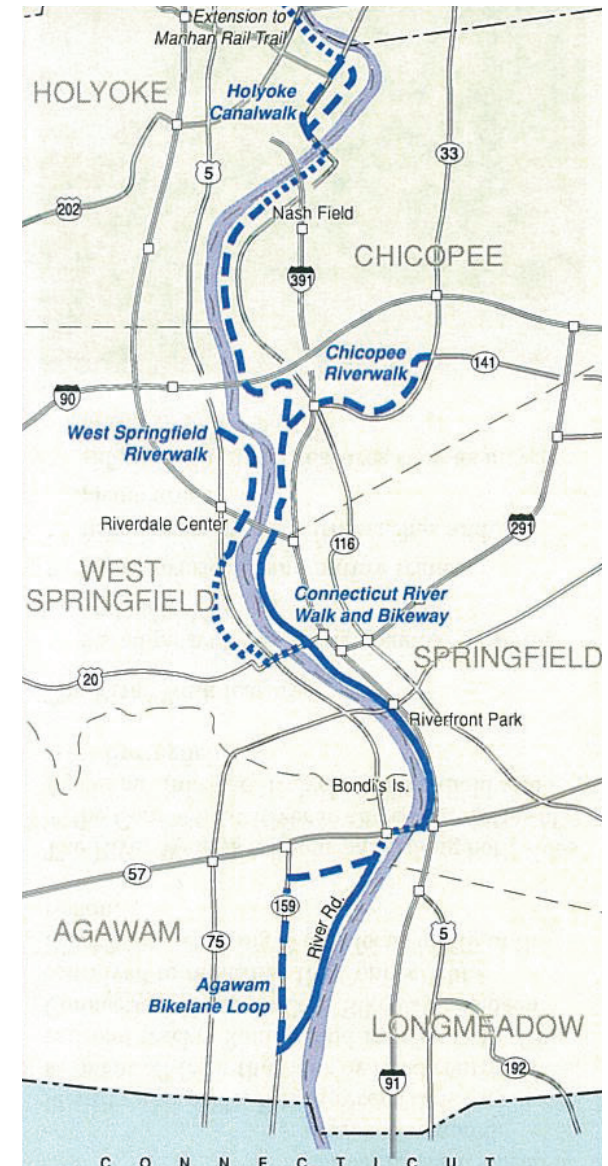
The construction of a new South End Community Center along with the recent expansion and reconstruction of Emerson Wight Park provides a tremendous opportunity to increase community and recreational programs that address the interests and needs of local residents.

**Develop bike riding programs to encourage children to use the bikeway.**

The riverfront bikeway is a tremendous recreational amenity for the neighborhood. With a focus on childhood health and obesity, the bikeway is a nearby asset that can be utilized to increase the physical activity of youth in the community. The City will work with the local bicycle advocacy organizations to pilot learn-to-ride and bicycle maintenance and repair programs for youth in the neighborhood. Additional investments in the bikeway are proposed in the MGM Casino Community Agreement. Live Well Springfield is also interested in using the casino funds to create better linkages from the South End to the bikeway so that residents can more readily take advantage of this resource.



**Figure IV-3. Connecticut River Bike and Walkway**



**N3**  
GOAL

**Open space and recreational opportunities are utilized by all ages.**

**Identify a permanent location for and create a community garden.**

Access to affordable fresh food is limited in the neighborhood. Residents have expressed a strong desire for a community garden in the neighborhood. The City is working with its partners to explore possible locations for a community garden, including city-owned vacant parcels.



*Community garden*

## N4 GOAL

### The South End attracts an economically diverse residential population

#### **Ensure that MGM develops 54 new market-rate rental units.**

The MGM casino project proposes the construction of 54 new market-rate rental units in the neighborhood. The neighborhood lacks quality market-rate rental units, and these new units would assist with diversifying the housing stock and provide a housing resource for casino employees. As the MGM project moves forward, the City will ensure that the commitment to develop the market-rate rental units is honored by the casino developer.

#### **Target city-owned property (infill lots and larger parcels) for new residential development via RFPs.**

Within the target neighborhood off of the main retail corridor, there are a number of vacant parcels owned by either of the City of Springfield or the Springfield Redevelopment Authority that disrupt the housing fabric of the community, including the long vacant Gemini site. The City will issue RFPs for developers to construct new housing on both the larger parcels and in-fill lots to visually reknit the residential housing blocks back together and to provide new housing options within the neighborhood to enhance economic diversity.

#### **Prioritize use of HOME funds for homeownership in the South End in the long-term.**

The homeownership rate in the South End is only 7.8% as compared to nearly 50% for the City and direct costs for constructing new homeownership units currently exceed the market sales price and must be subsidized. Once the existing initiatives are completed and the neighborhood is safer, the City will target HOME funds to the South End to help support additional homeownership opportunities.

**N4**  
GOAL

## The South End attracts an economically diverse residential population

### Fund homeowner rehab program for existing owners.

Of the homeowners living in the South End, many are low-income and do not have the financial resources available to make improvements to their homes. The City will fund a rehabilitation program targeting low-income homeowners that will allow them to make the necessary improvements and remedy existing code violations.

### City to aggressively take court action against distressed buildings and demolish where necessary.

Distressed residential and non-residential properties are found on Main Street and in the residential areas of the neighborhood. In recent years, the City has begun to proactively acquire and demolish these structures, but more work remains. The City will continue to engage in these blight removal actions and pursue court action as needed to address the dilapidated and hazardous structures in the community.



*City-owned, scheduled for demolition*



## N5 GOAL

### Improve connectivity within the neighborhood to better access amenities and increase public safety.

#### Improve bus stops by providing shelters and posting information about bus routes and schedules.

Existing bus stops in the neighborhood are simply demarcated by a sign with the bus route number. To increase public transportation usage, the City will work with Pioneer Valley Transit Authority to improve bus stops to make them more user-friendly, including the provision of shelter and information about bus routes and schedule.

#### Prioritize streets for repaving and sidewalks for repair and coordinate priorities with DPW.

A number of the streets within the South End are in disrepair and in need of repaving, and the neighborhood also includes sidewalks in need of repair or replacement. The City will coordinate street and sidewalk improvement needs with the Department of Public Works Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize the South End for the infrastructure improvements.

#### Develop and install wayfinding signage throughout the neighborhood.

The South End contains or is near to many amenities, and it is expected that Main Street improvements as well as casino and related entertainment development will bring more people into the neighborhood. Providing clear signage that directs people to amenities can provide an increased sense of comfort and security. The City will seek resources to develop appropriate wayfinding signage.

**N5**  
GOAL

Improve connectivity within the neighborhood to better access amenities and increase public safety.

**Extend Ashmun to Marble Street.**

Currently Ashmun Street is a dead end street, which inhibits vehicle and pedestrian circulation through the neighborhood. The South End Action Plan identifies the extension of Ashmun Street to connect with Marble Street as an important catalytic project. The City considers this project a priority for improving circulation as well as public safety in the neighborhood. The design of the Ashmun extension is underway and construction will begin once the Marble Street apartments are demolished.

**Figure IV-4. Ashmun Extension to Marble Preliminary Design**

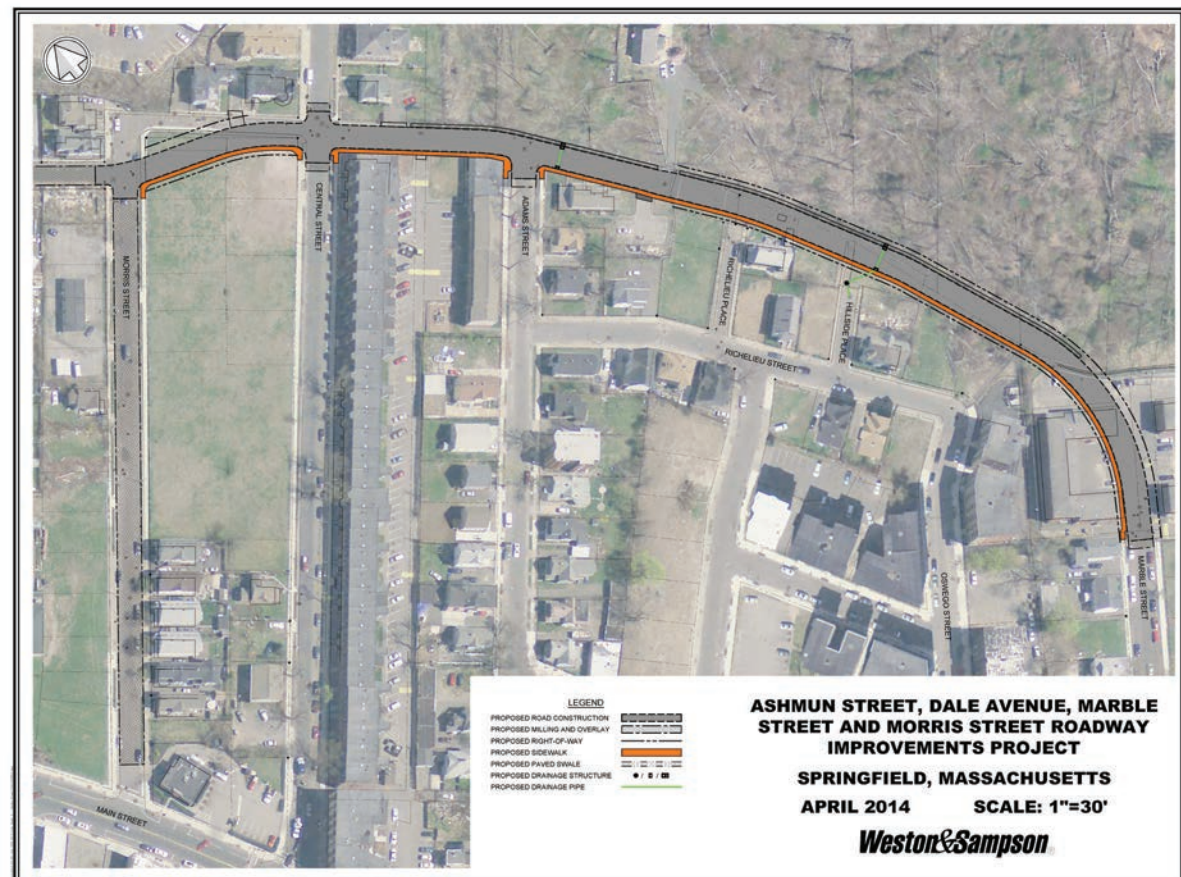
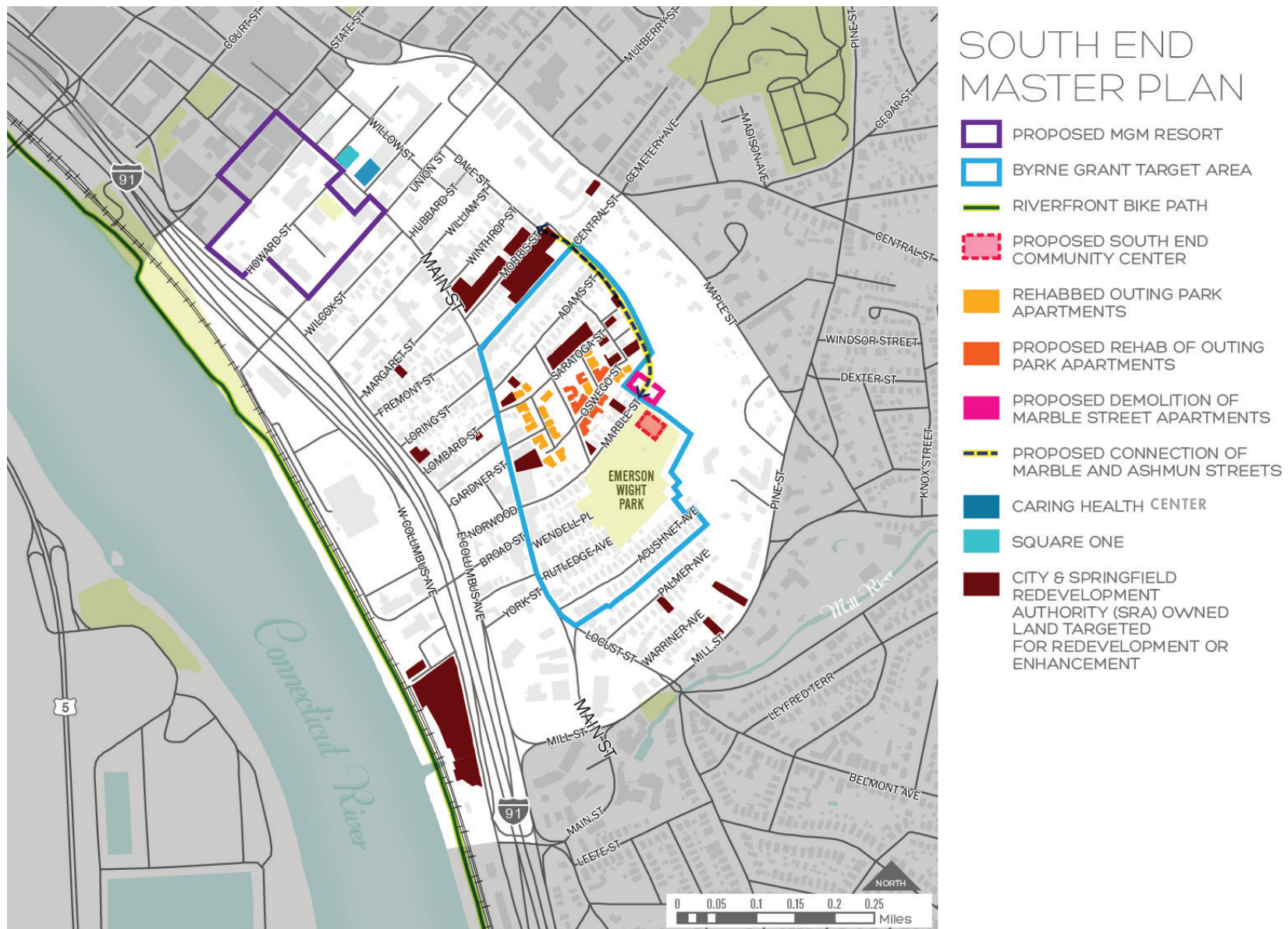


Figure IV-5. South End Master Plan



## D. Alignment with Existing Efforts

### MGM Casino

In July 2013, voters in Springfield approved the host community agreement between the City and MGM Resorts International for the development of a \$800 million resort casino complex in the South End. The Massachusetts Gaming Commission is completing its licensing process as the sole resort-casino applicant in Western Massachusetts with the award of the resort-casino license anticipated to occur in fall 2014. Proposed to be located at the northern end of the South End neighborhood closest to Downtown, the casino will include approximately 850,000 square feet of residential, dining, retail and entertainment facilities over three city blocks.

In addition to the resort, new jobs and investments in public facilities surrounding the casino are proposed. The Neighborhood Plan for the South End is aligned with the MGM's plan for the area, including the creation of new market-rate housing, improvements to the Riverfront Park, support of afterschool programs at the South End Community Center and hiring of qualified South End residents for the new jobs that will be created through the casino development, which include 3,000 permanent direct jobs and 2,000 construction-related jobs.

### Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant

The award of a \$1 million Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Program grant from the U.S. Department of Justice in October 2013 will be used to address crime and other public safety issues in the South End. The public safety elements of the Neighborhood Plan for the South End fully incorporate the efforts to be undertaken and implemented through the BCJI grant. This includes the enactment of the C3 model in the neighborhood, which includes building trust with residents, empowering neighborhood leaders, addressing neighborhood elements that lead to or support crime, and providing the level of police support necessary to disrupt and displace drug-related criminal activity.

Goals of the BCJI grant include:

- Closing down the area's open drug market and reducing violent crime;
- Increasing and improving cross-sector community-based partnerships;
- Empowering neighborhood residents to take back ownership of their neighborhood; and
- Reducing negative influences in the built environment.

## E. Consistency with Other Planning Documents

### SHA PHA Plan

The SHA Annual Plan describes Marble Street as being the target of a 2011 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant with the goal of demolishing and replacing the existing public housing units. SHA will amend this plan for Marble Street to indicate demolition and replacement via project-basing in locations outside the South End neighborhood.

### FY2010 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant

The City of Springfield is a member of the Knowledge Corridor Consortium – which includes three Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) regions (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission of Springfield, MA, the Capitol Region Council of Governments of Hartford, CT, and the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Agency of Bristol, CT) and the cities of Hartford and New Britain. The Consortium was awarded a \$4.2 million FY 2010 HUD Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant to create a Sustainable Knowledge Corridor Action Plan that coordinates the work and investments of these various entities, including the 32 universities and colleges in the area, for the benefit of all residents. Focused on updating the existing regional plans, building capacity and knowledge sharing, conducting transit-oriented studies, and carrying out specific place-based

planning projects as models on how the livability of urban centers and villages can be enhanced, the work of the Consortium is nearing completion. The neighborhood strategy for the South End compliments the goals, policies and strategies of the Action Plan in the following ways:

- Creating stronger linkages to jobs, transportation systems, and education opportunities;
- Increasing quality housing options across a range of incomes close to transit and with access to amenities;
- Instituting energy-saving and energy-efficient features in new construction and rehabilitation projects;
- Making infrastructure improvements to enhance the walkability and bike-ability of the neighborhood; and
- Expanding recreational facilities and programming for the benefit of residents across all age groups.



Chapter V

# Housing Strategy



# Housing Strategy

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## Chapter V

# Housing Strategy

## A. Overall Vision for Housing

The South End has long been experiencing disinvestment in its housing stock as neighborhood demographics change from a stable, middle income Italian neighborhood with bustling stores and restaurants to one that is primarily multi-family rentals serving low income households, over a quarter of whom are Puerto Rican migrants. The community's vision for its future rests on reviving the past neighborhood pattern of quality rental and for-sale housing at a variety of price points to serve the needs of a new diverse population who will invest in and maintain the housing over the long term.

This vision for housing in the South End will not be realized in the near future and not without careful thought and appropriate investments. The two targeted housing sites for this planning effort are critical to the vision. The HUD-assisted properties—Hollywood Apartments and Concord Heights (collectively renamed Outing Park)—are in the process of being renovated and the public housing site—Marble Street Apartments—because of both its condition and location, is slated for demolition, with replacement to occur off-site. The key challenge in the South End will be encouraging the development of new market housing units through new construction on vacant parcels and the adaptive reuse of existing structures.

**Figure V-1. Targeted Housing Developments**



- Outing Park Apartments (Rehabilitation in Process)
- Marble Street Apartments (Planned for Demolition)
- 65 Oswego Street (Vacant & Planned for Rehabilitation)

## B. Key Housing Challenges

**Distressed public housing.** Marble Street Apartments are SHA's most distressed family units. Basement areas suffer from persistent water run-off from the steep hill at the back of the property. Numerous and costly efforts to reroute this water flow have minimized but not eradicated the problem. And because of its isolated location on a dead-end street and adjacent to a forested hill and large park, it is perceived as dangerous location and SHA struggles to keep the units fully occupied even though there is a long public housing wait list. Despite on-site case management staff, the apartments are still a neighborhood hot spot for crime.

**Disinvestment.** The aging housing stock in the South End has seen little investment by private owners in recent decades. The neighborhood, already in decline, was hard hit by the national collapse of the housing market starting in 2008, and followed in 2011 by a destructive tornado that devastated numerous structures. The city has worked diligently to acquire and demolish vacant, abandoned and uninhabitable housing stock but more work remains and vacant parcels await rebuilding.

**High percentage of subsidized housing and concentrated poverty.** With a poverty rate of 45%, the South End has the greatest concentration of households living in poverty of Springfield's 17 neighborhoods. About a third of the housing stock in the neighborhood is subsidized: 46 units at Marble Street apartments, 286 units in the Outing Park Historic District, 102 units at SHA's Gentile senior apartments, 149 units at Northern Heights, 24 units in Crosstown Corners, and 44 units in CityWide Apartments. In addition, Section 8 voucher holders reside in many of the privately owned units in the South End, further concentrating extremely very low-income households in this inner city location. In the whole target area, about half of all renter households have some kind of subsidy; in the 8020 census tract, where 90% of occupied units are renter households, 70% of the renter households either live in a subsidized unit or have Section 8 assistance.

**Weak housing market.** Springfield in general, and the South End in particular, are low demand, low cost housing markets where low housing values do not justify the cost of capital or maintenance improvements to properties by homeowners and landlords. This has led to disinvestment by property owners. For-sale units must be deeply subsidized to attract buyers. Recent HOME-funded single family homes in the South End have construction costs of approximately \$200,000 but sold for only \$85,000. This makes it particularly challenging to develop market-rate housing without subsidies.

**Public safety concerns.** The South End is well known in the Springfield community for its high incidence of crimes, particularly drug-related criminal activity. The neighborhood's crime rate is nearly three times the rate of the City of Springfield as a whole. This perceived and actual crime problem impacts all who live, work, shop, and seek supportive services in the South End.

### C. Goals, Outcomes, Metrics, and Strategies

The goals for the targeted housing developments in the South End are four-fold:

- Complete the substantial rehabilitation of the Outing Park Apartments.
- Demolish and replace Marble Street units in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation.
- Ensure that new housing is accessible and environmentally sustainable.
- Provide a responsible relocation plan for Marble Street residents.

The objective is to improve the quality of life of existing residents through improved housing conditions, to use housing investments to catalyze further private investment in other private housing stock, and to use the replacement of Marble Street units as an opportunity to address the severe fair housing issues in the City of Springfield as well as in western Massachusetts. Table V-1 summarizes the key goals, outcomes, and metrics for the Housing Plan, and is followed by the proposed strategies for achieving the outcomes.



*The South End neighborhood*

**Table V-1. Goals, Outcomes and Metrics**

Goals	Outcomes	Metrics
<b>H1</b> Substantial rehabilitation of Outing Park Apartments is completed.	Outing Park II rehabilitation is completed	# assisted units rehabbed
	Vacant and unassisted building at 65 Oswego is rehabbed with tax credits	# workforce units (serving 40-60% AMI)
<b>H2</b> Marble Street Apartments are demolished and replaced in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation	46 public housing units are replaced	# deeply subsidized units replaced
	Marble Street units replaced in safe and stable neighborhood(s)	# units replaced in opportunity neighborhoods # units replaced in economically non-impacted neighborhoods
	Use project-based vouchers to replace public housing units	# tenant enhancement vouchers received by SHA after demolition approval
	Housing Replacement Plan in Demolition Application is approved by HUD SAC	HUD approval Local and state support for plan
<b>H3</b> A responsible relocation plan for Marble Street residents is developed and implemented.	Marble Street residents are stably rehoused in neighborhoods of their choice	# one way moves # households who remain stably rehoused # taking Section 8 voucher holders # residents rehoused in existing public housing units # PH residents returning to new replacement housing
	Voucher holders receive effective mobility counseling	#/% living in lower poverty/ higher opportunity neighborhoods after redevelopment (by family type)



## Substantial rehabilitation of Outing Park Apartments is completed.

Outing Park is comprised of two HUD-assisted Section 8 properties: Concord Heights, a 104-unit Project-based Section 8 development, and Hollywood Apartments (renamed Outing Park I and II), a 182-unit Section 8 Moderate Rehab property. The 23 buildings are located along Oswego, Bayonne, Niagara, and Dwight St. Extension and were built between 1913 and 1927. The buildings are 4-story brick walk-ups with units ranging in size from 0 to 3 bedrooms; all units have only one bathroom. Prior to rehab, the properties were in distressed condition, had high utility bills, were inaccessible, and the crumbling fire escapes had been written up as a code violation by the City of Springfield.

First Resource Development Company purchased the Concord Heights and Outing Park I and II Apartments in 2010 to undertake a phased rehabilitation for the preservation of the affordable units. First Resource has successfully developed several affordable housing projects in the region, including the recent award-winning \$19.2 million revitalization of Worthington Commons in Springfield. First Resource worked with the City to have the Concord Heights and

former Hollywood Apartments area designated as a historic district and renamed Outing Park.

Substantial rehabilitation for all units and buildings includes:

- *Units* – complete bathroom and kitchen modernization
- *Building systems* – new heating and hot water systems including high efficiency boilers; ventilation; fire alarm upgrade with CO detectors
- *Building exteriors* – new high-efficiency windows; new roofs and fire escapes; waterproofing and repointing of exterior masonry
- *Security system* – new video intercom and full security systems connecting all buildings; all security cameras are connected to the management office on site which will allow Springfield Police 24-hour access for monitoring
- *Non-residential facilities* – new community building/ management office and maintenance garage

- *Accessibility* – 5% of units are fully accessible; new ramps
- *Site improvements* – new off-street parking lots; repaired sidewalks, new street lights, landscaping and fencing

To support the rehabilitation of the Outing Park buildings, the City completed the Dwight Street Extension streetscape improvements which span 3 blocks and include about 850 feet of new roadway creating on-street parking and improving lighting and safety in the area. Pedestrian safety is improved with the reconstruction of sidewalks, installation of new lighting, wheelchair ramps, crosswalks, and new trees. A MassWorks state grant funded the construction.



Outing Park Apartments



## Substantial rehabilitation of Outing Park Apartments is completed.

**Table V-2. Three-phase Rehabilitation of Outing Park**

	Outing Park Historic District			
	Concord Heights	Outing Park I	Outing Park II	Total
<b>Status</b>	Completed	Completed	Financing Award Pending	
Number of Existing Buildings	8 <i>new community building</i>	9	6 <i>new maintenance building</i>	23 apartment buildings
<b>Unit Mix</b>				
0 bedrooms	–	–	9	9
1 bedrooms	52	–	19	71
2 bedrooms	52	80	89	221
3 bedrooms	–	14	1	15
Total	104	94	118 <small>(20 units tax credit rents)</small>	316
<b>Unit Sizes</b>				
0 bedrooms			550 SF	
1 bedrooms	570 SF		625 SF	
2 bedrooms	800 SF	800 SF	750 SF	
3 bedrooms		900 SF	875 SF	

	Outing Park Historic District			
	Concord Heights	Outing Park I	Outing Park II	Total
<b>Status</b>	Completed	Completed	Financing Award Pending	
<b>Sources of Funds</b>				
Developer’s Equity	\$1,252,663	\$341,644	\$32,289	\$1,625,596
Tax Credit Equity	\$14,732,072	\$16,702,931	\$19,760,366	\$51,195,369
Subordinate Debt	\$2,900,000	\$2,850,000	\$4,050,000	\$9,800,000
Permanent Debt	\$1,561,840	\$2,100,000	\$1,975,000	\$5,636,840
<b>Total, All Sources</b>	<b>\$20,445,575</b>	<b>\$21,994,575</b>	<b>\$25,817,655</b>	<b>\$68,257,805</b>
<b>Uses of Funds</b>				
Acquisition	\$4,720,000	\$4,707,000	\$4,962,500	\$14,389,500
Construction	\$11,875,000	\$13,195,000	\$16,385,651	\$41,455,651
General Development Costs	\$1,675,575	\$1,849,575	\$1,894,504	\$5,414,654
Developer Overhead	\$825,000	\$960,000	\$1,060,000	\$2,835,000
Developer Fee	\$1,000,000	\$980,000	\$1,090,000	\$3,070,000
Capitalized Reserves	\$350,000	\$303,000	\$425,000	1,078,000
<b>Total, All Uses</b>	<b>\$20,445,575</b>	<b>\$21,994,575</b>	<b>\$25,817,655</b>	<b>\$68,257,805</b>
<i>Total, per Unit</i>	<i>\$196,592</i>	<i>\$233,985</i>	<i>\$218,794</i>	<i>\$216,006</i>

Source: First Resource OneStop Affordable Housing Finance Applications



**Secure funding for the final phase of rehabilitation.**

The first two of three phases have been funded with city and state resources, including 9% tax credit allocations. The tax credit application for the third and final phase has been submitted and is awaiting an award of tax credits to complete the project.

**Provide non-HUD assisted units to improve income mixing.**

The final unit count at the revitalized Outing Park will be 316 units of which 286 are deeply subsidized and 20 tax-credit only units have been redeveloped in a currently vacant, unrestricted building that is part of the Outing Park Historic District. The Section 8 contract rents and the tax credit rents are the same in the last phase (Hollywood II) but are lower than contract rents in Phases 1 and 2.

**Figure V-2. Outing Park Historic District Master Plan**



**H2**  
GOAL

**Marble Street units are demolished and replaced in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation.**

The Marble Street Apartments were constructed in 1971 as a turnkey project for the Springfield Housing Authority. The project consists of two identical 3-story walkup buildings which originally contained 48 units but two are off-line and being used as community and program space, resulting in 46 public housing units (per PIC). The two buildings face each other, on a lot completely covered with asphalt. They are located at the dead end of Marble Street and back up to a steep, wooded hillside, leaving them vulnerable to criminal activities. Serious structural deficiencies in the buildings include: considerable stormwater runoff from the hill entering the basements; high energy usage; and building code violations that present significant safety concerns. Design deficiencies include small units that do not meet current standards for minimum dimensions and square footages; secondary bedrooms that do not accommodate double occupancy; and lack of accessible units and building entries.

Even with a long public housing waiting list, the Marble Street units struggle with maintaining full occupancy. Applicants are well aware of the crime in the neighborhood and the isolated location

of the buildings. To address this issue, SHA runs a Housing First program, a services-enriched initiative targeting formerly homeless families. However, even with the services provided on site, turnover of units is high and it is a challenge to find new households willing to move to Marble Street.

As a result of their obsolescence, and with broad community support, the Marble Street buildings are targeted for demolition and units will not be replaced back on the isolated site.



*Marble Street Apartments*







## Marble Street units are demolished and replaced in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation.

### Replace one-for-one the 46 Marble Street public housing units.

Although the Marble Street Apartments are challenging to keep fully occupied, there is strong demand for public housing units in Springfield as evidenced by long waiting lists for both federal and state funded public housing. The Springfield Housing Authority has established a policy to maintain, at a minimum, the current number of deeply subsidized affordable housing opportunities (both public housing and vouchers) in their stock.

### Based on the most recent market study, replace the 46 Marble Street units outside of the South End neighborhood.

The City of Springfield has long struggled with the need to attract middle income households back to the downtown area and immediately surrounding neighborhoods. As noted earlier, about 50% of the rental units – which comprise 91 percent of the dwelling units in the South End – are occupied by residents with deep subsidies, and this percentage rises to 70% in the 8020 census tract, which is where there is land available for development.

In 2006 the City procured Zimmerman/Volk Associates, a nationally known mixed-income market analysis firm, to conduct a residential market analysis for downtown Springfield, with the goal of identifying the depth and breadth of the market for newly-introduced market-rate housing units to be leased or sold within Downtown Springfield. The City’s underlying premise is that retaining existing households is just as important as attracting new households. The study identified a specific market and price point for housing in the downtown area, targeting one and two-person households as the strongest market segment. The identified challenges to attracting these small households to the urban core included: first and foremost, genuine security issues; neglected or vacant properties; high costs; developer perceptions; and an unsupportive real estate community. Unfortunately, only limited new housing units were developed before the housing crash in 2008.

More recently, as part of the Rebuild Springfield and the Choice Neighborhoods planning efforts, the City requested that Zimmerman/Volk update their Downtown market study and develop a specific market assessment for the adjacent South

End neighborhood, whose housing stock was severely damaged by the 2011 tornado. Using their proprietary analytic framework, Zimmerman/Volk determined that “an annual average of approximately 940 households currently living in the defined draw area represent the pool of potential renters/buyers of new housing units (new construction and/or adaptive re-use of non-residential structures), within the South End each year over the next five years.”<sup>1</sup> The distribution of these households by housing type follows.

**Table V-3. Potential Market for New Housing Units in the South End**

Housing Type	No. of Households	Percent
Rental Multi-Family (lofts/apartments, leaseholder)	615	65.4%
For-Sale Multi-Family (lofts/apartments, condo/co-op ownership)	120	12.8%
For-Sale Single-Family Attached	205	21.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Residential Market Potential: The South End Neighborhood, Zimmerman/Volk, September 2013



**Marble Street units are demolished and replaced in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation.**

The estimated South End rental range for apartments over retail (along Main Street) is \$675-\$1,300 per month; for lofts/apartments the range is \$700-\$1,475. Per Table V-4, these rent ranges for market-rate units may not exceed tax credit rents or Fair Market Rents for Section 8 vouchers, depending on bedroom size. For-sale units are estimated to range between \$185,000 and \$295,000 for casino condominiums, and \$145,000-\$195,000 for infill rowhouses.<sup>2</sup> While the market study does identify a potential demand for market-rate housing in the South End, it specifically cautions against creating mixed-income housing because of the sensitivity around price points.

**Table V-4. Income Limits**

Bedrooms	60% LIHTC Rent Limits	FMR
Efficiency	\$903	\$634
1 bedroom	\$967	\$761
2 bedroom	\$1,161	\$951
3 bedroom	\$1,340	\$1,187
4 bedroom	\$1,495	\$1,353

Source: HUD 2014 Income Limits and Novogradac Rent & Income Limit Calculator

“Regardless of whether the MGM project goes forward, it is highly recommended that the first rental project in the South End be of substantial size – 50 to 75 units – and that all units be market-rate. There is a preponderance of affordable apartments in the South End, which will make an initial ‘mixed-income’ property following HUD’s preferred mix of a third public housing replacement units, a third tax-credit affordable units, and a third market-rate units very difficult to achieve. This is because of the challenge of attracting households who can afford market-rate rents, but where those households will represent only a third or less of the project. In contrast, an initial rental development of well-designed market-rate loft apartments is likely to be successful because there has been very little new residential construction in the city and, because all units would be market-rate, there would be no limitations on unit design.”<sup>3</sup>

The study recommends developing market-rate rental units above first floor retail on Main Street and on upper floors of smaller buildings. New ownership units are proposed as infill on vacant lots scattered throughout the neighborhood, with a first phase of at least 10 fee-simple new rowhouse units grouped together, either adjacent to or facing each other across a street.

**Based on the Zimmerman/Volk market study, the current City policy calls for only building market-rate housing in the South End at this time and to replace the public housing units outside of the neighborhood.**



## Marble Street units are demolished and replaced in safe neighborhoods of opportunity less impacted by concentrated poverty and racial segregation.

### Seek vouchers to aid the replacement of 46 deeply subsidized units outside of the South End neighborhood.

SHA will seek Board approval to prepare a demolition application for Marble Street and to seek 46 tenant protection vouchers. SHA's capital funds are reserved for modernization of existing properties; SHA has no funding for new development. In addition, at this point in time, there is no increased authority for SHA to pursue funding through the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program. As a result, SHA will seek additional vouchers with the intent of project-basing 46 units in other locations.

### Develop a detailed Replacement Housing Plan.

This will be necessary for the demolition application that will be submitted to HUD's Special Applications Center (SAC) for review and approval, and also to develop political support for replacing the 46 deeply subsidized units in areas outside of the South End. This support starts at the local level, will need to identify likely locales accepting of deeply subsidized units, and will require state and federal support, particularly around fair housing issues. A more detailed review of considerations for where this housing can be replaced follows at the end of this chapter.

### Ensure that the replacement housing is high quality, promotes income mixing, is energy efficient and safe.

SHA will utilize an experienced developer to develop and manage the replacement units. Through procurement documents, Master Developer Agreements, and other documents, SHA will articulate program goals and design standards. A minimum of 5% of all units will be accessible to persons with mobility problems and a minimum of 2% of all units will be designed to meet the needs of persons with hearing and sights impairments. Unless the replacement units are part of a scattered site strategy in an economically stable neighborhood, they will be part of a mixed-income development. The developments will be required to use EnergyStar equipment and appliances at a minimum, and meet Enterprise Green Communities Criteria. Where applicable, LEED-ND criteria will guide site selection and design. New developments with replacement housing will employ CPTED design principles to maximize resident safety in and around the buildings.

### **H3** GOAL

## **A Responsible Relocation Plan for Marble Street Residents is developed and implemented.**

While the Outing Park residents were able to occupy their units during rehabilitation activities, the Marble Street residents will be displaced in order to demolish the two existing structures. It is likely that relocation and demolition may proceed more quickly than the development of new replacement units so a thoughtful and responsible relocation strategy will be prepared as part of the demolition application submitted to the SAC.

### **Marble Street residents receive their first preference for relocation resources.**

If tenant protection vouchers are awarded to SHA after the demolition application is approved, existing residents will be provided with several relocation options including use of a tenant-based voucher in the private market or relocation to another SHA public housing facility. In the resident survey, 47% of Marble Street residents indicated a preference for utilizing a Housing Choice Voucher in other parts of the City and 32% indicated a performance for using the voucher to move outside of the City. Relocation counselors will work closely with residents to identify the relocation resource and relocation criteria most appropriate for individual households.

### **Families with vouchers move to low poverty/high opportunity neighborhoods.**

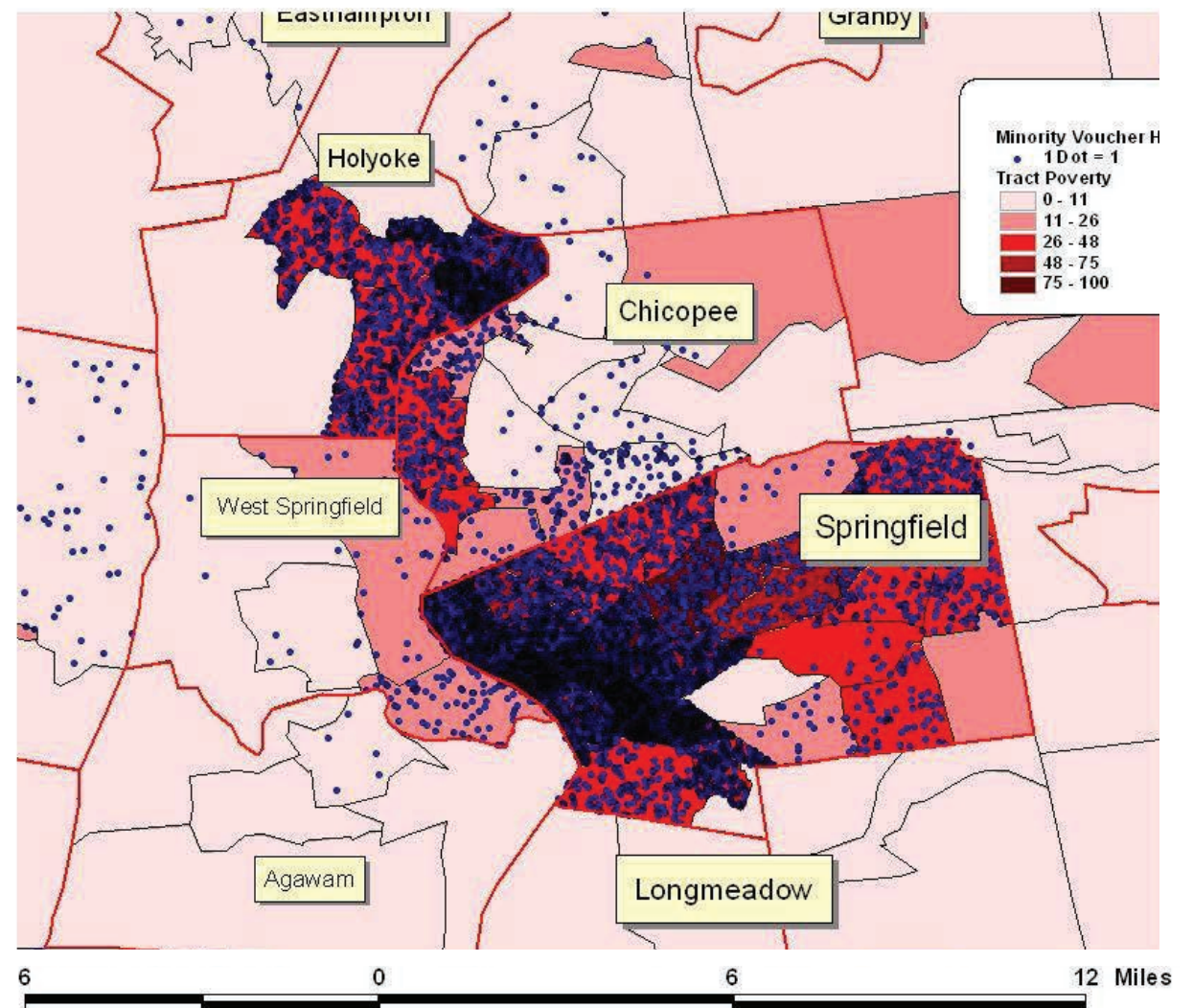
Based on findings and recommendations in the recently completed Analysis of Impediments, SHA will enhance its mobility counseling to encourage residents to move to neighborhoods that are safer, less poverty-stricken, and with improved access to quality schools, services, and amenities. Relocation outside of Springfield will also be encouraged, given the concentration of poverty in many of the neighborhoods closer to the urban core.



The concentration of minorities overlaps with a concentration of the region’s population of low-income households: 57% of Hampden County’s population of people in poverty live in the City of Springfield (another 16% of the county’s poverty population is concentrated in the neighboring city of Holyoke).

Looking beyond race and class, recent research has focused on opportunities within neighborhoods for sustainable employment, high performing schools, a safe environment, access to quality health care, adequate transportation, quality child care, and institutions that facilitate civic and political engagement.<sup>6</sup> Using a defined set of indicators for evaluating Massachusetts cities, the Kirwan Institute report relied on in the AI determined that the City of Springfield had only low opportunity areas—in areas that overlapped with concentrations of non-White population—but was surrounded by cities with moderate, high and very high opportunities. The long-term strategies for addressing the identified strong relationship between racial segregation and access to opportunity in Massachusetts cities are multi-fold but primary focus on investing in low-opportunity areas and in mobility options for affordable housing.

**Figure V-4. Location of Minority Voucher Holders and Tract Poverty**

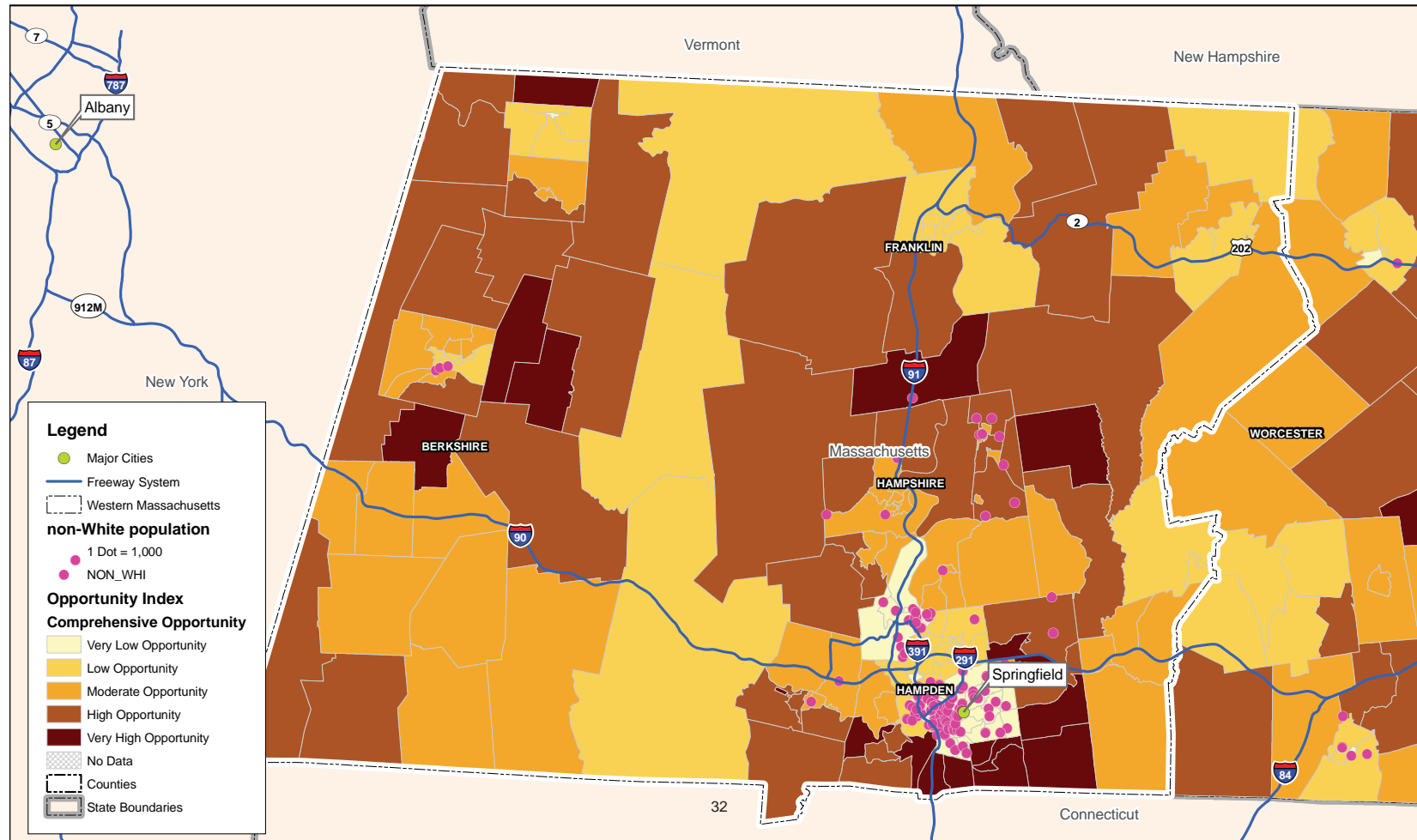


**Figure V-5. Opportunity Map with non-White Household Population Overlay**

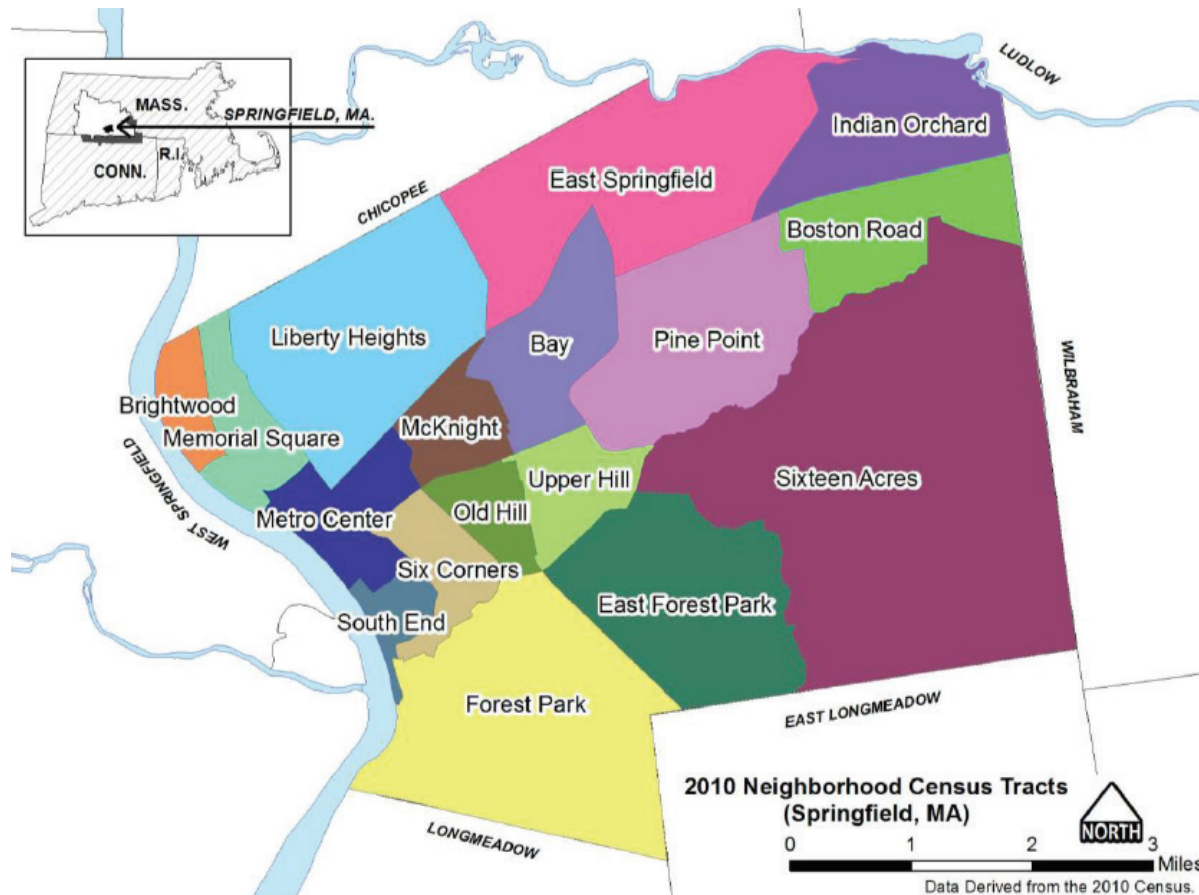
**WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS**

This map displays the spatial pattern of distribution of opportunity based on Education, Economic & Mobility, and Housing & Neighborhood indicators overlaid with non-White population.

**Source:** US Census 2000; EPA; MA State Police; HUD **Date:** July 17, 2008



**Figure V-6. Map of Springfield Neighborhoods**



Looking more closely within the City of Springfield itself, the AI highlighted the variation between each of Springfield’s 17 neighborhoods, with the South End generally ranking in the top of neighborhoods with respect to families living in poverty, minimal homeownership rates, and housing stock that is predominantly in multi-family structures. While there is a cluster of neighborhoods in the inner city that ranks more challenged (Metro Center, South End, Six Corners, Memorial Square, and Brightwood), there is also a cluster of neighborhoods that provide improved residential conditions (Pine Point, Boston Road, East Springfield, Sixteen Acres, and East Forest Park). However, these neighborhoods still compare unfavorably with nearby communities just outside Springfield’s border.



**Table V-5. Characteristics of Springfield Neighborhoods, 2010**

Neighborhood	Families Below Poverty Level	Rental Levels (v. Ownership)	Multi-Family Housing	Non-English Speaking HHs	Vacant Housing Units
Metro Center	36.31%	98.15%	96.37%	46.23%	10.83%
South End	64.6%	85.34%	92.98%	45.53%	9.84%
Six Corners	47.41%	82.01%	82.38%	50.27%	20.89%
Old Hill	31.89%	52.36%	61.29%	24.75%	22.82%
Upper Hill	28.79%	54.58%	65.24%	13.41%	12.16%
McKnight	26.11%	58.15%	46.63%	31.62%	13.87%
Bay	36.35%	61.58%	59.67%	27.01%	12.71%
Pine Point	19.45%	36.97%	31.72%	32.34%	7.41%
Boston Road	7.64%	25.23%	20.57%	37.85%	6.08%
Memorial Square	50.1%	89.42%	89.21%	75.87%	15.02%
Brightwood	39.51%	86.54%	75.42%	69.79%	4.84%
Liberty Heights	19.65%	49.24%	53.22%	46.96%	9.32%
East Springfield	20.1%	25.04%	28.44%	36.18%	5.16%
Indian Orchard	24.2%	52.97%	54.25%	37.85%	11.99%
Sixteen Acres	11.5%	22.89%	19.09%	17.87%	5.15%
East Forest Park	1.97%	10.65%	8.49%	14.79%	1.91%
Forest Park	21.49%	54.16%	64.04%	35.48%	17.39%
<b>City-Wide</b>	<b>27.6%</b>	<b>50.2%</b>		<b>33.7%</b>	<b>11.0%</b>

Source: 2010 Census; Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, City of Springfield, Massachusetts, June 14, 2013; 2010 ACS 5-year

- Five neighborhoods with **highest** values
- Five neighborhoods with **lowest** values

#### HUD's Site and Neighborhood Standards

Project-based voucher (PBV) sites must also meet HUD's Site and Neighborhood Standards for Existing and Rehabilitated Housing Sites [24 CFR 983.57(d)] and New Construction Sites [24 CFR 983.57(e)]. In general, sites selected for project-based assistance must be consistent with the goal of deconcentrating poverty (with a poverty level no greater than 20%) and expanding housing and economic opportunities. The standard for deconcentrating poverty and expanding housing and economic opportunities must be consistent with the Housing Authority's Administrative Plan. The standards vary slightly for rehabilitated vs. new construction projects.

**Figure V-7. Excerpts from HUD’s Site and Neighborhood Standards (24 CFR 963.57)**

**Existing and rehabilitated housing site and neighborhood standards.** A site for existing or rehabilitated PBV housing must meet the following site and neighborhood standards. The site must:

- Be adequate in size, exposure, and contour to accommodate the number and type of units proposed, and adequate utilities and streets must be available to service the site.
- Promote greater choice of housing opportunities and avoid undue concentration of assisted persons in areas containing a high proportion of low-income persons.
- Be accessible to social, recreational, educational, commercial, and health facilities and services and other municipal facilities and services that are at least equivalent to those typically found in neighborhoods consisting largely of unassisted, standard housing of similar market rents.
- Be so located that travel time and cost via public transportation or private automobile from the neighborhood to places of employment providing a range of jobs for lower-income workers is not excessive.

**New construction site and neighborhood standards.** A site for newly constructed PBV housing must meet the following site and neighborhood standards:

- The site must be adequate in size, exposure, and contour to accommodate the number and type of units proposed, and adequate utilities and streets must be available to service the site.
- The site must not be located in an area of minority concentration (with certain exceptions), and must not be located in a racially mixed area if the project will cause a significant increase in the proportion of minority to non-minority residents in the area.

- A project may be located in an area of minority concentration only if:
  - Sufficient, comparable opportunities exist for housing for minority families in the income range to be served by the proposed project outside areas of minority concentration; or
  - The project is necessary to meet overriding housing needs that cannot be met in that housing market area.
  - There is an appropriate balance of assisted units within and outside of areas of minority concentration.
  - Units may be considered “comparable opportunities” if they have the same household type (elderly, disabled, family, large family) and tenure type (owner/renter); require approximately the same tenant contribution towards rent; serve the same income group; are located in the same housing market; and are in standard condition.
- The site must promote greater choice of housing opportunities and avoid undue concentration of assisted persons in areas containing a high proportion of low-income persons.
- The neighborhood must not be one that is seriously detrimental to family life or in which substandard dwellings or other undesirable conditions predominate, unless there is actively in progress a concerted program to remedy the undesirable conditions.
- The housing must be accessible to social, recreational, educational, commercial, and health facilities and services and other municipal facilities and services that are at least equivalent to those typically found in neighborhoods consisting largely of unassisted, standard housing of similar market rents.
- Except for new construction, housing designed for elderly persons, travel time, and cost via public transportation or private automobile from the neighborhood to places of employment providing a range of jobs for lower-income workers, must not be excessive.

### SHA's Section 8 Administration Plan

SHA proposes to use project-basing as a means to distribute the deeply subsidized units in areas that are less racially and economically impacted and provide greater access to opportunity. SHA's Section 8 Administration Plan defines site selection standards with the goal of deconcentrating poverty and expanding housing and economic opportunities. Specifically SHA seeks to locate PBV units in census tracts that have a poverty concentration of 20 percent or less, with exceptions available for specific conditions including an area undergoing significant revitalization or the availability of meaningful opportunities for educational and economic advancement. Only five of Springfield's neighborhoods have poverty levels below 20%: East Forest Park (1.97%), Boston Road (7.64%), Sixteen Acres (11.5%), Pine Point (19.45%), and Liberty Heights (19.65%). These neighborhoods tend to be more residential neighborhoods with more limited access to amenities and public transit.

### Implementing the Project-basing Approach

To implement the replacement of 46 public housing units (via project-basing) in neighborhoods of opportunity and low poverty rates, SHA will issue RFP(s) that allow for a variety of replacement options including:

- Scattered sites in opportunity neighborhoods
- Clustered sites and small scale development in targeted neighborhoods undergoing revitalization
- Project-basing up to than 25% of the total units in existing or new mixed-income developments

Specific criteria to define “opportunity neighborhoods” and “neighborhoods undergoing revitalization” will be developed by analyzing census tract data and development opportunities. SHA and the City are exploring opportunities for locating some of the PBV units outside the City of Springfield.

## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Residential Market Potential: The South End Neighborhood, Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc., September, 2013. The 940 households excludes those with a preference for single-family detached units.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid, page 34.
- <sup>4</sup> Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, City of Springfield, Massachusetts, June 14, 2013, p. 50.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 24.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 13. Refers to the January 2009 Kirwan Institute report entitled “The Geography of Opportunity: Building Communities of Opportunity in Massachusetts.”

Chapter VI

# Resident Needs Assessment



Source: Live Well Springfield

# Resident Needs Assessment

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Chapter VI

# Resident Needs Assessment

The People Strategy in Chapter VII is informed by the findings of a comprehensive resident needs assessment that documents the strengths, challenges and opportunities facing the families at Marble Street and Outing Park Apartments (which includes Concord Heights, Outing Park I and Outing Park II), and the broader South End neighborhood.

The needs assessment discusses the existing conditions and current needs in the areas of income and employment, health and wellness, as well as education and youth.

Key data sources utilized in this assessment are listed on the following page.

**Springfield Housing Authority**  
**Resident Needs Survey Results - Jun 14, 2012**  
**Marble Street Apartments, Outing Park/ Hollywood Apartments**

Note: NR, NA or invalid responses are excluded unless otherwise indicated.  
 If total line is not shown, respondents were allowed to select more than one response and percentages will not sum to 100%.

GENERAL INFORMATION						
Preferred language for interview?	All N= 164		Marble Street N= 36		Outing Park N= 128	
	English	76	46%	18	50%	58
English/Spanish	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%
Spanish	87	53%	18	50%	69	54%
Total	164		36		128	
2. About how many years have you lived in your current apartment?						
	All N= 161		Marble Street N= 35		Outing Park N= 126	
	0-2	52	32%	13	37%	39
2-5	51	32%	15	43%	36	29%
>5	58	36%	7	20%	51	40%
Average	6.3		3.7		7.1	
NR	2		1		1	
Missing	1		0		1	
Total	164		36		128	
HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION						
6a. How many household members live at this address?	All N= 164		Marble Street N= 36		Outing Park N= 128	
	1	24	15%	0	0%	24
2	38	23%	1	3%	37	29%
3	49	30%	8	22%	41	32%
4	38	23%	19	53%	19	15%
5	12	7%	6	17%	6	5%
6	3	2%	2	6%	1	1%
Total	164		36		128	
Average HH Size	2.9		4		2.4	

## Key Data Sources

Data Source	Description
2010 Census and American Community Survey	Includes demographic data on the neighborhood population, as compared to the city and state
Administrative data	Includes demographic data of the Marble Street households provided by the Springfield Housing Authority and demographic data of Outing Park I and II households provided by HAP Housing as of April 2014. (Concord Heights data was not available for this draft.)
Resident Survey	Comprehensive survey of service availability and participation as well as the needs and preferences of the Marble Street and Outing Park residents administered door-to-door by the City during April/May 2012; 70% response rate (164 of 232 possible households).
Community Information Fairs and Resident Meetings	The City held three public meetings open to all neighborhood residents on April 11, 2012; June 23, 2012; May 26, 2104. Additionally, the Springfield Housing Authority has held periodic meetings with residents of Marble Street and the City and HAP Housing held meetings with Outing Park residents.
Focus Groups	Four focus groups on topics related to youth and education were held with residents from Outing Park, Marble Street and the broader South End community including (1) parents of 0-5 year olds, (2) parents of elementary school age children, (3) youth ages 12-16 and (4) youth ages 17-24.
Greater Springfield Service Provider Inventory	List of community programs and services compiled from a number of sources including Springfield Partners for Community Action’s Director of Programs and Services, Multicultural Community Service’s Community Resource Guide, Springfield Adult Basic Education 2012 Directory, Western Massachusetts Substance Abuse Treatment and Prevention Services Directory.
Massachusetts Department of Education	2013 Massachusetts School Report Cards
Local Reports and Publications	United Way of Pioneer Valley’s Community Impact Blueprint: Data Baseline Report and Enhancing Financial Stability in Hampden County; The Pioneer Valley Plan for Progress: Economic Strategies for the Region; The Pioneer Valley Food Security Plan, The Regional Employment Board of Hampden County’s Strategic Workforce Development Plan for Hampden County, 2011-2013 and Building a Better Workforce: Closing the Skills Gap on the Road to Economic Resurgence; Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s Towards a More Prosperous Springfield, MA” What Jobs Exist for People without a College Education?; 2012 Massachusetts Prevention Needs Assessment Survey; Springfield’s Plan for Reading Success by 4th Grade; Cherish Every Child: An Action Plan for Springfield’s Youngest Children; Partners for a Healthier Community’s Casino Health Impact Assessment
Stakeholder Input	Via Task Force meetings; a series of Working Group meetings on three key topics: Workforce Development and Financial Literacy, Health and Wellness and Education and Youth; three electronic surveys on the outcomes of the respective working groups; and individual interviews



## A. Profile of Target Population

The target population includes 1,852 households from the South End neighborhood with particular emphasis on the 44 households at Marble Street Apartments and 282 households from Outing Park. A Neighborhood Factbook with more detailed data from the 2010 Census and American Community Survey is available, as is a detailed summary of the Resident Survey administered at Marble Street and Outing Park. Table VI-1 provides some basic demographic data to provide an overview of the populations that are the focus of the People Strategy.

**Table VI-1. Target Population Profiles**

	Marble Street	Outing Park I and II	South End
Total Households	44	282	1,852
Households with children <18	42 (95.5%)	192 (68.1%)	603 (32.6%)
Female-headed with children <18	40 (91.0%)	—	422 (22.8%)
White, Non-Hispanic <sup>1</sup>	6 (3.6%)	620 (87.7.9%)	1,897 (51.2%)
Black, Non-Hispanic	21 (12.4%)	84 (11.9%)	774 (22.3%)
Hispanic	133 (78.7%)	425 (88.4%)	2,642 (38.8%)
Other	9 (7.0%)	3 (0.4%)	—
Total Individuals	169	707	4,386
0-5 Year Olds	25 (14.8%)	138 (19.5%)	420 (9.6%)
6-12 Year Olds	62 (36.4%)	160 (22.6%)	645 (14.7%) <sup>2</sup>
13-18 Year Olds	25 (14.8%)	77 (10.9%)	306 (7.0%) <sup>3</sup>
Adults 19-64	57 (33.7%)	312 (44.1%)	2,699 (61.5%) <sup>4</sup>
Seniors Ages 65+	0 (0%)	20 (2.8%)	316 (7.2%)
Adults with Disabilities	11 (19.3%)	108 (15.3%)	—

## B. Income & Employment

Per the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, the region is still experiencing slow job growth and persistent high unemployment. This is due in part to a structural unemployment issue. Due to advancements in technology, fewer, but higher skilled workers are required which results in slower local job recovery compared to the State and Nation as a whole. Compounding this is a skills gap for the jobs that are available. In 2010, over 20,000 residents sought jobs at the One-Stop Career Centers; yet less than half were able to secure employment. At the same time, the persistent skills and education gap continues to leave good-paying jobs unfilled, particularly in the high growth sectors of health care, human services, advanced manufacturing and financial/business services.<sup>5</sup> Residents of Outing Park and Marble Street are casualties of this skills gap.

### Extremely low incomes.

Three (3) out of four (4) households at Marble Street (77%) and virtually all of the Outing Park households (93%) earn less than \$25K annually. The median household income at Marble Street is \$16,257; Outing Park is even lower at \$14,400. This is comparable to the median income of \$14,244 in census tract 8020, one of the two that make up the South End. However, it is significantly lower than the median income of \$25,333 for census tract 8011.2 which comprises

the other part of the South End closer to downtown. It is less than half of the Springfield median income of \$34,628 and less than a quarter of the Massachusetts median income of \$64,509.

### High unemployment rates.

21 Marble Street residents in 19 households (43.2%) have earned income. The 21 individuals represent 36.8% of the 57 working-age adults (19-64 years). Per the resident survey, only 23% of Outing Park households have income from wages.

The unemployment rate among the population ages 16 and older in the two census tracts that make up the South End are (1) 18.8% in census tract 8020, and (2) 10.7% in census tract 8011.2. Both are significantly higher than the unemployment rates for Springfield MA-CT. The Metropolitan NECTA area was 7.9% in December 2013 and the state of MA was 7.1%.<sup>6</sup>

### Industries of interest to job seekers are in high growth sectors.

34% of survey respondents indicated that someone in their household is looking for work (67% at Marble Street and 28% at Outing Park). They expressed interest in the following areas of employment: Healthcare (12%), Child care (10%), Hotel/Hospitality (8%), Restaurant/Food Service (8%), and Maintenance/Janitorial (7%).

Fortunately, these areas of employment are among the three fastest growing employment sectors in

the region, namely Professional, Technical and Business Services, Health and Educational Services, and Leisure and Hospitality which represent more than two-thirds of all new jobs. And most of them overlap with the seven industries that are expected to increase by more than 10,000 jobs accounting for 45% of projected new jobs. These include Food Services and Drinking Places, Private Hospitals, Management and Technical Consulting, Residential Care Facilities, Employment Services, Offices of Health Practitioners, Colleges and Universities, and Computer Systems Design.

It is also noteworthy that the lion's share of neighborhood residents also works in these growth industries, including educational services, health care, social assistance (34.5%); arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, food services (13.8%); retail trade (9.4%), and professional, scientific, management (7.4%).



Residents face multiple barriers to work.

- **Low educational attainment:** According to the Hampden County Regional Employment Board, education and training will play an increasingly prominent role for both current and future job seekers in the region. More than half (60%) of all new jobs related to growth will require an Associate’s Degree or higher. While a Bachelor’s Degree may be preferable, some form of post-secondary education will be essential for those seeking rewarding career paths with good pay and upward mobility.<sup>7</sup>

Unfortunately, a large number of residents in the target population do not have a high school diploma. Of the survey respondents at Marble Street and Outing Park, 41% do not have a high school diploma. The rate is close to double that of the City of Springfield (24.1%) and nearly four times the state rate (11.3%). The Marble Street/Outing Park rate is comparable to other South End residents in Census Tract 8020 (44.8%), although the rate among South End residents in Census Tract 8011.2 is significantly lower (26.7%).

Given this reality, 24% of survey respondents noted that they have a household member that could use GED classes right now. However, participation is low; only 13% of households have a member currently enrolled.

**Table VI-2. Educational Attainment of Target Population Compared to City and State**

	HUD-assisted Residents	Census Tract 8020		Census Tract 8011.02		South End/South Metro Center		Springfield	MA
Less than high school	41%	618	44.8%	227	26.7%	845	37.9%	24.1%	11.3%
High school grad	49%	446	32.3%	210	24.7%	656	29.4%	33.9%	26.7%
Some college	9%	226	16.4%	155	18.3%	381	17.1%	25.1%	23.7%
College degree	0	91	6.6%	102	12.0%	193	8.7%	10.6%	21.9%
Graduate degree	0	0	0	155	18.3%	155	7.0%	6.3%	16.4%

Source: Resident Survey and the 2010 5-year American Community Survey

Only 9% of survey respondents indicated they have some completed some college coursework and none had achieved a college degree. This was nearly doubled among South End residents where 17.1% completed some college coursework and 8.7% received a college degree. Nonetheless, both populations were significantly less educated than others in the City of Springfield (25.1% some college, 16.9% college degree or higher) and the State of Massachusetts (23.7% some college, 38.3% college degree or higher)

19% of survey respondents stated that they have a household member that could use College Prep classes right now. Additionally, 36% would like to see programs to help residents access to community or 4-year colleges. Nonetheless, only 5% have a household member that is currently enrolled.

- **Language Barriers:** 40.8% of South End residents speak a language other than English at home; primarily, although not exclusively Spanish (37.3%). This is significantly higher than the rate in Springfield (33.7%) and nearly doubles the rate in Massachusetts (21.0%). Additionally, 17.7% speak English “less than very well”. Again this is significantly higher than the rate in Springfield (14.5%) and doubles the rate in Massachusetts (8.7%).

Similarly, English is not the primary language for 50% of respondents who opted to take the survey in Spanish. 28% stated that English as a Second Language classes (ESL) is a service that someone in their household is most in need of right now. Yet participation in such classes is low with only 6% of respondents indicating that they or someone in their household is currently enrolled.

- **Limited participation in vocational training:** Like GED, ESL and College Prep, survey respondents indicated a great need for training. 48% would like to see job readiness training made available, 47% would like to see vocational training, 33% apprenticeship training and 32% energy/green jobs training. Less than half of respondents (41%) were aware of existing job training programs. And far fewer participate in such training programs; 7% have a household member enrolled in job readiness training, 13% in vocational training, 3% in apprenticeship training and 1% in energy/green jobs training.
- **Limited computer access and literacy:** Per the survey, 29% of respondents cited computer training as the service most needed by themselves or someone in their household that they are not utilizing now. Yet only 2% of respondents indicated that they or a member of their household is currently enrolled in computer training.
- **High rates of physical and mental disability:** 14.8% of South End residents have SSI income. Additionally, 19 individuals at Marble Street in 16 households (36.4%) and 35 individuals at Outing Park in 49 households (27%) receive SSI income. Marble Street is nearly triple and Outing Park more than doubles the rate in Springfield (12.5%). Furthermore, Marble

Street is nearly eight times and Outing Park more than five times the rate in Massachusetts (4.7%).

Exceptionally high numbers of survey respondents suffer from chronic health conditions. In particular, 35% of adults report suffering from depression and 32% has asthma. 9% of respondents indicated that physical or health problems make it difficult to find or keep work.

- **Transportation challenges limit resident's access to the regional economy:** Less than half (44%) of Marble Street and Outing Park residents has a car. Nearly half (45%) indicate that the bus is their primary mode of transportation. Marble Street residents in particular are not satisfied with the public transportation services in the community; 49% said these services were not very good compared to 10% at Outing Park. 2 out of 3 survey respondents (67%) say the lack of adequate transportation is a somewhat to big barrier in getting to work or other appointments.
- **Need for affordable, high quality child care and child care subsidies:** Per the survey, childcare was the most cited barrier to employment with 18% of respondents indicating this need (36% at Marble Street, 13% at Outing Park). Almost half (47%)

indicated a need for child care or infant care for young children and a third (33%) need before school care or child care for older children.

- **Criminal record barriers:** According to the Hamden County Sherriff's Department, 131 individuals (117 males and 14 females) were released from prison to an address in zip code 01105 in 2011; another 98 were released from Jan-Sept 2012. Two thirds of the crimes were related to violence, drugs or fire arms, as compared to a third that were property or motor vehicle related. In addition, according to numerous comments at the public meetings, CORI records are a significant employment barrier for many members of the community.

#### Limited financial literacy.

Survey respondents cited financial literacy services as the service most need right now. Nearly half of respondents (47% ) need credit repair services; 2 out of five (38%) need financial assistance; and 1 out of 4 (25%) need budget/financial literacy services. Additionally, although only 21% of respondents report using a check cashing business, only half of respondents (52%) have checking accounts.

### C. Health & Wellness

University of Wisconsin’s Population Health Institute ranked Hampden County worst in MA for health outcomes and factors in 2011.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, HHS/Health Resources and Services Administration has designated all of Springfield as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) and Medically Underserved Areas/Populations (MUA/P) for having too few primary care providers, high infant mortality, high poverty and/or high elderly populations.<sup>9</sup>

The premature mortality rate (PMR), defined as deaths occurring before age 75 (# deaths/100,000 persons) is considered a good summary measure of population health status. Springfield rates for heart disease and respiratory disease are significantly higher than the state. As a result, poor people in Springfield have life expectancies 25% lower from cardiovascular disease than people with higher incomes that live in more prosperous communities in the state.<sup>10</sup>

	Heart Disease	Respiratory Disease
Springfield	419.5	196.6
Massachusetts	284.5	137.8

#### Good access to quality medical services.

Despite Springfield’s designation as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) and Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/P), Marble Street and Outing Park respondents report nearly universal (99%) medical insurance coverage for both children and adults.

- 88% receive MassHealth
- 18% receive Medicare
- 9% receive Medicaid
- 10% have children enrolled in Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Furthermore, respondents report nearly universal (99%) access to a pediatrician and good access (81%) to a primary care doctor. And, the overwhelming majority (90%) of respondents rated their health care services as excellent or good.

#### A high-quality, federally-qualified Community Health Center is located in the South End.

Nearly universal access to quality medical services appears to be, in large part, due to the proximity to Caring Health Center (CHC), a federally-qualified health care center serving the South End since 1974. CHC provides services on a sliding fee scale and does not turn away patients who do not have the ability to pay.

Currently CHC serves 14,000 patients (approximately 4,000-5,000 from the South End) via 150 staff including 14 providers, 10 nurses, 6 LPNs, social workers, and prevention staff at two sites. CHC has the capacity to provide 19 different languages through certified interpreters as well as a phone line with access to many others. CHC serves as a refugee health assessment site for the state and, in addition to medical care, introduces refugees to the health system as well as other local systems and cultural norms. It also serves other special populations like the many people released from prison to the community. CHC recently opened a new 45,000 square foot facility in the South End which will enable it to greatly expand its service delivery.

Curiously, although CHC is located only blocks from Marble Street and Outing Park, some survey respondents did raise concerns about accessing quality, affordable health care respondents, including issues related to: transportation (38% Marble Street, 26% at Outing Park); waitlists (33% Marble Street, 22% Outing Park) and long waiting room times (24% Marble Street, 21% Outing Park). Also, when asked what type of businesses are needed in the neighborhood, 72% stated a doctor’s office/clinic is very needed. In addition, when asked what amenities are needed, 71% stated a health clinic is very needed. As a result, it appears that additional outreach and marketing of CHC services is needed.

**Residents report poor health and high rates of chronic disease.**

Despite good access to quality health care, a large portion of Marble Street and Outing Park residents reported poor health. Only half of respondents reported good to excellent health for themselves (56%) and approximately two-thirds for other adult members (68%) indicating that a large number of residents have fair to very poor health. Respondents reported much better overall health for their children, indicating that 86% have good to excellent health (74% at Marble Street, 91% at Outing Park).

In addition, like many of their Springfield counterparts, children and adults at these two sites suffer from high rates of chronic disease. In particular, rates of asthma among children and adults far exceed state averages as do rates of depression among adults. In addition, rates of diabetes at Outing Park appear to be more than twice the state average.

The main health care needs identified by residents include dental services (40%) and eye care services (40%). Not surprisingly, given the number of residents who suffer from depression, 31%

identified services to alleviate stress, anxiety, depression (58% at Marble Street) and 16% (33% at Marble Street) identified mental health counseling and services. Similarly, given the high rates of asthma, it is understandable that 25% identified treatment of upper respiratory disease (36% at Marble Street). The other health care need identified by 23% residents (31% at Marble Street) was nutrition and exercise programs.

**High rates of teen births and other risky behaviors.**

Springfield has the 4th highest teen birth rate in the state. In 2009, there were 72.1 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 in Springfield. This was over three times greater than the state rate (19.5 per 1,000). Springfield also has a large disparity in teen birth rates. The Hispanic teen birth rate was over seven times the rate for White teens. Given that large Hispanic population in the targeted housing and the South End generally, this is important to recognize.

Furthermore, Springfield has the second highest rates of chlamydia and gonorrhea among teens in Massachusetts. And, in 2010, 28% of 7th graders and 51% of 9th grade students in Springfield reported having had sexual intercourse. Of the latter, 56% reported not using any method of birth control the last time they had sex.<sup>23</sup>

High rates of alcohol and marijuana use among Springfield 8th graders was also identified in the 2012 Massachusetts Preventions Needs Assessment Survey.

**Table VI-3. Prevalence of Chronic Disease at Target Sites Compared to City, State and National Averages**

	Asthma	Over-weight	Depression	Arthritis	Hypertension	Diabetes
Marble Street Adults	39%	17%	50%	227	26.7%	845
Outing Park Adults	30%	17%	31%	210	24.7%	656
All HUD-Assisted Adults	32%	17%	35%	155	18.3%	381
City Average for Adults	—	66% <sup>11</sup>	—	—	—	—
State Average for Adults	9.6% <sup>12</sup>	59.3% <sup>13</sup>	—	—	—	7.0 <sup>24</sup>
National Average for Adults	—	—	9.1% <sup>25</sup>	22% <sup>26</sup>	28.6% <sup>27</sup>	8.2% <sup>28</sup>
% HUD-Assisted Being Treated	75%	59%	64%	68%	76%	68%
Marble Street Children	87%	56%	—	—	—	—
Outing Park Children	44%	8%	—	—	—	—
All HUD-Assisted Children	55%	16%	—	—	—	—
City Average for Children	17.6% <sup>19</sup>	43.6% <sup>20</sup>	—	—	—	—
State Average for Children	10.8% <sup>21</sup>	14.3% <sup>22</sup>	—	—	—	—
% HUD-Assisted Being Treated	70%	38%	—	—	—	—

Source: Resident Needs Survey unless otherwise noted.

## D. Education & Youth

### Great need for Early Education.

*Springfield's Plan for Reading Success by 4th Grade* identifies numerous citywide indicators illustrating challenges the City faces in improving educational outcomes for its children.

- Springfield has the highest rate of births to single mothers in the state. Almost 69% of all births in Springfield in 2007 were to a single mother, compared to 32.2% for Massachusetts.<sup>24</sup>
- The teen birth rate in Springfield is four times the state average.<sup>25</sup>
- 38% of babies are born to mothers who had inadequate prenatal care in 2007 which represents the 3rd worst rate in the state.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2010, 31% of all single female heads of households in Springfield did not have a high school degree.<sup>27</sup> This is six times the state rate, and research indicates that the greatest predictor of child academic success are (1) the education level of a child's mother and (2) socioeconomic level of the home.<sup>28</sup>

In light of these statistics, it is not surprising that in September 2009, the majority of entering Kindergarteners were at risk according to the Springfield Public Schools (SPS) kindergarten assessment which focuses on skill areas important

for kindergarten literacy:

- 51% had inadequate knowledge of print concepts
- 57% had inadequate knowledge of letter naming
- 82% had inadequate knowledge of consonant letter sounds
- 78% had inadequate knowledge of rhyming and initial sounds.<sup>29</sup>

And while these data indicators are not available specifically for the South End or our target housing sites, given how poorly the neighborhood fares on other socioeconomic indicators, it is not likely that it is markedly better in any of these areas than the city as a whole. As a result, a focus on early learning and preparation for kindergarten is critical.

### Early Education enrollment is far below the statewide average.

According to a 2008 parent survey, only half of Springfield's 3-5 year olds are enrolled in formal early education, compared to 70% of 3-5 year olds statewide.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, the CNI resident survey indicates that 50% of children aged 0-5 at the HUD-assisted sites are enrolled in an early learning program. Enrollment is significantly higher at Marble Street (85%) than at Outing Park (36%). Among those enrolled:

- 28% are in Kindergarten (19% at Marble St, 34% at Outing Park)
- 36% are in Head Start (24% at Marble St, 44% at Outing Park)
- 15% are in Early Head Start (10% at Marble St, 19% at Outing Park)
- 21% are in other early education programs (48% at Marble St, 3% at Outing Park) including Square One, Giggle Garden, part-day preschool and other day care

### Affordable early education slots are limited.

According to data from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, there are 6,627 EEC slots citywide. According to 2010 census data, there are 11,183 children under 5 years in Springfield. So there is EEC capacity for only 59% of children under age 5.

Of the 6,627 slots, 373 are located in zip code of 01105 where the South End is located. Among these 373 slots, 200 slots at three NAEYC accredited centers. However, these 373 slots only accommodate 30% of the 1,258 children under age 5 in the zip code. Within the South End neighborhood itself, only 24 family child care slots were available at the start of the CNI planning process; none of which are accredited.

Beyond capacity is the issue of affordability. According to the Pioneer Valley Planning

Commission data only one-third of the slots in zip code 01105 (123 of 373) are occupied by children with a childcare subsidy. And even more sobering, only 17% of the slots in the South End (4 of 24) are subsidized.

Square One, an anchor early education provider and CNI partner, offers high quality early education and care at four centers in Springfield and Holyoke, as well as home-based care settings located throughout greater Springfield. Headquartered in the South End neighborhood for more than 100 years, the organization's South End facility was destroyed in the 2011 tornado. However, Square One has very strong South End roots and in the summer of 2013 reopened its headquarters in a new location on Main Street next to the new Caring Health Center. In addition to providing an early learning classroom for 20 students, Square One also launched a new initiative-- Family Square-- which offers a safe, lively space for parents to gather and participate in activities and services to develop their parenting, educational and basic life skills which result in healthier more self-sufficient thriving families.

#### **Mixed elementary school performance.**

The majority of school age children (64%) at Marble Street and Outing Park are in elementary school. There is currently no elementary school in the South End neighborhood. However, the Massachusetts Board of Education has recently

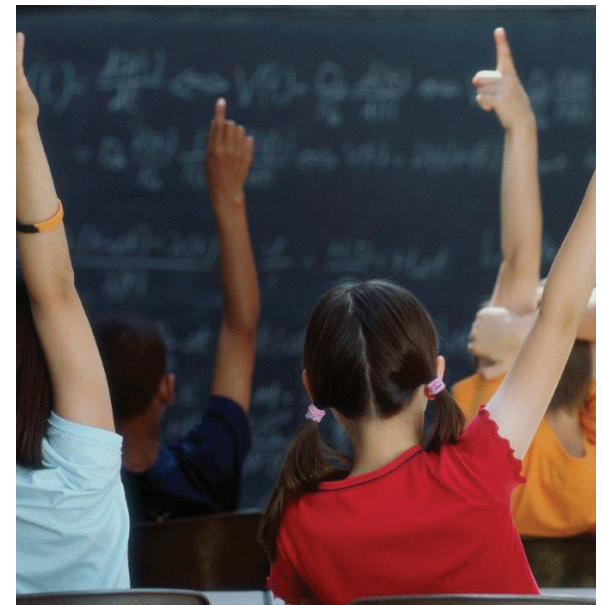
granted approval to the Springfield Prep Charter School to open in the fall of 2015.

According to Springfield Public School enrollment data for the 2011-2012 school year, South End students attend 11 elementary schools around the City. Those with the highest South End enrollments include: Daniel B. Brunton (26%), Homer Street (13%), Washington (13%), Mary M. Lynch (10%), White Street (9%) and Dryden Memorial (8%). Based upon resident survey data, it appears that most Marble Street students attend Brunton which is a level 3 school, among the lowest performing 20% of schools in the state. However, Outing Park students attend several different schools at both ends of the spectrum; Dryden Memorial being one of the highest ranked, performing better than 80% of the state's elementary schools and Washington and Lynch being among the lowest, performing better than only 15% and 28% of their peers respectively. Characteristics and performance for all six elementary schools with the highest level of South End enrollments are provided in Table VI-4.

#### **Poor Middle School performance.**

Located conveniently in the neighborhood, 90% of South End middle school students attend the South End Middle School that was reopened in the fall of 2011. At the 10/12/2012 focus group of parents with elementary school age children, many participants also had students attending the

South End Middle School which had only recently reopened. Contrary to their concerns with some of the elementary schools, parents spoke very highly of the South End Middle School stating "I wish all schools were like that" because it is a smaller school with smaller classes. The staff was perceived as "really attentive" and the principal at the time was described as "awesome" in part because he appeared to know everyone by name. They believed the school to have better behavior support and to be very welcoming. Nonetheless, performance data from the 2103 report card detailed in Table VI-5 below indicates that students did not score as well as their district peers





**Table VI-4. Characteristics and Performance of Elementary Schools with Highest Marble Street and Outing Park Enrollments**

	Massachusetts			Springfield			Brunton			Homer			Washington			Lynch			White			Dryden					
School Enrollment	954,773			25,283			519			403			483			275			380			278					
Accountability and Assistance Level <sup>1</sup>	—			4			3			3			3			2			4			1					
Meeting Gap Narrowing Goals	—			—			No <sup>2</sup>			Yes			No <sup>3</sup>			No			No			Yes					
Overall Performance Relative to Other Schools Statewide (Percentile)	—			—			17th			8th			15th			28th			3rd			80th					
Average Class Size	19.9			19.1			23.8			18.6			23.9			17.2			20.2			23.7					
Student:Teacher ratio	14.3 to 1			11.5 to 1			12.4 to 1			9.8 to 1			11.3 to 1			11.0 to 1			11.3 to 1			11.0 to 1					
Low-income students	37.5%			89.5%			83.0%			95.3%			95.4%			90.5%			96.3%			76.3%					
Students with disabilities	15.3%			15.7%			13.3%			15.9%			17.2%			17.8%			11.8%			8.6%					
English language learners	9.7%			18.0%			16.6%			19.4%			20.3%			10.5%			33.9%			13.3%					
Distance from Marble Street	—			—			5.3 mi			2.7 mi			2.2 mi			5.4 mi			1.9 mi			2.6 mi					
Subject (M=Mathematics, E=English Language Arts, S=Science and Tech/Eng)	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S
All Students (%)	62	61	54	42	36	33	45	39	31	45	32	17	50	46	41	53	42	51	35	18	8	98	78	88			
Students with disabilities (%)	23	29	21	8	10	4	0	0	0	24	13	8	3	3	8	15	12	0	14	0	0	85	46	—			
English language learners (%)	35	34	19	19	21	11	32	21	23	34	30	18	36	39	36	50	36	—	24	14	8	94	69	—			
Low-income (%)	41	50	32	30	38	20	39	33	23	44	31	15	49	45	42	47	37	48	34	17	8	99	74	84			
Black (%)	39	51	29	31	44	21	47	46	20	51	27	9	46	33	23	32	32	—	29	23	10	100	81	—			
Hispanic/Latino (%)	38	45	27	27	51	18	33	28	23	41	31	16	42	41	33	52	42	50	31	11	7	100	73	87			
White (%)	67	76	61	48	53	39	72	59	—	—	—	—	71	76	—	70	44	—	66	42	—	97	86	91			

Red = Performance is worse than the district average  
 Green = Performance is better than the district average

Source: 2013 Report Cards, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Massachusetts Department of Education

**Table VI-5. Characteristics and Performance of Middle School with Highest Marble Street and Outing Park Enrollments**

	Massachusetts			Springfield			South End Middle School		
School Enrollment	954,773			25,283			284		
Accountability and Assistance Level <sup>32</sup>	—			4			—		
Average Class Size	19.3			17.4			21.2		
Student/Teacher ratio	13.1 to 1			12.7 to 1			15.7 to 1		
Low-income students	34.7%			91.9%			97.9%		
Students with disabilities	17.4%			22.0%			19.7%		
English language learners	5.2%			19.4%			32.4%		
Distance from Marble Street	—			—			0.5 mi		
Subject (M=Mathematics, E=English Language Arts, S=Science and Tech/Eng)	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S
All Students (%)	57	73	43	17	34	8	16	25	2
Students with disabilities (%)	23	29	21	8	10	4	0	0	0
English language learners (%)	35	34	19	19	21	11	8	10	0
Low-income (%)	41	50	32	30	38	20	16	24	2
Black (%)	39	51	29	31	44	21	22	45	0
Hispanic/Latino (%)	38	45	27	27	35	18	13	23	1
White (%)	67	76	61	48	53	39	29	34	—

Red = Performance is worse than the district average

Source: 2013 Report Cards, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Massachusetts Department of Education

on standardized tests and they rank well below their state counterparts.

**Poor high school performance.**

South End high school students attend one of four high schools: Putnam Vocational Technical High School (31%), Science-Tech High School (29%), High School of Commerce (22%) or Springfield Central High (18%). Per Table VI-6, Commerce and Science-Tech appear to perform below the average district performance and well below the state on most indicators. In contrast, while Putnam and Central are only level 3 schools, they do appear to perform better than their state counterparts in teaching low-income, Black and Hispanic students.

**Low graduation rates.**

Not surprisingly given the performance of the four high schools, the 4-year and 5-year graduation rates for Commerce and Science Tech are well below both the City and the State’s average. And while the rates at Putnam and Central are better than the district average, there are low percentage of students taking Advanced Placement courses, completing MassCore or scoring above the city average on the SATs indicate that fewer of these students will be well positioned for college admission than their counterparts statewide.

Although the specifics for the individual schools is not known, the 2010 4-year cohort graduation rates for certain subsets of the student population were even lower:

**Table VI-6. Characteristics and Performance of High Schools with Highest Marble Street and Outing Park Enrollments**

	Massachusetts			Springfield			Putnam Voc Tech			Science Tech			Commerce			Central		
School Enrollment	954,773			25,283			1,284			1,401			1,258			2,034		
Accountability and Assistance Level	—			4			3			4			4			3		
Meeting Gap Narrowing Goals	—			—			Yes			No			No			No		
Overall Performance Relative to Other Schools Statewide (Percentile)	—			—			15th			1st			2nd			5th		
Average Class Size	16.0			14.1			11.9			14.0			15.0			18.3		
Student:Teacher ratio	12.9 to 1			12.1 to 1			9.1 to 1			13.0 to 1			14.7 to 1			14.1 to 1		
Low-income students	34.0%			83.9%			89.5%			84.8%			85.5%			78.4%		
Students with disabilities	16.0%			22.0%			23.2%			21.1%			24.2%			15.3%		
English language learners	5.1%			15.4%			12.3%			16.2%			26.0%			10.5%		
Distance from Marble Street	—			—			3.2 mi			3.1 mi			0.8 mi			4.0 mi		
Subject (M=Mathematics, E=English Language Arts, S=Science and Tech/Eng)	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S	M	E	S
All Students (%)	80	92	72	44	74	27	56	84	36	24	65	8	29	65	6	59	81	40
Students with disabilities (%)	23	29	21	8	10	4	17	55	9	0	13	4	7	32	0	8	32	7
English language learners (%)	35	34	19	19	21	11	20	66	7	0	22	0	7	23	0	18	36	10
Low-income (%)	41	50	32	30	38	20	55	84	34	23	64	7	30	66	7	56	80	37
Black (%)	39	51	29	31	44	21	71	98	48	25	78	8	24	64	8	49	80	34
Hispanic/Latino (%)	38	45	27	27	35	18	50	83	30	22	63	7	29	63	6	53	79	33
White (%)	67	76	61	48	53	39	63	69	41	24	55	16	—	—	—	72	87	50

**Red** = Performance is **worse** than the district average

**Green** = Performance is **better** than the district average

Source: 2013 Report Cards, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Massachusetts Department of Education

**Table VI-7. Graduation rates and college preparedness at schools attended by Marble Street/Outing Park students compared to the district and state**

	Massachusetts	Springfield	Putnam Voc Tech	Science Tech	Commerce	Central
2011 5-year graduation rate	86.3%	57.3%	66.9%	42.1%	35.4%	80.2%
2014 4-year graduation rate	84.7%	56.6%	71.1%	39.9%	35.4%	74.6%
2012 annual dropout rate	2.5%	10.0%	5.1%	11.6%	13.6%	7.7%
2013 12th graders taking 1+ Advanced Placement courses	35.2%	18.1%	7.0%	13.7%	2.4%	28.1%
SAT average score - Reading	507	416	385	393	397	431
SAT average score - Writing	501	403	374	374	386	413
SAT average score - Math	522	425	388	414	412	445
MassCore - completing rigorous course of study	68.4%	35.7%	56.7%	26.7%	34.4%	32.8

**Red** = Performance is worse than the district average

**Green** = Performance is better than the district average

Source: 2013 Report Cards, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Massachusetts Department of Education

- Among students with disabilities, the rate was 33.5% vs. 64% statewide
- Among English language learners, the rate was 39.2% vs. 57.8% statewide
- Among Hispanics, the rate was 46.4%

This is particularly troubling given the significant portion of the Marble Street and Outing Park students that fall into one or more of these subpopulations.

**High rates of special education needs.**

41 respondents (25%) stated they have a child with special needs for a total of 53 children at the

two sites. This is significantly higher than the citywide rate of 19.8% and statewide rate of 17%. Additionally, parents in the focus groups talked about the lack of sufficient support for special needs children and the difficulty of getting an IEP. Again, parents at Marble Street tended to be more critical of the special education supports than their counterparts at Outing Park. 63% of Outing Park parents were very satisfied with special needs education, 19% somewhat satisfied and only 12% dissatisfied at Outing Park; whereas only 43% of Marble Street parents were very satisfied, 21% somewhat satisfied and 36% were dissatisfied.

**Additional bilingual support for students and parents is needed.**

78% of Outing Park residents were very satisfied with the bi-lingual support offered, 11% somewhat satisfied and none were unsatisfied; whereas no Marble Street residents were very satisfied, only 57% were somewhat satisfied and 29% were unsatisfied. At the October 12, 2012 focus group, parents identified the lack of language support for Spanish-speaking children not yet fluent in English and their parents as a major issue. This is discussed further below regarding parental engagement.

**High rates of chronic absence.**

Chronic absence is defined as absences at least 10% of the time or 18+ days. Severely chronically absent is defined as absences at least 20% of the time or 36+ days. SPS has implemented a district-wide Attendance Improvement Initiative (AII) beginning in 2009-2010 school year that has resulted in a significant drop in the percentage of K-5th graders who are chronically absent. Nonetheless, this is still an issue that requires vigilance.

Per SPS, citywide 39.8% of students were chronically absent during the 2011-2012 school year and this rate is even higher for Hispanic/Latino students (41.6%). The citywide rate for severely chronically absent students during the same period is 23.0% (24.3% for Hispanics/Latinos). The rate of chronically absent South End students is about the same as the citywide rate but the rate of severely chronically absent is estimated to be slightly higher than the district but not by much.<sup>34</sup>

Table VI-8 provides attendance statistics for the schools where most Marble Street and Outing Park students attend. Dryden Memorial performs better than the state average, while Mary M. Lynch, the South End Middle School and High School of Commerce perform below the district average.

**Table VI-8. Attendance rates at schools attended by Marble Street/Outing Park students compared to district and state rates**

School	Attendance Rate	Average days absent per student
<b>Elementary</b>		
Massachusetts	94.9%	8.3
Springfield	93.8%	10.2
Daniel B. Brunton	94.4%	8.8
Homer Street	94.7%	8.7
Washington	94.4%	8.9
Mary M. Lynch	93.7%	11.0
White Street	94.5%	8.7
Dryden	95.3%	8.0
<b>Middle School</b>		
Massachusetts	93.4%	11.2
Springfield	92.2%	13.1
South End Middle School	90.3%	15.6
<b>High School</b>		
Massachusetts	95.0%	8.7
Springfield	88.4%	18.8
Putnam Vocational Technical High School	92.2%	13.6
High School/Science-Tech	88.6%	18.3
High School of Commerce	83.4%	23.9
Springfield Central High	91.2%	15.1

**Red** = Performance is worse than the district average  
**Green** = Performance is better than the district average

Source: 2013 Report Cards, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Massachusetts Department of Education

**High rates of disciplinary action in middle and high school.**

With the exception of White Street, rates of disciplinary action at the elementary schools attended by Marble Street and Outing Park students are relatively low compared to the City and State. However, the rates of in-school suspensions at the South End Middle School exceed that of the City and, although slightly lower than the City rate, the out-of-school suspensions are also alarmingly high. And while the rates at Putnam are low, both Commerce and Science-Tech have extremely high rates of disciplinary action. The out-of-school suspensions at Commerce are three times that of the state and the in-school suspensions are five times the state rate and both far exceed the district rate too. At the October 12, 2012 focus group, parents also expressed concerns that SPS puts too much emphasis on suspensions as a response to behavior problems.

**Concerns about student safety.**

Only 41% of parents at Marble Street compared to 71% at Outing Park feel their children are very safe at school. According to the survey, the sense of feeling unsafe is predominantly due to bullying and violence. However, at the focus group for parents of elementary school children, participants also raised concerns about the school bus safety as well as concerns about safely getting to and from the bus stop due to drug dealers and prostitutes in the neighborhood. Youth themselves also

**Table VI-9. Disciplinary rates at schools attended by Marble Street/Outing Park students compared to district and state rates**

School	Attendance Rate	Average days absent per student
<b>Elementary</b>		
Massachusetts	94.9%	8.3
Springfield	93.8%	10.2
Daniel B. Brunton	94.4%	8.8
Homer Street	94.7%	8.7
Washington	94.4%	8.9
Mary M. Lynch	93.7%	11.0
White Street	94.5%	8.7
Dryden	95.3%	8.0
<b>Middle School</b>		
Massachusetts	93.4%	11.2
Springfield	92.2%	13.1
South End Middle School	90.3%	15.6
<b>High School</b>		
Massachusetts	95.0%	8.7
Springfield	88.4%	18.8
Putnam Vocational Technical High School	92.2%	13.6
High School/Science-Tech	88.6%	18.3
High School of Commerce	83.4%	23.9
Springfield Central High	91.2%	15.1

**Red** = Performance is worse than the district average  
**Green** = Performance is better than the district average

Source: 2013 Report Cards, Massachusetts School and District Profiles, Massachusetts Department of Education

expressed concerns about safety at the South End Middle School during a focus group with 12-14 year olds. On a scale from 1-5 (1- safest and 5-unsafe), most students rated their sense of safety as a 3 citing examples of incidents/concerns both at school and traveling to/from school.

**Outing Park parents are happier with the quality of the schools and their services than Marble Street parents.**

62% of Outing Park parents were very happy, 25% somewhat happy, 8% unhappy with their children's schools. In contrast, only 33% of Marble Street parents were very happy and 39% somewhat happy, while 27% were unhappy. This difference between parents of the two sites may be explained by the fact that more Marble Street students attend Brunton, which does not appear to be highly regarded by parents. At the focus group for parents of elementary school children, participants rated Brunton much lower (1 out of 5) than the other schools including Lynch and Washington (5 out of 5). Although middle school was not intended to be a focus of the discussion, many of the participants spoke very highly of the South End Middle School and its principal. Students also spoke highly of the middle school in the focus group with 12-14 year olds.

**Parent involvement programs are highly desired.**

At the June 23, 2012 Community Information Fair, parent involvement programs and parenting classes topped the list of priorities for both

Education for Children and Adult Education. Although virtually all (95%) of Outing Park parents feel that the school where their child attends is welcoming of their involvement, one in four (26%) of the Marble Street parents did not. Similarly, 85% of Outing Park parents are very comfortable becoming involved in their children's school whereas only half (56%) of Marble Street parents are. For Marble Street parents, having a school located closer to home (38%), more convenient meeting times (31%) and bilingual support (27%) would make them feel more welcome.

At the 10/12/2012 focus group meeting with parents of elementary school children, participants talked in more detail regarding their concerns about the distance to school. They noted that if there is an emergency, parents without cars have great difficulty getting to the school. They also worried about special needs children being bused so far away. One parent also noted what a hassle it is to get their son's medication to the school. Another parent lamented, "It is just so far away you feel like you can't be the type of parent you want to be." And another noted, "I want to say that if the school was nearer there would be a lot of parents involved in their school. The other day, my son said 'today is open house,' but I didn't have no gas money to go and I really wanted to go."

Furthermore, during the focus group conducted in Spanish, many parents raised concern about the lack of Spanish speaking staff at the schools. This concern was raised both for the students that do not speak English and the parents. They noted that all communication from the school is in English. One parent cited an example where they needed to use SHA staff to help them communicate to the school that their child needed to be excused for a doctor's appointment. More generally, parents also talked about the general lack of information/communication with the school.

Based upon feedback at the focus group, most parents did not know about the Springfield Parent Academy. However, the few that did, all expressed positive experiences. And some parents noted that Brunton has held PTO meetings in the South End in the past and that was much appreciated.

**Very limited participation in after-school and youth programs among Marble Street and Outing Park students.**

A mapping effort completed by the Western Massachusetts Out-of-School-Time Coalition and encompassing non-profit providers and SPS summer school in 2009 found 2,942 elementary-age summer program slots in the city compared to 11,561 elementary school students in SPS, resulting in access for only 25% of the student population.<sup>35</sup> So perhaps it is not surprising that only 25% of Marble Street and Outing Park parents stated that they have a child who

participates in after school programs (42% Marble St, 18% Outing Park) and participation in other youth programs is significantly lower still. And, it is worth noting that participation rates are significantly higher at Marble Street than Outing Park. 74% of Outing Park respondents did not have a child participating in any youth program compared to 16% at Marble Street.

When asked why their children do not participate in out-of-school-time programs, Transportation (41% at Marble Street, 14% at Outing Park), Cost (43% at Marble Street, 11% at Outing Park) and Gang/Neighborhood Violence (39% at Marble Street, 8% at Outing Park) were cited most frequently as reasons. Across the board, residents would like to see additional programming for youth including Recreation and Sports (83% Marble Street, 43% Outing Park), Performing Arts (78% Marble Street, 45% Outing Park), Drug Prevention (75% Marble Street, 51% Outing Park), After-school Programs (75% Marble Street, 44% Outing Park) and Summer Programs (72% Marble Street, 48% Outing Park).

At the June 23, 2012 Community Information Fair, participants cited rebuilding the South End Community Center as the top priority for the neighborhood. And when asked about programming at the SECC, participant prioritized sports and recreation (18%), mentoring and leadership training for youth (12%), visual and performing arts (11%), a drop-in teen lounge (10%), adult education/GED (10%) and computer/technology lab (8%). At the focus group for parents of elementary students, parents talked about the following:

- Importance of the South End Community Center
- Need for a supervised computer center to complete homework
- Need for a gym in the neighborhood for kids to play after school
- Interest in performing arts such as glee club/chorus/band, theatre, dance
- Lack of availability of affordable sporting events/teams
- Need for special classes/activities for children with disabilities



## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Race and Ethnicity data for Outing Park I and II is for head of household only.
- <sup>2</sup> Census data age categories differ slightly from the SHA data. This figure represents children ages 6-14 years.
- <sup>3</sup> Census data age categories differ slightly from the SHA data. This figure represents children ages 15-19 years.
- <sup>4</sup> Census data age categories differ slightly from the SHA data. This figure represents adults 20-64 years.
- <sup>5</sup> Strategic Workforce Development Plan for Hampden County 2011-2103, Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economy at a Glance, Springfield, MA-CT, data extracted on March 06, 2014, [http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ma\\_springfield\\_mn.htm](http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ma_springfield_mn.htm)
- <sup>7</sup> Strategic Workforce Development Plan for Hampden County 2011-2103, Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, Inc.
- <sup>8</sup> Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition, Preliminary Discussion of Environmental Health Issues
- <sup>9</sup> Per Live Well Springfield grant application
- <sup>10</sup> Per Live Well Springfield grant application
- <sup>11</sup> The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, <http://www.foodbankma.org/what-we-do/community-outreach/sfap/>
- <sup>12</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/stateprofiles/Asthma\\_in\\_MA.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/asthma/stateprofiles/Asthma_in_MA.pdf)
- <sup>13</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/stateprograms/fundedstates/massachusetts.html>
- <sup>14</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6145a4.htm#tab>
- <sup>15</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/features/dsdepression/>
- <sup>16</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/data\\_statistics/arthritis\\_related\\_stats.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/data_statistics/arthritis_related_stats.htm)
- <sup>17</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db107.htm>
- <sup>18</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6145a4.htm#tab>
- <sup>19</sup> Massachusetts Department of Health, Bureau of Environmental Health, [http://matracking.ehs.state.ma.us/Health\\_Data/Pediatric\\_Asthma.html#](http://matracking.ehs.state.ma.us/Health_Data/Pediatric_Asthma.html#)
- <sup>20</sup> Childhood obesity in Massachusetts: Where does your town weigh in?, Examiner.com, Monique Brouillette, March 18, 2011 <http://www.examiner.com/article/childhood-obesity-massachusetts-where-does-your-town-weigh-in>
- <sup>21</sup> Massachusetts Department of Health, Bureau of Environmental Health, [http://matracking.ehs.state.ma.us/Health\\_Data/Pediatric\\_Asthma.html#](http://matracking.ehs.state.ma.us/Health_Data/Pediatric_Asthma.html#)
- <sup>22</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/stateprograms/fundedstates/massachusetts.html>
- <sup>23</sup> Facts: Springfield, Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy and Youth First Initiative, August 2011
- <sup>24</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- <sup>25</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- <sup>26</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health
- <sup>27</sup> U. S. Census Bureau
- <sup>28</sup> Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Massachusetts Community Health Profile (2006) National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation (2008). Workforce Development, Welfare Reform, and Child Well-Being: Working Paper #7.
- Downey, D.B., Ainsworth-Darnell, J.W. & Dufur, M.J. (1998). "Sex of parent and children's well-being in single-parent households." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 60(4), 878-893.
- <sup>29</sup> Springfield's Plan for Reading Success by 4th Grade, The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation, [www.readby4thgrade.com](http://www.readby4thgrade.com)
- <sup>30</sup> Springfield's Plan for Reading Success by 4th Grade, The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation, [www.readby4thgrade.com](http://www.readby4thgrade.com)
- <sup>31</sup> Per Springfield Public Schools enrollment data for the 2011-2012 School Year
- <sup>32</sup> Since the South End Middle School re-opened so recently, it appears that the state has yet to assign an Accountability and Assistance Level, determine if it is Meeting Gap Narrowing Goals or assess the Overall Performance Relative to Other Schools Statewide (Percentile).
- <sup>33</sup> Springfield's Plan for Reading Success by 4th Grade, The Irene E. & George A. Davis Foundation, [www.readby4thgrade.com](http://www.readby4thgrade.com)
- <sup>34</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup> Ibid.

Chapter VII

# People Strategy



*Source: Square One*

# People Strategy

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**Table VII-1.** Goals, Outcomes and Metrics

## Chapter VII

# People Strategy

The People Strategy for the *South End Revitalization Plan: Phase 2* seeks to implement a set of coordinated strategies designed to address the priority needs identified in the Resident Needs Assessment outlined in Chapter VI and, ultimately, to improve the economic and educational opportunities, health and quality of life of residents living at Marble Street Apartments and Outing Park Apartments specifically as well as the greater South End neighborhood.

This chapter presents the guiding vision for the People Strategy. The chapter then outlines the goals and outcomes that provide the framework for the plan and the metrics that will measure progress in realizing these goals. Finally, this chapter describes the specific strategies that will be implemented and suggests potential partners to be involved in implementing the plan's vision.

## A. Overall Vision for People

The People plan seeks to create opportunities for all South End families to thrive. Goals include:

- Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.

- Children, youth and adults are physically and mentally healthy.
- Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career.”

The plan seeks to achieve these goals through a series of strategies and partnerships by:

- Developing a comprehensive, coordinated, and evidence-based program that meets the specific needs of Marble Street, Outing Park, and South End residents.
- Capitalizing on and aligning with existing networks and initiatives, such as Springfield’s Reading Success by 4th Grade initiative, Live Well Springfield, and the Springfield Food Policy Council to name a few.
- Emphasizing collaboration among a network of partners who creatively leverage and align community assets to facilitate greater collective impact for the target populations and the neighborhood.

## B. Goals, Outcomes, Metrics, and Strategies

As previously noted three key People goals have been identified for the South End People plan. Additionally, a set of outcomes and metrics related to each goal have been developed in order to more fully define success and track progress to determine when strategies and partners need details to be adjusted during implementation. Table VII-1 details specific outcomes and metrics for each goal.

The section that follows describes the strategies to achieve each goal, while creating a coordinated, place-based framework that improves outcomes for all ages. The strategies reflect the input received from key stakeholders during the multi-faceted community engagement process. The strategies proposed offer an initial framework for the People plan, but are likely to be refined over time to respond to additional feedback from stakeholders during the remainder of the planning period and beyond, as well as to changes in the local provider network, the availability of funding, the evolving needs of the target populations, and lesson learned.

**Table VII-1. Goals, Outcomes and Metrics**

Goals	Outcomes	Metrics
<p><b>P1</b> Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.</p>	<p>Help residents attain the education, job skills and work readiness training needed for employment, particularly in high demand industries.</p>	<p>#/% of working-age adults with a certificate or license                      #/% of adults that complete high school or got their GED                      Average earned income (from work) of HUD-assisted households (excluding those who cannot work due to being elderly or disabled)                      Median household income</p>
	<p>Provide services and supports to address barriers to employment.</p>	<p>#/% of working-age adults working at least 30 hrs/wk</p>
	<p>Prepare HUD-assisted and other low-income South End residents to take advantage of Section 3 job opportunities.</p>	<p># of residents employed by NHA or contractors through Section 3</p>
	<p>Ensure residents are financially literate and build assets to achieve income security.</p>	<p>#/% who received EITC                      #/% with a bank account                      #/% enrolled in IDA/ savings program (i.e. FSS)</p>
<p><b>P2</b> Children, youth and adults are physically and mentally healthy.</p>	<p>Ensure families have access to affordable health care.</p>	<p>#/% of adults and children who have health insurance                      #/% of adults and children who have a place where they regularly go other than an emergency room when they are sick or need advice about their health</p>
	<p>Ensure families have the knowledge and resources to live a healthy lifestyle.</p>	<p>#/% reporting good physical health                      #/% reporting healthy weight                      #/% reporting hypertension                      #/% reporting low psychological distress</p>
	<p>Increase physically activity among children and adults.</p>	<p>#/% of adults and children who report being physically active 60 minutes a day</p>
	<p>Ensure residents have access to affordable healthy food and embrace healthy cooking and eating.</p>	<p># of community gardens in the South End                      # of healthy eating/ cooking classes and events offered in the South End</p>

**Table VII-1. Goals, Outcomes and Metrics (cont.)**

Goals	Outcomes	Metrics
<p><b>P3</b> Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career”.</p>	<p>Increase the involvement and support of parents in their children’s early literacy skill development and early education as well as their child’s ongoing education.</p>	<p># accredited early learning/child care slots in South End                      #/% of children participating in early learning programs                      #/% of households participating in family literacy activities</p>
	<p>Parents are engaged in their children’s education.</p>	<p>For children 0-7, #/% of parents or family members who report reading to their child 3 or more times per week.                      For K-8, #/% of parents or family members who report encouraging their child to read books outside of school.                      For 9-12th grade, #/% of parents or family members who report talking with their child about the importance of college and career.                      #/% of parents with school aged children attending at least one PTA or other school support organization</p>
	<p>Improve access to literacy-rich out of school time (after school and summer) programs that improve academic outcomes and encourage positive youth development.</p>	<p>#/% of youth involved in positive youth development activities</p>
	<p>Ensure students travel safely to school and out-of-school time programs.</p>	<p>#/% of students who feel safe travelling to and from school</p>
	<p>Increase the number of children enrolled in a high quality education from kindergarten through high school.</p>	<p>#/% of students at or above grade level according to State math and reading or language arts assessments</p>

**P1**  
GOAL

**Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.**

**Help residents attain the education, job skills and work readiness training needed for employment, particularly in high demand industries.**

**Connect adults and youth to the full array of One-Stop Career Center services available at Futureworks.** Futureworks is located less than two miles from Marble Street and Outing Park and offers a range of services and resources to job seekers and employers in Hampden County in both English and Spanish. These include job postings; free workshops in resume writing, interviewing, salary negotiations and many more; use of computers, FAX machines, phones and copiers; and access to trained professionals to assist members in their job search, career planning and management. Special programming includes:

- Pilot with Department of Labor for job search assistance for individuals with disabilities
- Post-incarceration supports via the Hampden Re-entry group
- Training for emerging medical occupations, including health care outreach workers

- Futureworks also offers more training accounts than anyone else in the state. So it is an important resource in serving WIA-eligible residents to work readiness programs.

**Expand access and enrollment in vocational training in high growth sectors.** According to the Regional Employment Board, the key growth industries identified in and around Springfield include health care, green building and precision manufacturing. In addition, particularly with the proposed casino development, growth is expected in Leisure and Hospitality. Where possible provide stipend and on-the-job training funds to support students' and trainees' financial needs, particularly in longer term certificate programs.

**Prepare residents for employment opportunities that are expected to result from the casino development.** Assuming that MGM moves forward with the casino development as planned, job opportunities in the construction and hospitality industries are expected. In total, 3,000 new jobs are anticipated, including 2,200 FTEs.<sup>1</sup> Given the high rate of unemployment in the neighborhood, it is critical to leverage this development project to its full potential to create employment opportunities for qualified local

residents in the short term during construction and the long term in the operations of the casino, hotel and other anticipated entertainment and retail venues.

**Support The Wellspring Collaborative and connect South End residents to employment opportunities in the proposed network of worker-owned businesses.** In early 2014, the Wellspring Upholstery Cooperative became the first of a network of worker-owned businesses to be launched in the Springfield area. The collaborative will harness the purchasing power of the region's largest employers as a market for creating new worker-owned companies that will provide urgently needed entry-level jobs. As the program's pilot business, the Wellspring Upholstery Cooperative partnered with two existing businesses in the South End, Alliance Upholstery and the Design Resource Center NE, to provide workers the training they need to become skilled employees, managers and future business owners. Wellspring employees will become worker-owners who will share in company profits and elect the company's board enabling them to accumulate wealth. A second greenhouse business is expected to open next year.



## Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.

### **Provide internships, apprenticeships, and/or transitional employment to help residents without an employment history to obtain soft skills and develop good work habits.**

One potential initiative would be to work with Springfield Public Schools to mirror Baystate Medical Center's interpreter training program to train DTA-mandated parents as facilitators/interpreters. This would provide an internship or employment opportunity to residents with limited work experience while also addressing the need for additional interpreter services in the Springfield Public Schools, which was identified as a critical need in the Education strategies.

**Connect South End youth to after-school and summer employment, training and internship opportunities.** Many Springfield public school graduates have no job experience and are challenged with understanding work place culture and ethics. So it is important to publicize existing training and internship opportunities and identify creative ways to engage South End youth in the following:

- In conjunction with Putnam High Schools, SHA offers training where youth are matched with a tradesman.

- New England Farm Workers Council offers a WIA Youth Program, under the direction of the Regional Employment Board of Hampden County, which provides skill-building and one-on-one counseling to help young people find and keep jobs, and a summer job program that familiarizes teenagers with the adult world of work and offers them valuable on-the-job experience.
- Center for Youth Internships and Employment (CYIE), a program of the Regional Employment Board, provides high school seniors with internship opportunities at businesses like Mass Mutual, Northeast Electric and Mass Housing. These opportunities target academic achievers that maintain a B+ average for two <?>semesters.
- The Workplace Readiness Certificate Program offers 10 hours of workforce readiness training for youth. Once students have completed the program, they receive a certificate signed by the REB certifying that the student has met preliminary workplace competencies. Employers in Hampden County are familiar with the certificate and acknowledge that these students come to their employment with an increased awareness.

- Futureworks sponsors a highly successful youth job fair at the Eastfield Mall and offers a youth center serving 14-21 year olds, with some programs offered up to age 24.

**Address low literacy levels with basic education and GED programs.** Connect eligible residents to programs offered by New England Farm Workers Council, Springfield Housing Authority, Springfield Technical Community College's expanded ABE Center, YMCA's Teen Parent Program, YWCA's Youth Build Springfield and others as available.



**P1**  
 GOAL

## Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.

**Cultivate employer participation in transitional employment and internship programs for adults and youth.** The biggest challenge in employment of youth, particularly those that are court-involved, is finding employers who are willing to hire the youth, even when program pay the youth directly and offer ongoing support. Some suggested steps include:

- Host the REB's employer outreach and appreciation breakfast in the South End and profile South End youth as part of the event.
- Encourage training providers to offer case management service for 3 month period to help with a new hire's transition.
- Convene an employer advisory board to consider additional incentives and strategies.

### Provide services and support to address barriers to employment.

**Address limited English proficiency.** Connect non-English speakers to English as a Second Language classes offered by Springfield Housing Authority, The Gray House, Springfield Adult Education Program (OWL), Springfield Vietnamese American Civic Association, Future Works who is developing a pilot with Holyoke Community College and others as available. Note, the New England Farm Workers Council also offers GED classes in Spanish.

**Address child care needs by connecting residents to affordable, high quality child care.** As discussed in more detail in the Education strategies, the availability of childcare vouchers is very limited but compounding this issue is also a limited number of providers in the neighborhood. In addition, many entry level jobs are 2nd and 3rd shifts that require evening and weekend care. Through partnerships with Square One and other childcare providers, it is important to expand the number of slots available in the neighborhood as well as identify services that can be offered during non-traditional hours. For more discussion of

early learning programs refer to the Education strategies later in the chapter.

**Address criminal record barriers.** Provide supports to formally incarcerated individuals to successfully integrate back in the community and secure education, training, and/or employment. Approximately 300 persons per year are released from prison into the South End community. Work with the Hampden County Re-entry Group, the Hampden County Sheriff Department's After Incarceration Support Services, Roca and partners to help ex-offenders to secure housing, education, training and employment and successfully transition back to life in the community.

**Create computer learning resources in the South End.** Even entry level jobs often can only be accessed via on-line job applications. So familiarity with computers is critical. However, there are currently no computer learning centers in the South End. Ideally, the new South End Community Center would offer a computer lab and partner with local providers to offer an array of computer learning programs for youth and adults.

**P1**  
 GOAL

## Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.

In the interim, SHA offers computer classes at its Neighborhood Network program at the Sullivan Housing Development. These offerings include a group class for on-line applications as well as task-oriented classes such as Email 101. However, given the long commute by public transit to this site from the South End, residents should be encouraged to utilize computers and other resources at the main public library branch on State Street. Currently most resident exposure to libraries is via school and not in the neighborhood. So perhaps resident leaders could be cultivated in the neighborhood and help to encourage utilization of the libraries and other supportive resources citywide. Computer classes are also available at Futureworks.

**Provide transportation assistance.** Given that there are no training partners located in the South End, transportation has proven to be a barrier to participation for South End residents without a car. So the City and partners should explore shuttle transport for South End residents to and from training programs. If possible this exploration should include Peter Pan bus lines.

**Provide pregnant and parenting teens with the necessary supports to complete school, secure employment and successfully raise their children.** One critical resource is The Corporation for Public Management's Young Parents Program (YPP). As part of the MA Department of Transitional Assistance Employment Services Program, YPP looks to reduce welfare dependency among young parents, ages 14 to 21, by helping them get GEDs, jobs, parenting skills, and additional education. YPP offers access to education with "real world" implications, teaching participants how to apply math, science, communication and other skills to raising a family and other day-to-day activities. The program has proven so successful that in FY2008, over 80% of program participants who came in without graduating high school not only obtained a GED but went on to college.

**Help immigrants with credentials earned in their native homeland to certify their aptitude in order to secure employment.** Explore whether Springfield Technical Community College or another entity might be able to conduct

independent assessments of an individual's skills and certify to their aptitude so that they have some standing with potential employers.

**Address high rates of physical/mental disability with health care partners and identify workforce training specifically tailored to the needs of these populations.** Mental and physical health conditions were identified as barriers to employment for many residents of Marble Street and Outing Park. So in addition to working with health partners as outlined in the Health strategies, it will be critical to connect them with Futureworks who was recently awarded state funds for "Navigators". For disabled job seekers, the Navigator is an additional support person within the workforce development system who can help them to access services and overcome barriers. The Navigator collaborates with disability agencies and providers, working to strengthen the link between that network and the Career Centers and works to develop links with employers to aid job placement. Residents should also be referred to the Human Resource Unlimited's Lighthouse on State Street, a clubhouse for persons with mental illness who are seeking employment.

**P1**  
GOAL

## Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.

### Prepare HUD-assisted and other low-income South End residents to take advantage of Section 3 job opportunities.

To further catalyze economic development and employment opportunities, the City's Section 3 Coordinator will work to ensure training, employment and contracting opportunities are made available to low- and very-low income persons from the South End as well as the larger metropolitan area. One key resource is the YWCA's YouthBuild Program which helps low-income young people ages 16–24 work toward their GEDs or high school diplomas while receiving close supervision and training in construction skills full-time on alternate weeks from qualified instructors. However, it was noted that apprenticeship programs and opportunities are currently very limited. So it will be important to work with the Springfield Labor Council, carpenters union and other local trades to explore the development of apprenticeship training opportunities.

In addition, the Section 3 coordinator will ensure priority consideration for Section 3 persons and businesses in all redevelopment activities. To help in this endeavor, she will create and maintain a database of Section 3 eligible residents and businesses and notify of Section 3 opportunities.



### Ensure residents are financially literate and have assets to achieve income security.

**Connect residents to financial literacy and credit repair services.** Springfield Partners for Community Action offers credit counseling and financial literacy services. Credit counseling is provided on a confidential, one-on-one basis to residents seeking to establish, improve, or repair their credit. Financial literacy workshops help people establish household budgets, create savings accounts, reduce debt, and build and maintain good credit scores. New sessions conducted by a certified credit counselor begin every month, and consist of four classes each that are free and open to the public. There is an opportunity to make these workshops available in community based settings in the South End like Square One's Family Square or the South End Community Center. Additionally, the Springfield Parent Academy discussed in more detail under the education strategies offers "workshops on wheels" that can be held in South End locations on financial literacy topics including credit.



## Work-able residents have viable employment options leading to greater economic stability and financial independence.

The United Way is also pursuing a grant to create One Stop Financial Literacy Centers located at STCC and HCC. Connect South End residents to these new resources as they come to fruition.

**Look for new opportunities to incorporate financial literacy into youth programs.** Junior Achievement and Gandara's PREP Program address financial literacy as part of their curriculum. The South End Community Center and other youth program providers should explore additional ways to incorporate financial literacy into their programming so youth develop good skills and habits related to money.

**Establish VITA tax assistance site in the South End.** VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) is a program operated by Springfield Partners for Community Action and sponsored by the IRS. VITA volunteers are trained and certified by the IRS to prepare and file state and federal tax returns. VITA services are available to mid- to low-income; disabled; elderly; and non-English speaking residents of Hampden County. Springfield Partners operates several VITA sites in the greater Springfield area, open at varied hours during the late January to mid-April tax season, but currently there are none located in the South

End. Square One's Family Square, Outing Park's new community building and/or the South End Community Center should be explored as possible South End sites for the next tax season.

**Maximize utilization of EITC.** As Paul Bailey of Springfield Partners for Community Action noted on National Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Awareness Day on January 31, 2014, the EITC keeps thousands of local households above the poverty line every year, yet nationally, more than \$13 billion in EITC goes unclaimed each year.<sup>2</sup> So it is critical to build upon SPCA's citywide campaign to ensure residents Marble Street, Outing Park and the South End more generally are aware of and that eligible residents fully avail themselves of the EITC, the Child Tax Credit (CTC), and education credits.

### **Potential Partners:**

*Baystate Medical Center, Home City Housing, Behavioral Health Network, Caring Health, Center for Youth Internships and Employment, Chamber of Commerce, City's Section 3 Coordinator, Corporation for Public Management, Department of Transitional Assistance, Develop Springfield, Financial Education Unit @ FHLB of Boston, Futureworks, Hampden County Sheriff's After Incarceration Support Program, Hampden County Re-entry Group, HAP Housing, Human Resources Unlimited, Junior Achievement of Western MA, MA Rehabilitation Commission, New England Farm Workers' Council, Outing Park/First Resource, Peter Pan, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Pioneer Valley Transportation Authority, Read/Write/Now Adult Learning Center, Regional Employment Board of Hampden County (REB), Roca, Sodexo, South End Community Center, Spectra Center ABE/GED, Springfield Adult Education Program (OWL), Springfield College, Springfield Family Support Program, Springfield Housing Authority, SHA Neighborhood Network Center, Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services, Springfield Parent Academy, Springfield Partners for Community Action, Springfield Pregnant and Parenting Teen Project, Springfield Public Library, Springfield Public Schools, Springfield Senior Services, Springfield Vietnamese American Civic Association, Square One's Mom Squad, STCC, The Gray House, Training Resources of America, uAspire Springfield's Promise Program, United Way of Pioneer Valley, UMass Donahue Institute (for medical professionals), Urban League's Higher Education Resource Center, Valley Opportunity Council, Young Parents Program, YWCA YouthBuild*

**P2**  
GOAL

**Children, youth and adults are physically and mentally healthy.**

**Ensure families have access to affordable health care.**

**Promote Caring Health Center (CHC) services to Marble Street, Outing Park and other South End households.** Utilize the opening of the new CHC facility to increase visibility and engage the hard to reach residents in the South End community. The new 45,000 square foot location will enable CHC to:

- Add 20 additional providers and to grow to serve 26,000 patients within the next five years.
- Add two exam rooms for specialty care that will enable patients to be seen by cardiologists, renal specialists, gastroenterologists, etc. on-site thereby dramatically increasing the likelihood of follow-up.
- Offer a community teaching kitchen and wellness center. The wellness center will comprise half of the ground floor space with a room to accommodate 100 persons, another to accommodate 30 persons and several to accommodate 15 persons. CHC will also offer this meeting space free to the community.

- Offer space for a 11,000 square foot pocket pharmacy with discount prescriptions. The pharmacy enables CHC to provide some storefront space along Main Street and to meet a critical need for the neighborhood as the closest pharmacy is in downtown.
- Offer space for behavioral health services to be provided via partnership with several local providers.

**Maximize health insurance enrollments and connect households to a medical home.**

Virtually, all residents (99%) of Marble Street and Outing Park have medical insurance and report that their children have a regular pediatrician. These are important steps in ensuring access to quality health care. However, nearly 1 in 5 adults do not have a primary care provider. So work is needed to connect these individuals to Caring Health and/or other quality medical providers in the greater Springfield area.

**Expand Behavioral Health Network’s highly successful mental health program at Marble Street to residents of Outing Park.** To respond to the high need for mental health services and the challenge of getting residents to participate in clinic-based care, BHN piloted an on-site

counseling program at Marble Street. The pilot has proven highly effective, achieving an 85-90% participation rate. Given that 1 in 3 adults at Outing Park also report stress, anxiety and depression, it is recommended that BHN and First Resource explore a similar arrangement at this second location.

**Improve access to dental services.** Springfield is a Dental Health Provider Shortage Area (DHPSA) since no dentists in the area accept Mass Health. Dental services are available via the Holyoke Health Center at Springfield Technical Community College. However, there is a long waiting list for this program. So, it is not a surprise that 40% of survey respondents cited dental services as an unmet medical need making it the most cited response. Fortunately, the expansion of Caring Health will increase the number of dental chairs from 5 to 14, reducing the previous 5-6 month wait time and enabling walk-in care. In addition, they will have oral surgery capacity where previously patients have to seek care as far away as North Adams, Worcester and Boston.

## P2 GOAL

### Children, youth and adults are physically and mentally healthy.

#### Ensure families have the knowledge and resources to live a healthy lifestyle.

**Promote healthy choices by South End youth via drug prevention, teen pregnancy prevention programs and more.** To address high rates of teen pregnancy, alcohol abuse and other risky behaviors among South End teens, partners will promote and seek to maximize participation by South End youth in the following programs. They will also explore the possibility of providing these programs at the South End Community Center once construction is complete. Until the South End Community Center is rebuilt, the South End Middle School is likely to be the best venue to reach South End youth for these programs.

- *YMCA's Making Proud Choices program.* This program seeks to prevent teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease. They recognize Nation Teen Pregnancy Day and offer a Young Mother's Program. They are also seeking funding for a mentoring program.
- *YMCA's Y-Aim program.* Y-AIM stands for "Achieve academically, Inspire to attend college, and Move toward personal, family and community advancement."



- *Gandara's PREP program.* This teen pregnancy prevention program builds on evidence-based programs like Cuidate and Making Proud Choices and includes additional life skills/positive youth development curricula (including an introduction to financial literacy) to help minority youth with multiple high risk factors for teen pregnancy. While the program has typically provided 12 hours of programming in a group setting for 15-19 year olds in their

residential programs, Gandara is looking to offer the program in more community settings.

- *YEAH Network.* Although the YEAH Network does not provide any direct services, it works with a network of partners to address adolescent reproductive health with the goal of lowering teen pregnancy in Holyoke and Springfield by 10% in five years. Two key partners include:
  - The Springfield Pregnant and Parenting Teen Project which currently serves 120 pregnant or parenting youth ages 14-26 years and provides assistance with GED, jobs and housing; and
  - Youth First which offers direct afterschool and youth programming.

To date, much of the outreach has been via the Chestnut Conference Center in the North End. The YEAH Network has identified the South End as a gap area.

- *Stop Access Springfield.* This coalition, spearheaded by Gandara, works to reduce underage drinking in the Mason Square and South End communities. Youth and adults work side-by-side to implement city wide and

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neighborhood-based strategies that highlight and address underage drinking. Current working groups include a retailers group, youth advisory board, law enforcement, trauma team and a multi-disciplinary prevention team focused on data.

- *Springfield Parent Academy.* Discussed in more detail in the Education strategies, the Springfield Parent Academy offers a number of “workshops on wheels” that can be made available in the South End neighborhood to support parents including Understanding the Sexual Behavior of Children and More than the Birds and the Bees: Talking to Children About Sex.

#### **Create and promote wellness programs in the new Caring Health facility.**

- *Enroll residents in the Chronic Disease Self-Management program.* Through this program, patients set goals to improve their health incrementally. 10 weeks of group support is offered as well as an ongoing mentor from the health center. With funding from the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, CHC intends to train more people through this program. Ideally, CHC will maximize the number of

South End residents that are trained to be trainers.

- *Maximize utilization of the community teaching kitchen and wellness center.* Beyond offering a venue for CHC initiated activities and programs; the wellness center is available for public use. Working in partnership with other local providers, it will be critical to ensure this much-needed community resource is put to good use and offers a variety of engaging services that will further the goals of this plan.

#### **Improve asthma management by providing asthma-related education and treatment services.**

Working in partnership with the Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition, CHC and other health providers ensure the many adults and youth in the South End who suffer from asthma have access to services and supports to manage this condition.

**Improve the health and wellness of South End men of color by promoting/enrolling residents in YMCA’s MOCHA program.** This collaborative effort enables men of color to engage in an educational and social experience with the support and motivation necessary to make lifestyle and community changes. The MOCHA introductory program includes a six-week class focusing on

key areas of men’s health in addition to weekly exercise classes. Each week includes discussion, education and peer support surrounding each topic. The curriculum also includes a free adult membership to the YMCA of Greater Springfield. Each participant partakes in pre- and post-wellness assessment. Walking groups, exercise classes, and screenings are also available to MOCHA participants.

#### **Increase physical activity among adults and children.**

**Support Live Well Springfield’s initiatives to promote physical activity.** Live Well Springfield is a community based coalition that includes over 20 organizations working in Springfield. The coalition supports a grassroots movement towards health equity through improving access to healthy eating and active living opportunities. In 2012, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission received a Community Transformation Grant (CTG) from the Center for Disease Control to further this movement. Live Well Springfield is currently working to promote active living in two key ways:

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- *Increase usage of the River Walk and the Pioneer Valley Riverfront Club (PVRC) by South End residents.* As noted in the Neighborhood context and strategies, the Connecticut Riverwalk is a 3.7 mile path which runs from the South End Bridge north to Plainfield Street. The path is adjacent to the Connecticut River and provides beautiful vistas and wildlife viewing opportunities and is suitable for walking, running and biking. The path also serves as a conduit to many area destinations like the Basketball Hall of Fame and downtown restaurants and attractions.

Located only 3 miles upriver from the South End, Pioneer Valley Riverfront Club is a 501(c)3 nonprofit whose mission it is to promote river-based sporting activities, to develop river and bike path access, and encourage recreation in the Greater Springfield metropolitan area. To that end, PVRC regularly integrates the Riverwalk in its programming and also rents bicycles out of its North Riverfront Park facility.

- *Create a city-wide bike pedestrian plan that would enhance the pedestrian and bike infrastructure in the South End.* Making walking and

bicycling easier and fun will go a long way in helping South End residents get more active. Live Well Springfield is partnering with PVPC and the Planning and Economic Development Department to develop the Western Massachusetts's first ever municipal pedestrian and bicycle plan which is expected to be completed in June 2014. It will include recommendations for bike lanes, crosswalks and other pedestrian infrastructure throughout the city, including the South End. The hope is to link these improvements to other traffic mitigations measures that MGM is required to provide as part of their community benefits package.

#### **Promote recreation, community activities, and events in the newly improved Emerson Wight Park.**

- Include the Park in the greater Springfield sports league rotation. Identify neighborhood organizations to sponsor/organize teams to participate in these leagues.
- Launch the Food, Fun, and Friend program which offers a free snack and lunch during the summer break.



Find out about physical activity programs, including dance, rowing, biking and walking at [livewellspringfield.org](http://livewellspringfield.org)



Made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



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- Link programs and services at the proposed South End Community Center to the Park to promote utilization and provide an anchor for ongoing activity.

**Rebuild the South End Community Center thereby ensuring a critical recreation resource is returned to the community.** As discussed in more detail in the Education strategies, the rebuilding of the South End Community Center is critical for so many reasons. With regard to health, it will provide an important recreation venue that they neighborhood lost in the 2011 tornado. In particular, the South End Community Center offer a boxing program, serving high-risk 8-34 year olds, which offers weight training and boxing fundamentals and sponsors a competitive team. The program also seeks to promote discipline and good citizenship. In addition, it seeks to connect youth with the GED programs and job placement via and relationships developed with Dunkin' Donuts and the local car wash. Currently participation is capped at 50 because of the available space at its temporary location at the YMCA and interested youth are regularly turned away. SECC also offers a basketball program that is available to adults 21 or older and sponsors

teams that compete in adult leagues citywide. In addition, prior to the tornado, SECC also offered open gym time. The City of Springfield has committed to build a South End Community Center building in the Emerson Wight Park, and has allocated \$8 million of FEMA funds to support this project.

**Maximize enrollment in other recreation programs such as the YMCA's Fit Kids Program.** Offered at the YMCA Dunbar, Fit Kids is a grant-funded program that gives children the tools they need to make better choices about nutrition and encourages them to lead active lifestyles. The curriculum was developed based on the CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health) fitness program. CATCH is an evidence-based, National Institutes of Health-funded program proven to increase physical activity, improve student nutrition habits, reduce sodium and saturated fats in school lunches, sustain student health behaviors at least three years post-intervention, and decrease obesity rates. Fit Kids coaches, typically Springfield College students studying to be physical education teachers, visit each site once a week to conduct a Fit Kids session. Each session includes a warm-up, a CATCH activity or game, and a cool-

down as well as fitness, nutrition and education components.

**Identify South End locations for the Y without Walls Program.** Instead of operating programs exclusively out of its traditional centers, the Y without Wall Programs uses existing facilities throughout the community to make its programs more accessible to clients. In particular, this program offers mini group exercise classes in community settings like housing developments and local neighborhood organizations. YMCA of Greater Springfield is open to exploring locations in the South End such as the South End Community Center, the Caring Health Wellness Center and/or the new community building at Outing Park.



Source: Live Well Springfield

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**Ensure residents have access to affordable healthy food and embrace healthy cooking and eating.**

**Identify city-owned land in the South End to be developed as a community garden.** In addition to providing healthy food, community gardens can serve as an outdoor classroom where youth can learn valuable skills. Recent studies indicate that community gardening has a positive impact on social and interpersonal skills, healthy eating and nutrition, science achievement and attitudes toward learning, and self-efficacy and enhanced stewardship.<sup>3</sup>

**Encourage a gardening program at the South End Middle School.** The City's Recycling Program provides and supports gardens prepared and planted by students at Springfield Public Schools, including a farm project at the JFK Middle School in Indian Orchard. A 21st Century grant program also supports summer school programming, utilizing the garden as a classroom. Currently there are no school gardens in the South End. However, Sodexo offers grants up to \$2000 to start a garden. Given the limited grounds at the



Source: Live Well Springfield

school, the plantings do not necessarily need to be on school property. There is the potential that the City's program could provide window boxes and/or facilitate the use of empty street planters. However, a program will require the involvement of a South End Middle School teacher(s) to engage and supervise students.

**Advocate for changes in food policy at South End schools to integrate healthier foods.**

Working with the Springfield Food Policy Council, Live Well Springfield and others, explore a pilot program, possibly with City Fresh Foods, to make healthier options available at the South End Middle School, Veritas and/or Springfield Collegiate.

**Expand Live Well Springfield's Go Fresh Mobile Market to include a second location in the South End.** The Go Fresh Mobile Farmer's Market brings fresh produce, straight from the Enterprise Farm and New Lands Farm starting the last week of June and running through the end of October. Food storage tips, recipes, and food demos are offered throughout the season. In order to make healthy food available at affordable prices, SNAP recipients get twice as much for every dollar spent when they use their EBT card. Gentile Apartments was added as a stop for the mobile market in 2013. There is discussion about adding another South End stop or two in 2014, most likely at Caring Health Center. Caring Health Center continues to be Live Well Springfield's primary South End partner and CHC's new wellness center and teaching kitchen offer a great



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opportunity to link programming and demos to the Go Fresh Mobile Markets stops.

**Support Live Well Springfield, the Mason Square Food Justice Initiative and partner efforts to create a full service grocery store on State Street.** Although technically outside of the South End neighborhood in Mason Square, the proposed location is only 2 miles from Marble Street Apartments and would be accessible to South End residents. To date, Develop Springfield has purchased four acres of land to site the new grocery store. An application for \$12 million in New Market Tax Credits is pending for the construction of the grocery store. Notification regarding funding of the application is expected in May/June 2104. Big Y is the preferred vendor for the project and Develop Springfield and partners have been in conversation with the chain but there are no commitments yet.

**Explore opportunities to partner with AC Produce to expand access to low-cost healthy foods.** AC Produce is a family-owned and operated market on Main Street in Springfield's South End. Given the lack of other grocery retail in the area, it is a valued resource for convenient, fresh produce. The City and partners should

explore innovative ways to partner with this market to support its ongoing business while making low-cost healthy food more accessible to neighborhood residents.

**Improve access to emergency food in the South End.** According to the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, the food hardship rate for Springfield households with children was 25.4% in 2009-2010, and 19.1% for households without children.<sup>4</sup> Given the exceptionally high rates of poverty in the neighborhood, many residents of Marble Street, Outing Park and much of the greater South End neighborhood are likely to be experiencing food insecurity, meaning they lack access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. Although there are 26 emergency food sites in Springfield, none are currently located in the South End. In July 2013, The Food Bank began its pilot program for the Mobile Food Bank – a delivery truck full of fresh and non-perishable groceries from The Food Bank's warehouse, shipped directly to a community site at a prescheduled time for immediate distribution to residents. With assistance from Square One and HAP Housing, the Mobile Food Bank now makes regular stops in the South End.

In addition, Caring Health currently screens for hunger and offers vouchers to Save-A-Lot that are funded by Project Bread.

**Support the Farm to Preschool Program at Square One.** The Farm to Preschool and Families (F2P) project, convened by Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc., is an innovative initiative that provides high quality, local produce to preschool children and their families via early care and education sites, exposing them to healthy eating habits. Through this cooperative effort, Early Education and Care (EEC) organizations, local farmers, Springfield Early Childhood Education Partnership (SECEP), MA Farm to School, and The Food Bank of Western MA (FBWM) provide access to healthy foods for approximately 7000 low-income children in the Greater Springfield community. In addition, the collaborative seeks environmental and policy changes at the organizational and local community level, through large-scale changes in procurement, distribution, retail, marketing, preparation and consumption systems. Square One is an active participant in the collaborative and should be supported in efforts to expand the reach of this program to serve more South End children.

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#### **Maximize utilization of SNAP and WIC benefits.**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the nation's first line of defense against hunger and offers a powerful tool to improve nutrition among low-income people. Providing benefits that can be spent only on food raises food expenditures more than an equal amount of cash. In addition, there is evidence that program participation can increase the availability of some nutrients in the home food supply.<sup>5</sup> The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) also provides supplemental foods for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. So it is important to work with South End residents to optimize the use of these benefits.

Additionally, it is important to explore funding and promote opportunities to double the value of food stamps at Farmers Markets via funders like Wholesome Wave and Bounty Bucks.

**Increase South End resident membership on the Springfield Food Policy Council.** The Springfield Food Policy Council oversees the coordination

of public and private efforts to improve access to nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate, fresh, and safe foods for all residents of Springfield. The council is governed by a Steering Committee composed of representatives from diverse sectors of the community, including but not limited to the relevant municipal departments, non-profit organizations that are devoted to food security and public health, faith-based organizations, neighborhood councils, farmers, grocers, food producers and youth organizations. While some members are appointed by the Mayor, remaining members of the Steering Committee are elected by the active members of the Food Policy Council's Committees, which will be open to all residents of Springfield. Currently there are no representatives from the South End. As resident and community leaders emerge from the CNI, Byrne and other neighborhood initiatives, interested parties will be encouraged to join the Springfield Food Policy Council to ensure the interests of the South End are considered and that other neighborhood efforts are aligned with the council's work.

**Work with Mass In Motion to identify South End residents/businesses to participate in the Healthy Corner Store Initiative.** In 2009

Massachusetts launched Mass in Motion which aims to promote wellness and to prevent obesity with particular focus on the importance of healthy eating and physical activity. Springfield was awarded one of ten state-wide grants to prioritize wellness initiatives at the community level. Mass in Motion Springfield is currently working with corner stores as part of the Healthy Markets initiative and there may be an opportunity to collaborate in the South End. It is also important to explore other ways to collaborate regarding their work on joint-use agreements with local schools, implementing school nutrition regulations, and creating safer routes for students to walk to school.

**Maximize utilization of the YMCA's Health-Smart Behavior.** Offered four times per year, the Health-Smart Behavior Program combines a culturally sensitive self-assessment of healthy behaviors with a supportive group of peers and a coach to equip individuals and families—youth and adults—with the tools and encouragement needed to make lasting behavior changes. Participants identify personal motivations for healthy behavior and the barriers impede the healthy lifestyle they desire. Each group meeting includes goal setting, health and wellness

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education and peer support to increase and sustain targeted Health-Smart Behaviors. Working with others, participants are inspired to change their behavior and have the accountability they need to commit to making changes that last.

#### **Provide and promote healthy cooking demonstrations and classes to South End residents at the new Caring Health facility.**

As discussed earlier, this demonstration kitchen recently constructed at Caring Health offers a great new resource in the neighborhood that should be maximized. SHA has an existing partnership with the UMass extension program that offers nutrition training to public housing residents. The program has been offered at Marble Street; however, the space is not ideal. Perhaps this program could be relocated to Caring Health and expanded to include other low-income residents from the neighborhood.

**Minimize the negative health implications of the proposed casino.** Based upon the findings of Partners for a Healthier Community's Health Impact Assessment, the proposed casino could increase problem and pathological gambling



particularly among the vulnerable populations in the South End, create traffic issues that exacerbate already high rates of asthma and cardiovascular disease, and lead to increase crime including DUIs. So it will be important that the City and other stakeholders work closely with the casino operator to mitigate these negative effects.

#### **Potential Partners:**

*AC Produce, American Health Association/American Stroke Association, Behavioral Health Network, Best Oral Health, Boys and Girls Club, Caring Health Center, Corporation for Public Management, Develop Springfield, Farm to Preschool Program, The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Gandara's PREP teen pregnancy prevention program, Gardening the Community, HAP Housing, Holyoke Health Center at Springfield Technical Community College, Live Well Springfield, Mason Square Health Task Force, Mason Square Food Justice Initiative, Mass Rehab Commission, Mental Health Commission, Partners for a Healthier Community, Pioneer Valley Asthma Coalition, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, Pioneer Valley Riverfront Club, Roca, Sodexo, South End Community Center, South End Middle School, Springfield Collegiate, Springfield Department of Health and Human Service, Springfield Facilities Department, Springfield Food Policy Council, Springfield Parks Department, Springfield Partners for Community Action, Springfield Public Schools, State Street Corridor Alliance, Stop Access Coalition, Tapestry Health, The Healthy Community Collaborative at the Mason Square Health Task Force, Square One, United Way of Pioneer Valley, UMass Extension Program, United Way of Pioneer Valley, Veritas, YEAH Network/Youth First, YMCA, Young Parents Program*

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Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career.”

### Build upon the Reading Success by 4th Grade initiative and lessons learned from Talk, Read, Succeed.

Reading proficiency by fourth grade is a critical milestone that indicates the quality of early childhood development and predicts future academic success. Up to third grade children learn to read, and after third grade children read to learn. Since 2009, Reading Success by 4th Grade (RS4G), an initiative of the Davis Foundation, has worked to align civic leadership, the funding community and the networks of service in order to promote the shared vision of reading proficiency for all of Springfield’s children by the end of third grade. The CNI Education strategies seek to align with this initiative by mirroring its key goals and to build upon and learn from the efforts to date, particularly the Talk, Read, Succeed program. TRS is a comprehensive education initiative that engages approximately 150 families at two Springfield Housing Authority developments and focuses on developing deep partnerships between families, schools and community programs to align strategies and support children’s literacy and learning.

### Improve access for preschoolers to a high quality early education and a successful transition to Kindergarten.

**Support Square One in reestablishing their South End facility.** Square One provides high quality early education and care at four centers in Springfield and Holyoke, home-based care settings located throughout greater Springfield, and out-of-school-time care for elementary school age children. Headquartered in the neighborhood for more than 100 years, the organization’s South End facility was destroyed in the 2011 tornado. In the summer 2013, Square One reopened its headquarters in a new location on Main Street next to the Caring Health Center. In addition to providing an early learning classroom for 20 students, Square One also launched a new initiative—Family Square—which offers a safe, lively space for parents to gather and participate in activities and services to develop their parenting, educational and basic life skills which result in healthier more self-sufficient thriving families.

**Work with the Preschool Enrichment Team to encourage Family Child Care providers in and around the South End to participate in trainings such as the Family Child Care Language & Literacy project and other professional development opportunities.** The Preschool Enrichment Team (PET) supports a skilled early childhood and out-of-school-time workforce by providing training and consultation on core competencies, academic and career advancement support, NAEYC Accreditation and the Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). It also assists parents and caregivers in their search for high quality child care.

In conjunction with the Springfield Public Library, PET offers the Family Child Care Language & Literacy Project. This intensive 6-session training helps Family Child Care providers build skills to

**Up to third grade children learn to read, and after third grade children read to learn.**

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increase children's foundation for literacy and supplies them with books and activities to promote concrete skill development in the young children in their care. The literacy initiative focuses on language development as well as pre-reading skills. As children participate in a language-rich environment with a nurturing provider, they have the potential to develop the building blocks needed for literacy learning: receptive language, speech production, vocabulary, sentence structure, and conversation. The project also brings providers into the library to familiarize them with the Children's Room and the state-funded regional Early Childhood Resource Center (ECRC) that is housed in the library.

#### **Create a Head Start classroom as part of the new Square One facility in the South End.**

Currently there are no Head Start classrooms in the South End despite the high rates of children in poverty in the neighborhood. As Square One rebuilds its programs in the South End, it would be worthwhile exploring with Holyoke Chicopee Springfield Head Start, Inc. whether there is an opportunity to create a new Head Start classroom as part of its new facilities.

**Develop systems which promote parents' awareness of the benefits of early education and care for children through cross training and better collaboration with housing and other family service agencies to increase referrals and enrollment.** Given the reluctance among many low-income communities to send their children to center-based care, work is needed to increase parent's awareness of the benefits of early education. Cross training and collaboration with housing and other family service providers is an important element in successfully delivering this message and, ultimately, increasing utilization.

**Promote enrollment in Springfield Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program.** Some of the public elementary schools including Dryden, Washington and Brunton where many of the South End students are enrolled have half-day pre-school programs. These integrated programs serve children ages 3-5 with and without disabilities. Slots are limited. This opportunity should be promoted among Marble Street, Outing Park and other South End households and parents should be encouraged and assisted to apply.

**Increase the involvement and support of parents in their children's early literacy skill development and early education as well as their child's ongoing education.**

**Provide home or community-based playgroups and workshops to promote early learning outside of center-based care.** Through administration of the Talk, Read, Succeed program, SHA and its partners have seen first-hand the reluctance of many parents to send their young children to center-based programs. So they are working with Home City Families to organize play groups in resident's homes. Lessons learned from and partnerships developed for this collaboration should inform outreach and programming at Marble Street, Outing Park and more broadly in the South End.

The Home Instructional Program for Pre-School Youth (HIPPY) is also worth exploring. This highly rated, evidence-based model uses well-trained peer home visitors to deliver 30 weeks of high quality school readiness curriculum directly to parents who then work with their own three, four, and five year old children. Using the HIPPY

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books and curriculum, parents spend one-on-one time each day with their children reading books and working with them on readiness activities.

**Provide South End children with opportunities for early detection and prevention of developmental/behavioral, vision and oral health problems and ensure connection to appropriate services.** Support the Live Well Kids Program which seeks to coordinate health care systems for preschoolers so that all students entering kindergarten have been screened for vision, hearing, dental, and nutrition and parents are empowered to be at the center of managing their child’s health care. The current focus of the initiative is Mass Vision. Live Well Kids will be creating an awareness campaign, conducting training with key partners on how to screen 0-5 year olds for vision problems and identifying resources/partners for referrals for eye glasses. Previous initiatives coming out of this group related to Oral Health and the Farm to Preschool programs.

**Partner with Ready! For Kindergarten to provide these interactive workshops in the South End.** READY! is a free, interactive, fun program for parents and guardians of children

from infancy to 5 years sponsored by Home City Families. It consists of 90-minute sessions held in fall, winter, and spring where parents learn play techniques to use with their children to encourage learning. At each session, families receive free toys and materials that support their child’s academic and social-emotional growth. READY! workshops are offered at different locations throughout the city, however, none are currently located in the South End. So it is important to explore opportunities to offer this program at South End locations like Square One’s Family Square, Caring Health’s Wellness Center, the South End Community Center or Outing Park’s Community Building so that it will be more readily accessible to South End parents and children.



Source: Square One

#### **Work with Square One to identify locations in the South End for the BOOK IT program.**

Nationally, only one of every 300 urban children has even one book to call their own. With support from the Davis Foundation, Square One is working to address this in Springfield. Through the BookIt program, they provide bookshelves at numerous locations throughout the city including community health centers, the women’s prison, the courts, nonprofit agencies and more where families go and keep them stocked with children’s books in a variety of languages. Children are encouraged to take a book to own so that they can grow their own personal libraries. In addition, the program serves as a visual reminder that reading should be part of the everyday life of families and encourages parents and children to embrace and enjoy reading together. Explore expanding this program to include bookshelves in the Outing Park Community Building, the South End Community Center and/or other locations in the neighborhood.

#### **Engage with young parents so that they are part of the development of programs and initiatives.**

To ensure programs successfully reach young parents and fully address their needs, include them in program development and evaluation.



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**Provide comprehensive family supports to promote safe and supportive home environments that encourage learning and positive educational outcomes.** Utilizing Square One’s Family Resource Center as an anchor, provide parents and families with a continuum of supports that are easily accessible and conveniently located in the South End. Existing supports that Square One offers include programs and activities directly related to parenting and families such as parenting classes, parent support groups, family advocacy group, parent/child activities, etc. They are also interested to work with other partners/providers to expand these supports to help parents further their own needs and goals including recovery groups, stress management, emergency food, financial management and more.

**Work with Springfield Public Schools to identify additional ways to provide bi-lingual support for students and parents.** One possibility is to mirror Baystate’s interpreter training program to train DTA-mandated parents as SPS parent facilitators/interpreters. Not only would this improve bi-lingual support, but it would also provide parents with opportunities to complete community service requirements and/or obtain additional skills.

**Promote Springfield Parent Academy programs to Marble Street, Outing Park and South End residents. Explore opportunities to locate programs in community-based settings in the South End and target particular South End parents’ needs and interests.** Studies have shown that consistent parental involvement is a major factor in determining a student’s academic success. Springfield Parent Academy (SPA) is a community-driven initiative designed to provide educational resources to help parents and caring adults become engaged in their child’s education. SPA offers free educational opportunities designed to help students succeed and help parents attain their personal and professional goals through a variety of workshops, one-day seminars and courses that address the issues which parents and families have stated are important to them. To make these programs accessible to families, these opportunities are offered at a variety of locations throughout the city.

To maximize South End resident participation, offerings should be made available in neighborhood locations like the South End Middle School, Square One’s Family Square, Caring Health’s Wellness Center, Outing Park’s

Community Building and/or the South End Community Center. Programs should also target particular areas of interest of South End parents and be offered in Spanish if possible. For instance, given the high rates of students with special needs in the neighborhood, the ABC’s of the IEP (and 504 Plan) could be useful for many Outing Park and Marble Street parents. Also, since many South End parents have not attended college themselves, the workshops on the SATs, college applications and financial aid are likely to be helpful. In addition, it will be important to work with SPA to address its primary unmet need for GED and programs for English Language Learners since there is such a high demand among South End residents.

**Support the Springfield Parent Academy to develop a train-the-trainer leadership program that will cultivate parent leaders to participate in Site-based Decision Making Teams and PTOs.** Once in place, work with community organizations to identify and encourage South End parent participation. In addition, the district is also looking to develop remote PTOs to promote engagement of parents who, due to transportation issues, find it challenging to attend meetings at the school site. Square One previously

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spearheaded an initiative through their after school program that created a PTO at Marble Street that routinely met with the Brunton principal for an ongoing dialogue and resulted in the presence of a police officer at the bus stop. Although considered a successful program by the residents, it unfortunately did not survive two changes of principals. Resurrecting this program and similar ones with other schools attended by South End students is highly recommended.

**Support the district-wide Attendance Improvement Initiative to reduce chronic absenteeism among South End students.** A place-based attendance campaign in the South End, specifically targeting Marble Street and Outing Park, could help to ensure that parents understand the connections between school attendance and future success and opportunities for their children. Additionally, a parent support team might help overcome the barriers to getting kids to school on time and every day. The Stay In School task force, funded by the United Way, is developing ways to tackle issues of chronic absenteeism. So it is important to look closely at the work this group is doing to determine how a place-based initiative in the South End might best support the effort.

**Facilitate introductions to and promote engagement of Marble Street and Outing Park parents with Parent Facilitators that are employed at every Springfield public school.** Parent Facilitators establish, build and maintain partnerships between the school community and parents, so that students are supported to reach academic and character proficiency. Among other things, they are responsible for implementing effective family involvement strategies and activities to empower and build the capacity of families; assisting families with parenting skills to support their children, academically and socially; acting as a liaison between families and teachers by creating opportunities for relationship building, especially when problems arise or cultural differences are a barrier; and arranging for translation services. Although South End students attend a number of different schools, Marble Street students tend to go to Brunton and Outing Park students tend to go to Dryden Memorial, Washington or Lynch. And, virtually all middle-schoolers attend South End Middle School. So at a minimum, it would be useful to facilitate introductions to the Parent Facilitators at these schools and to explore new and creative place-based ways for the Parent Facilitators to support South End students and parents.

### Improve access to literacy-rich out of school time (afterschool and summer) programs that improve academic outcomes and encourage positive youth development.

High-quality, organized after-school and summer programs promote academic and social skills, provide opportunities for children and youth to develop positive relationships with peers and adult mentors, increase children’s safety and reduce the likelihood that youth engage in inappropriate activities. Participation can improve children’s academic performance, homework completion, behavior and work habits, while reducing the need for disciplinary action. Additionally, students lose math and reading skills when they are not engaged in enriching summer activities. According to research, summer learning losses, when compounded each year, accounts for a large portion of the achievement gap between lower-income and higher-income students.

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### Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career.”

#### Support the South End Community Center to design and rebuild to provide a comprehensive array of recreation, academic and enrichment programming that address the needs and preferences of South End youth/families.

Rebuilding the South End Community Center is a critical step to increasing South End youth participation in quality out-of-school time programming. As discussed in more detail in the Neighborhood strategies, designs are currently being developed to rebuild SECC at Emerson Wight Park. The design and anticipated programming is intended to address the needs and preferences of the community as expressed at the Community Information Fair, in the focus groups and via the resident survey. It will also take



into account the facilities and programming being developed by Square One at its Family Resource Center and by Caring Health in its Wellness Center. Among the proposed features are:

- Reading room with computers that can serve as a study area for teens, accommodate job readiness and/or parenting programming for adults and be used as a meeting space.
- Study hall where the younger kids can do their homework separate from the teens. Ideally the room would be large enough to be divided into sections for separate meetings/activities could be held at one time.
- Computer lab that will offer computer skills programs for adults and seniors. The space would also be available for job readiness programming and for student projects.
- Dance studio and meditation room for a variety of programs from dance classes to gymnastics to yoga.
- Martial arts and wrestling room to accommodate the Kenpo and Wrestling programs.
- Gymnasium for basketball, dodge ball and soccer.
- Fitness room and Boxing Center with a “Black Box” for theatre shows that would include a weight lifting and cardio training area, boxing ring and training area, performing arts area for theatre programs to host their shows.

#### Maximize the number of Marble Street, Outing Park and South End students participating in the Springfield Public School’s summer programs, the Hasbro Summer Learning Initiative and other summer programs to stem learning loss.

The South End Community Center currently offers the Hasbro Summer Learning Program. This 8-week program offers breakfast, lunch and weekly field trips as well as daily literacy activities designed to stem summer learning loss. Based upon Dibel scores from pre- and post-testing, the program ranked within the top three of 60 programs in Western MA. In 2012, the camp served 129 participants and had a waitlist of approximately 100 slots. Due to CDBG funding requirements, 51% of enrollments must be from the North or South Ends. Approximately 60% of recent participants were from the South End but the program also draws heavily from Sixteen Acres. It is important to maximize utilization by South End students but, since slots are limited, it is also important to grow this resource.



## Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career.”

**Explore ways to expand the highly regarded Square One after school program at Marble Street to Outing Park and other South End students.** The existing program, available to Marble Street children ages 6-12, operates weekdays until 6:00pm during the school year and is available five days a week in the summer too. Consider relocating the program to the South End Community Center once Marble Street is demolished.

**Ensure all Marble Street and Outing Park youth and their families have knowledge of and access to quality out-of-school-time programs that offer academic enrichment and positive youth development.** While the South End Community Center is an important resource in achieving this goal, it will not be sufficient to address the quantity and variety of after school and summer program needs for the entire South End youth population. So it is important to cultivate new and promote existing out-of-school-time programs elsewhere in the city. To better promote existing programs, it is recommended that a single directory of educational services and youth programming be created to help youth and their families to get ready access to available resources. Distribution of this information through a variety

of outlets will be critical. An annual South End youth fair like the one the City held in spring 2013 could provide one of these outlets to promote summer camps, jobs and programs.

**Provide additional student support via mentoring programs.** According to Mass Mentoring, having a mentor helps young people stay engaged in school. In fact, 64% of students who regularly meet with a mentor develop a better attitude towards school and are 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school. So it is important develop partners and programs that will connect South End students to adults mentors. The South End Community Center offers the UMass Student Bridges Program that provides student mentors and an intense STEM curriculum that includes rocketeering, field trips, etc.

**Ensure students travel safely to school and out-of-school time programs.**

**Implement a walking school bus program to ensure students at Marble Street, Outing Park and elsewhere in the South End get safely to and from the school bus stop.** Building upon the experience and success of the Brightwood School program, the first step will be working with the City and the School Department to review the locations of the bus stops and crossing guards in the neighborhood and survey the status of maintenance and accessibility along the proposed route. The Transportation Coordinator for SPS will be critical as is the involvement of the police and DPW. Once successfully in place, the walking school bus program could be expanded to include safe routes to and from after-school and/or early learning programs.

**P3**  
GOAL

## Children and youth have access to a continuum of high quality education programs and services that support them from “cradle to career.”

**Explore training parents to serve as volunteer school bus monitors.** Parents at the focus group expressed concerns about the lack of adult supervision on the school bus. It was suggested that parents might be trained to serve as volunteer bus monitors. Not only would this improve safety on the bus, but it would also provide parents with opportunities to complete community service requirements or obtain additional skills. The Mom Squad program operated by Square One could serve as a model.



**Increase the number of children enrolled in a high quality education from kindergarten through high school.**

**Support Springfield Preparatory Charter School and maximize enrollment of South End students.** The state education board has voted to approve a new charter school in Springfield that is expected to be located in the South End. The Springfield Preparatory Charter School will open in 2015 with a kindergarten class. It is expected to enroll up to 486 students in grades K-8. It is important to explore opportunities to maximize enrollment by South End students.

**Support the South End Middle School in its ongoing efforts to improve student achievement.** As noted earlier in the needs assessment, parents at the CNI focus group spoke very highly of the South End Middle School and its staff. Nonetheless, performance data from the 2103 report card indicates that students did not score as well as their district peers on standardized tests and they rank well below their state counterparts. So it is important to explore, with the new principal, ways in which community based organizations and

providers can support the school, its students and their families to improve academic achievement.

**Counsel Marble Street families about access to high-quality schools during the relocation process.** Provide Marble Street families with comprehensive relocation counseling when they are relocated from the site to make way for demolition. Ensure that relocation counselors work with them to learn about and consider access to high-quality schools as part of the decision-making process.

## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Casino Health Impact Assessment, What is the impact of a proposed casino in Western MA?, Partners for a Healthier Community, Inc.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.springfieldpartnersinc.com/newsevents/2013vitakickoffandeitc/>
- <sup>3</sup> Benefits of Gardening for Children, Children, Youth and Environments Center for Research and Design, University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center, [www.cudenver.edu/cye](http://www.cudenver.edu/cye)
- <sup>4</sup> Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, <http://www.foodbankwma.org/learn/local-hunger-facts/>, downloaded April 16, 2014.
- <sup>5</sup> Building a Healthy America: A Profile of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research and Analysis, April 2012

Chapter VIII

# Implementation



# Implementation

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## Chapter VIII

# Implementation

The revitalization of the South End neighborhood is a work in progress. The City and community remain committed to this effort as evidenced by recent and planned investments by both the public and private sectors highlighted by the rebuilding of Caring Health Center, Square One and the South End Community Center, the rehabilitation of Outing Park Apartments, the planned demolition of Marble Street, and the proposed development of the MGM casino.

This section describes how the various Neighborhood, Housing, and People strategies will be implemented over time and with what potential resources.

## A. Neighborhood Implementation

The City of Springfield will continue to take the lead on key neighborhood investments in the South End. The City has an assigned Project Manager for the South End (in Planning and Economic Development Department) who is responsible for the South End Neighborhood

Revitalization Project (SENRP). The Project Manager serves as the City's liaison to the neighborhood, facilitates regular meetings with the South End Revitalization Coalition, and maintains the SENRP's website at <http://www3.springfield-ma.gov/planning/southendproject.0.html>.

The South End Project Manager is responsible for coordinating with the various City departments that are involved in neighborhood improvements including Planning and Economic Development (code enforcement and zoning), Housing (new housing development), Public Works (for the Ashmun Street extension), and Parks & Recreation (for the design and construction of the new South End Community Center). The Springfield Redevelopment Authority, as owner of a number of vacant properties in the South End, will coordinate with the City on identifying development opportunities for these parcels that are compatible with the Neighborhood Strategy detailed in this Transformation Plan.

The Springfield Police Department, as recipient of the Byrne Criminal Justice grant, will work closely with the South End community on a range of public safety initiatives under the umbrella

C<sup>3</sup> approach to community policing that was so successful in the North End neighborhood. The C<sup>3</sup> approach includes weekly meetings which bring together police, neighborhood residents, other City departments, business owners and social services agencies to respond in an ongoing and accountable way to crime and components of neighborhood disorder. The approach will be led by a project director, who will be physically located in the South End. The police also work closely with First Resources Management Company who recently installed many security cameras throughout the Outing Park property that the police use to identify potential suspects. Also funded by the Byrne grant, HAP Housing, located in the South End, is hiring a community organizer to assist with South End community building, an essential element of the C<sup>3</sup> approach to improving public safety.

As support for the Byrne initiative, the City is scheduling regular inter-departmental meetings to focus on continuing problems or challenges in the South End that arise at C<sup>3</sup> meetings or are otherwise reported to the City. These meetings will focus the activities of multiple departments

on issues such as illegal dumping, neighborhood blight, stray animals, and crime hot spot houses or businesses. The inter-department meetings will create a South End action plan and focus efforts on resolving all identified action steps.

The emerging South End Business Association, with over 45 members, is now meeting on a regular basis with a focus on helping those businesses displaced by the new casino relocate to other sites within the South End.

#### Key Neighborhood Partners

City of Springfield

- Planning and Economic Development
- Housing
- Public Works
- Parks & Recreation

Springfield Redevelopment Authority

DevelopSpringfield

Springfield Police Department

South End Business Association

South End Revitalization Coalition

HAPHousing

### B. Housing Implementation

The Housing Strategy involves three key components: revitalization of the Outing Park Apartments; demolition and replacement of Marble Street Apartments; and other housing rehabilitation and development. The City’s Housing Department will continue to oversee First Resources’ rehabilitation of Outing Park and the Springfield Housing Authority will be responsible for replacing the 46 public housing units at Marble Street in locations outside of the South End neighborhood. SHA will start the process of preparing a Demolition Application for HUD approval by the Special Applications Center (SAC) and applying for tenant protection vouchers.

Early in the CNI-funded planning process, SHA and the City procured Michaels Development Company to replace the Marble Street units in a mixed-income development(s) in the South End. Since the Zimmerman/Volk market study recommended not rebuilding in the South End neighborhood because of the fragile nature of the housing market, Michaels has the option to redevelop the replacement units in a mixed-income development in other locations and is currently looking for acquisition opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing buildings or for new construction. If Michaels elects not to undertake this development opportunity, the Housing Authority will seek another developer with the goal of project-basing 46 units in mixed-income developments.

The Springfield Office of Housing will aggressively target its homeowner rehabilitation programs to South End residents. As the neighborhood reaches a level of stabilization that will support new homeownership, the City will fund homeownership development in the neighborhood.

#### Key Housing Partners

City of Springfield

Springfield Housing Authority

First Resource LLC

Developers

### C. People Implementation

During the CNI planning process, the People Task Force invested a great deal of time and energy working collaboratively to identify the priority needs in the South End community and developing the strategies to address these needs. It is important to keep this momentum going by continuing to actively engage partners in the transition to implementation. The City will take the lead in formalizing a provider network that will work cooperatively to further to goals of the People Plan, with the long-term goal of using this provider network to schedule regular meetings for the purpose of coordinating and aligning

existing efforts and identifying new opportunities to further the goals and strategies outlined here and to monitor the achievement of outcomes over time. It is expected that this network will be a strong collaborative partner in the City's Byrne-funded South End C<sup>3</sup> initiative, which includes strong cross-sector partnerships and requires ability to make supportive services available to residents.

While the network of providers that serves residents in the South End is extensive, there is also the realization that there is a need to provide more intensive individualized services for the hardest to serve families as funding is available. The City will explore the use of casino benefits, CDBG or other funding to provide case management services that target Marble Street, Outing Park and the most vulnerable South End residents. An initial step toward meeting this goal, the City has located a neighborhood and housing specialist in the South End to provide resource connections to these residents.

Enhancing employment opportunities are also a key goal. The City is currently issuing an RFP for providers to use up to \$250,000 in CDBG-DR funds to create a job-training program for residents in tornado-impacted neighborhoods, specifically targeting the South End and Six Corners neighborhoods. Applicants will be asked to describe their strategies for engaging participants from these very poor neighborhoods who have significant employment barriers.

This effort is bolstered by the new location of the Wellspring Upholstery Cooperative (WUC) on Main Street in the South End. Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Wellspring develops detailed business plans to study goods and services that anchor institutions import from outside the area and to identify those that can be profitably produced locally. WUC plans to provide institutional upholstery services to colleges and public schools across New England. It will work closely with the Hampden County Sheriff's Department which has 25 years of experience teaching upholstery skills in its jail and with Alliance Upholstery, a skilled upholstery business with 40 years of experience in Springfield. WUC will provide long-term employment for formerly incarcerated persons who developed upholstery skills while imprisoned and will use experienced upholsterers hired from Alliance to manage WUC's business and train new workers. WUC expects to double the number of employees within six years – from six to twelve. Given its location in the South End, it will be heavily marketed to local low-income residents.

The City is also playing a role in several education initiatives. Through its Finance Division, the City was able to find funding to purchase the building the South End Middle School is currently leasing, to reduce its operating costs. The City is working with Springfield Prep, a new K-8 charter school, to help with their plans to locate in or near the South

End. Springfield Prep will open in Fall 2015 with a kindergarten and first grade, and will expand by one grade level per year thereafter. And the City is exploring opportunities to increase access to early childhood education.

### Key People Partners

- City of Springfield
- Springfield Housing Authority
- Caring Health Center
- Square One
- HAPHousing
- South End Community Center
- First Resources Management Company
- YMCA
- Springfield Public Schools
- Springfield Prep
- Wellspring Upholstery Cooperative

## D. Implementation Schedule

**Table VIII-1. Preliminary Implementation Schedule**

	Short Term (1 year)	Immediate Term (2-5 years)	Long Term (5+ years)
<b>Neighborhood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete design of South End Community Center with resident input</li> <li>• Complete design of Ashmun extension to Marble Street</li> <li>• Complete Byrne grant planning phase</li> <li>• Identify and remove blighted properties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete construction of South End Community Center</li> <li>• Complete construction of Ashmun extension and other roadway/sidewalk improvements</li> <li>• Implement Byrne grant initiatives</li> <li>• Casino facilities developed</li> <li>• Extend BID and façade program to South End retailers</li> <li>• Improve bus routes and bus shelters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor crimes and support public safety initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure financing for last phase of Outing Park rehabilitation</li> <li>• Identify neighborhoods and communities of opportunity for replacement housing</li> <li>• SHA submits Demolition to HUD Special Applications Center; once approved SHA submits application for tenant protection vouchers</li> <li>• Work with State and HUD re: replacement neighborhoods</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete rehabilitation of last phase of Outing Park</li> <li>• Relocate Marble Street residents</li> <li>• Demolish Marble Street buildings (2)</li> <li>• Procure developer(s) for replacement housing outside of the South End</li> <li>• Replace 46 public housing units in neighborhoods of opportunity</li> <li>• 54 market-rate rental units developed by MGM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use RFP process and HOME funds to encourage new for-sale housing</li> </ul>
<b>People</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalize service providers network and schedule regular meetings</li> <li>• Providers selected for running job-training programs for residents; market programs to South End residents</li> <li>• Seek funding for case management services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue regular meetings of South End service provider network</li> <li>• Continue with case management services as funding permits</li> <li>• Increase early learning opportunities in the South End</li> <li>• Run programs and services in the South End Community Center</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adapt programs and services in the SECC to meet changing needs of South End residents</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalize metrics to track outcomes</li> <li>• Develop work plan for reporting annual outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold annual data summit to report key outcomes for Neighborhood, Housing and People</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue with city reporting of key outcomes on annual basis for the South End</li> </ul>

## E. Financing Resources

A variety of different funding sources will be tapped to implement the strategies outlined in this Transformation Plan. The City will continue to target initiatives in the South End for annual CDBG and HOME funds; FEMA funds have been secured to rebuild the South End Community Center; some of the \$21.8 million of CDBG-DR funds are targeted to the extension of Ashmun Street and the demolition of Marble Street Apartments; and the \$1 million Byrne Grant will fund community building and public safety initiatives in and around the Outing Park Historic District. The City and key neighborhood organizations like HAPHousing, Square One, and Caring Health will continue their grant writing efforts to secure funding for implementation of specific initiatives. For example, HAPHousing recently submitted a grant application to ArtPlace America for \$450,000 to leverage a \$3.6 million effort to work with artists on place-making projects as part of disaster recovery and revitalization in Springfield neighborhoods, including the South End, recovering from the 2011 tornado. The Springfield community has a long history of pursuing a wide variety of financial resources and will use the needs assessment and strategies in this Transformation Plan to target the more critical needs.

### CDBG-Disaster Recovery Action Plan

The City of Springfield was allocated \$21,896,000 of CDBG-DR funds to assist with its recovery efforts. As a precondition to receiving CDBG-DR funds, the City must prepare for submission and approval by HUD a comprehensive Action Plan that describes its unmet needs and the proposed uses of the Disaster Recovery funds to address these needs. Per federal requirements, the City is required to spend all CDBG-DR funds within two years of the date HUD obligates the funds. Due to this strict expenditure deadline, the City has submitted a Partial Action Plan committing \$13.9 million of the City's CDBG-DR allocation, and will submit one or more Substantial Amendments to the Action Plan to access the remaining \$8 million, no later than June 1, 2017. The Action Plan covers several neighborhoods damaged by the tornado but the specific CDBG-DR projects to be funded in the South End include:

- Demolition of blighted properties
- Paving of damaged side streets within the tornado zone
- Purchase of the Mount Carmel School to be used as the South End Middle School
- Assistance to small businesses
- Housing repair, as is still needed
- Roadway realignment to accommodate the new South End Community Center

### Casino Host Community Agreement

The development of the casino will have a substantial financial benefit to both the City of Springfield as well as the South End neighborhood where it will be located. The City and the casino developer – Blue Tarp redevelopment, LLC (an affiliate of MGM Resorts International) – have executed a Host Community Agreement that details the project and the community benefits that will be provided by the developer. In addition to describing the specific components of the development, the agreement also provides a series of payments to the City which will either directly or indirectly benefit the South End neighborhood. Prior to opening of the casino project, the developer will provide \$15 million in payments and advances to the City. After opening of the casino, the developer will provide total annual payments to the City in excess of \$25 million. These payments will consist of:

- *Property Taxes.* Annual property tax payments of \$17.6 million plus a portion of gaming revenues
- *Community Impact Payments.* To mitigate direct and indirect community impacts, the developer will \$2.5 million annually to fund operating and other costs for police, firefighters, EMS and education.
- *Community Development Grants.* Developer will provide \$2.5 million annually to fund a

city-established Community Development Fund to provide grants in support of early childhood education, higher education, libraries, health initiatives, project compliance, and the general betterment of the City and its residents.

- *Riverfront Park.* \$1 million grant to the City to be used to improve Riverfront Park.
- *Golf Course Improvements.* \$150,000 grant to the City to construct the “MGM Springfield” pavilion at the Franconia Golf Course.

Although specific payments for South End improvements and services have not yet been determined, the City has prioritized early childhood education support as a top priority.

Additional commitments by the developer that will benefit the South End include: 2,000 construction jobs and 3,000 operational jobs, with specific goals for hiring city residents, minorities, women, and veterans; goal of utilizing local procurements for at least \$50 million of annual biddable goods and services; funding of any needed traffic improvements; installation of an outdoor skating rink for public use during winter months; financial support to the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority to operate a public trolley system throughout the City’s downtown area; and relocation payments to tenants displaced at the project site.

**Table VIII-2. Potential Funding for Key Initiatives**

Key Initiatives	Estimated Budget	Potential Sources
<b>Neighborhood</b>		
Rebuilding of South End Community Center	\$8 million	FEMA Funds
Extension of Ashmun to Marble Street	\$1 million	CDBG-DR
Public Safety Initiatives (C3 model)	\$1 million	Byrne Grant
Main Street Façade Program and BID	TBD	CDBG; Casino Host Community Agreement (HCA)
Improve Riverfront Park (North)	\$1 million	Casino Community Agreement
Develop for-sale housing opportunities	TBD	HOME Funds
Fund homeowner rehab program	TBD	HOME; CDBG; Casino HCA
Blight removal activities including demolition	TBD	CDBG
Improve bus routes, stops/shelters	TBD	PVTA
Repave priority streets in South End	TBD	DPW
<b>Housing</b>		
Outing Park II (Ph 3) Rehabilitation	\$25.8 million	Tax credit equity; private mortgage; City + State funds
Demolition of Marble Street Apartments	\$480,000	CDBG-DR
Replacement of 46 public housing units	TBD	Project-based vouchers
<b>People (selected initiatives)</b>		
Provide case management services	TBD	CDBG; Casino HCA
Increase early childhood learning programs	TBD	Casino HCA; Square One
Assist with job readiness	In-kind	Futureworks; Wellspring Collaborative; Casino HCA
Computer learning resources	In-kind	South End Community Center
Financial literacy program resources	In-kind	Partners for Community Action; Square One; United Way
Access to affordable health care	In-kind	Caring Health Center; YMCA; Gandara PREP
Healthy living activities	In-kind	Live Well Springfield; YMCA Fit Kids

## F. Continued Community Engagement

Continued and active community engagement is essential for the long-term viability of the South End. The CNI-funded plan represents a second phase of revitalization activities which began in 2007 with major road and streetscaping work, an urban renewal plan which allowed for the expansion and revitalization of Emerson Wight Park, and clearance of a brownfields site. In addition, the South End was designated a Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) area in 2009 and has been a Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) since 2008. These efforts all involved community input. Community engagement was intensified during the disaster recovery planning period when over 3,000 residents participated in the development of a long-term recovery plan for the City focusing on those areas most damaged by the 2011 tornado. During the CNI planning period, as part of the preparation of the CDBG-DR Action Plan, the City engaged city agencies, stakeholder groups and neighborhood residents, and state and federal government partners. Three public hearings were held; Spanish translation was provided; flyers were distributed; the City's website posted information and accepted written comments.

The City of Springfield will continue its history of actively engaging South End residents, businesses, and providers to ensure that all parties are well-

informed about, have access to and take full advantage of the services, programs, and amenities in and around the South End neighborhood. A variety of different methods will be utilized to encourage and support continued community engagement in the South End:

- **Dedicated South End staffing with City and Byrne funds.** This includes the City's South End project manager, re-assignment of a long standing city employee to work in and with the South End community (located in the SERC office), and a HAP Housing outreach worker.
- **City support of the South End Revitalization Coalition (SERC).** This includes having the City's South End project manager facilitate meetings to provide status updates on revitalization activities and to seek community input on a variety of issues that cross city departments.
- **Maintenance on the City's website of the South End revitalization project** which includes updates to specific projects, information about events, agendas and meeting notes for the SERC, etc.
- **Annual data summit to report out progress on a range of outcomes.** As described below, it will be important to constantly and publicly monitor the progress being made against proposed outcomes using the metrics identified in this plan.

## G. Data Management Plan

Key to the transformation of the South End will be an ongoing self-assessment process to gauge the effectiveness of the strategies in making progress toward the goals and outcomes collectively identified during the planning process. Metrics have been proposed and will be further refined in collaboration with implementation partners and stakeholders. The participatory process of setting goals and identifying metrics will help create shared accountability across all initiatives and promote collaborative discussion of program modifications when needed as incremental progress is made and measured. Where possible these metrics are aligned with measures currently used by partners and/or incorporated into existing initiatives like the Byrne Criminal Justice grant, Reading Success by 4th Grade/Talk Read Succeed, Live Well Springfield, etc.

### Data Sources

Measuring neighborhood change over time will be done using a variety of sources including those that are publicly available (such as Census, city, or state data) as well as those provided by key governmental, institutional, and neighborhood organizations. The City will negotiate data sharing agreements with key institutional entities such as the Springfield Police Department, Springfield Public Schools and the Regional Employment Board to drill down and track data specific to

the South End and its residents related to crime, education and employment. In addition, data sharing agreements with neighborhood organizations like Caring Health Center, Square One and the South End Community Center will help track measures related to health, early education and out-of-school time programs. Administrative data from Springfield Housing Authority, Outing Park and HAP Housing will provide demographic, household composition and income data for subsidized housing tenants in the South End.

Where possible and as funds are available, the City will continue to encourage the use of Social Solutions' Efforts to Outcomes (ETO) data management system among provider partners. By working off a common data platform, with appropriate safeguards for confidential information, the partner network will be better able to avoid redundancies, minimize the burden on residents, and maximize the integration of efforts.

#### **Annual "State of the South End" Data Summit**

The City will establish a baseline for the South End by capturing a full set of data representing all variables agreed upon at the outset of implementation, much of which is currently available via the Transformation Plan needs assessment. On an annual basis, the City will facilitate a Data Summit so all partners have an

opportunity to reassess the big picture, refine goals and priorities, and make programmatic and partner changes as needed to achieve these goals in all aspects of the plan.

The implementation team will engage the community in the ongoing project assessment by posting key findings on a publicly accessible and interactive project website that invites public comment on the strategies being implemented. The team will also share the progress of the transformation initiative and the findings of the evaluation process through the distribution of a quarterly newsletter and through social networking sites.