

**This Report Was Funded By
Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services
March 2005**

Fairview: A Dynamic Neighborhood in a Changing City

Introduction

Older central city neighborhoods are constantly in transition. The greater the dynamism of a city, the more likely the older neighborhoods will rapidly transform, either into a stronger neighborhood that is a good place for people to invest themselves and their resources or into a weaker neighborhood where any investment is questionable. The Fairview Neighborhood of Anchorage is a clear example of an urban neighborhood in transition within the context of a thriving city. Fortunately, due to the hard work of the Community Council with the support of the municipal government and Anchorage Neighborhood Housing Services, the transformation over the last decade shows a consistent record of improvement.

New schools, improved streets and traffic flows, upgraded rental properties, new construction of homes and condos, and a rebounding real estate market have combined to re-position Fairview as a revitalizing neighborhood. This outcome has been further supported by new entry signs, improved commercial facilities, and the hands-on hard work of neighborhood leaders. Overall, the message has been strong and clear: Fairview is once again a solid choice for buyers and renters seeking good quality housing at very competitive prices in the Anchorage market.

This success should be acknowledged and celebrated. Far too often similar neighborhoods have not been able to reverse the trends of disinvestment. Regrettably, this is also not the time to rest on laurels. The reality is that transition in older neighborhoods is always tenuous; it is critical that local leaders make a conscious decision to reinforce what is working effectively in Fairview and to minimize or even eliminate what is undermining the neighborhood. This report intends to provide advice and guidance to make that work succeed.

Fairview is a plural name.

There is an often-told story about a group of blind men describing an elephant. Each touches a different part. Some marvel at the trunk; others describe the legs; and still others talk about the tail. Each man creates his reality based on what he knows.

This observation is critical to understanding and planning for the Fairview Neighborhood, because there really are many different neighborhoods described under the one name. For example, the Fairview that the municipal government deals with and the Fairview that the Community Council oversees is very much larger than the Fairview that most neighbors and visitors understand. And depending on where they live or visit, these same people might know an entirely different community. None of players is wrong. Indeed, each viewpoint is valid, but each is also limited to its context.

Because there are multiple Fairviews understood in Anchorage, we will need to look carefully at the key parts as distinct places. To do this we will need to establish agreement about four underlying assumptions.

First, continuing to invest in Fairview makes sense. It is a sound economic decision for Anchorage and for ANHS to continue its current efforts in Fairview. This community offers an unparalleled opportunity to create and sustain a stable working and middle income neighborhood of choice. All of the necessary ingredients are already there, including a great mix of housing stock, an improved standard of property maintenance, increasing property values, an excellent location, a thriving commercial life, improved access to all parts of the city, and well designed public investments such as the new schools and street improvements. Compared to only a decade ago, investing in Fairview now means investing in an already revitalizing community.

Second, Fairview, as defined by the government and the Community Council, is much larger than the community understood by most people in Anchorage. It is almost axiomatic that the majority of people describe their neighborhoods in terms of the blocks around their homes. The descriptions include perhaps two, three or four blocks in each direction and the details mostly focus on the streets that people travel everyday. Most people do not think of an adjacent commercial and industrial site as part of their neighborhoods. In fact, with the exception of schools and community centers, most public institutions aren't really thought of as part of a neighborhood. For planners, government officials, and Community Council members, what happens in an adjacent industrial site is very important; for most neighbors, that site could be on the other side of town if there isn't a direct and immediate impact on their perceived neighborhood.

Third, Fairview consists of two primary distinct residential neighborhoods and one corridor made up of residential and commercial properties. Each of these segments of Fairview functions as a distinct place with different standards of investment, neighboring patterns, infrastructure needs, and strengths and weaknesses. For example, commercial intrusion affects all three because of the commercial through streets, but the easternmost part of the neighborhood is also affected by large commercial and warehousing facilities

adjacent to the airport. The westernmost area is impacted the most by pressures to build new housing at a higher density in a more urban like setting. Both of these parts face scattered blight, but both are buttressed by stronger residential areas including the South Addition on the west and the stable parts of Fairview south of East 15th Avenue.

Fourth, each of the neighborhoods of Fairview will need a specific unique set of strategies to positively impact the fundamental characteristics of any place: its market, image, physical conditions, and resident participation.

For most neighbors to “own” a neighborhood success, it must relate to where they live and not some place nearby. For Fairview to be seen as revitalized, most residents need to see the positive changes from their front doors. And for these positive changes to take place it is critical that the strategies be closely tailored to the specific characteristics of that area and to the real estate market conditions faced in each place. Therefore, any strategic approach to sustained revitalization will require both unique actions supported by sufficient capital and staff resources. This is best done from a perspective that focuses on a proactive approach to community change. One approach – the Healthy Neighborhoods – model is described in Attachment A.

Initial Conclusion: When we plan for Fairview, we need to first recognize that we are building on strength, not trying to remove weaknesses. To do this effectively we need to step back from the broader boundaries of the planning district and look carefully at those parts where neighbors live and feel direct involvement. Each of these parts is distinct and is made up of a unique mix of properties, which are facing particular real estate market realities. For the purpose of this report, Fairview consists of at least three primary neighborhoods that will require various tactics to assure that they thrive as neighborhoods of choice. These three places can be dramatically strengthened if a proactive approach is adequately staffed and funded to create the desired outcomes.

Fairview is the sum of great places.

Now that we have the overall goals in mind, let’s look at each of Fairview’s distinct parts by first identifying some key characteristics and then suggesting some possible actions which can reinforce the renewal process. At the end of each section will be a brief outcome statement that clarifies the direction of each set of strategic interventions.

Fairview East consists of those blocks on the eastern end of the neighborhood closest to Merrill Field. The area is characterized primarily by the large number of single family houses coupled with some small scale rental projects and a few larger multi-family complexes. The area benefits from a park, a community

center, traffic calming installations, and a new elementary school. The real estate market is getting stronger as more people realize that houses in Fairview East are an excellent value. Private developers are buying, upgrading and reselling houses as part of this process. The planned project to upgrade the park will assure that this trend continues.

Overall, the residents take responsibility for their properties and there is a good level of upkeep. Regrettably, there are some exceptions. In many cases the alleys are overgrown and trash containers are poorly stored in rotting wooden corrals. Worst, there are a number of scattered blighted properties throughout the neighborhood. Some of these are poorly-built rental structures, but others are home owned properties, complete with ramshackled outbuildings, collapsing fences, and remarkable examples of vinyl sheeting used as roofing material.

The resulting picture is of a neighborhood that has much to be proud of while still having a few serious blighting conditions that undermine full success. Since this part of Fairview is so stable, answers won't be found in dramatic new programs, but in expanding on the role of the neighbors in setting and encouraging good standards of maintenance and reinvestment. To do this, it is recommended that the Community Council, the ANHS, and some key local leaders accomplish the following:

- ✓ *Encourage a broader pool of block-based local leadership, even if the leaders are only interested in working on a single block or a specific project*

This part of Fairview has the greatest potential to be a stable working and middle income area, dominated by homeowners and long-term renters. It should be known for its neighborliness and stability. At the current time, there are too few residents involved in neighborhood activities. This is likely due to the nature of past projects which have focused on major activities such as traffic calming. What is needed is a much broader list of neighbors willing to participate with each other around more everyday issues. The focus needs to be on creating opportunities for people to know and respect each other, so that the pool of trust leaders moves beyond the community council and those involved in school issues.

- ✓ *Develop an array of small scale, self-help initiatives that can be used on blocks to improve properties while encouraging more neighborly interactions*

As noted above, Fairview has dealt with a number of fairly substantial issues over the last few years. These issues, such as the widening of a major cross-town street, were all complex and required a time commitment most neighbors don't feel they can make. What is needed is a number of small tasks that allow people to participate on their blocks on projects of manageable size. Such

projects might be planning as a block of neighbors to decorate for Halloween, or deciding to work as a team to help one elderly neighbor deal with an overgrown yard, or agreeing to plant new, coordinated landscaping, or instituting a porch lights for safety campaign. Obviously, these examples aren't very large or complicated. But they do require that neighbors meet each other and create a base for building positive relationships

- ✓ *Maintain and even upgrade the entry points to the neighborhood*

Due to the hard work of the Community Council and the support of the municipal government, Fairview has a number of attractive gateway signs and eye-catching traffic calming facilities. As a result, people might think that Fairview has enough positive entry points. The reality is quite the reverse. It is possible to travel certain common routes without any clear sense that one is entering Fairview. More important, it is possible to enter Fairview East and not understand that this is a distinct neighborhood where people have chosen to invest themselves and their resources. Fairview East needs specific entry markers such as banners on utility poles and logos on each of the street signs. Wherever possible, even more should be done. Public buildings, such as the community center, semi-public facilities, such as the Mutual Housing buildings, and private facilities, such as cooperating landlords, homeowners, and commercial property owners, should all be reinforce the message of the entry signs.

- ✓ *Create a step-by-step plan for the eyesore properties that uses both carrots and sticks on targeted properties at the rate of perhaps five or six a year*

Even though Fairview East has improved substantially over the past few years, scattered blight continues to undermine the gains. The Community Council and the residents must identify the properties and then select a few priorities sites. In these cases, there should be a clear plan of outreach to the owners, listing of resources available, and coordination with municipal officials. It is strongly recommended that city officials – elected office holders and staff – be alerted at the beginning of each year about the “hit list” for that year. There should be regular reporting to the community at-large and to the officials to make sure that the problem is addressed or there is agreement about why action can't proceed. It is important to keep the list small, so that sufficient resources of staff and money are available and so that everyone can be held accountable for non-action. (Please note at the end of this section there is a reference to volunteer efforts such as World Changers. These kinds of programs can also address some the troublesome properties owned by lower income homeowners.)

- ✓ *Develop a program for improving all properties, including very low interest loans to homebuyers purchasing properties with two or more units*

There should be a full review of all possible resources available to assist owners to upgrade their properties. Of course, the first resource that comes to mind is the various current and potential loan programs. There should be a set-aside of such loan money for this neighborhood so that the impact of the funds can be concentrated and better leveraged. It is also important to think broadly about lending resources so that all funds – especially those from private lenders – are fully utilized. (These suggestions are most critical when referring to the multi-family structures that would benefit from owner-occupancy.) However, beyond the lending resources, there should be free or low cost property improvement services including design assistance, project planning, contractor solicitation, and contract monitoring. One of the greatest missed opportunities is the chance to help property owners use their own capital wisely in the improvement of their properties.

- ✓ *Facilitate more homeownership, especially by outreaching to current tenants interested in purchasing from their landlords and providing incentives for purchase and renovation of the homes*

Much like the comments above, there should be a targeted effort to encourage more homeownership. This effort should include one-on-one counseling, outreach to current tenants, and sales promotions on selected properties. In addition to what is now being provided city-wide, there should be outreach through referrals from other residents, through open houses in conjunction with for-sale properties, and other promotions. It is important to have reduced interest rates, special lending criteria, and flexible rehab packages to give a competitive advantage to home purchase in Fairview East.

- ✓ *Encourage in-fill new construction and lend for significant upgrades to current properties in order to create clear examples of excellence throughout the neighborhood*

In the future, Fairview East will be evaluated primarily in terms of the new positive standards. In the past it was important just to be rid of the worst properties. Today the challenge is setting the bar high for future expectations. Given that reality, it is critical that a program be put in place which encourages high quality in-fill construction at a level above the current market. Moreover, if a homeowner, landlord, or a developer wishes to undertake a major renovation, it is desirable for there to be a package of loans and design services that assist in this effort. The task of neighborhood revitalization is not just bringing properties to code, but establishing a level of excellence that will assure long-term stability.

- ✓ *Review any and all idiosyncrasies to the zoning laws and to the code compliance regulations so that common sense rules are uniformly enforced*

It is very difficult to get residents to upgrade their homes if it appears that other property owners are allowed to undermaintain their properties. Good neighbors are always concerned about fairness and about everyone doing their share. If zoning laws are being flaunted or if code enforcement is only hit-and-miss, many people will hold back from making significant improvements in their homes for fear that even worse conditions will arise and be tolerated. Good zoning and code enforcement should build confidence among all neighbors that Fairview East is a great place to live and that it will continue to get even better because everyone will be taking responsibility for their properties.

- ✓ *Leverage any special events such as the proposed World Changers renovation program planned for 2005*

Fairview in general and East Fairview in specific has an enormous opportunity to quickly address some of the more troubled properties. At this time ANHS is planning to offer its services and the volunteer efforts of the World Changers group in order to improve a number of properties in Fairview. Of course, these properties will be those owned and lived in by lower income households, especially the disabled and seniors. But past experience tells us that the high energy and positive feelings that accompany these changes can encourage homeowners to undertake self-help block improvement projects and can also encourage other nearby residents to improve their properties. These larger homeowner projects occur most readily if there are supports to this process. These include construction advice and design assistance as well as lending and contractor referral.

The Outcome: In the instance of Fairview East, these actions will result in many positive changes in terms of a more positive image for the community both internally and externally, a reinforced real estate market which will attract strong buyers and stable renters, and a much improved appearance because the key eyesores will be replaced by examples of excellence in maintenance. Most important, Fairview East will strengthen the role of good neighbors as key forces in creating and sustaining a community as a place of choice. Indeed, if there is to be a single most desirable outcome, it will surely be the broad level of participation by committed neighbors to the neighborhood and to each other.

Fairview West encompasses the blocks closest to downtown and, therefore, nearest to the South Addition. The neighborhood benefits from a more hilly terrain that gives selected properties more prominence and enhanced views. Further, the closeness to the South Addition has attracted residents with slightly higher incomes. As a result Fairview West has already seen condos built over the last twenty years and more recently new in-fill houses aimed at more upscale buyers.

The neighborhood also benefits from the new elementary school, the proximity to downtown, and the absence of significant commercial intrusion except on the eastern edge. Beyond the roadway improvements on the southern edge, other recent improvements include the removal of a small undermaintained mobile home park to make way for new townhomes and the upgrading of small rental complexes. As a result, Fairview West is already evolving into a different place. Over the next few years, it will increasingly become a neighborhood of condos, improved apartments, better quality single family houses, and related new development.

The Community Council and the residents of the affected blocks need to come together to shape just what that evolving neighborhood will look like. It will probably be more urban and likely higher income. It will increasingly share features with the South Addition, but will still be separate and unique. Just what that means will only become clear through a process that involves as many people as possible.

Therefore, the challenge in Fairview West is to manage the process of change in a way that brings more residents into the community conversation. The Community Council simply has too many responsibilities and oversees far too large an area to be able to adequately focus on transition in Fairview West. Over the next few years, it is suggested that a conscious process be followed to support broad citizen involvement in the changing community. This could include these actions:

- ✓ *Identify a core of individuals who are interested in the specific challenges of working with the issues of transition in a highly diverse neighborhood*

Fairview prides itself on its diversity and its success in using diversity as a positive community virtue. Diversity is a major aspect of Fairview and it goes well beyond ethnic and racial categories to include age, income, and lifestyle dynamics. This reality is particularly true in Fairview West where new construction, more luxury apartments, and a closer location to downtown combine to make the neighborhood able to attract higher income households while still providing a large number of units to working income households. To assure that this diversity can be sustained while the neighborhood improves, it will be necessary to have a conscious strategy to develop a core of residents committed to sustaining diversity in this transitioning community.

- ✓ *Develop a number of ways for expression of the various viewpoints about the neighborhood's changes, including one-on-one interviews, surveys, and communication at neighborhood and block events, and, of course, meetings*

In a neighborhood undergoing dynamic change, it is easy to continue to meet with current residents and a few new arrivals. This is too hit-or-miss for effective planning and programming. Therefore, beyond the predictable neighborhood meetings, there ought to be a thorough outreach effort biased to individual interviews and small group settings. Examples might include presenting at a condo association meeting, hosting a get together for new homebuyers, visiting with dozen owners with at least ten years in the community, and interviewing an equal number of stable tenants referred by their landlords. The exact process isn't as important as the commitment to hearing from individuals outside of conventional community meeting formats. Of course, as the process unfolds, block and community events will open more opportunities for diverse resident expression.

- ✓ *Consider distinct marketing features along the blocks and at neighborhood gateways as well as site-specific communication tools*

Fairview West is the most urban part of the Fairview neighborhood, but it could also benefit greatly by learning from some more suburban areas. Increasingly, these areas use entry signs, coordinated landscaping, street signs with logos, and other tools to create a sense of identity. All of these could create a positive brand for this part of Fairview. Further, small actions, such as an insert page in The Fairview Press or a periodic door-to-door handout or a community street fair, could reinforce the uniqueness of Fairview West in the Anchorage market.

- ✓ *Work closely with developers, property owners, city officials, and residents to create a clear plan for the new construction over the next decade*

Fairview West will have significant new construction over the next decade. The real estate market is looking for quality close in sites with character. The changes of grade and the presence of some quality housing already will make Fairview West a prime target. The challenge is to assure that new development is of high quality and is appropriately sited in terms of other structures. The more clarity about the neighbors' expectations, the more successful this development process will be. It is critical that the key players are convened soon and a straightforward plan is created and approved.

- ✓ *Work with the city government to create a true neighborhood plan that includes policies regarding new construction, increased density, uniform code compliance, capital improvements, etc.*

As step two in the planning process it would be desirable to develop a true neighborhood plan. While it would be best if there were a plan for all of Fairview, it is most important that a neighborhood plan be crafted for Fairview West since this is the area with the greatest potential for private market change over the next decade. More clarity about the future of the area, including its infrastructure,

zoning, density, levels of code compliance, etc., will allow individual households and developers to make better decisions.

- ✓ *Reinforce the current homeowners by developing loan programs for general property improvements, for loans to homebuyers purchasing a principal residence with two or more units, and for any first-time homebuyer willing to upgrade a property*

Even if a true neighborhood plan cannot be developed quickly, residents and future residents will surely see that Fairview West is becoming an ever stronger choice for good housing in Anchorage. It would be desirable to encourage both current and new owners to upgrade their properties as part of this process. Loans should be available for both repairs and significant upgrades to properties; especially low rates should be offered those individuals willing to take on a distressed house or multi-family structures being converted to owner-occupied. In all cases, there should be significant emphasis on exterior renovations that reinforce the renewed marketability of this area.

- ✓ *Develop a "hit list" of a half-dozen key eyesore properties that need to be addressed by the public sector, through volunteer interventions, or by means of media exposure*

As is also true in the rest of Fairview, this part of the neighborhood is troubled by a few particularly troubling eyesore properties. It is unreasonable to expect the city government to address every one of these units at the same time and with the same level of intensity. Therefore, it is critical that a very specific list be created and regularly monitored and update. Because Fairview West will need to deal with the dynamics of integrating higher income residents, it is especially important to be sensitive when addressing those troubled properties owned by lower income homeowners. It is particularly fortunate that the World Changers program will be active in Fairview in 2005. This can improve troubled properties while support long-term lower income residents.

- ✓ *Create a process to welcome and include new owners and tenants to assure that the neighborhood continues as a neighborly place of choice open to a diverse population*

As noted above, one of the great challenges for Fairview West over the next few years will be integrating a very diverse group of residents. It shouldn't be expected that this happens normally; that era has past: no more Welcome Wagons and no brownies and lemonade from neighbors while moving in. Too many people have to work two jobs and have difficult family commitments. It is vital that neighbor leaders take the responsibility of setting up opportunities for people to know their neighbors and for people to recognize the broad range of residents moving into the neighborhood. Exactly how this is done should be

decided by the neighbors, but it is critical that a conscious decision be made to make this happen.

- ✓ *Outreach to leaders from the South Addition to strengthen the visibility of both neighborhoods in the broader community*

In addition to being linked with parts of Fairview (especially the blocks south of East 15th Avenue), Fairview West shares many of the same pressures and opportunities that confront the South Addition. It is important that communication and even alliances are established with leaders from there. It is best for this process to start when there is no immediate issue that must be addressed. Relationships are strongest when people first know each other as individuals and not as signatures on a petition.

- ✓ *Emphasize development activities that serve a higher price point of sales and rentals in order to further diversify Fairview and thereby strengthen its residential and commercial position*

It is clear that Fairview West has the potential for adding substantially higher income housing options. It is also true that the market doesn't always recognize the potential of an area. It is desirable for the local leadership to evaluate the development proposals in order to determine if the housing products being developed are high quality enough to attract and retain stable higher income households. This will be necessary if Fairview West is to be fully diversified.

The Outcome: There is no question that Fairview West will continue to grow and change significantly over the next few years. How that change is managed will be the critical question. The image of this area has already greatly improved, the real estate market is quite strong for both buyers and renters, and the physical appearance of the community is consistently improving. All of this change, accompanied by even greater density and diversity, suggests that the challenge of linking all the residents – current, new, richer, low income, owner, renter – will be the primary task. The suggested strategies are aimed at addressing this challenge while positioning the neighborhood to demand and achieve the highest possible level of new investment.

The Fairview Corridor consists of those blocks along Ingra and Gambell streets, north of East 15th Avenue. In addition to the businesses and residences along those streets, there are also houses and apartment structures in the interior section along Hyder Street and the numerous cross streets. The Fairview Corridor offers a range of retail and service businesses as well as wholesaling and a few institutional uses such as churches and a police substation.

The Corridor is a mix of commercial and residential buildings that are strongly defined by the high volume of local and through traffic. The Corridor is a major gateway in and out of central Anchorage and key entries in and out of East and West Fairview. Because so many people know Fairview primarily through this set of streets, it is critical that there be a well-conceived plan for managing and improving this section of the neighborhood. Improvements in The Corridor will significantly strengthen the marketability of the more residential parts of the neighborhood. Such improvements will be difficult to accomplish until there is a clear decision about the perceived threat that the area will become part of a super highway. Once this is resolved and reinforced by further investments in the current streets, The Corridor has enormous potential for both local and destination businesses and for good value residential structures.

To accomplish these outcomes, it is recommended that local and community leaders:

- ✓ *Craft the Fairview Corridor Plan to assure property owners about the long term viability of the area in light of long term highway needs*

In the best case scenario, the Corridor is designated by the municipal government for the development of a neighborhood plan. Beyond just the issue of through traffic, there are numerous questions that relate to city government policies regarding new construction, increased density, uniform code compliance, capital improvements, and further beautification. The development of the plan will go a long way in convincing everyone about the future of the Corridor.

- ✓ *Encourage a broader pool of local leaders, who should be a mix of business persons, residents, and property owners*

Although the Community Council provides an excellent venue for hearing a variety of viewpoints, it is important that the Corridor leaders make a particular effort to broaden the base of participants from the area. It is difficult to build a participant pool because of the very different perspectives held by the various players. But due to that great variety, it is especially critical to make a conscious effort to involve as many participants as possible. Such a broad base will convince funders and the government that the Corridor is more than a highway with businesses, but that it truly is a neighborhood with all that that means.

- ✓ *Develop a distinctive marketing campaign, possibly including banners along the main thoroughfares, a common logo and slogan, and coordinated landscaping*

The Corridor isn't like other parts of Fairview; rather, than be linked to the overall Fairview marketing effort, the Corridor needs to be promoted as a distinct place with both local and destination businesses. To make this work, there should be a campaign that reminds people that the Corridor is a great place to shop and get

other services. This can be accomplished in many ways, which probably should include attractive, eye-catching banners, a well-designed logo and memorable slogan, and coordinated features such as landscaping or even new lighting. These actions and symbols reinforce the story that Fairview is a distinct place where people choose to be because of its many assets.

- ✓ *Emphasize commercial improvements and development activities that strengthen the Corridor as a local and regional destination for quality goods and services*

Although this might seem overly-ambitious, the local leaders – especially the businesspersons and the commercial properties owners – should think in terms of market share growth. Some of the current businesses are marginal and could easily relocate over the next few years. Likewise, some of the businesses are primarily warehousing activities and are not significantly adding to the vitality of the commercial area. The Corridor is too well located for this to continue for long. Therefore, whenever possible, there should be a conscious effort to market the Corridor to additional destination businesses, which can bring new customers into the neighborhood.

- ✓ *Outreach to leaders from the other parts of Fairview to strengthen the shared voice of Fairview and to coordinate activities*

While it is clear that the commercial corridor is a distinct place and has a greater mix of players due to the number of businesses, it is also true that the Corridor is at the center of Fairview. Therefore, it is important that this specific community clarifies its own goals while simultaneously reaching out to the rest of Fairview. This is automatically done in the Community Council meetings, but it should be extended to mutual support of specific projects, through joint appearances at city-wide meetings, and through aggressive use of The Fairview Press. All of this effort will prove invaluable when a major public policy decision must be acted on.

- ✓ *Develop an array of small scale, self-help initiatives that can be used on interior blocks to improve properties while encouraging more neighborly interactions among residents and business persons*

Much like the other parts of Fairview, the Corridor would benefit greatly from proactive initiatives aimed at building stronger relationship among the individuals that share this part of the community. A particular focus should be Hyder Street, which has an uneven reputation, due to some poorly maintained and rented properties on one hand and newly-constructed single family homes on the other. This street is impacted by the backdoor service activities of many of the local businesses and, in turn, negative activities and poor maintenance on Hyder undermines a healthy commercial area. Therefore, it would be in the self-interest of all parties to undertake some small block-based projects to give a more

positive appearance to the area while building stronger relationship among the residents and with the local businesses.

- ✓ *Develop a program for improving all properties, including very low interest loans to homebuyers purchasing properties with two or more units*

Even though there are many fewer residential properties in this part of Fairview, the impact of these properties is great because so many can be seen by those passing to and from the local businesses. Working with ANHS, local leaders should promote home improvement loans on all properties and most especially on multi-family properties where a homebuyer is willing to purchase and renovate the units. Since many of the properties are owned by landlords who might not need rehab loans, it is important to also offer free design assistance to encourage higher quality, more attractive renovations.

- ✓ *Encourage new construction and lend for significant upgrades to current residential and commercial properties in order to create clear examples of excellence throughout the neighborhood*

As a step above traditional rehab lending, local leaders should also consider encouraging both new construction and substantial rehab of all properties, both residential and commercial. It might be necessary to negotiate special waivers on density or other matters in order to encourage this outcome. The reality is that the Corridor is more like a downtown of a small city and as such it might be better developed in a more urban-like form. These ideas are best considered as part of an overall plan for the Corridor, but in the absence of such a plan, careful flexibility would be well advised.

- ✓ *Review any and all idiosyncrasies to the zoning laws and to the code compliance regulations so that common sense rules are uniformly enforced*

Although a neighborhood plan would be very helpful, it is important that an immediate review be made of the zoning laws and the code compliance rules so that all existing regulations can be strongly and uniformly enforced. Because of the intensity of the commercial and residential mix in the Corridor, it is even more important that there be a clear understanding of what is and is not acceptable in terms of property uses and maintenance.

The Outcome: Like the other parts of Fairview, the future for the Corridor is very strong, especially when there is clarity about any major traffic changes. Today the image of the Corridor is more positive and the real estate market, particularly the commercial market, is strong. Due to the high level of traffic and the clutter that accompanies the commercial vitality, the physical appearance of the Corridor should be improved, but

one can easily imagine a positive place defined by attractive signage, well lighted parking areas, well maintained commercial structures, easy traffic flows, and an improved sense of pedestrian safety. To get this to happen will require commercial and property interests to align with neighbors both in the Corridor and on each side to create a common voice in support of a better community.