



ACTION PLAN



LIBERTY PARK DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

“If you don’t like the way the world is, you
change it. You have an obligation to change it.
You just do it one step at a time”
Marion Wright Edelman, Founder/President
Children’s Defense Fund

City of Medford
Oregon
2002





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INTRODUCTION



A neighborhood action plan is a document that is used to identify issues that are of concern to the residents of the neighborhood, and to devise strategies and a course of action to address these concerns. In conjunction with the broader policies and implementation measures contained in the City’s general land use plan, the neighborhood action planning process is intended to protect and enhance the livability within specific neighborhoods, as well as to help fulfill the overall community vision and to create a more livable city.

During the Summer of 2002, community volunteers from concerned agencies and government held a barbeque and canvassed the neighborhood with surveys designed to gather valuable information about residents and living conditions. The results of the survey were later evaluated, prioritized and integrated into this action plan which will be reviewed by the rest of the neighborhood and will be presented to the Medford City Council for adoption.

“Action is the antidote to despair.”
Joan Baez, American Folk Singer





NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE



This is a mixed use commercial-residential neighborhood platted between 1888 and 1909 and is one of Medford’s oldest areas originally built to serve the housing and commercial needs of working class residents who were employed predominantly in the timber and railroad industries or within the adjacent Central Business District. The neighborhood is viewed as a northern gateway to downtown Medford and as such, its character reflects on both the downtown and the entire city.

This neighborhood is isolated by major roadways and automobile-oriented businesses which surround the perimeter of an aging residential core dispersed with several small-scale commercial activities, churches and social service facilities. Since there are no elementary, middle, high schools or parks within the neighborhood, residents travel by bus or private vehicle to facilities in other parts of the city. The exterior boundaries of the neighborhood are defined as being Court Street and Central Avenue to the West, Jackson Street to the South, Riverside Avenue to the East and McAndrews Avenue to the North. Access to the neighborhood is achieved predominantly by Manzanita or Edwards Streets which both extend on an east/west axis between Court Street and Riverside Avenue. Bear Creek and the Greenway pedestrian/bicycle pathway are located a few hundred feet east of Riverside Avenue with no direct access to the path unless residents travel to bridge crossings that are a considerable distance away on Jackson Street or McAndrews Avenue.

A neighborhood study was last conducted in by the City of Medford in 1987 and the area was subsequently included into the Medford Urban Renewal District. The City of Medford contracted with E.D. Hovee & Company in April, 2002 to look at the neighborhood’s opportunities and to help develop a short and long term action agenda. Hovee’s report generated the necessary momentum for the City to choose this neighborhood as its first official neighborhood for revitalization. Another factor was the desire on the part of the Salvation Army, a major neighborhood property owner, to make a significant reinvestment in this neighborhood through its planned multi-millionaire dollar development of a community center.

The 2000 US Census has identified that the neighborhood contains a disproportional percentage of renter-occupied verses owner-occupied dwelling units which could be attributed to the expansion of Medford’s residential and commercial activities away from the Central Business District. However, the survey conducted in summer 2002 dispelled the perception that this neighborhood was exceptionally transient. Survey results showed that the average renter has lived in the neighborhood four to five years and the average homeowner ten years to twelve years.

A large number of homes and commercial properties have continued to degrade into disrepair to a point that most are not eligible for traditional mortgage financing. Many structures have been purchased through private investment and used for residential or commercial rental properties. There is increasingly evidence of a turnaround apparent from the number of houses now being fixed up and better property maintenance. A greater sense of pride is also evident since attention has been focused on the area. As Hovee stated in his report, “The importance of the neighborhood-downtown linkage is increased with greater interest and market potential for mixed income downtown housing. This trend is being experienced in other metro areas and cities of the Northwest– with clear interest now emerging for downtown Medford as well.”

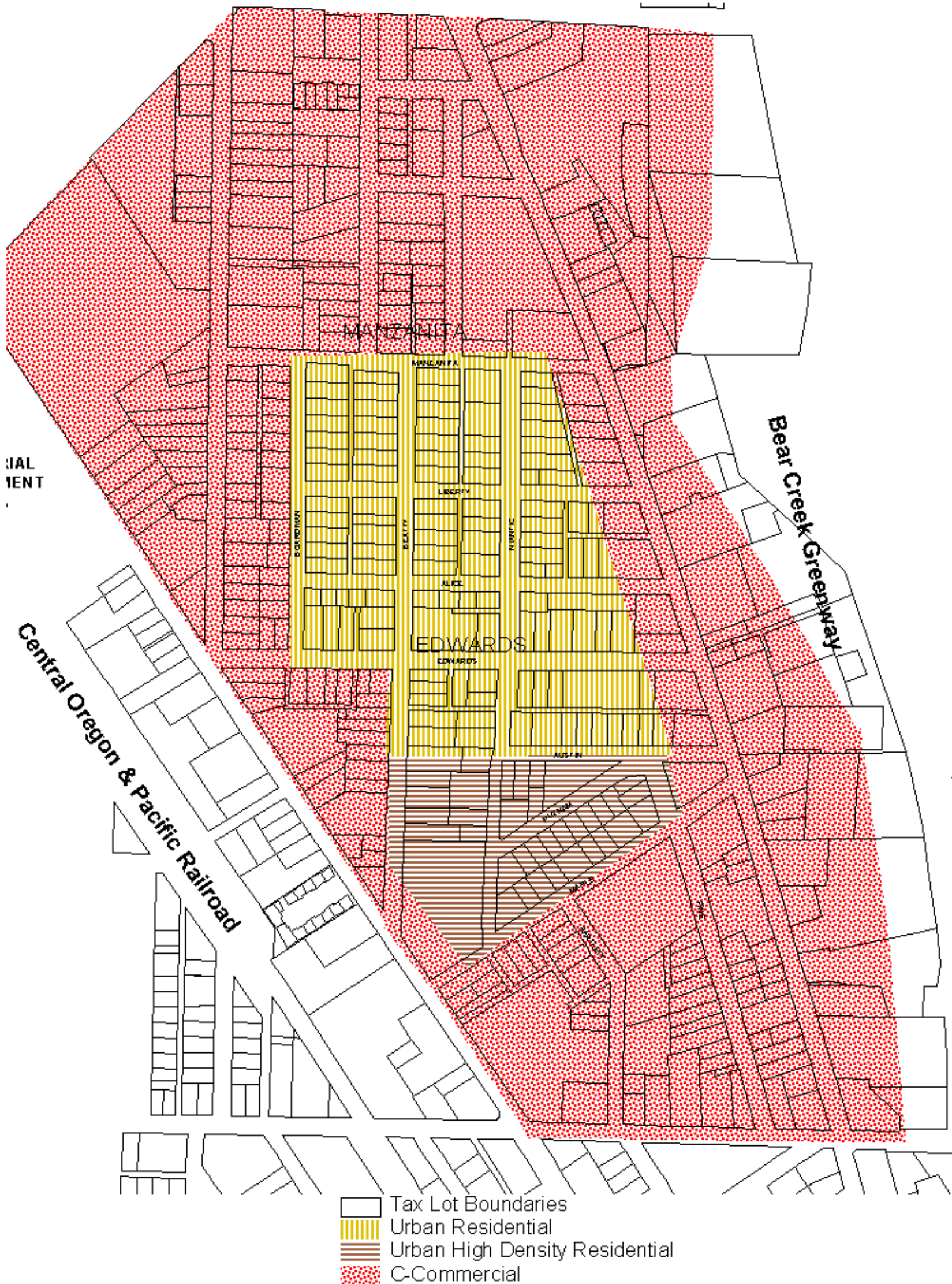
The demographics of the neighborhood show a highly diverse mix with over 22% Hispanic, 2% Black or African American, 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 5% either some other race or two or more races. A strength of the neighborhood lies in the number of families living within its boundaries.



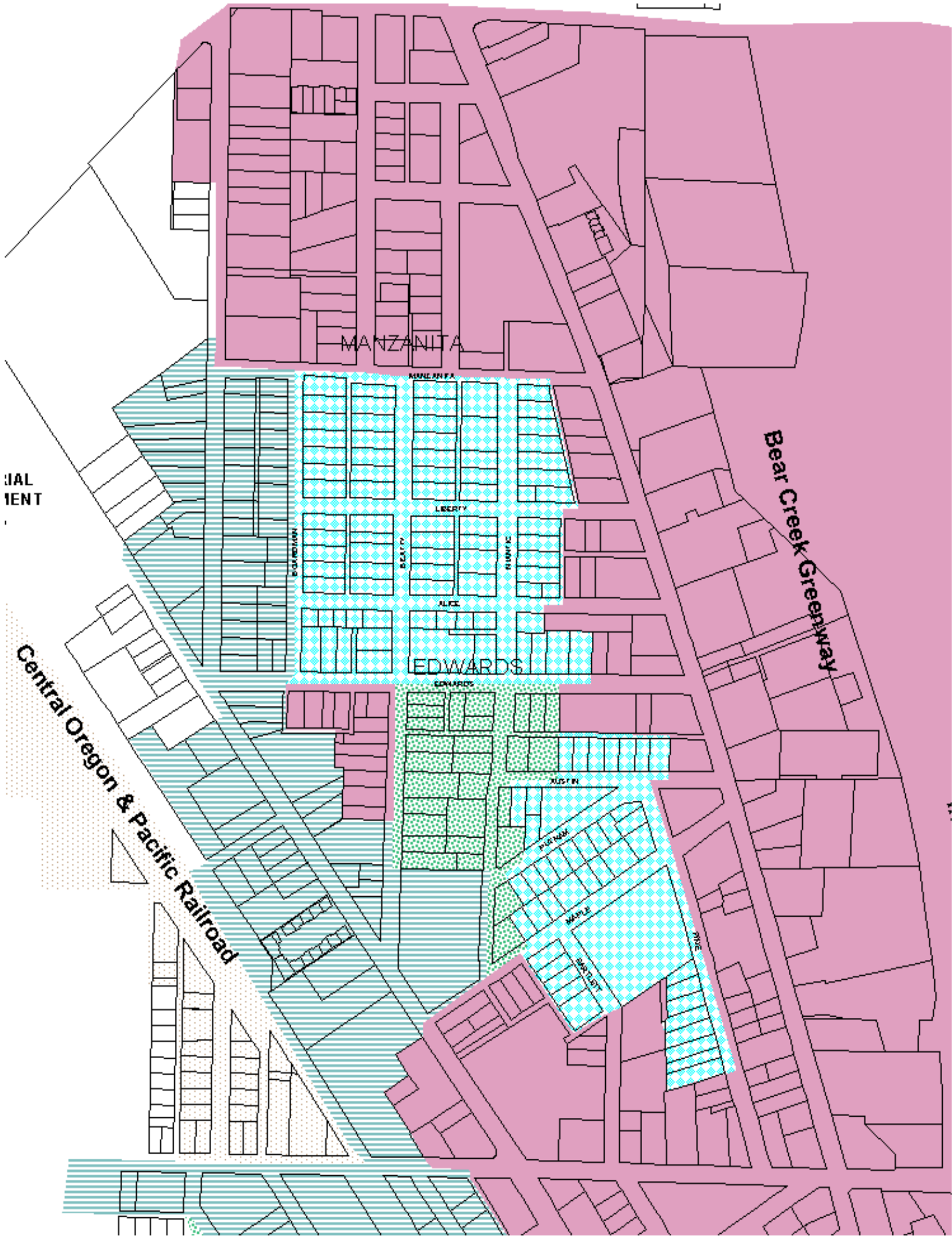
“Don’t wait for a light to appear at the end of the tunnel, stride down there... and light the bloody thing yourself.”
Sara Henderson, Australian Outback Station Manager



GENERAL LAND USE PLAN MAP



ZONE MAP



- Tax Lot Boundaries
- Zoning
- C-C
- C-H
- HL
- MFR-20
- SFR-10



AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH





VISION STATEMENT



We desire to bring change to our neighborhood by implementing community-based solutions formulated through the consensus of public, business, nonprofit and citizen resources.

Our neighborhood is alive and most of our residents choose to live here because it is affordable and conveniently located downtown where there is a large concentration of businesses, jobs, medical facilities, government and educational opportunities.

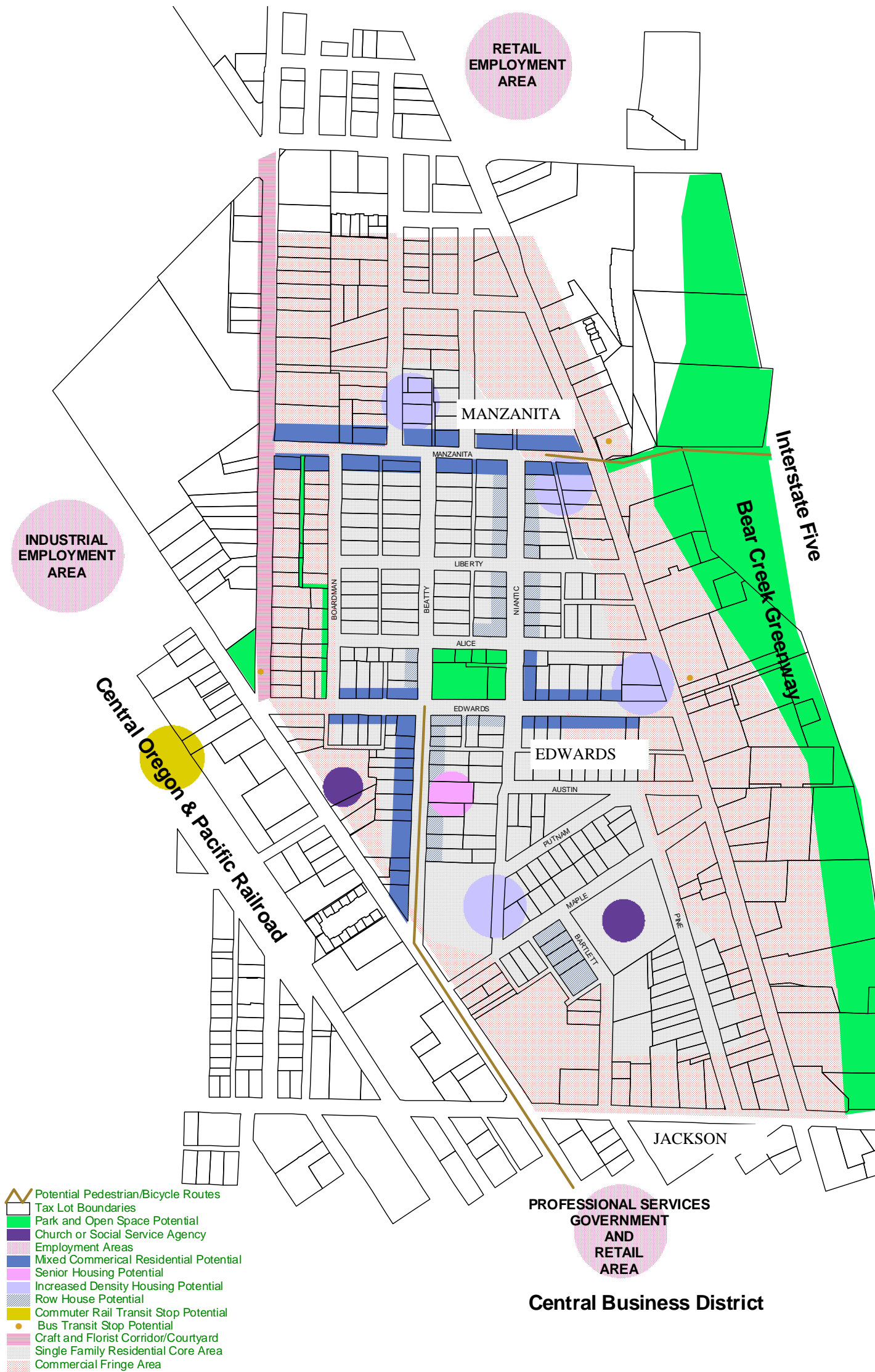
We recognize that there are social problems and urban blight in our neighborhood, however we feel fortunate to live in a country where Civil liberties grant us freedom and the ability to effect change and start anew. Rebuilding our neighborhood will prove to be a daunting task ;however our common goal is to make our neighborhood a better place for all.

It is our wish that the Beatty/Manzanita neighborhood be referred to as “The Liberty Park District” since it is a special place that we hope will serve as a catalyst for change in other neighborhoods.

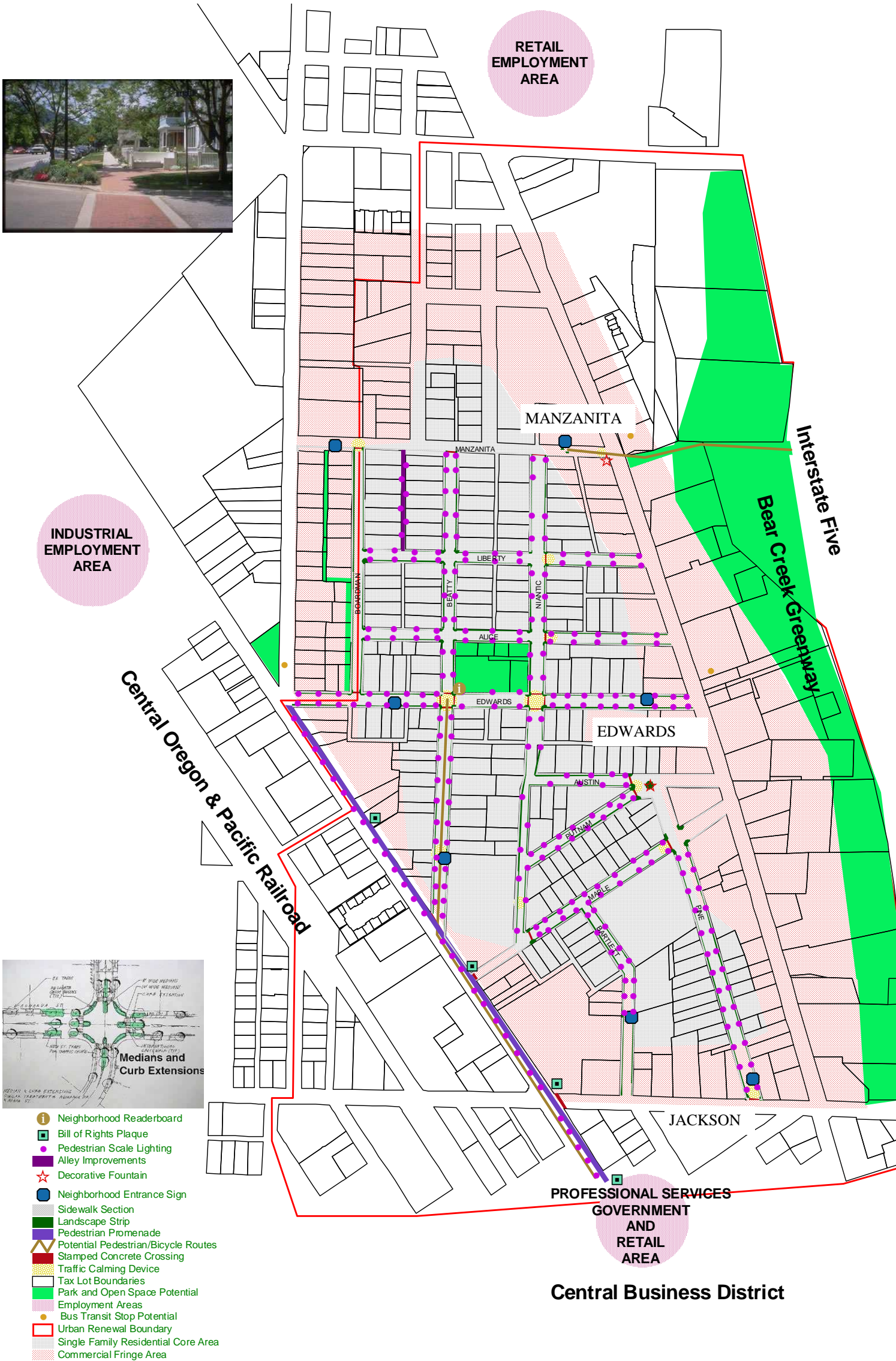
“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”
Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady



VISION MAP "A"
ZONING & LAND USE



VISION MAP "B" IMPROVEMENTS

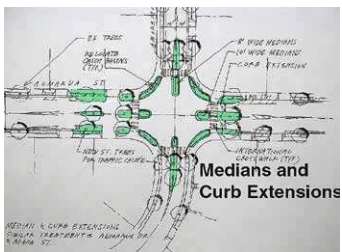


**INDUSTRIAL
EMPLOYMENT
AREA**

**RETAIL
EMPLOYMENT
AREA**

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
GOVERNMENT
AND
RETAIL
AREA**

Central Business District



- Neighborhood Readerboard
- Bill of Rights Plaque
- Pedestrian Scale Lighting
- Alley Improvements
- Decorative Fountain
- Neighborhood Entrance Sign
- Sidewalk Section
- Landscape Strip
- Pedestrian Promenade
- Potential Pedestrian/Bicycle Routes
- Stamped Concrete Crossing
- Traffic Calming Device
- Tax Lot Boundaries
- Park and Open Space Potential
- Employment Areas
- Bus Transit Stop Potential
- Urban Renewal Boundary
- Single Family Residential Core Area
- Commercial Fringe Area



OBJECTIVES & ACTION STEPS

The following recommended action items serve to attain objectives within the neighborhood. Items identified as having a “high” priority are considered by the Neighborhood Association to be most important. “Medium” priority action steps are somewhat less important. “Low” priority action is the least important.

Listed below are the abbreviations for the various responsible parties used throughout the document:

NA	Neighborhood Association
SA	Salvation Army
WMC.C	West Medford Community Coalition
A	Access Incorporated
HAJC	Housing Authority of Jackson County
CMO	City Managers Office
MPD	Medford Police Department
MFD	Medford Fire Department
PWD	Public Works Department
PLD	Planning Department
PRD	Parks and Recreation Department
549C	Medford School District
MURA	Medford Urban Renewal
JCHD	Jackson County Health Department
JCAC	Jackson County Animal Control
RVCOG	Rogue Valley Council of Governments
ODOT	Oregon Department of Transportation
RVTD	Rogue Valley Transportation District
MWC	Medford Water Commission
HFH	Habitat for Humanity
DLCD	Department of Land Conservation and Development
LITHIA	Lithia Motors
MEDFAB	Medford Fabrication
G	Office of the Governor
HHS	Health and Human Services
M	Mayor
PC	Planning Commission
TC	Tree Commission
HC	Housing Commission
CC	City Council





COMMUNITY BUILDING



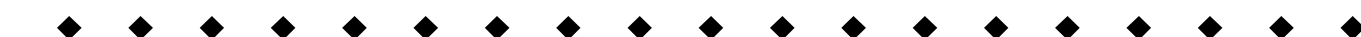
OBJECTIVE: A happy, healthy and vibrant neighborhood created by the people for the people.

Our Neighborhood is a safe and friendly place to live. On many of our streets, neighbors know their neighbors. On other streets, this is not the case. If we work together as a neighborhood, we can partner with the City and other agencies to prevent and stop crime and increase the safety of our streets for our children and other pedestrians. Many parts of our neighborhood are unattractive due to accumulation of trash and abandoned vehicles. Working together, we can help each other improve the overall appearance of our neighborhood.

Crime	Priority	Responsible Parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police response time is relatively good . Neighbors report drug activity. Loud music from cars travelling through the neighborhood has been reported as a problem by residents. Neighbors would like increased patrols by police. <p>Action Steps: Improve communication between the Police and residents by forming a neighborhood watch aimed at observing criminal activities. Report graffiti and other damage to Police and make repairs or restoration as needed. Refer to City Code 5.519 Find activities for kids that keep them away from drugs, alcohol and gang activities.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Speeding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large number of cars speeding through neighborhood presenting danger to pedestrians and bicyclists. A child was killed by an automobile a few years ago on Boardman Street. <p>Action Steps: Short term-Enforcement support by police. Use of speed reader board. Long Term-Traffic Calming Devices</p>	HIGH	
<p>Yard Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents are generally pleased with the appearance of landscaping however some yards are in need of basic maintenance such as mowing, trimming and watering. Senior citizens need help with chores. <p>Action Steps: Set a good example by keeping our yards presentable. Make contact with residents or landlords in writing when yards need work.. Help Seniors who cannot do chores. Hold yard and home maintenance classes to teach techniques. and have a prize for residents who complete the course. Have an award recognition for outstanding yards.</p>	LOW	
<p>Trash</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some dwellings have accumulated rubbish and don't follow City Ordinances that require scheduled trash collection. There is trash in the neighborhood that is thrown from cars or dropped by bicyclists, pedestrians and kids. Neighborhood residents would like annual cleanup .Many items are large such as tires, scrap wood etc. Organic dumpsters are needed for tree limbs and accumulated yard debris. Some trees on public and private property need trimming or are dead and need removal. <p>Action Steps: Daily patrols of streets near our homes to seek, collect and dispose of loose trash. Involvement by neighborhood watch to observe offenders who litter or those who do not have scheduled trash service that is required by City Code. Interaction between Neighborhood watch and City's Code Enforcement Officer. Find program to remove dead trees and donate wood for heating low income residents.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Asset Mapping/Social Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many residents do not know their neighbors. There is a diversity in this neighborhood which provides an opportunity to learn and understand about different cultures. Many residents have gifts or assets to share with others but have never been asked to do so. Some people know how to build things. Some people know how to speak a different language and would like to teach others. Some people know how to care for the elderly or for children. <p>Action Steps: Block parties or special neighborhood events offered quarterly or at a minimum, twice a year so that neighbors can get to know their neighbors. Neighborhood residents would develop an asset mapping survey and go door to door to find out what gifts, skills, assets their neighbors which to share with the community.</p>	HIGH	Asset

“The great end of life is not knowledge, but action.”

Thomas Fuller, English Clergyman and Writer



FACILITIES & SERVICES



OBJECTIVE: To have places within our neighborhood containing resources to enrich lives.

The Liberty Park District is physically isolated from many facilities and services since the area is an Urban Island surrounded by major roadways.

	Priority	Responsible Parties
<p>Parks and Open Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no parks or places for children to play. Residents would like to be involved in the placement, features and design of the park. This neighborhood is isolated and does not have direct access to the Bear Creek Greenway. A bridge across the creek would serve as an alternative means of transportation within the City of Medford. <p>Action Steps: Find a suitable place to locate a neighborhood park, secure agreements and acquire the land. Obtain public input and citizen participation from all interested parties in designing the layout to include playground, open space, community garden, water features, botanical plantings, benches, ball game area. Establish a deeded pathway to the Bear Creek Greenway so that the neighborhood can access other parts of the community. Construct a bridge from the established pathway across Bear Creek to the multi-use path.</p>	HIGH	
<p>Child Care Centers and other Day Care Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no child care or day care facilities within the neighborhood. Some children in the neighborhood are unsupervised at times. <p>Action Steps: Find a suitable location for the facility. Create a public/private solution that provides affordable quality care for the children of the neighborhood.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Pre-school & Elementary Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children in the Liberty Park District are enrolled in Howard or Wilson Elementary schools both of which are located a considerable distance away. To further complicate matters, the children are separated in Elementary schools based upon language preference which results in an isolation between ethnic groups. <p>Action Steps: Form a neighborhood group to decide what the best solution could be and work with the churches and schools to address the concerns.</p>	LOW	
<p>Churches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The neighborhood understands the importance of these institutions upon the social fabric of the community . 53% of residents who submitted surveys rated that Churches are a “very important” part of the neighborhood. <p>Action Steps: Work to have churches and neighborhood members be more involved in community and faith-based activities.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Community Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a diverse populace within the neighborhood yet there is no place where residents can share experience. A Community Center could provide a location for a multitude of activities for all age groups while fostering and forging new bonds within the neighborhood. <p>Action Steps: Form a neighborhood group to locate and establish a public/private partnership derived facility.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Integration Into Downtown Medford</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel to downtown Medford’s Central Business District is accomplished predominantly by automobile since the route is not pedestrian friendly. Lighting and street trees should be installed as a part of a new pedestrian promenade extending from Beatty Street to Vogel Plaza so that residents can feel safe about walking downtown. The pathway should include decorative plaques at equal intervals which identify a “liberty” granted by the United States Bill of Rights. <p>Action Steps: Create a landscape and lighting plan. Include improvements in downtown master plan. Find donors for plaque materials and exterior wall space for their installation.</p>	LOW	





HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

OBJECTIVE: To provide quality, affordable housing and neighborhood-oriented businesses to residents.

The Liberty District is a mixed use area with a variety of dwelling units and commercial activities. There are a large number of older single family homes and multiple family dwellings in the neighborhood that need maintenance . Some structures are in extremely poor condition and should be replaced eventually with affordable housing that can either be tenant or owner occupied. Zone modifications should be considered to encourage private investment through the construction of innovative commercial-residential structures.

Adequate Housing	Priority	Responsible Parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Liberty Park District is an affordable area to live but many of the dwelling units are not considered adequate since the condition of the housing stock is poor when compared other areas of the City. The neighborhood needs alternative forms of structures to include apartments, townhomes, row houses and business/residence combinations. An increased percentage of private homeownership is desired along with continued affordability. <p>Action Steps: Work with Housing Committee and other interested agencies to find solutions.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Renovation of Housing Stock</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are a large number of older homes in the neighborhood that need major work to include foundations, electrical and plumbing upgrades and new roofs. Many homes are not eligible for conventional financing due to poor condition. Help homeowners keep up maintenance on their homes, particularly the elderly. <p>Action Steps: Work to implement Paint a House Program, HUD low interest loan programs, seek private investment for renovations, encourage private endowment to rehabilitate some of the aged residences .</p>	HIGH	
<p>Architectural Standards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is one of Medford’s original neighborhoods containing Victorian and Craftsman style construction styles on homes built between the late 1880’s and early 1940’s. While newer homes in the neighborhood possess an eclectic architectural mix., the previous architectural style should be preserved when possible as a means of protecting the character of the area. <p>Action Steps: Ensure that new construction matches the architectural motif and scale within the neighborhood. Recognize the older housing stock and emphasize “anchor” historic structures.</p>	LOW	
<p>Zone Modifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Liberty Park District has been a mixed use neighborhood for at least 30 years, however a majority of the commercial activity is conducted on the fringe of the area which has traditionally targeted drive by traffic on Riverside Avenue, Court Street and Central Avenue. Neighborhood-Oriented businesses , cottage industry and home occupations are needed to serve the need of residents and reduce vehicle trips. Future public transportation opportunity awaits residents in the Liberty Park District and should be planned accordingly. Zoning modifications should be implemented to encourage a long term neighborhood plan while preserving the rights and investment opportunity for existing property owners. <p>Action Steps: Make changes to General Land Use Map , Zone Map and Zone Code that allow innovative housing and commercial “mixed-uses” within the neighborhood as a means of encouraging private investment. Modify applicable documents to proactively prepare for the future transportation needs of the neighborhood and target less reliance on single occupant automobiles and more emphasis on public transport to include bus and rail.</p>	LOW	



INFRASTRUCTURE



OBJECTIVES: To make this a safe neighborhood for residents to walk, bicycle and socially interact.
To conserve natural resources and preserve the environment.

The Liberty Park District contains an urban residential neighborhood that has a high level of pedestrian and bicycle activity yet many of the streets are not prepared to allow safe passage for current and future residents who would choose these alternative form of transportation to travel within the City. Other infrastructure improvements such as street trees and alternative heat sources actually help preserve valuable natural resources like clean air and water.

	Priority	Responsible Parties
<p>Hazardous Sidewalk Repair & New Sidewalks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many existing sidewalk sections are in serious disrepair. Handicapped must use roadway to travel in some areas. A few residents do not want new sidewalks to be installed on Niantic Avenue. There are some areas of the neighborhood that have inadequate pavement surface. <p>Action Steps: Repair or replace existing sections of sidewalk that are damaged or that don't currently meet the standards of the American's with Disabilities Act. Determine where new sidewalks could be constructed and develop consensus for the construction of same before approaching City for assistance and funding. Determine if the neighbors on Niantic don't want sidewalks by conducting a special survey.</p>	HIGH	
<p>Street Lights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are some areas of the neighborhood that have inadequate street lighting. Residents have indicated that lighting is an important issue for safety. <p>Determine if the neighbors on Niantic don't want new lighting by conducting a special survey. Action Steps: Short term– add several new “cobra style” pole mounted street lights as requested by residents in areas of need. Long Term– Work with City Staff and neighborhood to select, design and install pedestrian scale sidewalk lighting. Emphasis should initially be given to Beatty Street since sidewalk and planting strips are currently in existence. Trim trees as needed to allow light to filter through to the street.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Street Trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This neighborhood has a significant inventory of large trees, some of which need pruning. Residents recognize that trees reduce cooling costs during the Summer months together with increased property values and curb appeal. Trees also serve to soften the urban environment Medford is a tree city with the Arbor Day Foundation <p>Action Steps: Find mechanism and funding to trim old trees. Work with neighbors, tree commission, private and non profit companies and the City to plant new trees of appropriate species on public and private properties.</p>	MEDIUM	
<p>Wood Stove Replacement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many homes in the neighborhood rely upon wood for heating yet wood smoke aggravates the overall air quality of the Rogue Valley during the Winter months when temperature inversions trap particulates in the air. <p>Encourage and implement a replacement program for home heating that is both energy efficient and environmentally complementary to the improvement of air quality in the Air Quality Maintenance Area (AQMA).</p>	LOW	



ECONOMIC BASE



OBJECTIVES: Family wage jobs and advanced educational opportunity to the residents of the neighborhood.
To connect this neighborhood into the downtown economy.

The Liberty Park District is strategically located at the center of the economic hub for the Southern Oregon Region yet most residents are employed in low wage service-sector positions. A quality education through job training or college level course can increase worker skill qualifications and productivity within a company. Skilled employees receive increased wages commensurate with experience which ultimately feeds expendable income into downtown businesses.

Family Wage Jobs and Job Training	Priority	Responsible Parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Liberty Park District contains a working class neighborhood which provides a service-oriented labor pool to the community. Most residents are employed in positions that possess entry level wages with no health or medical coverage. This neighborhood will likely continue to be home to lower income families however an effort should be put forward towards preparing residents for better jobs and pay. Increased wages will result in more families being able to qualify for mortgages. <p>Action Steps: Rogue Community College, Private company educational opportunities.</p>	HIGH	
<p>Business and Commerce Downtown</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Businesses within the downtown are not open during the hours that the working class would be able to shop. At present, most residents frequent the Mall or other alternatives such as WalMart and GI Joes. <p>Action Steps: Work with Economic Development agencies to maximize opportunities for downtown businesses. Contact Chamber of Commerce to see if hours can be modified at least one day each week. Downtown and encourage shopping by all City residents.</p>	LOW	
<p>Neighborhood Business and Cottage Industries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are several neighborhood businesses like Linda's House of Beauty that are working success stories. New businesses should be encouraged since they provide service to the neighborhood and reduce reliance on travel by automobile. <p>Action Steps: Small Business incubator services.</p>	MEDIUM	

“The problem with doing nothing is not knowing when you are finished.”

Benjamin Franklin

