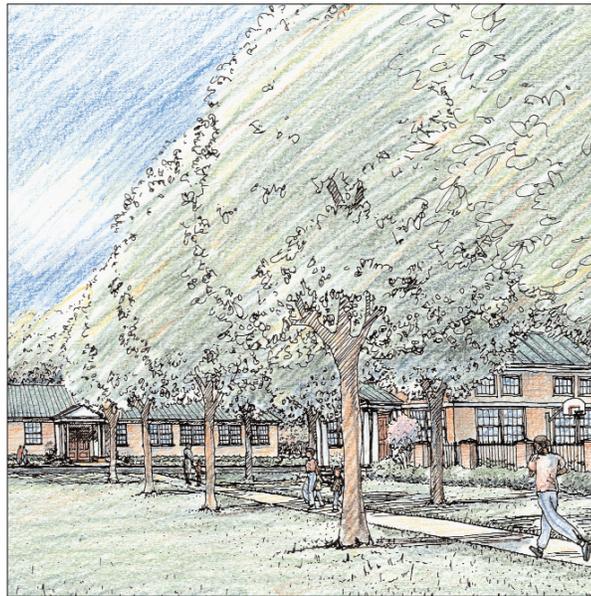


East Washington Street Neighborhoods Initiatives Plan



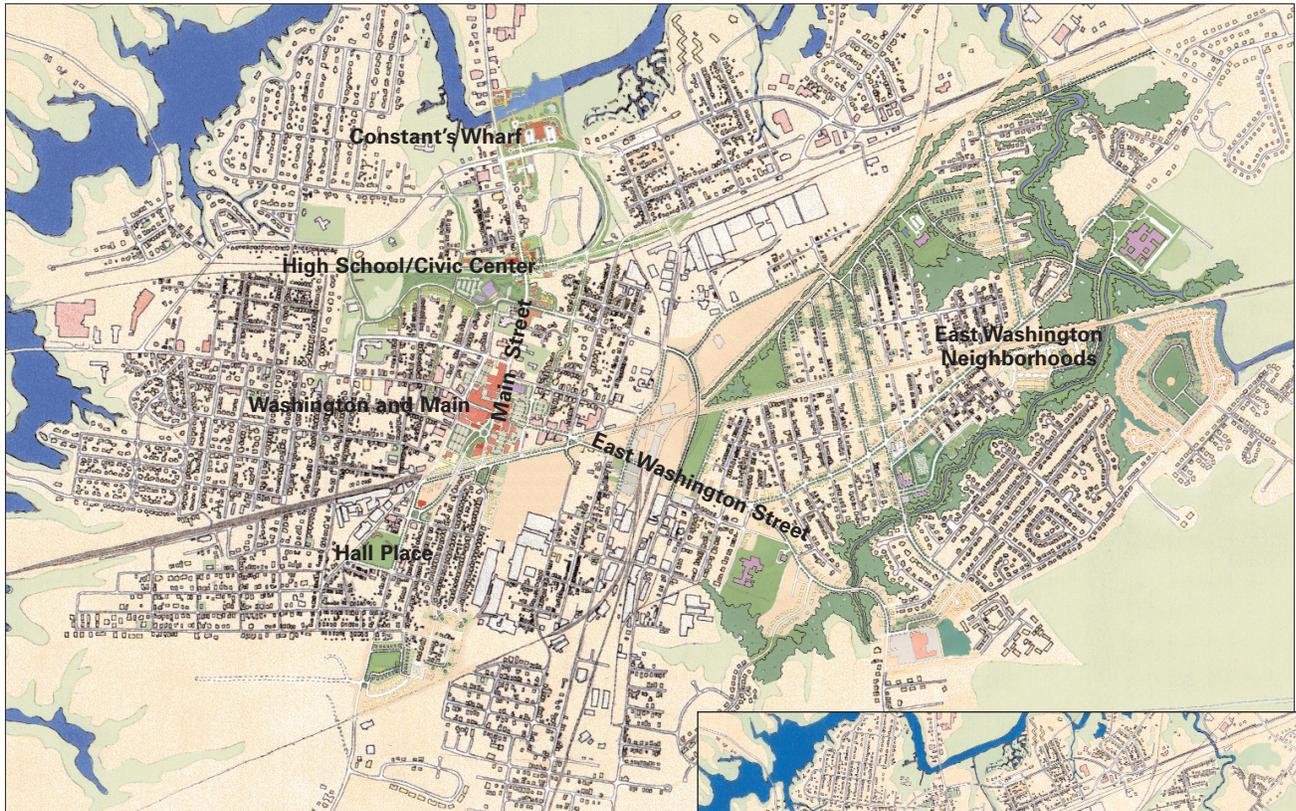
Prepared for
The City of Suffolk

by
Urban Design Associates (UDA)

May 1999

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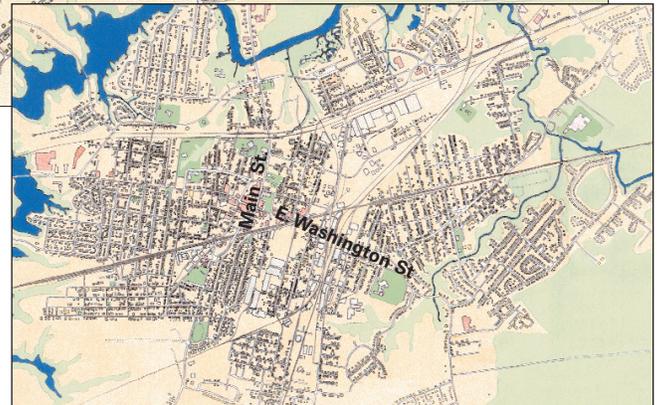
The Suffolk Downtown Vision Plan—Proposed

The Neighborhood Planning Process

This Plan for the East Washington Street Neighborhoods is part of the City's ongoing Downtown Initiatives Planning Process. The process began in 1997 when Urban Design Associates (UDA) was hired by the City to create a plan for the historic Downtown area as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Working with the Downtown Steering Committee, UDA created a plan that focused on repairing the fractured urban pattern

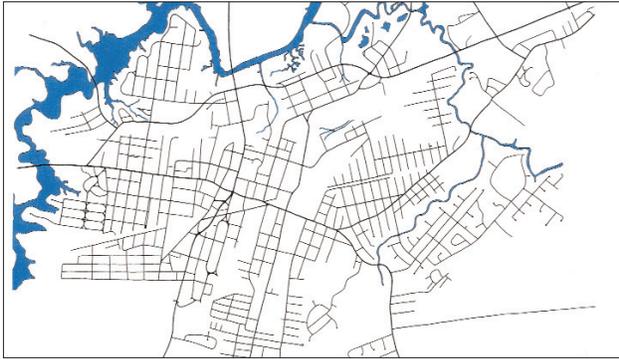
through the creation of an interconnected street network. The second phase of the plan focused on three key initiative areas: Constant's Wharf, the Old High School Area, and the commercial core at the intersection of Main and Washington Streets.

This current phase of the planning process continues with residential neighborhood initiative plans. The underlying premise is that for overall

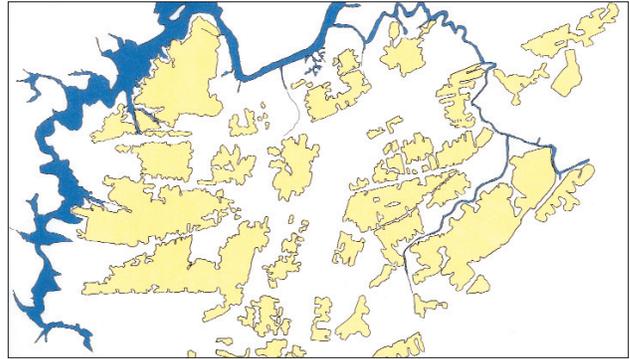


Downtown Plan—Existing Conditions

revitalization to occur, it is necessary to revitalize and strengthen the surrounding residential neighborhoods. In the East Washington Street area, the strength and commitment that residents have shown in their efforts to revitalize their neighborhoods will ultimately benefit not only the East Washington corridor, but the entire downtown core.



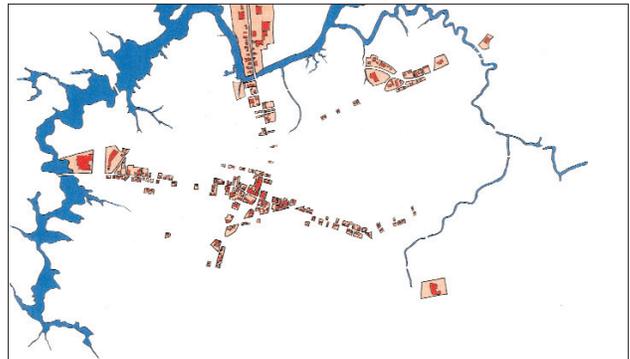
Streets: Suffolk's downtown street network is disconnected, forcing vehicles to use a small number of through-streets and causing major traffic congestion.



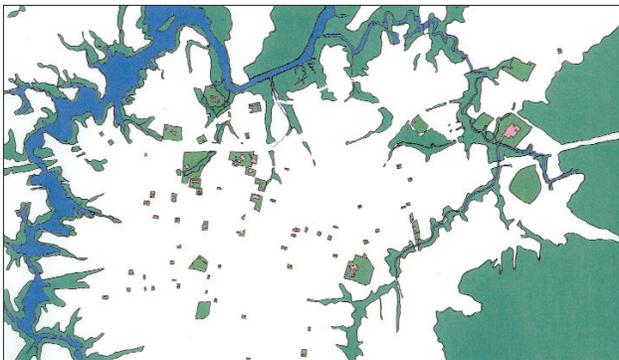
Settlement Pattern: Downtown Suffolk is made up of a series of isolated neighborhoods.



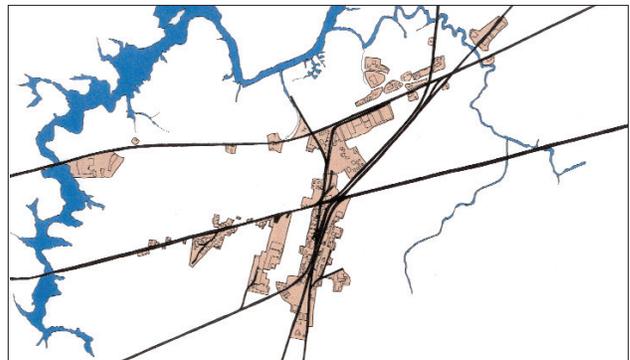
Figure/Ground: The building pattern is typical of older cities with large commercial and warehouse buildings ringed by clusters of small, residential scale buildings.



Commercial: Commercial development is located primarily along three major streets: Washington, Main, and Constance.



Parks, Institutions and Open Space: The open space is dominated by the Nansemond River system and Shingle Creek which encircle the downtown on three sides



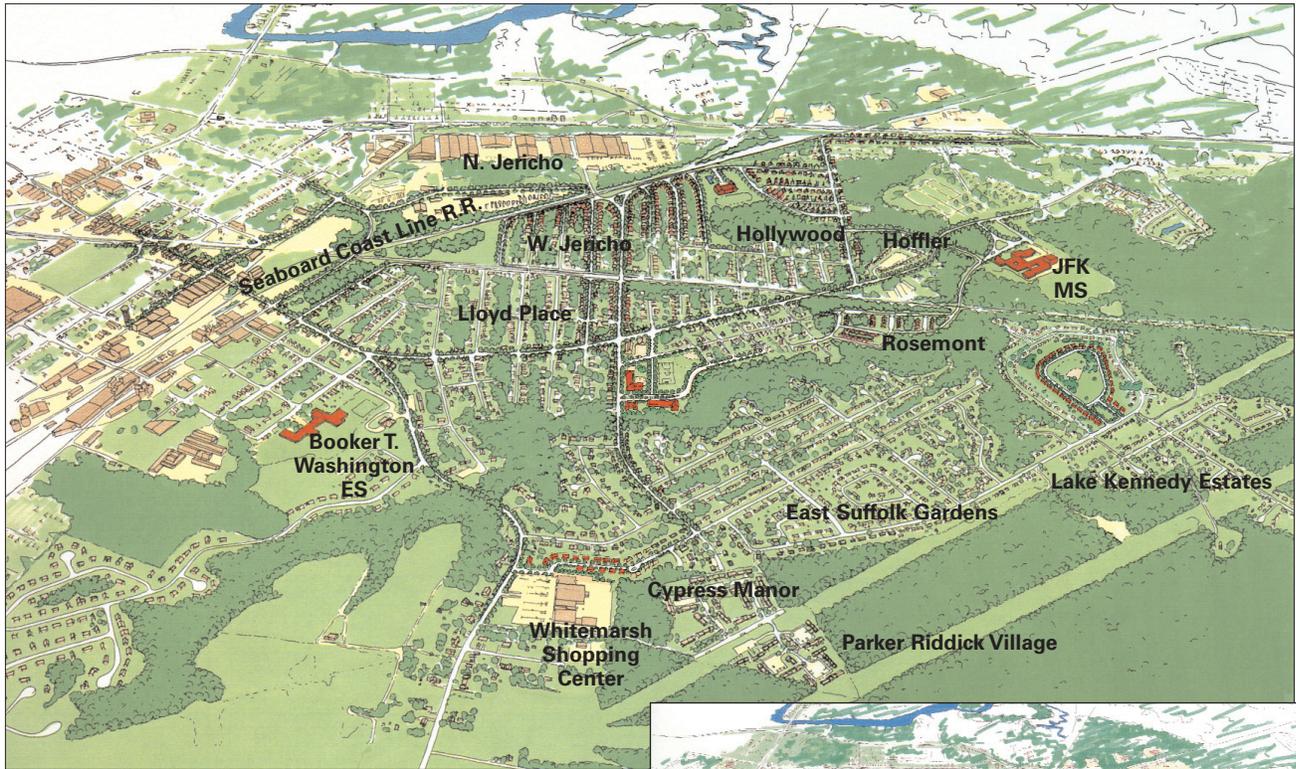
Industry & Railways: The four major railway lines which crisscross the downtown area serve the remaining industries, but act as a major barrier to road traffic.

Constraints

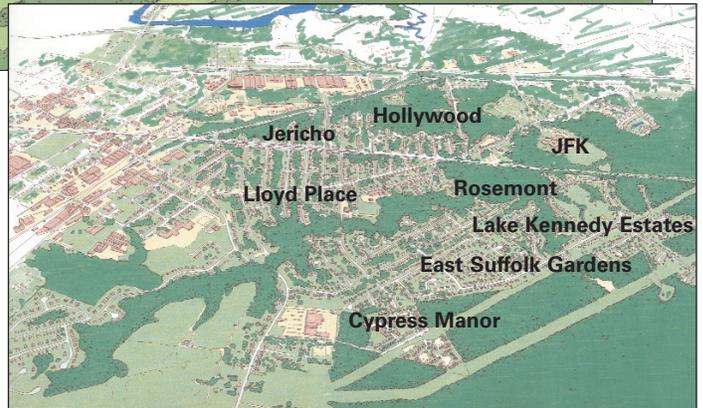
X-Ray Analysis

The neighborhood vision planning process began with an analysis of the existing site conditions. The most obvious problem in the Downtown area is the lack of an interconnected

street network, due primarily to the river valleys and railway lines which interrupt the street pattern and isolate neighborhoods from one another.



East Suffolk Aerial Perspective—Proposed



East Suffolk Aerial Perspective—Existing Conditions

Introduction

The East Washington Street neighborhoods are located roughly to the east of the Seaboard Coast Line railway tracks in an area that was historically, and continues to be, the heart of the City’s African American Community.

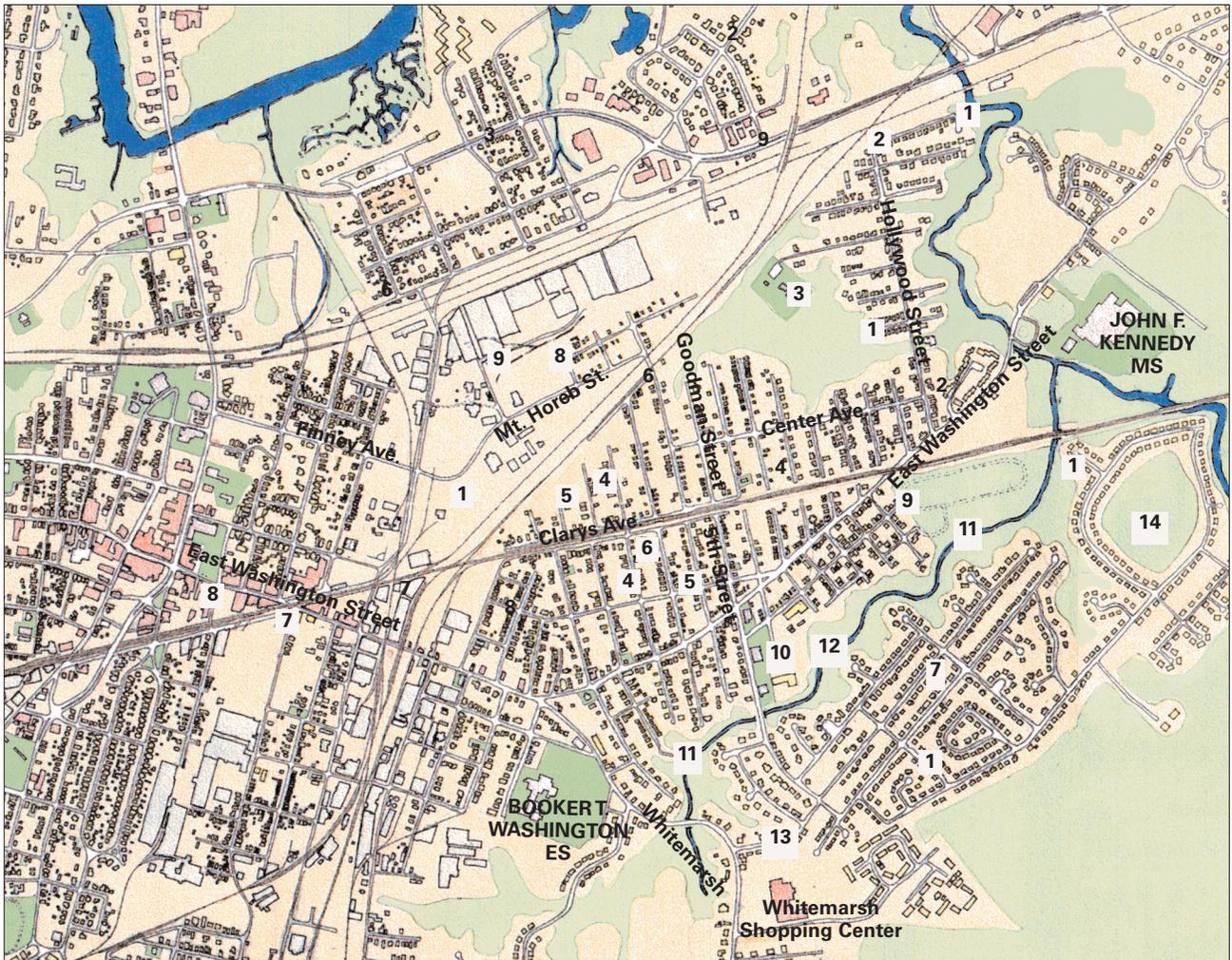
The older neighborhoods such as Hollywood, Jericho and Lloyd Place are located on both sides of the East

Washington Street corridor, while the newer neighborhoods to the south, such as East Suffolk Gardens and Lake Kennedy Estates, developed later. As in other parts of Suffolk, railway tracks and natural features act as boundaries which separate the neighborhoods from one another and force traffic onto a few overburdened streets such as East Washington Street and Whitemarsh Road.

The older neighborhoods are char-

acterized by modest houses, along residential streets with open storm-water ditches and no curbs or sidewalks.

The Plan for this area, which is part of the City’s ongoing Downtown Initiatives Plan, builds on the area’s inherent strengths: its strong sense of community pride, its well organized civic groups, and the energy and enthusiasm of the residents.



Existing Conditions Plan—East Washington Neighborhoods

Issues

During the public planning process we met with representatives from the East Washington Street Neighborhoods to discuss the issues and challenges, as well as hopes, aspirations and dreams for neighborhood improvement.

Issues identified by the group included the following:

1. Lack of street connections creating isolated neighborhoods.
2. Hollywood Avenue—only one way in and out (no connection to

Route 58/Portsmouth Boulevard).

3. Cypress Park isolation. Swimming pool is in poor condition.

4. Many neighborhoods have no curbs, sidewalks or underground storm drainage.

5. Jericho/Lloyd Place have too many cul-de-sac streets and rundown houses.

6. Jericho/Lloyd Place have inconvenient railway crossings.

7. East Washington traffic congestion.

8. East Washington Commercial area is rundown.

9. East Washington Street: Prob-

lem intersections, undersized railway underpass.

10. East Suffolk Complex is neglected and underused.

11. Shingle Creek is neglected and polluted.

12. Shingle Creek Cemetery is neglected and overgrown.

13. East Suffolk Gardens/Lake Kennedy Estates—lack of street connections.

14. Lake Kennedy Park is too large and unstructured.

15. New houses (duplexes) do not fit with the character of the neighborhood.



East Suffolk Plan—Proposed

Initiatives Overview

1. Hollywood Connector: Connect Hollywood Avenue to Route 58—(via Alabama Avenue and Suburban Drive).

2. Cypress Connector Road: Create a new East-West Connector Road along the north edge of Cypress Park

3. Cypress Park Neighborhood: Infill residential development, and improve park.

4. 6th Street Spine: Improve 6th Street as a north-south neighborhood connector street.

5. Jericho Park: Create a new buffer park at the west edge of the Jericho neighborhood.

6. Factory/Finney Connector: Build a new bridge connecting Factory Street to Finney Avenue.

7. East Suffolk Complex: Improve the East Suffolk Complex including a new gymnasium, classrooms, park, recreation fields, and parking area.

8. Shingle Creek: Restore Shingle Creek as a linear park

9. Rosemont Avenue: Continue Rosemont Avenue across Shingle Creek to JFK School.

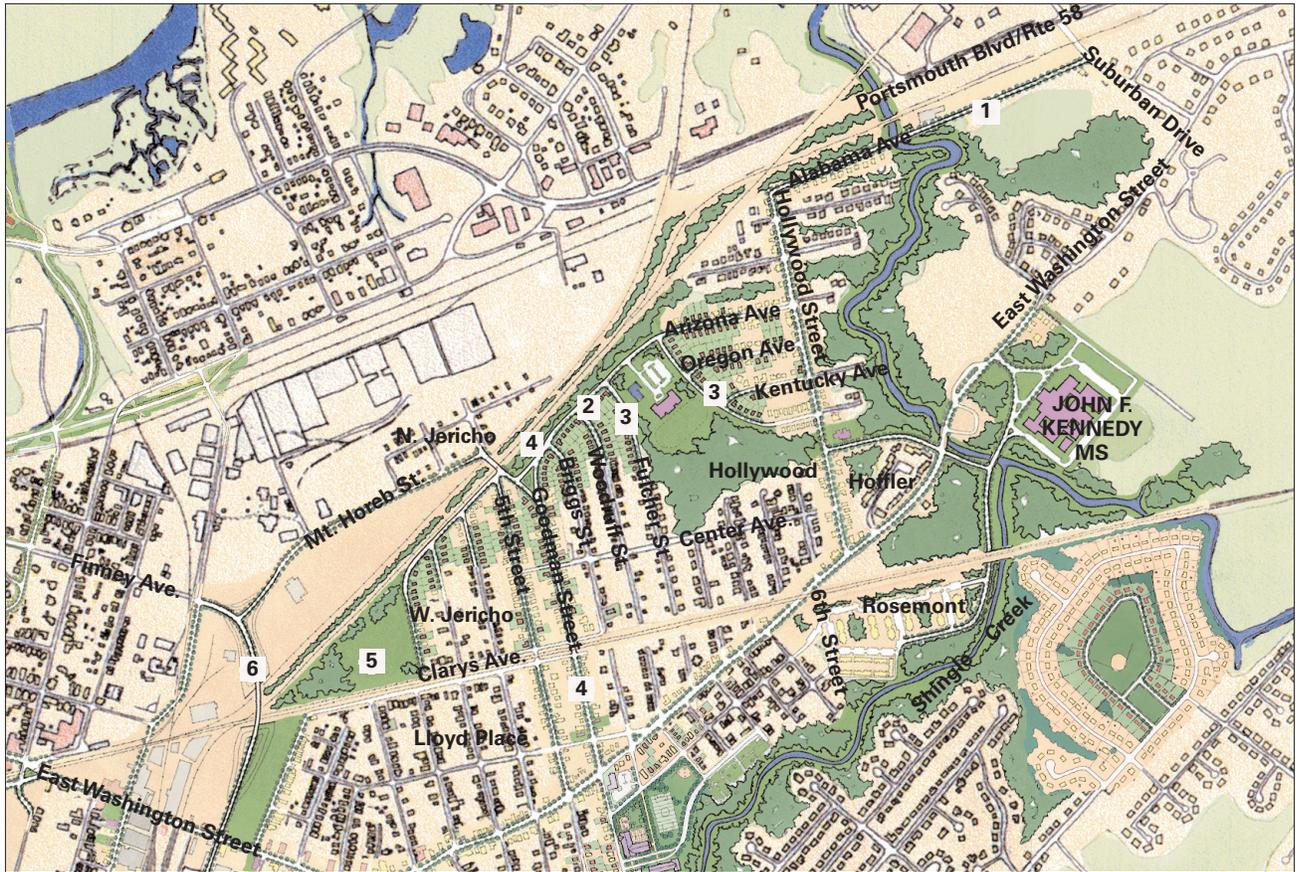
10. Lake Kennedy Drive: Extend Lake Kennedy Drive to Whitemarsh Road, add infill houses.

11. Lake Kennedy Park: Improve park and create new infill neighborhood.

12. E. Washington Streetscape: Improve East Washington Streetscaping.

13. Liberty/County/Moore: Improve intersection.

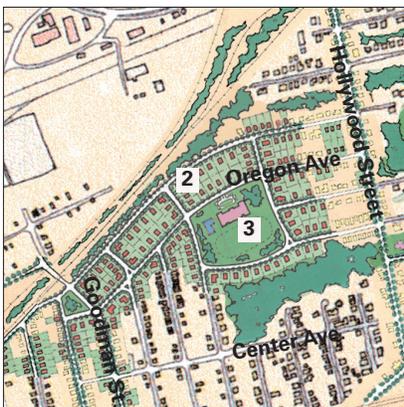
14. Hall/Culloden/Pinner: Redesign intersection to align Culloden and Pinner Streets.



Proposed East Washington Neighborhood Initiatives (Hollywood, Jericho, Lloyd Place)

Initiatives

Hollywood
Jericho
Lloyd Place



Cypress Park Area—Alternative B

1. Hollywood Connector: Connect Hollywood Avenue to Portsmouth Boulevard/Route 58. The most likely route is along Alabama Avenue, across Shingle Creek to Suburban Drive.

2. Cypress Connector Road: Create a new east-west connector road along the north edge of Cypress Park, connecting Arizona Ave. to Goodman Street. Create an interconnected street network with existing streets (Oregon, Kentucky, Briggs, Woodruff and Fulcher).

3. Cypress Park Neighborhood: Improve Cypress park and swimming pool and create a new Cypress Park Neighborhood with single family homes along the new connector streets. Two alternatives shown. Alternative B has two additional east-west connector streets and more

infill houses.

4. 6th Street Spine: Improve 6th Street as a north-south neighborhood, connector street from Mt. Horeb Ave. to East Suffolk Gardens. Realign the Mt. Horeb railway crossing (at Clarys and Railroad Ave.) from 4th to 6th Street. Improve streetscaping: curbs, sidewalks, underground storm water.

5. Jericho Park: Create a new buffer park at the west edge of the Jericho neighborhood lined by new homes. Acquire derelict properties, close cul-de-sac portions of Richardson and Division Streets.

6. Factory/Finney Connector: Build a new, small-scale railway overpass bridge connecting Factory Street to Finney Ave.



Proposed Plan—Shingle Creek Area

Initiatives

Shingle Creek Area

7. East Suffolk Complex: Create a new Community Center at the East Suffolk Complex including a new gymnasium building, a renovated high school building with classrooms and meeting rooms, new parks and recreation fields, and an enlarged parking area.

8. Shingle Creek: Restore Shingle Creek as a linear park linking JFK Middle School, the East Suffolk

Complex and Booker T. Washington Elementary School. Improve the old cemetery with new paths and landscaping.

9. Rosemont Avenue: Complete Rosemont Avenue. Redesign southern edge of race track residential development to allow Rosemont Ave. to connect through, and across Shingle Creek to JFK Middle School.

10. Lake Kennedy Drive: Create a new, secure entrance to the neighborhood by extending the street to Whitmarsh Road with lots for approximately 12 new single family houses.

11. Lake Kennedy Park: Improve park and create new neighborhood

with approximately 32 new single family houses.

12. E. Washington Streetscape: Improve E. Washington Street with new sidewalks, street trees, lighting and facade improvements. Encourage new business start-ups.

13. Liberty/County/Moore: Improve intersection for both vehicles and pedestrians.

14. Hall/Culloden/Pinner: Redesign/Improve the intersection at East Washington to allow traffic to flow between Hall Avenue and Culloden Street up Pinner Street.



The proposed East Suffolk Complex

East Suffolk Complex



East Suffolk Community Center—looking south toward the Community Center, the Library, and the new Recreation Facility.

7. East Suffolk Complex: Since the closing of the East Suffolk High School in the early 1970's, the East Washington neighborhood has been left without a true community center.

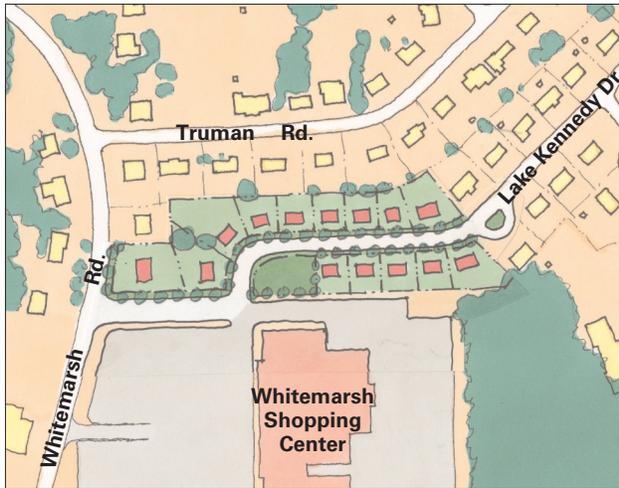
Building on the hopes and desires of area residents to create a new center, the Plan creates a new East Suffolk Complex in the former school site between between 6th and 8th Streets, south of Freney Avenue.

The new Complex will house a Community Center in the renovated historic High School, (with classrooms, meeting rooms, offices, a small business incubator, after-school programs and day-care facilities). A new 21st Century Recreation Facility

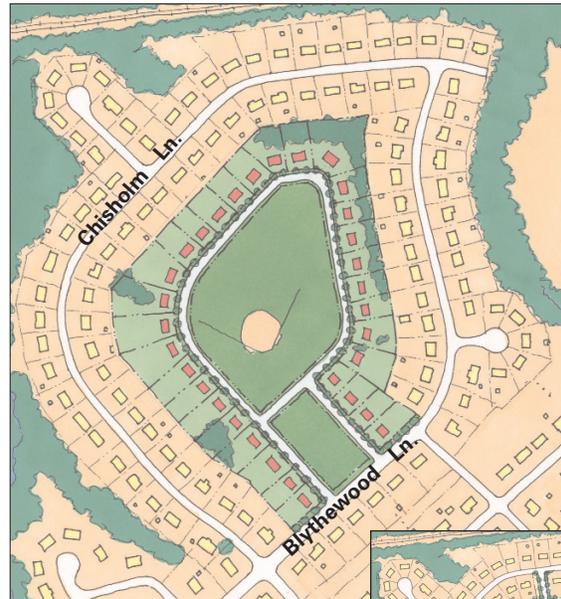
is planned for the old Gymnasium site, with state-of-the-art exercise facilities as well as supervised tennis and basketball courts. The existing Library will also be improved.

The entire site will be designed as one large, landscaped campus with the main entrance from 6th Street, and new, athletic playing fields in the area between Freney and Rosemont Avenues.

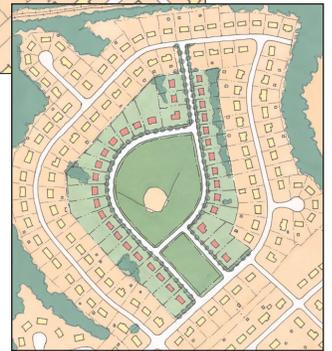
Many of the uses currently housed in the Birdsong Center on Main Street could be moved to this new location which promises to become the true center of the East Washington Community.



Lake Kennedy Drive Extension



*Lake Kennedy Park Neighborhood:
Proposal A*



Proposal B

Lake Kennedy/ East Suffolk Gardens Infill

10. Lake Kennedy Drive: In order to improve connections to the Lake Kennedy Estates/East Suffolk Gardens neighborhood the Plan extends Lake Kennedy Drive to Whitemarsh Road. This solution not only alleviates the traffic congestion, but also creates a wonderful new entrance to the neighborhood in an area that is currently neglected, cul-de-sac.

The street extends next to the Whitemarsh shopping center and creates lots for approximately 14 new houses which will provide “eyes on the street,” and help to create a safer neighborhood.

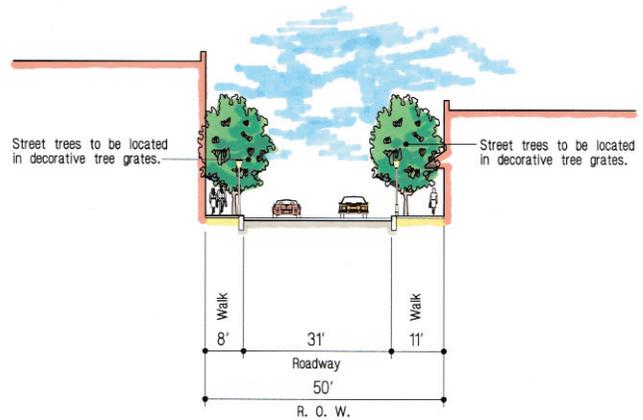
11. Lake Kennedy Park: Lake Kennedy Park, at the eastern end of

the neighborhood, is currently considered to be a problem because it is oversized and is difficult to maintain and supervise.

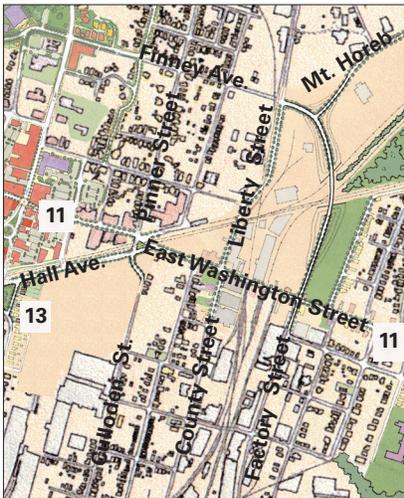
The plan creates a new, neighborhood-scaled park, surrounded by reasonably priced, single family homes. Proposal A concentrates the park and playing fields in the central area, with a major boulevard entrance from Blythewood Lane. A new ring-road, lined with approximately 32 houses, surrounds the park and provides the necessary eyes on the street and the park. Proposal B, is similar to A, but also creates a connection to Chisholm Lane.



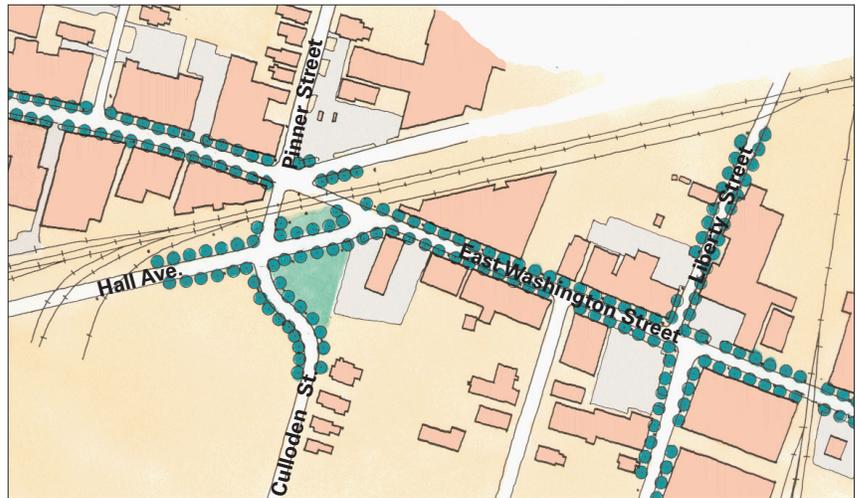
East Washington Street Today



Proposed East Washington Street Cross Section



East Washington Street Plan



Plan Detail—Proposed

East Washington Streetscape Improvements

East Washington Street was historically the heart of the City’s African American business community. Since the 1970’s, however, the street has undergone a slow and steady decline and only a small number of businesses remain. Many of the buildings have either been demolished or are in poor condition.

As one of the few through east-west streets, East Washington carries a lot of regional traffic, and currently presents a negative image of the City and the East Washington neighborhoods.

The Plan calls for a number of improvements to the area which will both enhance the look of the Street, and attract investment and new businesses into the area.

The Plan will begin with new streetscaping similar to North Main Street with new sidewalks, street trees, and lighting, and the intersections will be improved at Pinner and Liberty Streets. The City also plans to introduce a low interest loan program for new and existing businesses.