

7 | OVERALL DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In May of 2011 nearly eighty local residents, business owners, institutional leaders, and municipal officials reviewed and discussed the data contained in the first four chapters of this planning report. They were then invited to share their views of what the City of Brownsville could become if its residents and leaders came together

to creatively and strategically use the City's many assets to enhance the quality of life for current and future residents. The fifteen-year development plan outlined in the remaining pages of this report is designed to assist local residents and leaders in developing and implementing policies, plans, and projects to:

Position Brownsville as West Tennessee's most desirable city recognized for its natural beauty, rich cultural history, artistic attractions and musical heritage, abundant agriculture, exceptional architecture and unique town square, quality public services, faith-based traditions, and love of learning, with a central location bounded by the scenic Hatchie River – **a thriving community where small town values, quality of life, diversity, and entrepreneurial spirit are honored daily.**

Those participating in the Brownsville on the Move planning process were confident this goal could be achieved during the next fifteen years by mobilizing local residents, institutions, and agencies,

as well as external allies, to work together in a highly cooperative and strategic manner, to accomplish the following economic and community development objectives:

- Objective 1** | To preserve and enhance the City's built environment and public spaces through the skillful application of advanced **historic preservation and urban design** principles and methods;
- Objective 2** | To expand the City's economic and tax base by **expanding local employment, entrepreneurial, and investment opportunities** for current and future residents and business owners;
- Objective 3** | To connect the City's areas of public spaces and historic districts through a **proposed greenway system** utilizing the existing floodplain to improve access to the City's neighborhoods, community facilities, and the Hatchie Wildlife Refuge;
- Objective 4** | To strengthen the City's competitive position within the region and nation through strategic investment in **public education, arts, and culture**;

Objective 5 | To facilitate the movement of people and goods by **enhancing the City’s existing infrastructure and way-finding systems**; and

Objective 6 | To insure quality **housing choice, quality, and security** for current and future residents through creative approaches to neighborhood preservation and enhancement, and expansion of the City’s housing stock.

The following chapter of the plan presents a detailed action plan featuring a series of near, mid, and long-term improvement projects designed to enable the City to make clear and measurable progress towards achieving each of the plan’s six development objectives. The implementation of these projects are phased so that those requiring the fewest volunteers, financial resources, and legal and/or administrative changes are scheduled to take place first while the more complex and demanding projects are scheduled for the later stages of the implementation process. Momentum generated from the successful completion of the near-term projects is expected to generate the community support and external assistance required to successfully implement the plan’s more ambitious and transformative projects.

This developmental approach to economic and community development follows Mintzberg’s “ready, fire, aim” model of organizational change that the Rensselaer Institute has successfully applied in their work with smaller cities in the U.S. and abroad (Mintzberg 1994). This approach highlights the importance of early victories to overcome the widespread cynicism regarding the prospects for change that exists within contemporary organizations and communities. By implementing small but highly visible improvements, leaders can develop an increasingly broad base of support overcoming public cynicism regarding the prospects for more significant structural change. A step-wise approach to community change offers the opportunity to gain the confidence of citizens in the ability of local, state, and Federal officials to design and implement policies and programs to improve the quality of life within society.

8 | IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

This chapter presents a detailed action plan for the coming fifteen years designed to enable Brownsville to achieve the six development objectives required to transform the City into “West Tennessee’s most desirable city”. The overwhelming majority of the specific projects featured in this plan were proposed by local residents, business owners, institutional leaders, and elected officials who participated in the Brownsville on the Move planning process. These projects were also reviewed by Mayor Matherne and Planning Director Hayes, as well as members of the Brownsville Planning Commission. Local residents will have the opportunity to comment on this list of preliminary project proposals during public hearings being organized by the Brownsville Planning Commission and Board of Alderman in January and February 2012. Ample opportunity remains for local citizens and leaders to review, revise, and improve these proposals in order to accelerate Brownsville’s progress towards improving its overall quality of life.

8.1 | | OBJECTIVE 1: HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND URBAN DESIGN

The following table contains projects designed to preserve and enhance the City’s build environment and public infrastructure through the skillful application of advanced historic preservation and urban design principles and methods.

Near-Term (1-5 years)	Mid--Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11-15 years)
<p>NT1 Building Institutional Capacity</p> <p>Establish a city-sponsored historic preservation and urban design commission (may rely on the existing historic zoning commission or planning commission), to be supported by a municipal urban design officer, an external historic preservationist, and urban design consultant.</p>	<p>MT1 Brownsville Overlay</p> <p>Adopt planning codes and regulations aimed at promoting historic preservation as well as the development of more pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use districts within the City. Among the recommended code and regulation changes would be: a form-based land use control ordinance, overlay districts to enlarge the area of the Court Square Historic District and to establish the a Dunbar-Carver Historic District; and zoning map changes to expand several of the City’s existing historic residential districts.</p>	<p>LT1 The School Back to the City Core</p> <p>Abandon campus-based school complexes at the City’s periphery in favor of the adaptive re-use of infill sites closer to the town center.</p>
<p>NT2 Browns’art History</p> <p>Organize on-going cultural events (festivals, conferences, art exhibits, children’s scavenger hunts, weekly tours with and for local stakeholders, etc.) dedicated to highlighting the civic and social role of urban design in historic and contemporary Brownville, These activities would be undertaken, in part, as a strategy to initiate a conversation with key local stakeholders on the roles they can play in advancing specific improvement projects, especially the establishment of new historic and mixed-used districts.</p>	<p>MT2 Adopt a wall initiative</p> <p>Initiate a public murals project within the Court Square District to transform highly-visible but unsightly exterior walls into public art installations celebrating the City’s history.</p>	<p>LT2 Brownsville Greenway</p> <p>Complete the implementation of a greenway system surrounding the City that will include areas within the floodplain that can be used as a curvilinear park for recreational and outdoor sport activities by local residents and tourists.</p>

Near-Term (1-5 years) – (cont.)	Mid--Term (6-10 years) - (cont.)	Long-Term (11-15 years) - (cont.)
<p>NT3 Main Street Brownsville, Inc.</p> <p>Build upon the current Tennessee Downtowns Program and recently executed Court Square Master Plan to preserve and revitalize Downtown, complete and celebrate “Brownsville’s Looking Up”, as the foundation for achieving the next level - National Main Street status for Downtown Brownsville.</p>	<p>MT3 Brownville Urban Trails</p> <p>Establish at least two urban trails highlighting Brownsville’s art and history, with the aim of encouraging pedestrian use of Brownsville’s urban core while exposing visitors to the City’s Downtown and historic neighborhoods.</p>	<p>LT3 From Suburban to Urban Main</p> <p>Launch an ongoing corridor improvement project that features façade enhancements, street furniture improvements, inspired landscape installations, green infrastructure projects and advanced urban design techniques to address the conversion of Main Street frontages from a suburban to an urban character.</p>
<p>NT4 New Doors for an Old Town</p> <p>Create new entranceways to the City along with an improved way-finding system to guide residents and visitors to local attractions and services. Special signage will also be provided to indicate upcoming city beautification projects.</p>	<p>MT4 SIGNAGE Improvement</p> <p>Determine the feasibility of restructuring the City’s municipal codes governing signage for businesses, including: appropriate size, location, color, and other criteria. Establish rules for temporary residential and commercial signage.</p>	
<p>NT5 EXPAND HISTORIC DISTRICTS</p> <p>Evaluate the City’s existing historic districts with an eye towards expanding their boundaries, devising better interpretive materials, organizing weekly tours for residents and tourists, and investigating the possibility of establishing new districts.</p>	<p>MT5 Train Trestle</p> <p>Work with the railroad company to restore and enhance the old overpass on East Main to new glory by utilizing the structure’s existing architectural features as well as new signage and lighting to inform visitors that they are entering Brownsville’s historic and vibrant Downtown.</p>	

NEAR TERM ACTION #1 | POTENTIATING INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

Description | Set-up a city-sponsored historic preservation and urban design commission (may rely on the existing historic zoning commission or planning commission), to be supported by an urban design consultant and the SWTCC historic preservationist.

Rationale | Create the institutional capacity (decision making, management ability, technical skills) to plan and implement the near, mid and long-term actions needed to achieve the preservation and design outcomes of Objective 1.

Steps |

- a) City Board charges the commission; and
- b) The commission decides the criteria to use in selecting a designer (a professional figure with experience in regeneration planning able to integrate urban design and historic preservation).

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Haywood County, Tennessee Downtowns Steering and Design Committees, The Haywood County Historic Society, City Beautiful, and professional associations that might be helpful in preparing the professional profile (i.e. American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects, American Institute of Certified Planners, and the Urban Land Institute).

NEAR TERM ACTION #2 | BROWNS'ART

Description | Organize an on-going series of cultural events (festivals, conferences, weekly tours with and for local stakeholders, etc.) dedicated to highlighting the civic and social role of urban design in historic and contemporary Brownville, as a strategy to start a new civic conversation involving key local stakeholders regarding the roles they can play in advancing specific projects especially the establishment of new historic and mixed-used districts.

Rationale | Involve local stakeholders in an effort to preserve and enhance the local built environment, while promoting civic education highlighting the City's local history and unique architecture.

Steps |

- a) Organize a civic coalition for City Beautiful, involving local stakeholders, historians, property owners, design professionals, artists and interested residents;
- b) Commit to hosting a large event within the first year of this plan's adoption, such as a conference or public forum, inviting all public and private institutions located within the City to initiate a conversation on if and how they would like to be involved in the community's beautification.
- c) Set up a yearly calendar of events that includes weekly tours, special events, and services for tourists and visitors, and;
- d) Initiate a community-wide effort to collect historic documents and residents' perceptions of Brownsville's unique aesthetic features for use in future educational programming on the city's built environment.

Lead agency | City of Brownville (only the first event), and then the civic coalition for Beautiful Brownville.

Partnership | Interested local residents and property owners.

NEAR TERM ACTION #3 | BROWNSVILLE'S MAIN STREET PROGRAM

Description | Build upon the initial work carried out by Brownville's newly-established Main Street Program to achieve recognition as a National Main Street Project.

Rationale | National recognition would elevate Brownville's standing within our region. In addition, it would enable the City to take advantage of funding and technical assistance available through the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Steps |

- a) Create a standing committee of local property owners, business operators, design professionals and elected officials interested in the long-term health and vitality of Downtown Brownville.
- b) Establish a specific set of economic, community, and urban design goals for the Downtown;
- c) Select a local historic preservation planner to serve as a consultant to assist the City in putting together their application for National Main Street recognition; and

- d) Submit the application and prepare to implement the major elements of the Main Street improvement plan contained within the application to the National Trust.

Lead agency | Brownville Chamber of Commerce

Partnership | City of Brownville and Haywood County

NEAR TERM ACTION #4 | NEW DOORS FOR AN OLD TOWN

Description | Create new entranceways to the City along with an improved way-finding system to guide residents and visitors to local attractions and services. Special signage can also be installed to indicate upcoming City beautification projects. These materials should feature a common design adopted as part of the City's proposed branding initiative.

Rationale | Attract and then guide visitors to local points of interest and services, while also improving the aesthetics of town's major entrance points for both residents and visitors.

Steps |

- a) The City will utilize the community assets inventory prepared as part of this planning process to formulate a list of sites that identify: city entrances; points of interest; historic sites; and strategic crossroads where way-finding signage is needed; as well as local lodging and dining options;

- b) Develop the graphic design for these signs integrating the key graphic elements that came out of the aggressive branding strategy discussed in the Objective 1, Near-Term Project #4; and
- c) Install the new signage, giving priority to the I-40, Exit 56 location.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Chamber of Commerce and the firm that will be assisting the community with its soon-to-be initiated branding strategy

NEAR TERM ACTION #5 | EXPANDING HISTORIC DISTRICTS

Description | Adopt land use regulations aimed at promoting historic preservation as well as the development of more pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use districts within the City. Among the recommended code and regulation changes would be: a form-based land use control ordinance overlay district enlarging the area of the Court Square Historic District and establish a new Dunbar-Carver Historic District; and zoning map amendments to expand several of the City’s existing historic residential districts.

Rationale | Provide a framework for the ongoing transformation of the City by providing clear planning and design guidance for future and still un-planned developments and public improvements.

Steps |

- a) Produce detailed base maps of the Brownsville urban environment to guide future development, that include building footprints, detailed topography, etc.;
- b) Produce urban diachronic maps that identify existing urban districts and neighborhoods. In particular, the *Court Square District* might be enlarged to include historic and religious institutions on Washington Street and the area surrounding the Historic Oakwood Cemetery. In addition, a new historic district should be established around the *Dunbar-Carver Museum*, to celebrate the long and rich history of the local African American community, especially during the Civil Rights Era. For each district historic assets, aesthetic strengths and weaknesses, and future development possibilities will be determined; and
- c) Develop the land use code for each district in a manner that addresses:
 - Units to be preserved, and preferred preservation actions;
 - Units that are not under special preservation rules,
 - but need specifications in terms of allowable interventions and special projects to be promoted; and
 - A section of the code addressing how to improve and retrofit the existent storm water management system. This new section of the code should focus on design guidelines to be included in the overlays to promote the reduction of impervious surfaces within urban boundaries.

Lead agency | City - Proposed City Guidelines on Urban Design and Historic Preservation working with the Historic Zoning Commission.

Partnership | SWTDD Historic Preservationist and the services of a trained Historic Preservation Planner; the planning process has to be carried out through the systematic involvement of the community.

MID TERM ACTION #1 | BROWNSVILLE OVERLAY

Description | Adopt planning codes and regulations aimed at promoting preservation and more pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use districts in the future development of the city. Among those: a form-based land use control ordinance that would expand the boundaries of the Court Square Historic District and establish the new Dunbar Carver Historic District, and expanding the existing historic residential district.

Rationale | Legalize a framework for the ongoing transformation of the city providing guidance for future and still un-planned transformations.

Steps |

- a) Produce detailed base maps of the Brownsville urban environment, including building footprints, detailed topography, etc. ;
- b) Produce urban diachronic maps through the identification of urban districts and neighborhoods. In particular, the *Court Square district* might be enlarged, in order to include historic, religious institutions on Washington St, and the historic area of the cemetery. Moreover, a new historic district could be established around the *Dunbar Carver Museum*, to celebrate local civil rights

- history. For each district historic assets, aesthetic strengths and weaknesses, and future possibilities will be determined; and
- c) Define the land use code articulated in each district in a way that addresses:
 - d) Units to be preserved, and preferred preservation actions;
 - e) Units that are not under special preservation rules,
 - f) but that need specifications in terms of allowed interventions, not-allowed interventions, and special projects that are promoted; and
 - g) A section of the code should address how to improve and retrofit the existent storm water management system. This new study should focus on design guidelines to be included in the overlay that will promote the reduction of impervious areas within urban boundaries.

Lead agency | City - Proposed City Guidelines on Urban Design and Historic Preservation working with the Historic Zoning Commission

Partnership | SWTDD Historic Preservationist and Professional Services of Historic Surveyor; The planning process has to be carried out through a systematic involvement of the community.

MID TERM ACTION #2 | ADOPT A WALL INITIATIVE

Description | Initiate a public murals project within the Court Square District to transform highly visible but unsightly exterior walls into public art spaces honoring the area's rich social history.

Rationale | Celebrate local history, while beautifying unsightly walls in highly visible spaces, which are considered by many to be one of the factors causing many residents and visitors to avoid Downtown Brownsville.

Steps |

- a) Recruit local public school classes to begin an inventory of highly-visible but unsightly exterior walls and the corresponding property owners;
- b) Give priority to the properties along the planned city trails [See initiative ST3]. The Mayor will contact the wall owners to check their willingness to have their properties included in the initiative. A pilot project might be undertaken using a city and/or school-owned wall, to stimulate the interest of local private property owners. In the meantime, schools can prepare new curricula exploring the City’s social history and iconography using the archival collections at the Library, Dunbar-Carver Museum, and the Haywood County Museum, to help students conceptualize initial mural designs;
- c) Conceptualize murals (each participating class could be assigned one mural design); and
- d) Implement murals with the direct involvement of local leaders, historians, school teachers, artists, craftsman and students.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Haywood County Schools, Brownsville/Haywood County Arts Council, Tennessee Downtowns Design Committee

MID TERM ACTION #3 | BROWNSVILLE URBAN TRAILS

Description | Establish at least two urban trails celebrating Brownsville’s art and history, with the aim of facilitating pedestrian use and enjoyment of Brownsville’s urban core and exposing visitors to the City’s downtown and historic neighborhoods.

Rationale | Create a physical connection between already existing points of attraction to facilitate tourists’ visits; engaging the local community in the beautification of the city, and promoting Brownsville as a hot spot for contemporary art within the Region.

Steps |

- a) Organize a round table discussion involving institutions physically located on Main Street, such as First South Bank and the Chamber of Commerce, and along the trail, such as the Haywood County Museum, that might be interested in hosting and sponsoring pieces of public art;
- b) Prepare the physical design/plan of the trail locating single sites for sculptures and possible physical interventions (changes in the pavement, landscaping, way-finding, etc.) to connect those sites with Court Square, the Mindfield, and College Hill; different sites can be developed following different implementation strategies, with different accountable agencies – two sites have to be located on public spaces;
- c) Organize a one-semester-long workshop involving art students from a higher education institution with an art committed to public art and community engagement, that will involve local high

- school students in the creation of the first sculpture on one of the two public spaces at one end of the trail;
- d) Organize an international juried competition for the creation of a public art piece on public space on the other end of the trail. The jury might be led by local artist Billy Tripp; and
 - e) Each agency will be responsible for the implementation of the plan on each privately-owned site; the City will realize the connecting elements.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Agencies located on West Main such as First South Bank, The Chamber of Commerce, etc.; a higher education institution with a department of art and a strong community engagement mission; Haywood County High School; and local artist Billy Tripp

MID TERM ACTION #4 –SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT

Description | Undertake a major revision of the City’s existing signage ordinance to enhance the ability of local residents and visitors to find important businesses, government offices, and service agencies while enhancing the physical appearance of Brownsville. The new ordinance will establish rules to determine the maximum signage allowable, location and kind of signs, minimum and maximum lettering, and other design features for each zoning district within the City.

Rationale | The City of Brownsville’s generous and often vaguely worded signage ordinance makes it difficult for property owners and business operators to understand and for local zoning officials to interpret and enforce. As a result the city has an overabundance of poorly designed and placed signage.

Steps |

- a) The City Planning Commission should establish a sub-committee to work with regional and state planners to identify small Southern Towns with well-crafted signage ordinances;
- b) The Sub-Committee should review these ordinances comparing them to Brownsville’s current regulations;
- c) The Committee should then interview local Building Inspectors, architects, and builders to determine their concerns regarding the existing signage code;
- d) The Committee should subsequently prepare a draft of a new signage ordinance for the full Planning Commission to review and adopt.

Lead agency | Sub-Committee of the Planning Commission

Partnership | Planning Commission

MID TERM ACTION #5 – TRAIN OVERPASS ENHANCEMENT

Description | Engage local designers in re-imagining the historic train overpass that is located on East Main Street that currently serves as

an unattractive entranceway to Downtown Brownsville. Working with the overpass' existing structural elements, possible sculptural additions and an inspired lighting design local artists and designers should transform this utilitarian structure, with the approval of the railroad, into a significant piece of public art that excites pedestrians and motorists about the many attractions of Downtown Brownsville.

Rationale | Like many historic towns whose histories are tied to rail service, Brownsville has an overpass on East Main Street that is unsightly and distracting. It serves to lower resident and tourist expectations regarding Downtown.

Steps |

- a) Invite residents, institutional leaders, and business owners interested in Downtown Brownsville to tour the overpass “on foot” and meet at the local Chamber of Commerce office to discuss what they like about the structure as well as their ideas for transforming it into an appropriate entranceway to Downtown;
- b) Form a small committee of interested individuals to scour the internet, scholarly publications, and popular magazines to identify examples of urban railroad passes that have been transformed through thoughtful and inspired design;
- c) Invite local stakeholders to share their ideas and proposals for transforming the trestle into an object of beauty;
- d) Seek the services of a local architect and/or landscape architect to review the materials collected by the committee and to prepare a series of alternative design proposals;
- e) Share these proposals via an exhibition at the Library and on the web to elicit local stakeholders preferences;

- f) Ask the volunteer designer to prepare a preferred design and present this to the Landmark Commission and the Planning Commission for their review;
- g) Organize a local fundraising campaign to secure the funds to implement the proposed changes.

Lead Agency | Chamber of Commerce

Partnership | Affected Railroad, Local Volunteers, and Members of the Historic Planning Commission.

LONG TERM ACTION #1 | THE SCHOOL BACK TO THE CITY CORE

Description | Abandon campus-based school complexes at the City’s periphery in favor of the adaptive re-use of infill sites closer to the town center for new educational facilities.

Rationale | Re-populate the downtown area with potential users of recreational activities and retail businesses; locate young people in a pedestrian-friendly area; and encourage them to walk and socialize in urban space.

Steps |

- a) Host city-wide consultation events, showing successful examples of high schools that have abandoned their suburban campus locations.

- b) At the same time, survey vacant properties in the downtown area, and assess the options of re-use or demolition and reconstruction (e.g. vacant mall on East Main);
- c) Based upon the survey, present a set of alternative locations for the high school to local residents and leaders;
- d) Formulate a detailed site plan for the preferred location based upon resident, parent, official, and School District feedback;
- e) Quietly secure an option to purchase this land; and
- f) Request Haywood County School District approval of this preferred location and site plan.

Lead agency | Haywood County School District

Partnership | City, Planning Commission, and Haywood County Government.

LONG TERM ACTION #2| BROWNSVILLE GREENWAY

Description | Complete the implementation of a greenway system surrounding the city that includes areas within the floodplain that can be used as curvilinear park for recreational and outdoor sport activities by local residents and tourists, and as a connector of public sites and educational facilities. The greenway plan should also include a link to the Hatchie River and Wildlife Refuge for added recreation opportunities and a mechanism for encouraging more visitors to Downtown Brownsville.

Rationale | Contributing to the City’s goal of having a more natural and sustainable (less maintenance) storm water management system,

the greenway is conceived as a multi-purpose infrastructure element that will help Brownsville become a preferred destination for visitors and tourists. This improvement will also promote health and wellness within the local community, especially among residents of low income neighborhoods in the northern and southern part of town. Finally, it will provide safe routes to many schools and new links to nearby points of interests.

Steps |

- a) Continue acquiring land that was flooded in May 2010 to be part of the large greenway system;
- b) Establish a Greenway Conservancy that will coordinate the projects, through a high level of engagement by local stakeholders;
- c) Prepare a detailed urban design scheme for the greenway, connecting newly-acquired lands subjected to frequent flooding, existing infrastructures easily converted into dedicated bike and pedestrian lanes, and existing attractions and parks. The schema should classify sections of the system according to different priorities and levels of community engagement. (A tentative conceptual schema of the system is included and shows the relationship between the urban trails and the greenway system);
- d) Implement sections that have a high level of priority and a low level of community engagement;
- e) Implement sections that have a high level of priority and high level of community engagement (See Obj. 4 LT2; Obj. 6 ST1; Obj. 7-LT3); and.
- f) Complete implementation of the entire greenway system.

Lead Agency | City Greenway Conservancy through the Brownsville Beautiful Committee

Partnership | Brownsville/Haywood County Parks and Recreation, youth groups or schools promoting linear community gardening; local cultural and philanthropic organizations promoting urban trails connecting historic districts; etc.

LONG TERM ACTION #3 | FROM SUBURBAN TO URBAN MAIN

Description | Launch an ongoing corridor improvement project that features building façade enhancements, street furniture improvements, inspired landscape installations, green infrastructure features and advanced urban design principles to advance the conversion of Main Street frontages from a suburban to urban character.

Rationale | The first impression of Brownsville that newcomers form is largely based upon their experience travelling along the city's primary north-south and east-west arterials, namely, Main and Washington Streets. The impression visitors form can be dramatically improved through the passage of a new signage ordinance that removes ineffective and unsightly signage, establishes a more functional and aesthetically-pleasing approach to on-street parking, implements a building façade loan program to restore historic storefronts, and executes a "Complete Streets" concept that establishes uniform sidewalk and right of way dimensions, installs attractive and hearty street trees, shrubs, and flowers, places beautifully designed street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, and bus shelters) and lighting consistent with the dominant architecture of nearby residential and commercial properties; and hangs artistically created banners to add color to the area.

Steps |

- a) The City Planning Commission should work with the chamber of Commerce and institutions located along both Main and Washington Streets to form a taskforce to study existing conditions along these thoroughfares and possible improvement strategies;
- b) Representatives of this body should examine the architecture and planning literature on improving urban streetscapes, especially the "Complete Streets" concept;
- c) The Taskforce should consult representatives of the Western Tennessee Division of the American Planning Association, the Association of Landscape Architects, and the Urban Land Institute to identify two or three communities within the Greater Memphis Region that have undertaken successful streetscape improvement projects;
- d) The Planning Commission should request assistance from the Memphis Regional Design Center in organizing a community charrette to involve local stakeholders in creating alternative strategies for improving these thoroughfares; and
- e) The City should explore, seek, and secure external funding to fund the implementation of this program.

Lead agency | Brownsville Planning Commission

Partnership | Memphis Regional Design Center; the Greater Memphis Urban Land Institute; and the Graduate Programs in Architecture and City and Regional Planning.

8.2 | OBJECTIVE 2: LOCAL EMPLOYMENT, ENTREPRENEURIAL, AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Table of actions aimed at strengthening the City’s economic and tax base by expanding local employment, entrepreneurial, and investment opportunities for current and future residents and business owners, and investors.

Near-Term (1-5 years)	Mid-Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11-15 years)
<p>NT1 Branding Brownsville</p> <p>A comprehensive, strategic, and aggressive branding, marketing, and promotional campaign designed to sell Brownsville as an attractive residential community, business location, investment site, and tourist destination within the Mid South.</p>	<p>MT1 What’s Cooking/Baking</p> <p>A coordinated and strategic effort by local business leaders to recruit a successful restaurateur and/or baker from within the region to establish a quality family or fine dining restaurant and/or bake shop in a currently underutilized first floor location on or near Court Square.</p>	<p>LT1 4H Home Base</p> <p>Make Brownsville the location of a new regional 4-H Education and Training Center in West Tennessee to be built by the State Cooperative Education Service.</p>
<p>NT2 Buy Brownsville</p> <p>An organized campaign to support local agricultural, retail, wholesale, and service businesses by increasing the percentage of local purchases made by the City of Brownsville, the Haywood County School District, and local non-profit organizations, especially churches.</p>	<p>MT2 Emerald Brownsville</p> <p>A city-initiated energy conservation program focused on the systematic retrofitting of single-family homes, local institutions, and municipal properties, generating employment in the green building sector while significantly reducing the energy requirements of the City’s local building stock.</p>	<p>LT2 College on Court Square</p> <p>Rehabilitation of vacant space within the Court House located in the middle of Court Square to serve as a multi-university teaching and learning complex where nearby colleges and universities could offer educational services.</p>
<p>NT3 Digging Downtown Project</p> <p>A systematic effort to bring people back to Court Square to enjoy art, music, culture, food and shopping, that builds upon the excitement generated by the City’s recent upgrading of the Court Square. This project would feature a Friday evening Music series, Saturday Farmers Market, Sunday Classic Outdoor movie program and an end-of-the-school year social history arts, and drama festival to attract residents and visitors to the Court Square District.</p>	<p>MT3 Play Ball Brownsville</p> <p>A modest upgrading, marketing, and scheduling of the City’s existing baseball, softball, basketball, and football fields for use by regional, sectional, and national tournament groups. This effort could potentially bring thousands of young people and their families to the City.</p>	<p>LT3 Ecotourism</p> <p>Recreational and educational programs dedicated to advancing the protection and enjoyment of the Hatchie River and Wildlife Sanctuary and other prime nature areas by residents and visitors, through the promotion of nature-oriented activities including: walking, hiking, biking, canoeing, and fishing. Work with local entrepreneurs, the Nature Conservancy, and other groups to formulate a plan, coordinating with the Greenway system, and developing a blueprint for trail development and river access.</p>

Near-Term (1-5 years) – (cont.)	Mid--Term (6-10 years) - (cont.)	Long-Term (11-15 years) - (cont.)
<p>NT4 Revolving Loan Fund</p> <p>Activate the City’s revolving loan fund to provide funding for small businesses with a focus on job creation and/or retention and business expansion and/or startups.</p>	<p>MT4 South Industrial Park</p> <p>In partnership with Haywood County, complete the infrastructure for the South Industrial Park to enable the rapid development of this complex for job and tax generating purposes.</p>	<p>LT4 Agritourism</p> <p>Collaborate with area farmers and local extension staff to create visitor venues for promoting and accessing agricultural-based activities and businesses, from cotton-production/ginning, nursery operations, fruit & nut orchards, honey & sorghum, vineyards and wineries, and smoked ham distribution.</p>
<p>NT5 Expansion AT I-40</p> <p>Complete a comprehensive development plan for the urban growth area between exits 56 and 60 along I-40, with the goal of measured growth as a part of the overall development of the land adjacent to the Interstate.</p>		

NEAR TERM ACTION #1 | BRANDING BROWNSVILLE

Description | Branding Brownsville will be a comprehensive, strategic, and aggressive branding, marketing, and promotional campaign to highlight Brownsville as an attractive residential community, business location, investment site and tourist destination within the Mid South. Municipal officials, Chamber of Commerce leaders, and local media professionals will engage either a private firm with expertise in the branding of local communities and their major attractions or students and faculty from a university business school to design and implement such a campaign. This effort would include the development of a short branding statement that expresses the unique character of the Brownsville community, the development of an eye-catching logo to be featured in all City materials, the redesign of the City’s web presence, and establishment of a social media profile on Twitter, Facebook, My Space, and Linked to enhance the public’s exposure to and appreciation of Brownsville as a unique Southern City.

Rationale | While Brownsville has an extraordinary number of natural, historic, and cultural assets and attractions, relatively few people outside of Brownsville know about these. The redevelopment of Court Square, completion of the nearby State Solar Farm, and the proposal to establish a State Megasite, offers the City a unique opportunity to rebrand and reposition itself within the State and Region to attract new investors, businesses, jobs, and residents.

Steps |

a) Board of Alderman, in cooperation with the Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, should form a joint branding, marketing, and promotional committee;

- b) This committee should critically review current efforts to promote the City, evaluate their shortcomings, and develop a set of concrete goals and objectives for the new campaign;
- c) The Committee should, with the assistance of the local Chamber, approach local businesses to gauge their willingness to cover the costs of hiring a private firm to develop this campaign;
- d) In the event local funds are insufficient to cover of a private branding firm, steps should be taken to explore working with students and faculty of a local graduate school of business in designing such a campaign; and
- e) The Campaign should be implemented and evaluated for its effectiveness and efficiency.

Lead agency | The Office of the Mayor

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce; Brownsville Business Association

NEAR TERM ACTION #2 | BUY BROWNSVILLE

Description | An organized campaign to support local agricultural, retail, wholesale, and service business by increasing the percentage of local purchases made by the City of Brownsville, the Haywood County School District, and local non-profit organizations, especially churches. A directory of local products and service providers will be developed and distributed to those responsible for making purchasing, contracting, and vendor service decisions within these public agencies and non-profit organizations. An information meeting could be organized by the Chamber to familiarize local businesses with opportunities to sell to and service local public agencies and non-profits. In the case of municipal government, departmental budget allocations could be evaluated, in part, on the basis of manager’s ability to improve their unit’s local

purchasing profiles. The success of this effort within local public and private agencies could result in local businesses deciding to participate in a parallel effort further supporting local businesses and job generation.

Rationale | Local residents and officials are concerned about the future health of the regional economy and its ability to provide living wage employment for local residents. Brownsville has been more successful than most other West Tennessee cities in recruiting manufacturing and distribution firms. However, unemployment and underemployment remain high. An import substitution strategy, such as a buy local campaign, would complement the City's current efforts by helping existing businesses grow by capturing a portion of local spending that is now flowing outside of the City.

Steps |

- a) Research existing state laws governing purchasing of goods and services by local public agencies;
- b) Determine the current level of local purchasing by the City, School District, area churches, and local non-profit organizations;
- c) Work with the Chamber of Commerce to develop a directory of available local goods and services;
- d) Organize a business information meeting for local businesses interested in participating in the buy-local program;
- e) Establish a policy designed to increase local purchasing by municipal government, public agencies, and area non-profits to a higher level while evaluating its local business and employment impact over time.

Lead agency | Office of the Mayor

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce and the Brownsville Business Association

NEAR TERM ACTION #3 | DIGGING DOWNTOWN PROJECT

Description |. The Digging Downtown Project would be a coordinated effort to bring people back to Court Square to enjoy art, music, culture, dining and shopping. This initiative is designed to build upon the excitement generated by the recent upgrading of the Court Square through the organization of a series of low-cost events that bring people back Downtown to enjoy the architecture, ambience, and social life of this important historic district. A small committee could be jointly established by the Tourism Committee, Tennessee Downtowns Promotion Committee, and the Chamber of Commerce this winter to encourage local schools, colleges, cultural organizations, and independent artists and craftsman to exhibit and sell their creative works near the end of what might be the spring semester. This same group could work with local school and church music programs and independent performers to organize a Friday evening music series that would bring people Downtown for music, a meal, and a bit of shopping. The organizers of the Brownsville Farmers Market could be encouraged to move their operations directly onto Court Square on Saturday mornings during the spring, summer, and fall growing seasons. Finally, this volunteer body might also explore the feasibility of organizing a Sunday Evening Outdoor Film Series on the Square during the summer. These efforts would dramatically increase the number of people visiting Court Square and supporting its current and future businesses.

Rationale | Court Square has been the commercial, civic, and cultural center of Brownsville since its establishment in the mid-1820s. Like many smaller cities in West Tennessee, it has experienced a sharp decline in business activity and is currently underutilized. While the recent infrastructure investment has significantly improved its appearance; these brick and mortar investments are not likely to

restore the Square’s vitality without a significant marketing and promotion effort.

Steps |

- a) Survey local businesses, religious organizations, and civic associations regarding their willingness to participate in the Steering Committee for the Digging Downtown Initiative;
- b) Organize short study trips to Covington and Bolivar which have recently carried out successful downtown revitalization efforts;
- c) Contact local school and university officials regarding their interest in the Spring Arts Exhibition that would serve as the kick-off of the downtown revitalization effort;
- d) Establish contact with the Brownsville Farmers Market Committee to explore moving their enterprise to Court Square on Saturday mornings;
- e) Identify a local civic organization willing to undertake, with City assistance, the organization of a short summer film series on the Square.

Lead agency | Court Square business owners, Tennessee Downtowns Promotion Committee, Brownsville Tourism Committee, as well as local religious leaders, and civic activists

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

NEAR TERM ACTION #4 | REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Description | Revive the City’s dormant revolving loan fund to support new business start-ups that generate new jobs and additional tax revenues, especially those that meet local consumer and business needs. For example, local residents complain about having to drive to

Jackson and/or Memphis for an evening of fine dining. Such a fund could assist a local chef in opening a local family and/or fine dining venue on Court Square.

Rationale | The downturn in the economy, along with the collapse in the real estate market, has made it very difficult for businesses, especially new start-ups, to secure financing. A revolving loan fund that could provide a portion of the financing needed for a new venture while assuming a secondary mortgage position could play a critical role in launching new Brownsville businesses.

Steps |

- a) Organize a small taskforce of local business persons, bankers, and municipal officials to estimate the credit gap facing local start-ups;
- b) Work with municipal, county, regional, and state economic development officials to identify possible sources to capitalize this new fund;
- c) Collaborate with local business, banking, and faith-based organizations to market the existence of this new fund;
- d) Seek and evaluate applications from would-be business operators; and
- e) Make loans and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs overall design and underwriting policies.

Lead agency | Chamber of Commerce

Partnership | Haywood County Economic Development Agency

NEAR TERM ACTION #5 – I-40 Exit 56-60 GROWTH PLAN

Description | As the economy continues to regain momentum and the I-69 is built, traffic and development pressures along the I-40 corridor will intensify. The City of Brownsville should develop an overall growth plan for the Urban Growth Area along I-40 between Exits 56-60. A special effort should be made to develop a land use plan with a mix of retail, commercial, institutional, and residential purposes to insure the area’s attractiveness, vitality, and sustainability. A more compact form of development that encourages walking within this district and establishes a higher standard of design will serve as an attractive new district and an exciting new gateway to the City encouraging visitors to explore the rest of Brownsville.

Rationale | A slowdown in the economy offers local officials the opportunity to develop more strategic and innovative approaches to development. The undeveloped land along the Interstate which is relatively close to the Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge represents one of the County’s most desirable development opportunities. Transforming this unimproved space into an attractive, vibrant, and sustainable mixed-use community could enable the City and County to establish a new and higher standard for development giving the local community a distinct competitive advantage over other nearby communities that are pursuing low cost/minimum design development.

Steps |

a) The City should take steps to secure any and all available real estate market data for the I-40 corridor related to current and projected demand;

b) The City should approach a local business school to conduct a regional opportunity loss study to identify sectors of the economy that appear to be underrepresented;

c) Based upon this study’s estimate of square footage demand for particular kinds of services; the City should engage of local planner to prepare a master plan for the site;

d) With the completion of the master plan, the City should consider issuing a Notice of Funding Availability for a developer willing to develop the site in accordance with the City’s master plan;

e) The Master Plan, NOFA, and Development Plan should be used to approach the County and State to assist with the infrastructure costs needed to prepare the site for development;

6.) A developer should be chosen and work initiated on the site to realize the promise of the master plan.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Haywood County

MID TERM ACTION #1 | WHAT’S COOKING/BAKING

Description | A coordinated and strategic effort by local business leaders to recruit a successful restaurateur and/or baker from within the region to establish a quality restaurant and/or bake shop in a currently underutilized first floor location on or near Court Square. While franchise stores might not be interested in such an opportunity, a local entrepreneur with a single location looking to expand into a second venue might be very interested. This interest could be further peaked through an appropriate set of incentives, including: reduced rent,

property tax relief, reduction in required parking, staff training support, participation in a cooperative marketing program, etc.

Rationale | A significant number of the Brownsville residents interviewed for this plan complained about having to travel to Jackson and/or Memphis to have a family dining experience. There appears to be sufficient demand in Brownsville to support such an enterprise which would meet an important market niche, add to the vitality of the Court Square area, and generate needed local employment and tax revenue.

Steps |

- a) Complete an initial inventory of available commercial space on and around Court Square appropriately zoned for this purpose;
- b) Interview local residents regarding their favorite regional dining venues;
- c) Initiate preliminary conversations with independent restaurateurs regarding their potential interest in a Brownsville business opportunity;
- d) Prepare a small area market study to demonstrate the existence of an untapped market; and
- e) Assist the interested restaurateur in preparing a business plan for his/her Court Square venue, identifying local financing, and negotiating a workable property purchase or lease agreement; and,
- f) Work with local, County, and state economic development professionals to develop a package of incentives to encourage interested local entrepreneurs to pursue this opportunity.

Lead agency | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

Partnership | Tennessee Downtown Steering and Promotion Committees,

MID TERM ACTION #2 | EMERALD BROWNSVILLE

Description | A city-initiated energy conservation program focused on the systematic retrofitting of single-family homes, local institutions, and municipal properties. This effort would generate needed employment in the green building sector while significantly reducing the energy requirements of the City's local building stock, thereby lowering costs to their owners and slowing down the growth of the City's carbon foot-print. This project would be carried out in collaboration with the national green building campaign of the Emerald Cities Coalition staffed by the students and faculty at MIT in Cambridge, MA. Effort should be made to bring those visiting the State Solar Farm to see the energy conservation efforts being implemented in nearby Brownsville thereby generating a modest economic development benefit from the project.

Rationale | Many of Brownsville's homeowners are low to moderate income families that have been struggling to make ends meet during these economically-challenging times. Rising energy costs have forced many of these families to make tough decisions regarding which of their monthly bills to pay. An energy conservation program would enable these families to achieve significant savings on home heating and cooling while also generating needed living wage employment. The existence of a local energy cooperative serving the City increases the likelihood that such a program could be implemented.

Steps |

- a) Work with local utilities to circulate a bill stuffer survey regarding the energy use and conservation interests of local families;

- b) Establish contact with MIT’s Emerald Cities Program to learn more about community-based energy conservation programs operating in small cities within rural areas;
- c) Explore the University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension Service’s interest in working with the City to develop such a program;
- d) Make contact with the State of Tennessee Department of Housing and Community Renewal to explore the availability of State and Federal resources to implement such a program; and
- e) Prepare a proposal for the development of a “demonstration” project to establish both the energy conservation and living wage employment potential of such a program.

Lead agency | Brownsville Energy Authority

Partnership | TVA, UT and TSU Cooperative Extension Service, MIT’s Emerald Cities Project.

MID TERM ACTION #3 | PLAY BALL BROWNSVILLE

Description | Play Ball Brownsville would involve the modest upgrading, marketing, and scheduling of the City’s baseball, softball, basketball, soccer and football fields for use by regional, sectional, and national tournaments. This effort could potentially bring thousands of young people and their families to the City, thereby making a significant contribution to the local economy. Once these families are in town, efforts could be made to encourage them to visit the City’s Minefield, Museums, and historic districts. In the future, these families could also be encouraged to use the soon-to-be developed Brownsville Greenway System to travel to the Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge.

Rationale | Brownsville, like many other communities in the Mid South, have expended significant amounts of public funds in constructing and maintaining athletic fields that are somewhat-underutilized. These fields and facilities represent public assets that could be used to meet the needs of regional, sectional, and national athletic organizations seeking appropriate venues that are well designed, built, maintained, and highly accessible. The availability of such facilities in Brownsville could make the hosting of tournaments an important addition to the City’s current economic base.

Steps |

- a) Work with local coaches, school officials, and park staff to develop an e complete inventory of indoor and outdoor facilities within the City;
- b) Research the current availability of these facilities for seasonal tournament use;
- c) Enlist the help of a work study student from a nearby college or university to develop a database of recreational, scholastic, and semi-professional men’s and women’s leagues organizing annual tournaments in our region;
- d) Contact the parks departments of towns that host such events in order to identify leagues that might be looking for facilities similar to those offered by Brownsville; and
- e) Hire an area college student, preferably work study eligible, with a combined interest in leisure studies and business marketing to develop and implement a marketing campaign to attract such leagues to Brownsville.

Lead agency | Brownsville/Haywood County Parks and Recreation Department

Partnership | Haywood County School District

MID-TERM #4: SOUTH INDUSTRIAL PARK

Description | Work with Haywood County to complete the necessary infrastructure improvement within the South Industrial Park in order begin recruiting firms to this important new economic development site.

Rationale | While Brownsville has been most effective than most small cities in Tennessee in recruiting new industrial firms; it still suffers from a relatively high unemployment and poverty rate.

Steps |

- a) Meet with Haywood County officials to determine the specific infrastructure improvements that are needed;
- b) Identify potential sources of funding to cover the costs of such public investments;
- c) Apply for available state and federal grants and loans available to cover such costs;
- d) Upon raising the needed funds, determine if the City and County could work together to complete the improvements or if one or more outside contractors are required to successfully complete the work;
- e) If the later is required, issue an RFP and select a contractor to complete the work; and,
- f) Following the completion of the work and the appropriate inspection by public agencies begin marketing the space to potential tenants of the industrial park targeting those who have strong environmental records, pay living wages, and have a reputation for being
- g) good corporate citizens.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Haywood County

LONG TERM ACTION #1 | 4-H HOME BASE

Description | The State Cooperative Education Service is currently planning to build a new regional 4-H Education and Training Center in West Tennessee. Brownsville would be an ideal location for such an educational facility. This 30,000 square foot facility would use state-of-the-art teaching technologies to introduce future 4-H leaders, staff, and volunteers to the fundamentals of child development, leadership education, and urban and rural ecology.

Rationale | Brownsville is located in the heart of one of the State's most active farming counties where many young people regularly participate in 4-H Programs. The presence of several nearby colleges and universities insure the availability of faculty to design and deliver the curriculum required by this new facility. The City has plenty of vacant lots and underutilized buildings that could be redeveloped to house this important new youth educational and recreational center.

Steps |

- a) Contact the leadership of 4-H at the University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University to learn more about the siting and building requirements for such a center;
- b) Convene a meeting with members of the House and Senate of the Tennessee State Legislature to inform them of Brownsville's interest in serving as the site for such a facility;
- c) Work with the City of Brownsville Planning staff to identify potential locations for such a facility within the City;
- d) Explore possible local individual, municipal, county, corporate, and philanthropic donations that might be available to support the construction and/or operation of such a center; and

- e) Prepare a full proposal to State 4-H officials, complete with preliminary building designs, and siting rationale, for a Brownsville site for a Regional 4-H training facility.

Lead agency | Haywood County 4-H Association and Haywood County Mayor

Partnership | City of Brownsville, University of Tennessee

LONG TERM ACTION #2 | COLLEGE ON COURT SQUARE (CCS)

Description | Significant elements of the local court system, formerly housed on Court Square, have been moved to a new Justice Department Complex located outside of downtown in the former Wal-Mart building. The Court House located in the middle of Court Square is now largely vacant. This historic building could be adapted to serve as a multi-university complex where nearby colleges and universities could offer in-person and on-line Advanced Placement classes, traditional and non-traditional undergraduate and graduate school offerings, as well as a variety of certificate programs for area youth as well as adult learners.

Rationale | An underutilized historic structure in the middle of the city center represents a potential asset to many observers. Adaptively re-used as a multi-university site offering courses to traditional and non-traditional students, the site can serve to activate the entire Court Square District with learners of all ages coming Downtown to acquire new knowledge and skills, thereby, improving the educational attainment levels in the community critical to workforce development and economic prosperity.

Steps |

- a) Recruit a volunteer structural engineer and preservation architect to assess the extent and costs of the rehabilitation required to transform this historic building into a suitable learning environment;
- b) Survey local and regional colleges and universities to determine their interest in offering ongoing classes at the multi-university center in Brownsville;
- c) Organize a field trip to Jonesport to learn more about their experience operating a similar adult education center;
- d) Explore existing state, federal, and foundation funding opportunities to identify the financial resources required to complete the renovation; and
- e) Submit the proposal in order to secure the funds needed to complete the renovation.

Lead agency | Brownsville/Haywood County Chamber of Commerce, Haywood County Mayor, Brownville PTA and HHS Alumni Association

Partnership | Haywood County Board of Education, City of Brownsville, Tennessee Downtowns Steering Committee

LONG TERM ACTION #3 | ECOTOURISM

Description | Create a brochure highlighting the City, County, and Region's many natural attractions, including the Hatchie River, Hatchie National Wildlife Reserve, the Haywood County Nature Reserve and the soon to be developed Brownsville Greenway.

Rationale | Increasing numbers of Americans are looking to spend part or all of their vacation time exploring natural habitats.

Ecotourism is currently the most rapidly growing segment of the leisure and hospitality industry. Brownsville is well positioned to take advantage of its many nearby natural areas and habitats to attract additional visitors and tourists to the community.

Steps |

- a) Work with Haywood County Parks and Recreation staff and representatives of the Hatchie National Wildlife Reserve to inventory potential ecotourism sites;
- b) Form a small working group within the Chamber to prepare an initial brochure and web content highlighting these resources;
- c) Work with Brownsville and Haywood County officials to distribute these materials through existing County and State tourism outlets;
- d) Enlist a local writer and photographer to prepare a short article highlighting these resources to be submitted in various forms to publications used by nature-oriented travelers.

Lead agency | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

Partnership | Haywood County Parks and Recreation and Hatchie National Wildlife Preserve

LONG TERM ACTION #4 | AGRITOURISM

Description | Collaborate with area farmers and local extension staff to create visitor venues for promoting and accessing agricultural-based activities and businesses, from cotton-production/ginning, nursery operations, fruit & nut orchards, honey & sorghum, vineyards and wineries, and smoked ham distribution.

Rationale | Agriculture remains a critical element of Brownsville and Haywood County’s economic and cultural life. This program would introduce long-time residents, visitors from nearby urban areas, and long-distance tourism to the remarkably diverse and vibrant agricultural economy of the City and County.

Steps |

- a) Meet with representatives of Haywood County Cooperative Extension, the University of Tennessee Extension, and Tennessee State University Extension to map the wide range of agricultural producers, food processors, and others participating in the region’s agricultural system;
- b) Invite representatives of these entities to an initial meeting to gauge their interest in participating in an Agritourism initiative;
- c) Work with those who are most interested to develop an informational brochure and web presentation on the City/County’s new Agritourism program;
- d) Consult state agriculture, economic development, and tourism offices to secure funds to design and promote the program;
- e) Organize a major public event to initiate the effort, operate it for one year, and then evaluate its effectiveness

Lead agency | Haywood County Cooperative Extension

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

8.3 | OBJECTIVE 3: CITYWIDE GREENWAY SYSTEM

Table of actions needed to connect the City’s major public spaces and facilities and historic districts by means of a proposed greenway system utilizing the existing floodplain, thereby, improving access to the city’s neighborhoods and community facilities and the Hatchie Wildlife Refuge, while mitigating storm water runoff and reducing the threat of future flood damage.

Near-Term (1-5 years)	Mid Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11-15 years)
<p>NT1 Let’s Move</p> <p>Establish a Greenway Conservancy to coordinate the planning and development of a circumferential greenway that will serve as a central feature of the City’s flood control system and an important regional recreational amenity.</p>	<p>MT1 Securing Resources</p> <p>Implementation of a multi-pronged development strategy focused on securing public and private resources to complete segments of the greenway</p>	<p>LT1 To the Hatchie</p> <p>Design and construct a public hiking and biking trail connecting the City’s proposed greenway to the Hatchie Wildlife Refuge.</p>
<p>NT2 Concept</p> <p>Complete conceptual drawings and construction documents related to the establishment of a fully-developed greenway around the City incorporating existing parks and a potential second passive park in the Sugar Creek area.</p>	<p>MT2 Securing Easements</p> <p>Secure land and utility easements needed to complete the greenway, as well as a public hiking and biking trail along Sugar Creek thereby strengthening the City’s connection to the Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge.</p>	<p>LT2 Link with other Trails</p> <p>Integrate the Brownsville greenway and Sugar Creek trails into the region’s rapidly expanding urban and rural trails and scenic byways network.</p>
<p>NT3 Retention Plan</p> <p>Complete a storm water retention plan and design reflecting international “best practices” for the entire City, focusing on flood prone sections of the City located around Sugar and Nixon Creeks</p>	<p>MT3 Trailhead Design</p> <p>Organize an international design competition for the creation of a “green” trailhead information, education, bike rental and repair facility.</p>	<p>LT3 Operation Bird-watch</p> <p>Every year the Audubon Society, in cooperation with Cornell University’s Ornithology Laboratory, mobilizes local volunteers to organize a Census of local bird life throughout the United States. Brownsville’s location in the middle of a major north/south avian flyway along parts of the Hatchie River Wildlife Refuge makes it an ideal location to engage in this low impact recreational activity.</p>

NEAR TERM ACTION #1 | LET'S MOVE

Description | Establish a Brownsville Greenway Conservancy, a public-private park planning and development non-profit, to assume overall responsibility for the design, development, and management of the greenway.

Rationale | In recent years, a number of cities have encouraged the formation of non-profit organizations to raise public and private funds to redevelop existing open space and public park assets or to create new recreational facilities. Nationally, one of the most successful examples of this type of is the Central Park Conservancy. In our region, the Shelby Farms Park Conservancy has generated millions of dollars to transform this regional park facility into a world-class public park with the assistance of famed landscape architect – James Corner of the University of Pennsylvania.

Steps |

- a) Research “best practices” in the use of non-profit conservancies to either establish or expand a public open space and/or park facility;
- b) Visit the Shelby Farms Conservancy to benefit from the experience of this nearby park development and maintenance organization;
- c) Solicit the assistance of a local attorney, with non-profit incorporation experience, to develop the charter, by-laws, and 501c3 application for the organization;

- d) Identify local civic leaders interested in participating in the further development of the greenways system to serve on the board of this new organization; and,
- e) Conduct an initial scan of potential funding resources to support the Conservancy’s activities.

Lead agency | Office of the Mayor

Partnership | Local neighborhood association leaders and Storm Water Management Board Members

NEAR TERM ACTION #2 | CONCEPT

Description | Develop the conceptual drawings to illustrate the vision for a greenway system that would circle the City in order to better manage storm water and provide Brownville residents and visitors with an important new recreational amenity. Over time, this greenway system would connect Brownsville residents to the Hatchie River by means of a southern extension that would be planned and built in the future.

Rationale | In recent years, significant numbers of Brownsville families, many poor and working class, have watched as flooding from violent summer storms have damaged and destroyed their homes and neighborhoods. This greenway would be created by expanding the public right along the historic drainage canal system that currently surrounds the City and making needed physical improvements to enable it to be used as an attractive and pleasant active and passive recreation area.

Steps |

- a) Secure current base maps for the area with natural features, topography, drainage patterns, flood plain boundaries, street designations and building footprints;
- b) Engage residents from the areas adjacent to the current storm water drainage canal in an inventory of local community assets and a discussion of preferred design features for the proposed greenway system;
- c) Conduct a quick review of the existing “best practices” literature regarding the re-naturalization of flood prone areas within urban communities;
- d) Prepare a set of alternative conceptual designs for Phase I of the greenway development process;
- e) Present these alternative proposals to local stakeholders to elicit their preferences; and,
- f) Execute a preliminary design plan for the Greenway and the Brownsville- to - Hatchie Extension.

Lead agency | Brownsville Public Works Department

Partnership | Haywood County Public Works Department

NEAR TERM ACTION #3 | RETENTION PLAN

Description | Prepare a detail storm water retention plan to reduce the volume of water flowing into the City’s existing storm water drainage system in order to reduce flooding especially in the Sugar and Nixon Creek areas of the City.

Rationale | Residents, property owners, and business owners in the neighborhoods adjacent to the City’s existing storm water drainage system live in near-constant fear that intense storm water events will exceed the current systems capacity resulting in serious property losses.

Steps |

- a) Conduct research on traditional and non-traditional approaches to improving storm water management in urban areas, with special attention being paid to the work of MIT Professor Anne Spirn, a landscape architect, who emphasizes above-ground, naturalistic solutions;
- b) Collect and study maps describing the city’s topography, flood history; and existing drainage systems;
- c) Contact local agencies involved in storm water management planning in Brownsville to learn about their future plans for the system; and,
- d) Engage an experienced landscape architecture and/or civil engineer to prepare a innovative approach to reducing the flow of storm water into the drainage system through a combination of traditional retention ponds and culverts and an “above ground” system utilizing plant materials and swales. Policies reducing the percentage of impervious surfaces within new developments will be aggressively pursued.

Lead agency | Brownsville Public Works Department

Partnership | Haywood County Engineering Department

MID TERM ACTION #1 | SECURING RESOURCES

Description | Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan and campaign to secure the resources needed to acquire the land and make the needed improvements to establish an attractive, functional, and intensively-used greenway to meet the future storm water and recreational needs of the Greater Brownsville community.

Rationale | In the context of more limited federal and state funding for local infrastructure projects, there is a need to develop innovative public/private funding strategies to pay for such projects. It is also advisable to look for opportunities to engage in multi-objective programming to secure funds normally not available for narrowly conceived storm water projects. In this project, local residents and leaders are seeking to use the greenway promote environmental education, health and wellness, and tourism while addressing the City’s storm water management problems. By addressing a number of planning needs through one project, additional funding sources may come available to cover the significant costs related to this project.

Steps |

- a) Consult local and regional planners engaged in storm water management projects to identify typical funding sources available for Tennessee projects;
- b) Investigate non-traditional approaches to storm water management presented as “best practices” in the literature to identify additional sources they have been able to access;
- c) Explore possible funding that might be available to the project in light of its significant commitment to environmental education;

- d) Research possible funding that might be available to the project given the important health and wellness contribution the project will make towards encouraging more active lifestyles among youth and adults;
- e) Probe possible funding sources that might be available to the project through state and federal Safe Routes to School Programs; and,
- f) Seek possible funding sources that might be available to the project given its potential contribution to agro-tourism, eco-tourism, and heritage tourism.

Lead agency | Office of the Mayor

Partnership | Haywood County Community Development Agency

MID TERM ACTION #2 | SECURING LAND AND EASEMENTS

Description | Haywood County, the City of Brownsville, the Haywood County School District and other public agencies have historically owned property adjacent to the existing storm water drainage system. Efforts should be made to secure either title or easements to their surplus properties and to do the same from those properties held in private hands to fully develop the circumferential greenway for flood control, recreational, and educational purposes.

Rationale | The successful development of the greenway requires considerable land acquisitions. A significant portion of the land to be acquired is within the flood zone and, therefore, can be acquired at affordable prices .

Steps |

- a) Review the conceptual design for the greenway and determine the land parcels required to fully realize its full potential;
- b) With the assistance of the County Assessor, identify which public and private entities own the land;
- c) With the assistance of a local realtor experienced with public land acquisition, approach these landowners regarding their interest in either selling the land or the rights to use it for public purpose through carefully constructed easements;
- d) Identify public and private sources available to support acquisition of land for flood control, park development, health and wellness, ecological education, and tourism purposes which the greenway will serve; and
- e) With the support of the City Attorney acquire the needed property to fully implement the greenway plan.

Lead agency | Office of the Mayor

Partnership | Haywood County

MID TERM ACTION #1 | TRAILHEAD DESIGN

Description | Organize an international design competition for the creation of a “green” trailhead information, education, bike rental and repair facility, if possible, at a location on the trail close to the Court Square Historic District.

Rationale | This facility would give local residents, visitors, and tourists another reason to come Downtown. It would serve as an education center for those interested in exploring the trail as well as the city’s other

Ecotourism and Agritourism sites. The building’s green building design would be an attraction and education site by itself.

Steps |

- a) Invite local architects, landscape architects, and civil engineers to a meeting to discuss their ideas regarding alternative approaches to designing a green “trail head” building and store;
- b) Elicit their participation in preparing an initial “call for submissions” for an international design competition for this structure;
- c) Approach local and regional business regarding their interest in underwriting the costs of the competition;
- d) Contact the local chapters of the American Institute of Architects, American Society of Landscape Architects, American Institute of Certified Planners, the Green Building Council, and the Urban Land Institute to seek their assistance in staffing the jury for the competition;
- e) Hold the competition exhibiting all of the submissions in a public place where local residents can record their perceptions of the work; and
- f) Announce the winners of the competition and commence the fundraising campaign to raise the funds needed to construct the building.

Lead agency | Brownsville Arts Council

Partnership | Haywood County Board of Realtors and the University of Memphis Department of Architecture

LONG TERM ACTION #1 | TO THE HATCHIE

Description | One of the City and County’s greatest assets is its proximity to the Hatchie National Wildlife Preserves. This plan proposes the development of a walking, hiking, and biking trail connecting the City of Brownsville and this remarkable recreational resource.

Rationale | While many of the local stakeholders we interviewed identified the Hatchie National Wildlife Preserve as an important community asset, they acknowledged that few residents currently take advantage of this resource. The design and completion of the Brownsville Greenway offers a perfect opportunity to provide an important physical connection to the Preserve by means of hiking and biking trails. This trail will encourage users of the greenway to travel to the Preserve; it will also encourage visitors to the Preserve to include a side trip to Brownsville in their vacation plans.

Steps |

- a) Work with local civil engineers, landscape architects, and planners to devise a preliminary conceptual design for an “extension” of the greenway connecting the City to the Hatchie;
- b) Collaborate with the Haywood County Tax Assessors’ Office to identify the property owners along the route;
- c) Approach these property owners requesting easements for a modest but well designed hiking/biking trail across their properties;
- d) Secure the funds to develop a preliminary design for the trail; and,
- e) Hire a landscape architecture firm to assist with the final design and implementation of the trail.

Lead agency | Brownsville Planning Commission

Partnership | Local naturalists and recreational enthusiasts

LONG TERM ACTION #2 | CONNECTING TO OTHER TRAILS

Description | Local officials and planners will work together to connect the soon-to-be built Brownsville Greenway and Hatchie Extension to the region’s rapidly growing regional hiking and biking trail system which is also connected to the ten-state Mississippi River Trail system.

Rationale | There is a growing awareness throughout the region of the importance of promoting more active lifestyles among children and adults in order to advance health and wellness. The recent investment in local hiking and biking trails is also being promoted to advance local economic development. Companies seeking new locations are increasingly asking about access to local trails and park facilities and health conscious tourists are increasingly seeking to incorporate hiking and biking activities into their vacation plans. This has led to several recent efforts to promote local trails within the Tri-State Memphis Region connecting these new public open spaces to larger regional and national trail networks.

Steps |

- a) Contact nearby counties to secure maps presenting their existing and planned hiking and biking trails;
- b) Examine the City and County’s existing greenway system to identify ways to connect local trails with this rapidly expanding network;
- c) In the development of new maps and promotional materials highlighting the new Brownsville Greenway incorporate these complimentary regional trails and encourage local trail users to take advantage of this system;

- d) Consider developing a Haywood County Trail Logo that can encourage users to consider using the entire local network; and,
- e) Install appropriate signage at key intersections where major local and regional trail systems intersect to encourage users to travel seamlessly from one to the other.

Lead agency | Brownsville Planning Commission

Partnership | Greater Memphis Greenway Alliance, Shelby Farms Conservancy, Mississippi River Corridor – Tennessee, and Mississippi River Trail

LONG TERM ACTION #3 | OPERATION BIRDWATCHING

Description | Each year the National Audubon Society, in cooperation with the Cornell University Ornithology Laboratory, conduct a national census of birdlife throughout the nation using local citizen volunteers. In light of Brownsville’s critical location on an important north/south avian flyway, local residents should be organized to participate in this important national research effort.

Rationale | Participation in the Audubon Wildlife Census will generate improved data on the City, County, and Region’s extraordinary birdlife. It will also introduce a wider range of residents and tourists to the beauty of the Brownsville Greenway. Finally, it will highlight the Greenway as an ideal location for a wide variety of passive and active recreation activities.

Steps |

- a) Determine the dates and local organizational requirements to participate in the upcoming Audubon/Cornell Survey;
- b) Contact local student, environmental, nature, and sportsmen organizations regarding their interest in participating in the census;
- c) Organize an information and training session for potential volunteers;
- d) Participate in the event providing data to the national effort; and,
- e) Evaluate the effectiveness of this first effort in order to identify ways to improve subsequent local efforts.

Lead agency | Local Chapters of the Audubon Society

Partnership | Sierra Club, Conservation League

8.4 | OBJECTIVE 4: PUBLIC EDUCATION, ARTS, AND CULTURE

Table of actions designed to strengthen the City’s competitive position within the region and nation through strategic investment in public education, arts, and culture

Near-Term (1-5 years)	Mid-Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11-15 years)
<p>NT1 Adults on the Move</p> <p>Expand the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) and General Education Diploma courses being offered for youth and adult learners.</p>	<p>MT1 Engagement Brownsville</p> <p>The City, in cooperation with the Haywood County Schools and the Brownsville Public Library, would work to contract with service-learning experts to formulate a developmental approach to getting school-age children directly engaged in ongoing public service, community-building and problem-solving efforts within the community.</p>	<p>LT1 Museum studies</p> <p>Encourage local businesses to come together to fund three Graduate Research Assistantships to assist the Haywood County Museum, Dunbar Cultural Center, and the Delta Heritage Museum in securing the services of three anthropology, education, and or museum studies students to assist with basic acquisition, interpretation, and educational tasks.</p>
<p>NT2 AP on the Advance</p> <p>Increase the number and variety of Advanced Placement courses available to Brownsville and Haywood County secondary students thereby improving their college admissions profiles and completion times.</p>	<p>MT2 Brownsville Leadership Network</p> <p>Work with area businesses, institutions, and agencies to develop internships that will allow students to acquire new knowledge and skills while strengthening their attachment to Brownsville thereby increasing the likelihood they will return to the City following their graduation from college.</p>	<p>LT2 The Greenway Ecological Education Center</p> <p>Open classroom and learning laboratory for Haywood County School children, located on the soon-to-be constructed greenway near the current high school. This will feature a teaching garden with organically grown items, an arboretum highlighting local species, a composting area, solar collection exhibit, and dry toilets.</p>
<p>NT3 Intercultural Brownsville</p> <p>Establish a Human Relations Council in Brownsville that will work with outside consultants to develop and implement a cultural awareness and diversity training program for local residents, leaders, and officials.</p>	<p>MT3 Brownsville Cultural Connection</p> <p>The establishment of curriculum development grants for area teachers to work with volunteers and staff from local museums to create new lessons that would involve local school children in working with the historical and cultural materials in these collections to deepen their understanding of local history and culture. In a similar vein, explore a program working with Library staff in the Genealogy Resource section to educate students in ancestry research as part of understanding their heritage.</p>	<p>LT3 The New Haywood County High school</p> <p>The design and construction of a new Haywood County High School near the center of the City using green design principles that will allow students to actively study sustainable approaches to architecture, engineering, and planning.</p>

Near-Term (1-5 years) – (cont.)	Mid-Term (6-10 years) – (cont.)	Long-Term (11-15 years) – (cont.)
<p>NT4 Brownsville/Haywood Higher Ed Center</p> <p>Address significant educational attainment needs with the establishment and expansion of higher education credit and technical offerings, and workforce training and adult education programs, by working with local community colleges, universities, and technology centers taking advantage of locally-owned education facilities, and distance learning technologies already in place.</p>		<p>LT4 College Hill Arts Camp</p> <p>Use the former campus of the Female Bible College for a 10-week summer arts, music, and drama camp for area and boarding junior and senior high school students.</p>
<p>NT5 Arts Central</p> <p>Work with local artists, the Arts Council, and the Chamber to host periodic art parties for various ages and groups offering painting and art workshops in a festive and fun interactive setting(s) on the Square/Main Street. Establish a venue to host exhibits of local art students, artists, and craftspersons.</p>		

NEAR TERM ACTION #1 | ADULTS ON THE MOVE

Description | Adults on the Move would be a cooperative adult education effort by the Haywood County Schools, the Brownsville Public Library, local religious congregations, and area businesses to significantly improve basic literacy and educational attainment levels among Brownsville adults. This effort would expand the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) courses for the area’s growing Spanish speaking population. It would also result in the development of new pre-GED and traditional GED courses offered at the library, in church basements, and at area workplaces.

Rationale | Currently, many Brownsville adults enter the job market at a competitive disadvantage due to weak literacy skills and low educational attainment levels. This fact makes it difficult for them to secure living wage jobs and to be as successful on the job as they would like to be. This situation also makes it difficult for adults who are parents to fully participate in their children’s educational journey. Finally, these educational limitations discourage would-be employers looking for a skilled workforce from considering Brownsville.

Steps |

- a) Convene a meeting of representatives of the Haywood County School Board, Public Library, area churches, and community-based businesses to determine their interest in participating in an ambitious adult literacy project;
- b) Contact faculty from area universities, especially the University of Tennessee and the University of Memphis, to request their assistance in identifying best practices in adult education;
- c) Seek local religious congregations, employers, and social service agencies assistance in surveying, in English and Spanish, their

- constituents to determine their interest in participating in such a program;
- d) Explore potential support for such a program through the local United Way, West Tennessee Catholic Charities, Cooperative Extension, Haywood County Schools, the State Department of Education, and the Community Service Block Grant Program; and
- e) Mobilize local retired teachers and other volunteers willing to participate in the program as teachers, mentors, and tutors.

Lead agency | Brownsville Public Library, Haywood County Schools

Partnership | Brownsville Ministerial Alliance

NEAR TERM ACTION #2 | AP ON THE ADVANCE

Description | This initiative would bring Haywood High School administrators together with the Vice-Presidents for Academic Affairs from area community colleges and public and private universities . The purpose of this meeting would be to explore strategies to increase the number of Advanced Placement courses offered to local high school students. This effort, if successfully undertaken, would enhance the intellectual life of HHS students while also improving their competitive position as future college applicants. The acquisition of Lambuth University as a local branch of the University of Memphis may provide a unique opportunity to offer AP courses through the traditional classroom method as well as on-line formats.

Rationale | Non-elite students at the high school complain of difficulties gaining access to more challenging AP courses. They feel as though they are being placed at a competitive disadvantage when it

comes to college applications by their lack of AP classes. They also wish to capture for their families the potential economic benefit of reducing the length of their college studies by a semester or two through the completion of a significant number of AP classes while they are in high school.

Steps |

- a) Meet with Haywood County Schools administrators to discuss their current AP course offerings and interest in expanding their catalogue of AP classes;
- b) Work with the Student Government Association at the high school to identify subject areas they would be interested in exploring through a variety of AP offerings;
- c) Convene a meeting with senior administrators involved in undergraduate education at the U of M. UT Martin, Union College, and other area higher educational institutions to identify areas they may be willing to offer instructional support for HHS’s AP efforts;
- d) Market the new course offerings; and
- e) Offer and evaluate student, faculty, and administrator satisfaction with the new AP classes.

Lead agency | Haywood High School

Partnership | Area higher educational institutions

NEAR TERM ACTION #3 | INTERCULTURAL BROWNSVILLE

Description | One of Brownsville’s greatest current strengths and advantages is its racial, cultural, and religious diversity. In a world that

is, according to leading urban theorist Leonie Sandercock, increasingly distinguished by its cultural diversity, especially in cities, Brownsville has the potential of preparing its residents to cross boundaries in school, the workplace, and in the community. While Brownsville has a mix of people, a significant portion of the population feels uncomfortable and unwilling to cross historic racial, ethnic, class, and religious boundaries. As a result, the civic and business core of the community continues to be dominated by Caucasians even though African Americans and Latinos/as comprise the majority of the population. Despite significant progress in addressing issues of tolerance and diversity, a significant portion of the City’s non-white population continues to experience subtle forms of discrimination. The challenge of assembling a diverse set of ministers as part of the Brownsville on the Move planning process highlighted the need to address the often subtle forms of racism that appear to persist within the community.

This initiative would involve the establishment of a Human Relations Council in Brownsville to work with outside consultants to develop and implement a cultural awareness and diversity training program. All municipal and school district employees would be required to complete this training. Staff from non-profit organizations receiving City funds would be asked to require their staff to do likewise. Business receiving City assistance in the form of business development grants, loans, infrastructure investments, and zoning consideration would be required to have their managers and workers complete the program. Finally, area churches would be strongly encouraged to offer this program to their staff, elders, and congregational members.

Rationale | Divisions among significant segments of any community creates serious economic, educational, and social problems. In

Brownsville, some young people do not feel it is safe to travel through all parts of the community and to associate with whomever they would like. They feel subtle pressure to maintain the same forms of separation they observe in their elders. These pressures represent serious distractions for them in their neighborhoods, at school, and at work. Their tendency to spend the majority of their time within their own cultural identity group denies them important inter-cultural and cross-cultural experiences that will prepare them for future success in school and in the workplace.

Steps |

- a) Establish a diverse Human Relations Council;
- b) Engage the services of an experienced diversity scholar/consultant who either works at a nearby university or has their own private practice;
- c) Seek the assistance of a nearby university-based anthropology department to conduct a series of focus groups with the City's major cultural and racial identity groups to identify the various forms of discrimination, bias, and bigotry that they experience and to ask them to articulate the major outcomes they would like to see emerge from such an education and training program within the City;
- d) Request the anthropology students and faculty to complete best-practices research on successful anti-racism education programs undertaken in other small Southern cities in the United States; and,
- e) Collaborate with the hired consultant to develop, pilot, and evaluate this program beginning with municipal employees.

Lead agency | Brownsville Ministerial Alliance

Partnership | Brownsville Branch of the NAACP and the University of Memphis Department of Anthropology

NEAR-TERM #4: BROWNSVILLE/HAYWOOD COUNTY HIGHER EDUCATION CENTER

Description | Address significant educational attainment needs with the establishment and expansion of higher education credit and technical offerings, and workforce training and adult education programs, by working with local community colleges, universities, and technology centers taking advantage of locally-owned education facilities, and distance learning technologies already in place.

Rationale | Many working class and middle income families are experiencing difficult economic times. This Center would enable the children of these families to take AP courses that might reduce the number of semesters they would have to spend at a residential college. Taking such courses might also improve their competitive position when they apply for school. Non-traditional workers seeks to improve their skill set in order to move ahead within their organization and career would benefit from the courses offered by such a center. Finally, the existence of such a center would be an attraction to companies considering a Brownsville location.

Steps |

- a) Survey the Human Resources Managers of local and regional firms regarding their continuing education needs and interests;
- b) survey local public and private high school principals regarding their students AP needs;
- c) Investigate the organization, programming, and operations of similar multi-university education centers, such as the one recently established in Jonesport;

- d) Research the interest of local community colleges, private colleges and universities, and nearby public universities in offering programming at such a site; and
- e) Identify an initial set of courses to be offered, market the program, and evaluate its effectiveness.

Lead agency | Haywood County Schools

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, area fraternal organizations

NEAR-TERM #5: ARTS CENTRAL

Description | A regular series of arts events hosted on Court Square organized by local artists, the Arts Council and the Chamber of Commerce.

Rationale | Brownsville is fortunate to be home to many talented craftsman and artists. However, there are very opportunities for local artists and craftsman to share their knowledge and skills with each other and to introduce their latest work to the broader community.

Steps |

- a) Work with local artists and the Arts Council to inventory local artists and craftsperson;
- b) Invite the leadership of these networks to plan a regular series of public arts event on Court Square;
- c) Seek the Chamber of Commerce in identify appropriate venues on or near Court Square for seasonal art exhibitions, demonstrations, and sales;

- d) Implement a cooperative marketing and advertising effort to promote these events; and,
- e) Assist this network in establishing a Brownsville Arts website to promote post-event sales of work by these artists and craftsman.

Lead agency | Brownsville Arts Council

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

MID TERM ACTION #1 | LEADERSHIP BROWNSVILLE

Description | This initiative would involve local teachers, school administrators, business persons, non-profit executives and municipal officials working together to develop a leadership development program for school age children based upon “best practices” in service-learning.

Rationale | Like many communities, the majority of those currently involved in local civic affairs are 55 years of age or older. A greater effort must be made to introduce young people to the extraordinary opportunities that exist to effect positive change in their community through public service.

Steps |

- a) Organize an initial meeting involving key city staff members and the University of Memphis’ Engaged Scholars Committee members to discuss the principles of service-learning and to identify possible age-appropriate projects that could be undertaken through such an initiative;

- b) Meet with officials from the Haywood County Schools to discuss their ongoing civic education and service-learning programs to gauge their interest in such an effort;
- c) Contact Tennessee and National Campus Compact organizations to secure their involvement in a half-day introduction to service learning for interested teachers, parents, non-profit managers, and City officials;
- d) Organize the training session;
- e) Initiate and evaluate a small number of service-learning courses on a pilot basis; and
- f) Appoint students who in the future emerge as interested and effective youth leaders where appropriate to committees and task forces charged with implementing Brownsville on the Move projects.

Lead agency | City Mayor’s office, Haywood County Mayor

Partnership | Haywood County Schools

MID TERM ACTION #2 | BROWNSVILLE LEADERSHIP NETWORK

Description | This project would recruit area business, non-profit, and governmental organizations to participate in a soon-to-be established paid summer internship program for Brownsville students attending college. This program would offer these young Brownsvillians opportunities to acquire new knowledge and skills through paid summer employment with inspired public and private sector leaders who would serve as their mentors. The interns would benefit from a weekly public issues seminar exploring economic and community development challenges facing the City. In small groups, they would be asked to prepare policy papers

exploring creative solutions to these problems. Finally, these interns would be assigned to assist with one or more Brownsville on the Move projects.

Rationale | One of the major challenges facing small to medium cities is the loss of so-called social capital represented by the movement of college-educated youth to other communities. This program seeks to connect the City’s best and brightest young people to exciting urban transformation efforts taking place within the community to increase the likelihood they return to Brownsville following their undergraduate and graduate education.

Steps |

- a) Reach out to leaders in municipal and county government, the local business community, and the City’s non-profit sector to identify managers willing to participate in the development of this program;
- b) Invite interested leaders to form a planning committee to work on the design, marketing, and management of this program;
- c) Research similar civic leadership programs being operated by other cities in our region;
- d) Work with the Haywood School District and area churches to identify young people who can be invited to participate in this program;
- e) Invite, screen, and admit young people into the program; and,
- f) Assign interns to assist with Brownsville on the Move Implementation activities.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

MID TERM ACTION #3 | BROWNSVILLE’S CULTURAL CONNECTION

Description | One of Brownsville’ most important assets is the number of well organized museums it has that celebrate various aspects of the City’s social life. The Haywood County, Dunbar-Carver, and Delta Heritage Museums, as well as the archives collection of the Brownsville Public Library represent significant learning resources for area students and teachers. The Brownsville Cultural Connection would provide a small number of curriculum development grants for area teachers to work with volunteers and staff from these institutions to create new lessons that would involve local school children in working with the historical and cultural materials in these collections to deepen their understanding of local history and culture.

Rationale | The three museums and library-based municipal records and local history collection represents a rich, but under-utilized learning resources, for local schools. Involving an increasing number of area children in the ongoing cultural document and interpretation efforts of these local institutions will, over time, generate renewed interest in the work of these impressive local institutions among adults within the community. This will broaden the membership, and hopefully, the financial base of these institutions allowing them to expand and deepen their efforts well into the future.

Steps |

- a) Encourage representatives of the City’s three local museums and library to meet to discuss their most successful work with school-age children and ideas for new programming;
- b) Catalogue the abovementioned activities and organize a meeting with representatives of the Haywood County Schools and area

- private academies to discuss possible history and social science programming at the museums;
- c) Seek School District and private sector support to underwrite a small number of pilot projects at the primary, middle, and secondary school levels;
 - d) Recruit and train teachers, parents, and volunteer docents willing to participate in this program; and
 - e) Initiate and evaluate this “day at the museum” program.

Lead agency | A joint committee composed of representatives from the three museums and the public library

Partnership | Haywood County Historic Society, University of Memphis Departments of Anthropology and History

LONG TERM ACTION #1 | MUSEUM STUDIES

Description | This initiative would mobilize local and regional businesses to fund the creation of three Graduate Research Assistantships to support the curatorial, marketing, outreach, and fundraising activities of the City’s three museums. These positions would support the work of anthropology, history, American studies, and communication students from area colleges and universities who would be asked to spend twenty hours a week supporting the education efforts of the Haywood County, Carver-Dunbar, and Delta Heritage Museums.

Rationale | These three museums represent a significant educational and tourism asset for Brownsville. Their continued growth and development are of vital importance to the community. A single graduate student interested in the social history of the region would

make a significant contribution to advancing the educational and cultural programming of these institutions. If the local community could cover the cost of a 9-month stipend (\$9,000) for each museum; nearby colleges and universities would be asked to match this commitment by offering participating students tuition and fee waivers to cover the cost of their studies.

Steps |

- a) Contact the local museums regarding their interest in initiating such an effort;
- b) Work with the museum staff to prepare three position descriptions and announcements;
- c) Approach local businesses, corporations, and foundations giving programs to secure their support for the program;
- d) Request matching tuition and fee waiver support from area colleges; and,
- e) Advertise, screen and appoint the Graduate Research Assistants.

Lead agency | Haywood County Museum

Partnership | Dunbar-Carver and Delta Heritage Museums

LONG TERM ACTION #2 | THE GREENWAY ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Description | The Greenway Outdoor Education Center would be an open classroom and learning laboratory for Haywood County School children. This facility would be located on the soon-to-be constructed greenway near the current high school and would feature a teaching garden with organically grown items, an arboretum highlighting local species, a

composting area, solar collection section, and dry toilets. This facility would be used to introduce young people to the joys of gardening and basics of ecological living.

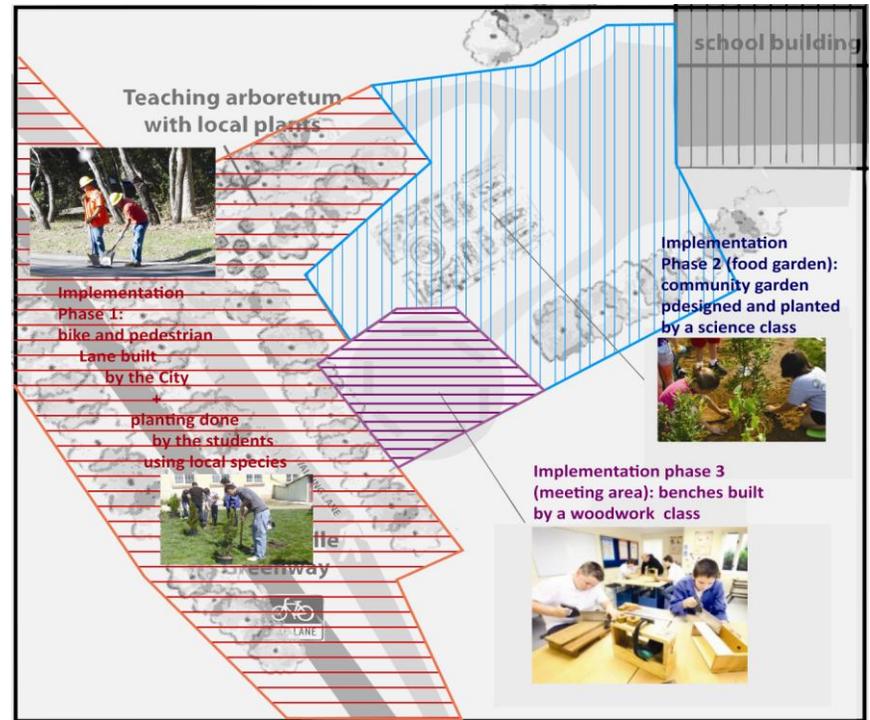
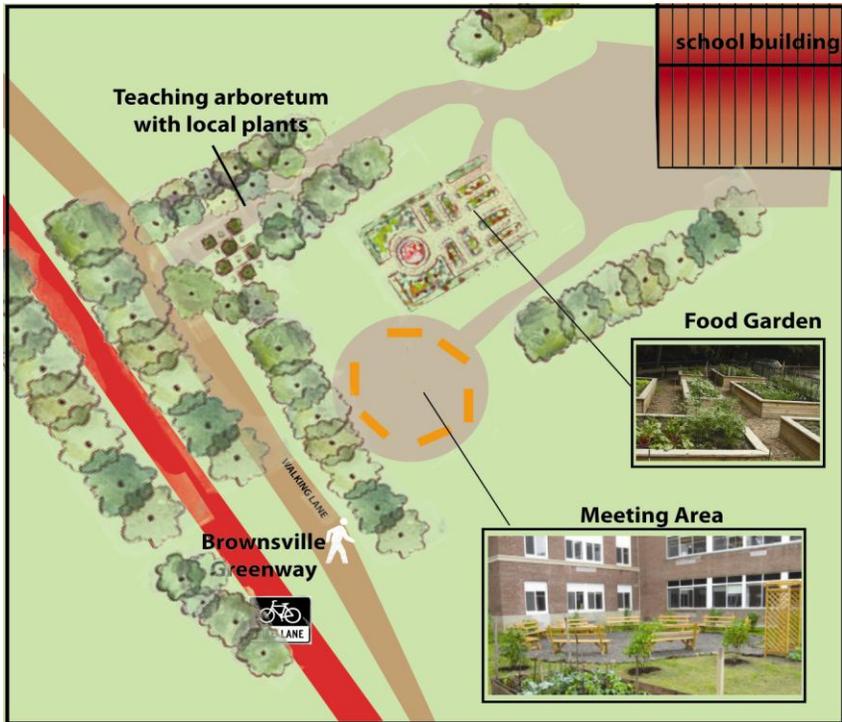
Rationale | This facility would be used to introduce young people to basic ecological principles, local plant materials and animal life, energy conservation techniques, and fundamentals of sustainable farming practices. Students would be encouraged to develop pilot/demonstration projects applying their new ecological understandings and skills to advance the development of the greenway and other residual open spaces throughout the City.

Steps |

- a) The County School District gives permission to school officials, teachers, and students to play an active leadership role in establishing the outdoor education center;
- b) An environmental and health/wellness education consultant should be hired to help local school officials and teachers develop a practice-oriented curriculum; the curriculum might be organized in areas: ecological design, physical construction, on-going management;
- c) A land-use survey of school-owned and public-owned open spaces along the Brownville greenway would be carried out by the City to determine the most suitable site/sites for this facility;
- d) Design phase, that can use a combination of Section Types illustrated at page 84;
- e) Implementation Phases 1, 2, and 3 (See following illustrations).

Lead Agency | Haywood County School District

Partnership | University of Tennessee and Tennessee State University Cooperative Extension Service.



Example of an outdoor classroom and its implementation phases

LONG TERM ACTION #3 | THE NEW HAYWOOD COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

Description | Students, parents, teachers, alumni, and local school officials have long discussed the need to build a new high school that more effectively supports the high school’s commitment to promoting excellence in teaching, learning, and community service. The authors of this plan encourage local school planners to resist the tendency to design and build the new high school as a suburban/rural campus at the edge of the city. Such a location would isolate the life and work of the campus from the community where the majority of their students live. A remote location requires the vast majority of students, teachers, staff, and administrators to commute to and from school in automobiles, which is expensive, time consuming and hurtful to the environment. An infill location near the heart of the City would allow the vast majority of the high school community to either walk or bike to school. It would also allow students and faculty to use the City as a learning lab where they could pursue a variety of service-learning projects benefiting the community. If designed using green building principles, the school could also be a learning lab for students and community members interested in deepening their knowledge of urban sustainability. Finally, if the school incorporated space for various community non-profits into the building, it could significantly strengthen the ties that exist between the school population and the rest of the community.

Rationale | In a period of peak oil prices we can no longer afford to locate important civic facilities, such as regional high schools, at the edge of the city. By designing the building with the latest of green design features the school becomes a dynamic example of sustainable living in the heart of the city. By incorporating important civic uses within the building, it fosters closer ties between the school and the broader community, and uses and revitalizes the existing infrastructure

Steps |

- a) Meet with local school planners and administrators to formulate a time-line for the design, siting, and construction of the new high school;
- b) Survey students, staff, faculty, parents, alumni, and school officials regarding their goals and preferences for a new building;
- c) Research best practices in green building and design, especially the West Philadelphia Green Block and School;
- d) Identify locations in and near the downtown as possible sites for school that maximize walking and riding to school; and,
- e) Ask the Memphis Regional Design Center to organize a national design competition for innovative green designs for the new school.

Lead agency | Haywood County School District

Partnership | Haywood County and City of Brownsville Planning Commissions, Memphis Regional Design Center, and the Greater Memphis Chapter of the Green Building Council

LONG TERM ACTION #4 | COLLEGE HILL ARTS CAMP

Description | College Hill Arts Camp would involve the use of the former campus of the Female Bible College for a 10-week summer arts, music, and drama camp for area and boarding junior and senior high school students. Area art teachers from local high schools, colleges, and universities, along with interested area artists, would be recruited to develop and deliver age-appropriate instruction in art, architecture, dance, drama, voice and performance. This camp would offer young people an exciting new place to develop their artistic skills while generating needed summer employment for area fine artists and supplemental revenue for area businesses.

Rationale | Brownsville is fortunate to be the home of many talented artists, musicians, singers, and architects who appear eager to share their gifts with the next generation and build upon its rich musical heritage. The College Hill facility is currently underutilized during the summer and could serve as an ideal location for a Summer Arts Camp for youth. This activity could make a significant contribution to the ongoing development of the Brownsville economy.

Steps |

- a) Survey the existing College Hill facilities and determine their summer availability (Also include nearby religious, school, and municipal facilities that could be used to supplement those on the Hill.);
- b) Identify inspired artists, musicians, singers, dancers, and architects who might be interested in working together to develop the curriculum for the camp;
- c) Secure a small seed grant from a local lending institution and/or the Chamber of Commerce to hire an experienced arts educator to revise the volunteer generated curriculum, formulate weekly schedules, identify and hire needed staff, and assume a leading role in marketing this exciting new youth education program;
- d) Work with local building and health department officials to secure the needed permits and licenses to operate the Camp; and
- e) Market this exciting new day and sleep-away camp to junior and senior high school students interested in the arts.

Lead Agency | Brownsville/Haywood Arts Council

Partnership | Haywood County Schools

8.5 | OBJECTIVE 5: TRANSPORTATION, ACCESS, & INFRASTRUCTURE

Table of actions designed to facilitate the efficient movement of people and goods in and through Brownsville by enhancing the City’s existing infrastructure and way-finding systems

Near-Term (1-5 years)	Mid Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11-15 years)
<p>NT1 Transportation Survey</p> <p>A transportation infrastructure survey will provide a detailed picture of the current state of roads, sidewalks, bike lanes and other improvements needed to insure residents multiple transportation options. This survey will feature a map showing the condition of all routes including sidewalks and other pedestrian and bike ways. The final product will include maps showing current conditions as well as gaps in the existing network to be prioritized as short-term improvements to be made.</p>	<p>MT4 Roundabout</p> <p>Work with TDOT to determine the most appropriate treatment of the intersection of the Bypass and Highway 76 (Anderson Avenue), including a roundabout to create an attractive gateway into the City, while providing an efficient and safe methods to move people and vehicles into the City.</p>	<p>LT1 Toward An Oil-Free Brownsville</p> <p>Collaborate with local utility executives and municipal engineers to establish sites for electric car charging/re-charging. Such a facility could engage those working in the City to consider hybrid or electric vehicles. It could also serve as another stop on the “green tour of Brownsville” developed to attract those visiting the State’s nearby Solar Farm and the Hatchie National Wildlife Reserve to the City.</p>
<p>NT2 Senior Dedicated Transit</p> <p>Continue to support and expand the SWTHRA dedicated vehicle program serving seniors and individuals with disabilities. Determine the feasibility for SWTHRA to establish regularly scheduled, fixed routes to meet seniors’ needs to travel to doctors, churches, stores, etc.</p>	<p>MT2 The Road to Jackson</p> <p>Explore the feasibility of establishing regular van or bus service from Brownsville to major employment centers in Jackson and Memphis.</p>	<p>LT2 Alternative Fuels Initiative</p> <p>Studying the extent to which the City, School District, and County could achieve energy efficiency and environmental benefits by changing the mix of fuels they use in their respective motor fleets.</p>
<p>NT3 Safe Routes to Schools</p> <p>Continue to seek TDOT Safe Routes to School Grants where applicable to encourage larger numbers of students, staff, and faculty to walk and bike to and from school.</p>	<p>MT3 Ride Sharing</p> <p>Survey those employed by local firms to determine if car-sharing and car-pooling could reduce local vehicle miles traveled reducing costs to the workers and the City while not reducing their convenience.</p>	

NEAR TERM ACTION #1 | TRANSPORTATION SURVEY

Description | The first step in improving Brownsville’s approach to the delivery of transportation services is to conduct a local infrastructure survey. The primary objective of this survey is to develop an accurate assessment of the current state of local roads, sidewalks, bike lanes and other improvements in order to offer Brownsville residents multiple travel options. This survey will feature a map showing all current sidewalks and other pedestrian and bike infrastructure elements and their condition. The final product will be maps indicating existing infrastructure that needs maintenance or improvement and places where the system needs to be upgraded or extended.

Rationale | A comprehensive transportation plan requires an understanding of current capacities and limitations. Such a plan should also identify needed short and long-term improvements. This information is needed to insure Brownsville residents transportation options that meet their needs in a peak-oil environment in which fuel costs are likely to continue to rise.

Steps |

- a) Secure the assistance of the Graduate Program in City and Reg. Planning at the University of Memphis to conduct a streets, sidewalks, and transportation infrastructure survey;
- b) Identify places where there might be ADA compliance issues;
- c) Develop a prioritized list of needed improvements;
- d) Budget for these improvements over time through a capital improvement plan; and.
- e) Periodically re-evaluate the survey by updating the data in light of improvements made, in part, to maximize connectivity between areas and optimum access to alternative transportation modes (such as to new greenway facilities to schools and golf cart routes)

Lead agency | Planning Department & Code Enforcement and County Engineering Departments

Partnership | Tennessee Department of Transportation; Local Colleges and Universities

NEAR TERM ACTION #2 | SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE HUMAN RESOURCES AGENCY TRANSIT DEDICATED ASSET TO BROWNSVILLE

Description | SWTHRA provides on demand transit for seniors and persons with disabilities. As a short-run solution, the City and County could explore with SWTHRA officials the possibility of operating one of their vehicles on a daily fixed route in Brownsville during the week in order to better serve seniors needs. An additional vehicle might be dedicated to make one scheduled round trip from the Senior Center, Sugar Creek and the Hospital to medical centers in Jackson.

Rationale | Southwest Tennessee Human Resources already provides on-demand transit services. If they have vehicles that are underutilized these could be re-assigned to provide fixed route services and dedicated services to locations inside the City rather than allowing them to be under-utilized.

Steps |

- a) Plan a fixed route based upon an analysis of existing trip generators and higher density residential locations;
- b) Locate a few strategic bus stops in visible places with signs;
- c) Publish the route and schedules; and
- d) Involve service coordinators at the senior center, Sugar Creek Residence and the Hospital to help refine schedules and stops.

Lead agency | City and Mayors

Partnership | SWTHRA, service coordinators, county senior center

NEAR TERM ACTION #3 | SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Description | Pursue State Department of Transportation Safe Routes to School Grants to encourage larger numbers of students, staff, and faculty to walk and bike to and from school.

Rationale | Research suggests that encouraging youth to walk or bike to and from school each day is one of the most effective strategies for encouraging them to adopt more active life styles as adults. This is also an effective strategy for encouraging young people to adopt a less auto-intensive life style that affords positive health and financial benefits for them. It will also serve to reduce road maintenance costs for the city and county while improving air quality levels.

Steps |

- a.) The City of Brownsville will write and submit a “Safe Route to School” Grant proposal to the State Department of Transportation this year; the grant proposal will address planning, education, and implementation;
- b.) Planning phase; identification of possible routes to be developed based upon local school enrollment information; identification of minor street maintenance and improvement needs; and training required to introduce young people to the benefits and requirements of safe walking and biking to school;
- c.) Implementation of educational programs (such as pedestrian/bicycle education, safety education, workshops, outreach programs, awareness campaigns, trainings for future Safe Route to School guards) and marketing;
- d.) Completion of minor infrastructure improvements: sidewalk enhancements (sidewalk repairs, filling in sidewalk gaps, cutting back trees and shrubs, adding curb cuts, and remarking crosswalks), traffic calming interventions, school zone signs, bicycle racks, bicycle lanes, trails, and crosswalks;
- e.) Introduction of incentives to encourage walking and biking to school (Walk to School Days, bicycle trains, walking school buses,

- walking clubs, mileage clubs, bicycle clubs) and enforcement measures (cameras, speed feedback signs, pedestrian-activated signals and countdowns, police overtime, crossing guards, crossing guard supplies, and speed enforcement); and,
- f.) Integrate school routes with the proposed Brownsville Green Trails wherever feasible.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Volunteers involved in the Neighborhood Watch Programs can be trained as crossing guards and become actively involved in the enforcement and encouragement phase.

MID TERM ACTION #1 | THE ANDERSON ROAD/BYPASS ROUNDABOUT

Description | Roundabouts are self-regulating traffic circles that are increasingly replacing traditional signalized intersections where two moderately to heavily travelled streets meet.

Rationale | Roundabouts have demonstrated their ability to move large flows of traffic with fewer serious accidents. They typically require a smaller right of way and do not require the ongoing costs related to the upkeep of signal equipment.. Since they do not require multiple signal poles and overhangs, many feel they offer a more aesthetically pleasing alternative to the traditional signalized intersection, especially at the entranceway to neighborhoods and communities.

Steps |

- a) Consult TDOT regarding their support for a possible roundabout to replace the current three-way, signalized stop at the intersection of Anderson Road and the Bypass;

- b) Study the existing maps for this intersection to determine the current right of way controlled by the City of Brownsville;
- c) Mobilize members of the City of Brownsville Public Works Department to conduct a traffic count at this intersection during off-peak and peak driving hours;
- d) Engage a traffic engineering and planning firm experienced with the use of Roundabouts, such as Kimberly-Horn Engineering, to evaluate the feasibility, produce the technical drawings, and estimate the costs of transforming this intersection through the use of a roundabout; and
- e) Seek capital funds to execute the redesign plan for this critical intersection in Brownsville.

Lead Agency | Brownsville Public Works Department

Partnership | Haywood County Public Works Department, Tennessee Department of Transportation

MID TERM ACTION #2 | RIDE TO WORK

Description | Conduct research to determine the feasibility of establishing either van or bus service from Brownsville to major employment centers in Jackson and Memphis

Rationale | This program has the potential of reducing transportation costs for long distance commuters while also reducing the number of local vehicle miles traveled which will have a positive impact on local air quality and road maintenance costs.

Steps |

- a) The Chamber of Commerce, in collaboration with the City of Brownsville, should undertake a survey of local residents regarding commuter patterns to determine under which

circumstances they would consider taking advantage of van or bus service to these two locations;

- b) The costs of operating different sized vehicles to address this need would be determined;
- c) Research into possible cost-sharing arrangements would be conducted (commuters and employers);
- d) An RFP would be issued to offer service, on a pilot basis,; and,
- e) The pilot experience would be evaluated and a permanent program would be considered if the data suggested its long-term viability.

Lead Agency | Brownsville Chamber of Commerce

Partnership | Larger Jackson and Memphis employers

MID TERM ACTION #3 | CAR-SHARING BROWNSVILLE

Description | Currently, a significant number of employees working at firms in the City’s industrial parks commute from outside the City. These long commutes represent a major expense for these workers. The impact of vehicle miles traveled by these workers also diminishes local road conditions and air quality. A car-sharing program could save workers considerable resources while making a positive contribution to the City’s air quality and road repair budget.

Rationale | Most economists predict increasing energy costs due to intensifying world-wide competition for non-renewal fossil fuels. A car-sharing program organized with the assistance of local human resource managers could reduce the fuel costs for local workers while having a positive impact upon the local environment and the City and County’s road maintenance budgets.

Steps |

- a) Contact the Human Resources Managers for the firms located within the City’s two industrial parks to ask them to consider working with the City in organizing a local car-sharing program;
- b) Prepare a simple chart showing weekly, monthly, and annual savings per worker for car-sharing arrangements involving different sized commuter groups;
- c) Organize a series of informational meetings to present the benefits of car-pooling to and from work;
- d) Assist local workers in forming manageable-sized groups to undertake their program on a pilot basis; and,
- e) Collaborate with local employers to identify low-cost incentives to prod workers into forming small car pooling groups.

Lead Agency | Businesses located within the City’s two industrial parks

Partnerships | A local civic/fraternal organization such as the Rotary, Kiwanis, or Lions Club

LONG TERM ACTION #1 | ANTICIPATING ELECTRIC CARS

Description | This program would involve representatives of the local electric cooperative and the City of Brownsville in establishing a select number of locations within the City where electric car owners can recharge their vehicles.

Rationale | More and more consumers are opting for either hybrid or all electric vehicles that require recharging. Brownsville would place itself in the forefront of West Tennessee’s ever-expanding auto-efficiency movement by providing strategically placed portals for people to recharge their vehicles.

Steps |

- a) Survey local residents to determine the number of hybrid and electric cars in use within the City;
- b) Convene a small focus group of hybrid and all electric car owners to determine their need and location preferences for electric recharging stations;
- c) Meet with representatives of Brownsville’s local electric cooperative to determine the feasibility and costs of establishing public re-charging sites;
- d) Explore state and Federal funding for these energy conservation facilities; and,
- e) Construct and evaluate the use and impact of these facilities on hybrid and all-electric car use.

Lead Agency | Brownsville Energy Authority

Partnerships | City of Brownsville

LONG TERM ACTION #2 | ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Description | Students from the Graduate Program in Urban Ecology and the Herff School of Engineering should be invited to assist the City, School District, and County in exploring the potential cost and benefits of using alternative energy sources such as: gasoline with ethanol, natural gas, biodiesel (such a reprocessed cooking oils) and electricity in the local public car and truck fleets to reduce the consumption of non-renewable energy sources.

Rationale| The overwhelming majority of serious economists predict higher fuel costs. At the same time, most climate scientists predict continued and potentially accelerating global climate change. This project has the potential of significantly reducing the public auto and truck fleets consumption of non-renewable fuels; thereby, generating

positive economic and environmental benefits for the City, its taxpayers, and residents.

Steps |

- a) Establish contact with environmental engineers at the University of Memphis to elicit their help in surveying current energy consumption by the City, School District, and County's car and truck fleets;
- b) Evaluate the current consumption of non-renewal fuels by local public auto and truck fleets;
- c) Identify alternative fuels capable of powering the City, School District, and County's auto and truck fleets;
- d) Determine the extent to which the current fleet could take advantage of energy savings alternative fuels; and,
- e) Estimate the potential benefits and costs of reducing the City, School District, and County's use of non-renewable fuels.

Lead Agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | University of Memphis Herff School of Engineering

8.6 | OBJECTIVE 6: QUALITY HOUSING CHOICE AND SECURITY

Table of actions aimed at insuring quality housing choice and security for current and future City residents through creative approaches to neighborhood preservation and enhancement, and expansion of the City’s housing stock.

Near-Term (1-5 years)	Mid -Term (6-10 years)	Long-Term (11-15 years)
<p>NT1 Christmas-in-April</p> <p>An initiative aimed at organizing local volunteers to undertake small repairs and cosmetic improvement projects for low to moderate income homeowners who cannot, for a variety of financial and physical reasons, complete these projects.</p>	<p>MT1 In Town Housing & Infill Initiative</p> <p>Re-zone Court Square District to encourage a variety of in-town housing developments reinforcing the economic and social function of the city center</p>	<p>LT1 Bradford Square Revisited</p> <p>Redevelop Bradford Square as a mixed-income, mixed-use, mixed-finance project to include housing, neighborhood-oriented retail services, including a grocery, and various educational and civic uses.</p>
<p>NT2 Senior Home Repair Program</p> <p>A fundraising effort to support home repairs for seniors that go beyond those covered by grants available through the Senior Home Repair Program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.</p>	<p>MT2 Employer assisted housing</p> <p>Establishment of an employer-assisted housing fund to encourage housing rehabilitation and new infill construction in targeted residential areas.</p>	<p>LT2 Brownsville Choice Neighborhood</p> <p>Explore replacement of the County’s most troubled family housing complexes by taking advantage of HUD’s newly-established Choice Neighborhood Planning and Implementation Grants.</p>
<p>NT3 Brownsville Turn Key Housing Initiative</p> <p>A program using Federal Community Development Block Grant and/or Neighborhood Stabilization Funds to acquire, rehabilitate, and retrofit currently foreclosed properties. These homes would subsequently be made available to individuals and families who have been displaced by the floods that devastated Brownsville in 2008 and 2010.</p>	<p>MT3 Brownsville Assisted Living Project</p> <p>Recruit a recognized non-profit senior housing provider to develop an assisted living complex offering a range of housing types and supportive services for middle and upper income seniors.</p>	<p>LT3 The Garden City at Brownsville</p> <p>Seek a developer interested in working with local residents and leaders to design and build a green housing project that promotes resource conservation, active lifestyles, and social integration, establishing links with traditional neighborhoods and the Brownsville Greenway</p>

Near-Term (1-5 years) – (cont.)	Mid -Term (6-10 years) – (cont.)	Long-Term (11-15 years) – (cont.)
<p>NT4 – Neighborhood Watch Program</p> <p>Further strengthen the existing neighborhood watch groups that have been organized in each of the City’s four historic wards. Provide these groups with advance community organizing, crime watching, and crime reporting training. Organize an annual Neighborhood Watch Conference to allow local groups to share best practice, offer training, and recognize outstanding service and accomplishment by individuals and groups.</p>	<p>MT4 Mid-Town Neighborhoods & Infill</p> <p>Initiate guidelines and programs for restoration, preservation, and character-appropriate in-fill in the traditional residential districts surrounding the town core. Explore the possible establishment of a preservation trust fund to assist residents in restoring architecturally significant houses in disrepair.</p>	

NEAR TERM ACTION #1 | CHRISTMAS-IN-APRIL

Description | Christmas-in-April is a national organization that shows local communities how to organize community volunteers and organizations to undertake small repairs and cosmetic improvement projects for low to moderate income homeowners who cannot, for a variety of financial and physical reason, complete these projects. Throughout the year, local volunteers carry out a wide variety of fundraising efforts to purchase the equipment and supplies needed to carry out these home improvement projects. These volunteers also comb the community to identify semi-skilled and skilled craftsman who can supervise the volunteers recruited to work on these initiatives. Local religious institutions and social service agencies help to identify and qualify those in need of assistance.

Rationale | Brownsville has many low and moderate income homeowners who appear to be struggling to maintain their properties during these economically trying times. The City also has a large number of civic-minded students, retirees, and church members who could be mobilized to establish a local affiliate of the Christmas in April Project in Haywood County. This effort would seek to make significant repairs to the homes of 20-30 struggling homeowners each year. Special attention would be given to those whose homes were damaged by either the 2008 or 2010 summer flooding.

Steps |

- a) Secure basic literature and affiliation materials from the National Office of the Christmas-in –April Program;
- b) Approach the Brownsville Ministerial Council and seek their co-sponsorship for the project asking them to assist in the following three ways: 1.) raising funds for materials and

equipment; 2.) mobilizing volunteers to assist in the completion of the repairs; and, 3.) identifying local families in need of such assistance.

- c) Develop a basic plan for raising the funds required to complete repairs to a minimum of 20 homes during Year I of the project;
- d) Contact local vocational-technical schools and trade unions to recruit skilled labor capable of supervising the work to be completed; and,
- e) Make needed repairs to the homes of 20 families during Year I of the project

Lead agency | A local fraternal organization such as the Masons, Elks, Moose, etc. An alternative would be a local of one of the AFL-CIO Building Trades Unions or Habitat for Humanity.

Partnership | Brownsville Ministerial Alliance

NEAR TERM ACTION #2 | SUPPLEMENTAL SENIOR HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

Description | Currently, many low-income seniors are eligible to participate in the Senior Home Repair Program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. However, many poor seniors live in homes requiring repairs that cannot be funded by the maximum grants available through this program. An effort needs to be made to raise additional funds from local public and private sources to provide additional resources for seniors in such structures. The same non-profit organizations administering the current program could administer this new supplemental senior repair program.

Rationale | Brownsville has many seniors living in older houses that are serviceable but require significant repairs. Currently, they cannot get many of these repairs made under the Federally-funded Senior Home Repair Program because they cost more than the typical grant provides. Creating a new fund to cover these additional expenses will improve the quality of shelter these seniors will enjoy. It will also prevent these structures from deteriorating beyond the point at which they can be cost effectively rehabilitated.

Steps |

- a) Contact local non-profits operating the Senior Home Repair Program to determine how many homes fall into this category;
- b) Develop an annual cost estimate for covering these additional senior home repair expenses;
- c) Explore individual, corporate, foundation, public, and pension fund sources for covering these unusually high senior housing costs;
- d) Prepare and submit proposals to secure these additional resources; and
- e) Work with current service providers to develop a stream-line approach to managing this supplemental program as part of the standard Senior Home Repair Program.

Lead agency | Rural Housing Alliance

Partnership | City of Brownsville

NEAR TERM ACTION #3 | BROWNSVILLE TURN KEY HOUSING INITIATIVE

Description |. Similar to other small and mid-sized cities, the Brownsville housing market has been negatively affected by several waves of foreclosures following the mortgage crisis of 2008. This program would use Federal Community Development Block Grant and/or Neighborhood Stabilization Funds to acquire currently vacant foreclosed properties from local lenders so they can be rehabilitated and retrofitted to be more energy efficient. This work would be sub-contracted by the City’s Community Development Block Grant Officer to either for-profit contractors or non-profit community development corporations. These homes would subsequently be made available to individuals and families who have been displaced by the serious floods that devastated Brownsville in 2008 and 2010.

Rationale | Vacant homes that have been foreclosed upon are problematic for a number of reasons. First, they are often occupied by those engaged in illegal activities that present both a public safety and fire protection challenge. Second, they tend to have a very negative impact on the property values and insurance premiums paid by adjacent property owners. Dozens of families have been permanently displaced from areas abutting the City’s existing drainage canals. These foreclosed units, following basic upgrades, represent an important alternative housing resource for flood-displaced families.

Steps |

- a) Secure an up-to-date listing of all foreclosed property in the City;
- b) Work with students in the University of Memphis’ Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning and Department of Architecture to identify foreclosed properties that may be good candidates for remodeling and re-housing;

- c) Collaborate with County and State housing officials to secure funding through the Community Development Block Grant and Neighborhood Stabilization Programs to complete needed repairs to these structures;
- d) Seek Request for Qualifications from area builders and sub-contractors who might be interested in completing these renovations; and
- e) Cooperate with local non-profit housing organizations and human service groups to identify families who could be helped by such a program.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Brownsville Housing Authority

NEAR- TERM ACTION #4 | ADVANCED NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

Description | Brownsville has a very effective network of ward-based Neighborhood Watch Groups. This proposal seeks to further enhance their effectiveness by organizing a campaign to expand the number of residents participating in these organizations, providing advanced skills training, and organizing an annual awards program to recognize the extraordinary work being carried out by members of this network.

Rationale | Neighborhood Watch has proven to be a highly effective community-building, problem-solving, and crime prevention structure. This proposal seeks to enhance the effectiveness of an already existing community-based network by expanding their membership base, enhancing the skills of its members and leader, improving the level of cooperation their members receive from local

law enforcement agencies, and recognizing the many valuable contributions of its members.

Steps |

- a) Meet with the leaders of the existing Neighborhood Watch network to elicit their views regarding the support they need to enhance their effectiveness;
- b) Organize a short-term public interest media campaign using, traditional and social media methods, to inform local residents of the importance of these groups and to encourage them to join their local neighborhood watch affiliate;
- c) Survey the members and leaders of these groups to identify their community organizing and development training interests and needs;
- d) Work with local agencies to design and deliver a comprehensive neighborhood watch training program; and,
- e) Evaluate the effectiveness of this training program; adjusting it on the basis of regular participant feedback.

Lead agency | Planning Commission

Partnership | United Way

MID TERM ACTION #1 | IN TOWN HOUSING INITIATIVE

Description | This project will require the City to amend its existing zoning ordinance that currently restricts land uses within the Court Square Historic District to commercial and civic uses to include a variety of housing uses. The City might also consider creating a downtown overlay district that would provide modest zoning bonuses

and property tax breaks to building owners who redevelop vacant upper level floors or back lot/alley parcels to provide additional housing. Special effort would be made to provide additional housing units for seniors and persons with disabilities within the Downtown where there are ample opportunities for social interaction and excellent access to retail, public, and non-profit services. These additional units, when completed will serve to further animate the street life of Downtown making the city core more lively, welcoming, and economically viable.

Rationale | One of the best ways to support the redevelopment of downtown areas is to increase the residential population through the addition of new housing units either through conversion of existing industrial or commercial uses or by means of new construction. Adding residential housing units in the downtown core would enhance the Court Square Historic District's street life while supporting local businesses.

Steps |

- a) Conduct a survey of downtown land uses to identify the sites and buildings that might be appropriate candidates for conversion to residential uses;
- b) Explore the possibility of creating a downtown overlay district that would add residential uses as a permitted for downtown use;
- c) Contact the University of Memphis Department of Architecture and the Memphis Regional Design Center to request their assistance in developing prototypical designs for the creation of inspired downtown housing options;
- d) Investigate options for providing tax breaks for property owners and developers willing to invest in the creation of

downtown housing within the Court Square Historic District; and

- e) Research options for creating special needs housing for seniors and people with disabilities within the historic district.
- f) Conduct survey of residential areas adjoining the downtown business district and assess potential for historic zoning overlay and the appropriate types of infill development

Lead agency | City of Brownsville

Partnership | Haywood County Housing Authority, Brownsville Planning Commission, and Historic Zoning Commission

MID TERM ACTION #2 | EMPLOYER ASSISTED HOUSING

Description | This program would encourage local employers to provide basic mortgage assistance to workers willing to purchase homes within the City. By depositing a modest amount of funds with a local lending institution in the form of a loan guarantee account their workers would be eligible for no down payment loans at lower interest rates enabling many who might otherwise been unable to qualify for such loans to do so. This program would be of great potential value to these workers by enabling them to capture the benefits of homeownership. It would be of benefit to area firms by reducing the commuting times and costs of their workers thereby enhancing their attendance and performance records. It would also be of value to Brownsville by helping it address its vacant housing problem, expanding the City's tax base, and increasing the customer base for area firms. It would also help the town by increasing the

number of individuals available to become members and leaders within the City’s civic, cultural, fraternal and religious communities.

Rationale | Like many small and mid-sized communities Brownsville has a growing problem with housing foreclosures and vacancies. An Employer Assisted Housing Program targeted to existing and future firms located in the City’s two industrial parks could help the City address this problem. These homes would be occupied by local workers, most of whom currently rent or own housing outside of the City. This program would help stabilize the City’s housing market and improve its tax base. It would also further strengthen the City’s civic life by bringing new families into town. Over time, it would contribute to the productivity of area firms by bringing their workforce closer to their job sites. This will improve attendance and work productivity; it will also reduce the number of vehicle miles driven each year by these workers which is of benefit to them and the City where road costs and air quality issues are important policy considerations.

Steps |

- a) Review the scholarship on Employer Assisted Housing generated by Richard Fulardo of the Institute for Policy Studies;
- b) Prepare a short policy paper explaining the potential value of such a program to local workers, firms, and the City;
- c) Work with the Memphis Branch of the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank to host a meeting for area lenders on Employer Assisted Housing Programs;
- d) Meet with interested lenders to discuss how such a program would work; and,
- e) Approach area corporations, especially those located in the City’s existing and the planned State-sponsored Super Site to elicit their interest in and commitment to the program.

Lead Agency | City of Brownville

Partnership | Chamber of Commerce

MID TERM ACTION #3 | BROWNSVILLE ASSISTED LIVING PROJECT for RETIREES & SENIORS

Description | The City of Brownsville, similar to many small and medium-sized Southern towns, has a high percentage of residents over the age of 65 years of age. The portion of the City’s population over the age of 65 years will dramatically increase during the coming 20 years with the impending retirement of the “Baby Boom” generation and the return of many Southern-born African Americans who moved to the North and are returning home in record numbers, for familial and economic reasons. Brownsville offers many qualities that seniors appreciate, for example, it is a relatively low-cost of living area; it is also quiet, peaceful, and safe. As a community, it offers excellent health care, has many historical and cultural amenities, is home to many churches, and is walkable. These factors offer Brownsville the opportunity to compete for a portion of the retiring Baby Boomers who are looking for a comfortable retirement location as well as a portion of the African-American community that is returning to the South. The development of a well-designed and managed assisted living complex for seniors would reinforce Brownsville’s reputation as a good place to retire. Developing such a complex in or near the Court Square where seniors could walk to stores, the doctor, the library, area schools, athletic fields, and the soon-to-be developed greenway represents an excellent economic and community development opportunity for the City.

Rationale | The City has a significant senior population; a portion of which will need to consider moving into smaller and more manageable housing units with services. The City’s senior citizen population will continue to

grow with the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation and the return of many African Americans who moved North to this region. Today's seniors tend to have financial resources, be in better physical shape, and wish to be physically, intellectually, and civically active. They represent a terrific new resource for communities seeking to stabilize and/or increase their populations. Since they do not have school-age children they tend not to tax the resource base of the communities where they relocate to age in place.

Steps |

- a) A small group of interested seniors might be convened to examine “best practices” in assisted living developments;
- b) The Area Agency on Aging should be approached to participate in the completion of a feasibility and development plan for the project;
- c) Non and for-profit firms that operate such facilities, especially those affiliated with national religious bodies that have local congregations in Brownsville, should be contacted to explore their future business plans, siting criteria, and potential interest in a Brownsville location;
- d) The University of Memphis Public Administration and Non-Profit Management Program should be approached to assist the City in completing a feasibility report, marketing strategy, and business plan for the development of a successful assisted-living facility in the City; and,
- e) Local investors should be approached and a request for proposals developed that could be circulated to industry leaders whose agencies and firms that might be interested in the project.

Lead agency | A taskforce of interested seniors, pastors, and senior service professionals convened by the Mayor and Planning Director who would work together, with University assistance, to plan and execute this project.

Partnership | The Graduate Programs in Public Administration and Non-Profit Management and City and Regional Planning should be recruited to assist in this planning, design, development, and evaluation of this project

MID TERM ACTION #4 | MID-TOWN NEIGHBORHOODS AND INFILL

Description | Initiate guidelines and programs for restoration, preservation, and character-appropriate in-fill in the traditional residential districts surrounding the town core. Explore the possible establishment of a preservation trust fund to assist residents in restoring architecturally significant houses in disrepair.

Rationale | There are small pockets of deterioration, vacancies, and abandonment in the four historic residential wards that comprise the heart of the City. Steps need to be taken restore these area which are, for the most part, attractive and highly desirable residential area.

Steps |

- a) Work with the Brownsville building Inspector to identify vacant land, abandoned properties, and deteriorated residential structures in these areas;
- b) Contact the Haywood County Tax Assessor to confirm the ownership and mortgagor of these properties;
- c) Contact these owners to discuss their plans for restoring these properties;
- d) In cases where the owner is not in a position to restore the property explore ways of using an existing or proposed Land Trust to acquire the properties for redevelop and/or resale or rent;

- e) Seek Community Development, Neighborhood Stabilization or Tax Credit funding to rehabilitate these properties and return them to the market.

Lead Agency | Haywood County Housing Authority

Partnership | Habitat for Humanity and United Housin

LONG TERM ACTION #1 | BRADFORD SQUARE REVISITED

Description | This project would involve the re-invention of the Bradford Square as a mixed-income, mixed-use, and mixed-finance community district featuring a mix of housing types, neighborhood-oriented retail, district and regional entertainment venues, public education facilities and civic buildings. This development would address a range of current and future resident needs through a mixed-use approach to place-making that reflects “best practices” in Traditional Neighborhood and New Urbanist design. This redeveloped district would strive to provide a wide range of services individuals and families require in a beautifully redesigned district that is architecturally compelling, walkable and sustainable. The district would offer bike facilities, zip cars for people to share for more infrequent forays outside of the neighborhood, stations for electric car re-charging, and natural approaches to storm water management.

Rationale | Bradford Square has been an important sub-center within the City for many years offering nearby residents a wide variety of retail and entertainment services. In recent years, the Square has had to compete with a growing number of nearby malls and highway-oriented commercial strips. As a result, the Square has begun to show

its age causing its customer base to shrink resulting in a number of commercial vacancies. Demonstrating the viability of a neighborhood-oriented commercial and civic center serving a number of nearby residential areas would be an important accomplishment and asset for Brownsville in this period of peak oil prices.

Steps |

- a) Work with the University of Memphis Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning to conduct a land use, building condition, and site maintenance survey of the area;
- b) Convene a preliminary focus group with business owners and neighborhood resident to elicit their assessment of existing conditions and future development opportunities;
- c) Collaborate with the UM graduate planning students to review best practices in mixed-use neighborhood redevelopment;
- d) Recruit either the University of Memphis Department of Architecture or the Memphis Regional Design Center to prepare a preliminary redevelopment plan for the district; and
- e) Prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP) for private and non-profit developers to undertake the required market study, feasibility analysis, and development planning for the project.

Lead agency | City of Brownsville, Brownsville Planning Commission

Partnership | Memphis Regional Design Center

LONG TERM ACTION #2 | BROWNSVILLE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

Description | This project would involve residents of the City’s most challenged public housing project, the Haywood County Housing Authority, and the City of Brownsville, working with the U of M Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning, in preparing an application for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s newly-launched Choice Neighborhoods Program to transform the neighborhood where the City’s largest family housing complex is located. The Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant, if secured, would provide the City with \$250,000 to involve local stakeholders in a highly participatory process of neighborhood revitalization planning. Success with this planning grant would position Brownsville to receive a much larger Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant to execute the major improvements featured in their initial planning grant.

Rationale | Cuts in federal funding for major system upgrades in public housing has resulted in their deterioration and partial abandonment throughout the United States. The deterioration in these affordable housing units has, in turn, de-stabilized the residential neighborhoods where they are located. HUD’s new Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants offers local communities the opportunity to redesign these communities in a holistic manner so as to improve the quality of life for future residents. A Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant from HUD would offer Brownsville the opportunity to carefully examine and plan, in a thoughtful manner, the redevelopment of its largest complex located on the main artery leading from the Interstate into the city center.

Steps |

- a) Confirm the availability of future Choice Neighborhood funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development;
- b) Encourage the Haywood County Housing Authority to work with the City in preparing a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Application;
- c) Invite the University of Memphis’ Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning to assist in the preparation of the Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant Application;
- d) Convene a meeting of public housing tenants and their residential neighbors to discuss the basic outline and content for the Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Application. Invite interested residents to participate in an ongoing Steering Committee for the project; and
- e) Work with local non-profits to identify in-kind services they can offer to increase the application’s probability of success.

Lead Agency | Brownsville Housing Authority

Partnership | City of Brownsville

LONG TERM ACTION #3 | THE GARDEN CITY AT BROWNSVILLE

Description | This project would result in the development of a new residential community reflecting advanced concepts and practices in sustainable planning, design, and development. This project, similar to Ebenezer Howard’s original planned communities of Letchworth Village and Welwyn outside of London, would be a community offering residents local employment opportunities, a range of housing

types, as well as numerous active and passive recreation opportunities, in a setting that preserves as much of the area’s natural landscape as possible.

The community would feature a range of modest-sized homes elegantly designed using open floor plans and the latest in green building concepts. The homes would be clustered in a manner, similar to Sunnyside Gardens designed by Clarence Stein, in which individual families would have modest yards but would share in the use of ample common spaces. The community would feature a community building as well as shared recreational facilities. Energy conscious siting, super insulation, and passive solar techniques will be used to minimize energy consumption. Rainwater will be captured for watering local plant life. Grey water will be processed on site through appropriately designed natural filters and ponds. Sidewalks and shade trees will be provided as well as bike paths to discourage unnecessary auto trips. The internal sidewalk and bike trail system will be connected the City’s existing pedestrian and bike trails to maximize connectivity.

Plant materials will be selected for their beauty, minimum water consumption, and modest heights (reducing the need for mowing). All yard wastes will be directed to a community composting site where new soils can be generated to enhance the fertility of the land within the community’s common garden and planting areas.

Rationale | The decline in the percentage of households comprised of two or more adult wage earners, the ongoing increase in energy costs, the uncertain nature of the economy, and growing awareness regarding global climate change has created a market for modest-sized homes built in an energy conscious manner within our region. Brownsville could further distinguish itself from other smaller cities in West Tennessee by successfully developing such a new community to

address the needs of environmentally conscious young couples just starting out and empty-nester seniors looking to right-size their housing.

Steps |

- a) Identify alternative sites to accommodate a two hundred unit green sub-division;
- b) Complete “best practices” research regarding the most successful green communities built within the past five years in the South;
- c) Sponsor a international competition for architects, landscape architects, planners, and engineers committed to developing a workable model for green housing for a small American city;
- d) Approach the State to elicit their help in identifying a corporate sponsor interested in underwriting the costs of the competition; and
- e) Use Community Development Block Grant funds to acquire the land and cover a portion of the infrastructure costs before issuing an RFP to private and non-profit developers interested in designing and building Brownsville’s version of Frank Lloyd Wright’s USONIAN homes.

Lead Agency | Green Building Council

Partnership | Urban Land Institute, American Institute of Certified Planners, American Institute of Architects, and American Society of Landscape Architects, and the Green Building Council