

APRIL 2018

GREटना COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

GREटना
comprehensive plan





Prepared for:
The City of Gretna

Prepared by:
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

The Citizens of Gretna

Gretna Elected Officials:

- Mayor Belinda C. Constant
- Chief of Police Arthur Lawson
- Councilman at-Large Wayne A. Rau
- Councilman Milton Crosby - District 1
- Councilman Mike Hinyub - District 2
- Councilman Mark Miller - District 3
- Councilman Jackie Berthelot - District 4

Steering Committee Members:

- Darren Piglia
- Angel Varnado
- Amelia Pellegrin
- Judy Sullivan
- Pastor Orin Grant

Stakeholder Committee Members:

- George Relle
- Jack Stumpf
- Jefferson Parish Councilman Ricky Templet - District 1
- Terri Wilkinson
- State Representative Joe Marino - District 85

City Administration:

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SECTION 0

INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The City of Gretna Comprehensive Plan is a guiding document created by the collaboration of citizens, planners, and city leaders. It contains a detailed documentation and analysis of existing conditions within the City, covering a comprehensive array of planning realms, and a set of goals and objectives for each realm that will guide the community's development over the next twenty years. The City of Gretna Comprehensive Plan includes the following elements:

- *Resiliency*
- *Land Use*
- *Economic Development*
- *Housing*
- *Transportation*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Community Design*
- *Parks and Recreation*
- *Environmental*
- *Historic Preservation*

A comprehensive plan is a living document that provides guidance for both public and private development and supports resilient and sustainable growth patterns. Land use regulations, such as the zoning code, subdivision regulations, and other ordinances, as well as City projects, are based on the goals and vision stated in the Comprehensive Plan.

WHY A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR GRETNA?

Located in South Louisiana on the banks of the Mississippi River, the City of Gretna is vulnerable to natural disasters, including hurricanes and major storms, which often result in flooding and property damage. Resiliency is a community's ability to respond efficiently to disasters and bounce back quickly to a normal, functioning state. To address community resilience comprehensively, the City of Gretna secured funding through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery Program, provided by the State Office of Community Development. This grant is used to create a Comprehensive Plan and subsequently update the City's Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, to ensure resilient and sustainable development patterns in Gretna over the upcoming two decades.

VISION STATEMENT & PLANNING GOALS

During the comprehensive planning process, the community developed a vision statement for the City of Gretna, which reflects the values to preserve and the changes to face over the next 20 years. The vision statement was central to all planning realms throughout the entire planning process.

“Our vision for the City of Gretna is to build upon the City’s strong foundation of community, while respecting the past and embracing the future, to improve existing infrastructure, enhance commercial corridors, and promote walkable and bikeable neighborhoods. The new connections should link our parks, diverse communities, and commercial centers, as well as connect the City to the region, making the City a more united whole that is a premiere place to live, work, and raise a family.”

Reflecting the community vision and current and projected community needs, the ten Comprehensive Planning Elements contain detailed data and analysis of existing conditions, as well as a set of goals and objectives, that will lead implementation efforts over the upcoming planning period. The Gretna Comprehensive Plan is in compliance with the community vision and based on Smart Growth principles as adopted by the American Planning Association.

Principles include the development of a walk- and bikeable community with interconnected neighborhoods; the provision of housing choices that reflect affordability need, as well as life-cycle needs of the community; the support of a diverse local economy that ensures economic resiliency, job security; the preservation of neighborhood character and historic heritage; the maintenance of Gretna's high-quality public spaces and recreation facilities; and infrastructure that addresses the City's environmental challenges.

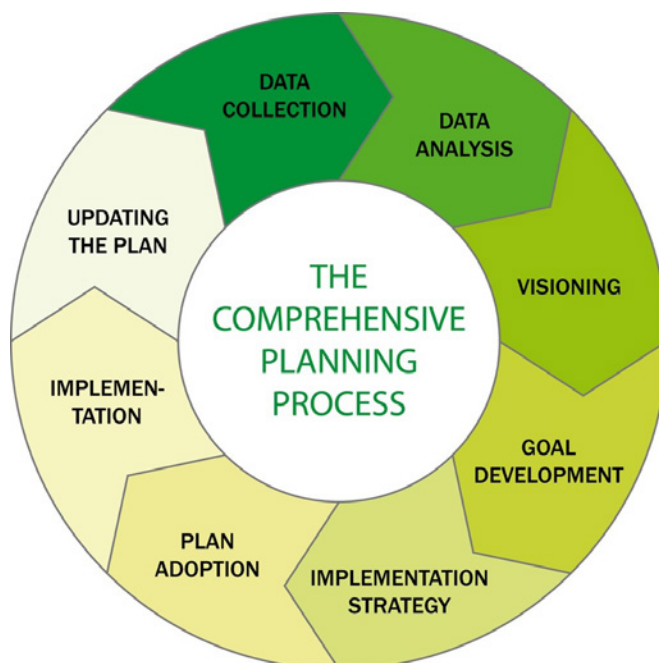
In a nutshell, the City of Gretna Comprehensive Plan is a manual for guiding sustainable community development over the next 20 years, leading Gretna to preserve community character and cultural heritage, while improving the local quality of life and to address environmental and infrastructural needs that foster community resiliency. This Comprehensive Plan is designed to build off the existing strengths of the City, while making it stronger as it moves into the future.

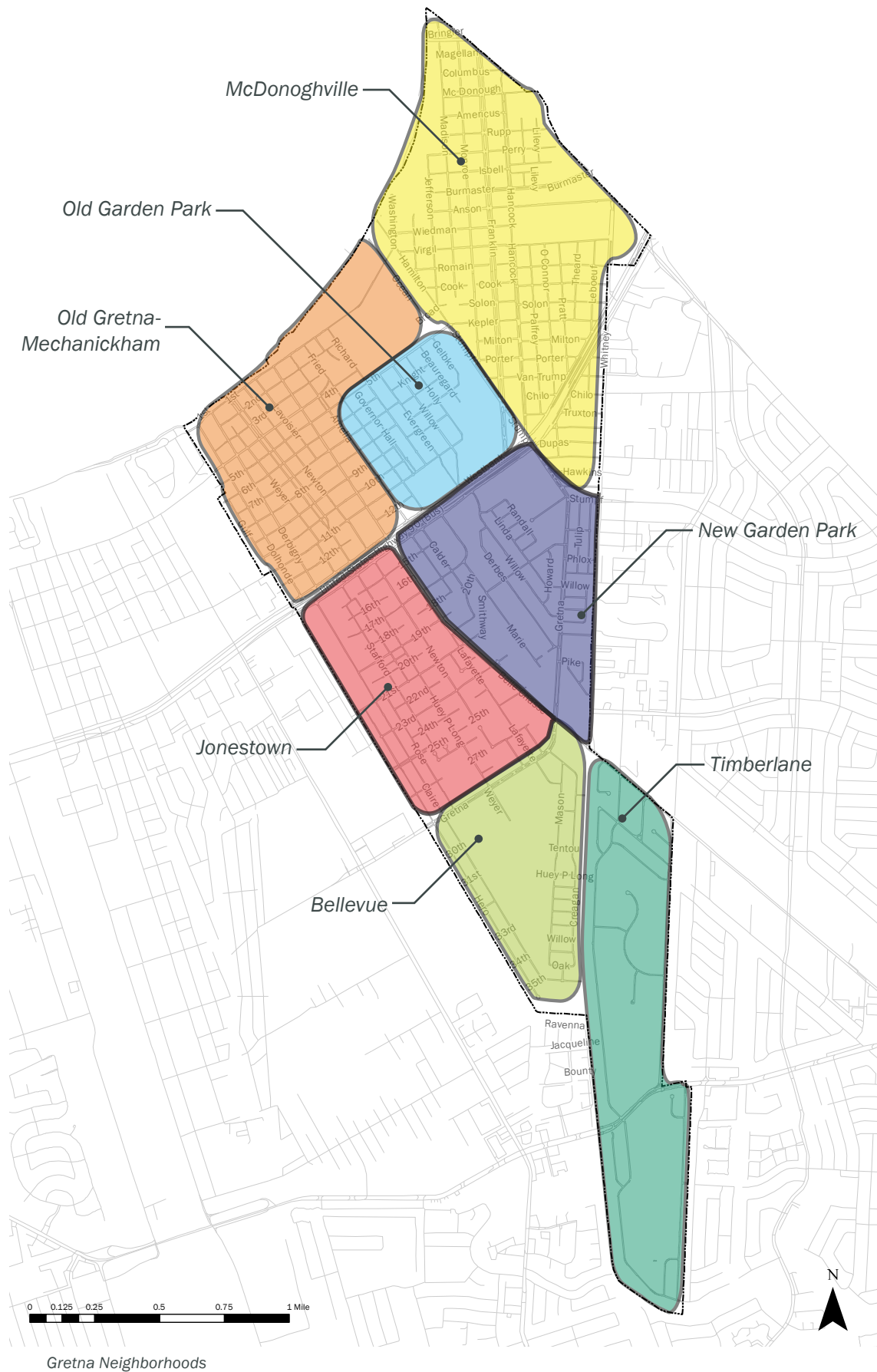
THE COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS

To start the planning process, planners created a comprehensive database about the City, including available U.S. Census data, the Bureau for Economic Analysis, and locally-sourced data. Further, planners directly collect specific local data, including conducting a current land use survey. The planners interviewed community members, town leaders, and stakeholders to gather local knowledge about the City's planning issues. By analyzing the data and information collected, planners developed forecasts and projections for Gretna's expected development. Through public participation in community workshops and surveys, the community created a vision statement for the future of the City. Based on data analysis, forecasts, and community input, planners and city leadership established goals and objectives to guide development over the next two decades. Prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the City Council, the public, stakeholders, and community leaders had the chance to review the draft and provide their comments. This input was considered

and incorporated into the final draft of the document. After adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City will begin to implement goals and objectives through land use regulations and other policy efforts, and by securing funding for public projects that implement goals. As conditions change over time, the Comprehensive Plan, a living document that can respond to change, will be periodically updated to reflect community needs.

The following map identifies the neighborhoods of Gretna which will be used referred to throughout the Comprehensive Plan's Elements.





PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Active community participation throughout the comprehensive planning process is an essential part of developing a strong, implementable Comprehensive Plan. City of Gretna leaders and planners ensured public engagement was maximized through direct outreach, public participation workshops, surveys, social media presence, and a project website. Residents were encouraged to contribute their ideas, communicate their needs, and share their local knowledge about the physical, social, and cultural aspects of the community with planners, town leaders, and each other.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP NO. 1 - VISIONING

The first series of public workshops took place in September 2016. There were three public workshops for the four council districts in the City. District 1's workshop was on September 12; District 2's workshop was on September 19; and Districts 3 and 4's combined workshop was on September 7.

The purpose of this first series of workshops was to introduce to the public the concept of a comprehensive plan to educate them on Smart Growth principles, and have them begin to identify assets and challenges within their districts. Common assets from all three public workshops were

- *Strong community*
- *Safe neighborhoods with low crime*
- *Historic neighborhoods and architecture*
- *Great parks and recreational opportunities, including the Mississippi River*

Common challenges throughout the workshop were:

- *Improvement of drainage infrastructure*
- *Lack of public transportation options*
- *Bare streetscapes*
- *Limited neighborhood oriented commercial*
- *Vacant properties*

The information gathered from the first public workshop was used to create the vision statement for the City for the next 20 years. This vision statement is used to guide all of the goals and recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan Elements.

Outreach for the workshops was done through many avenues by both the City of Gretna and the project team. DBA created a Facebook page and website where the workshops were advertised. Flyers were also created and distributed through civic and religious facilities throughout Gretna, including where the workshops were being held. There were a total of 67 attendees at the first series of public workshops.



Public Workshop No. 1, District 1 - Group in Discussion



Public Workshop No. 1, District 2 - Group in Discussion



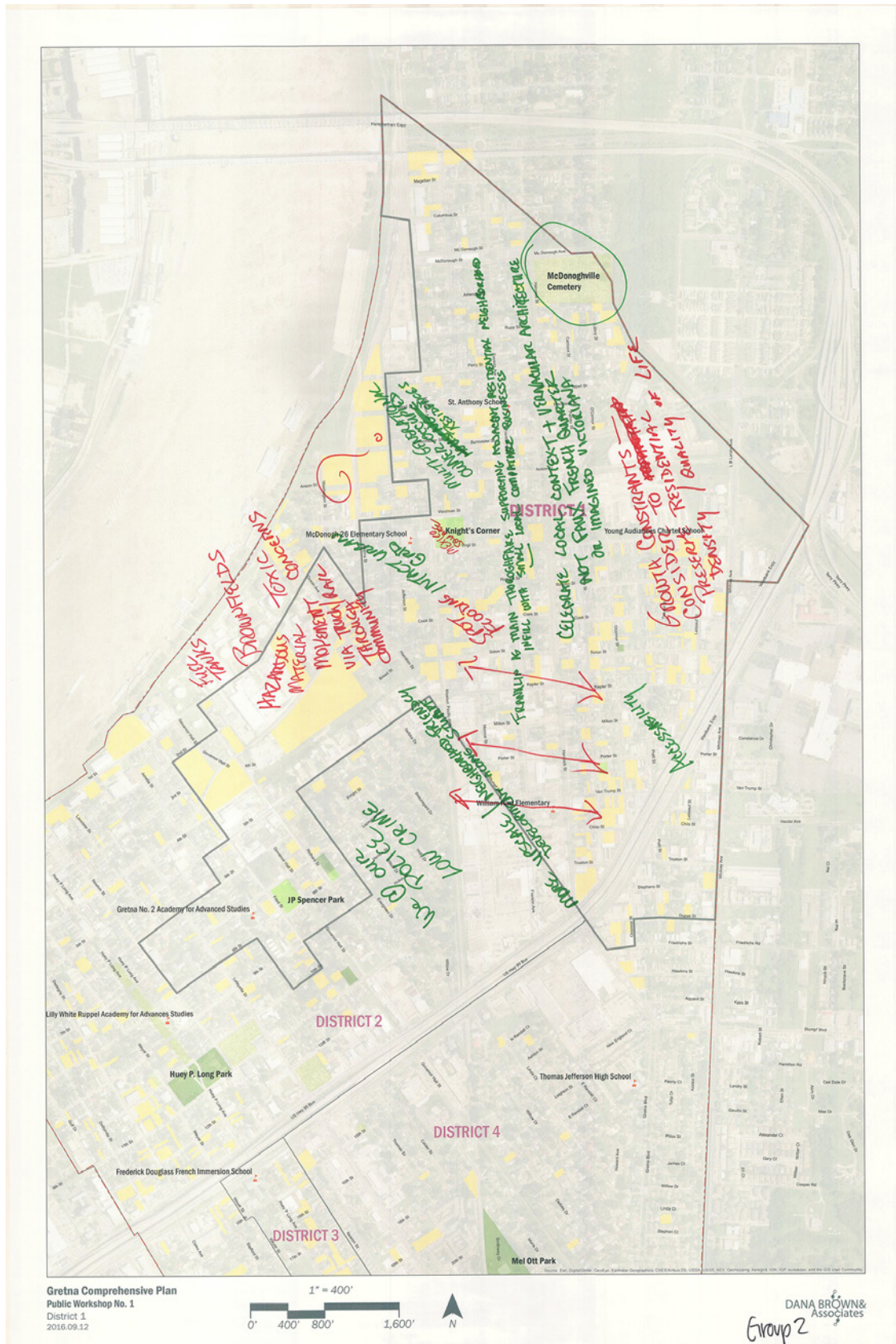
Public Workshop No. 1, Districts 3 & 4 - Group Presenting

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



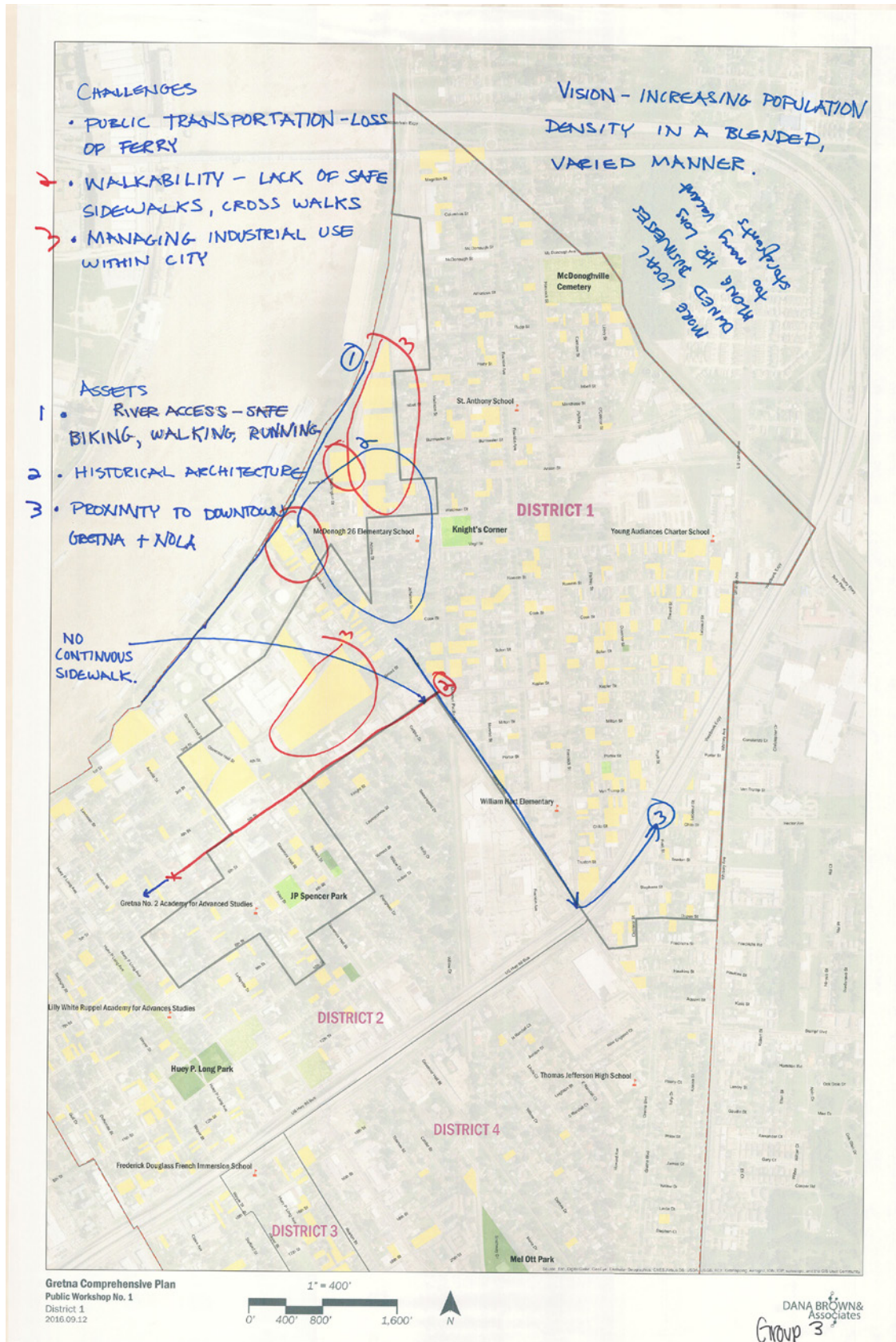
Public Workshop No. 1: District 1, Group 1

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



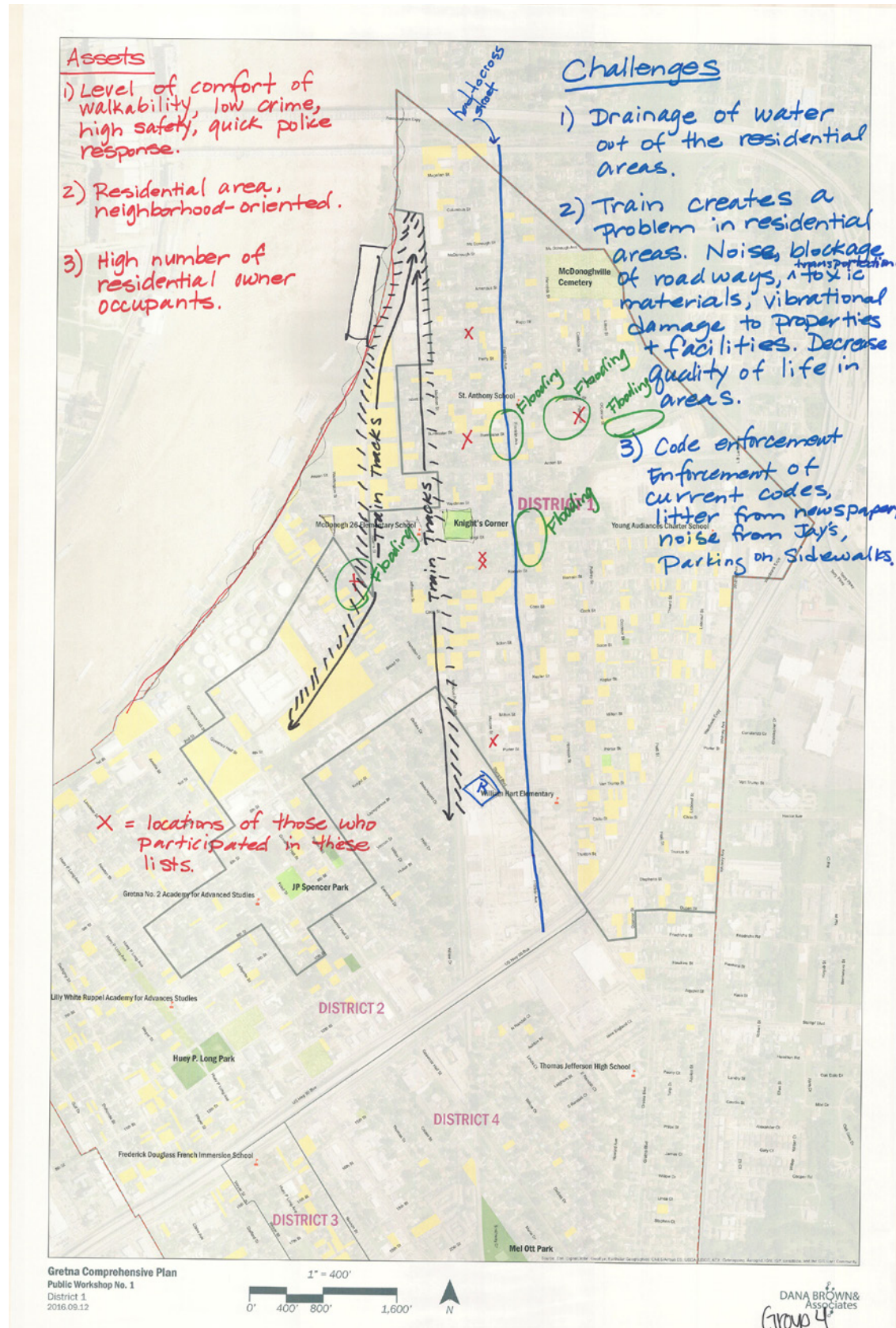
Public Workshop No. 1: District 1, Group 2

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



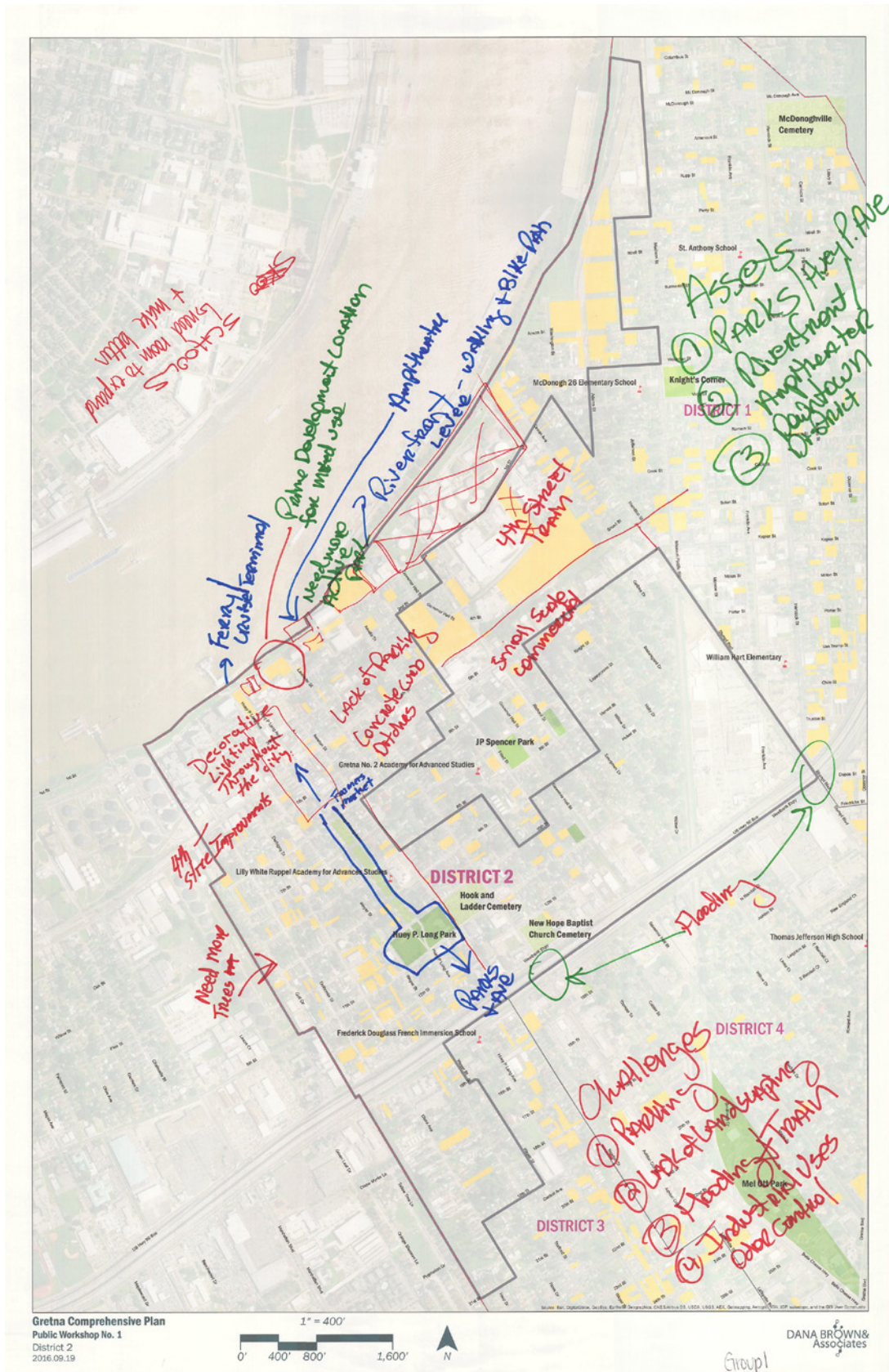
Public Workshop No. 1: District 1, Group 3

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



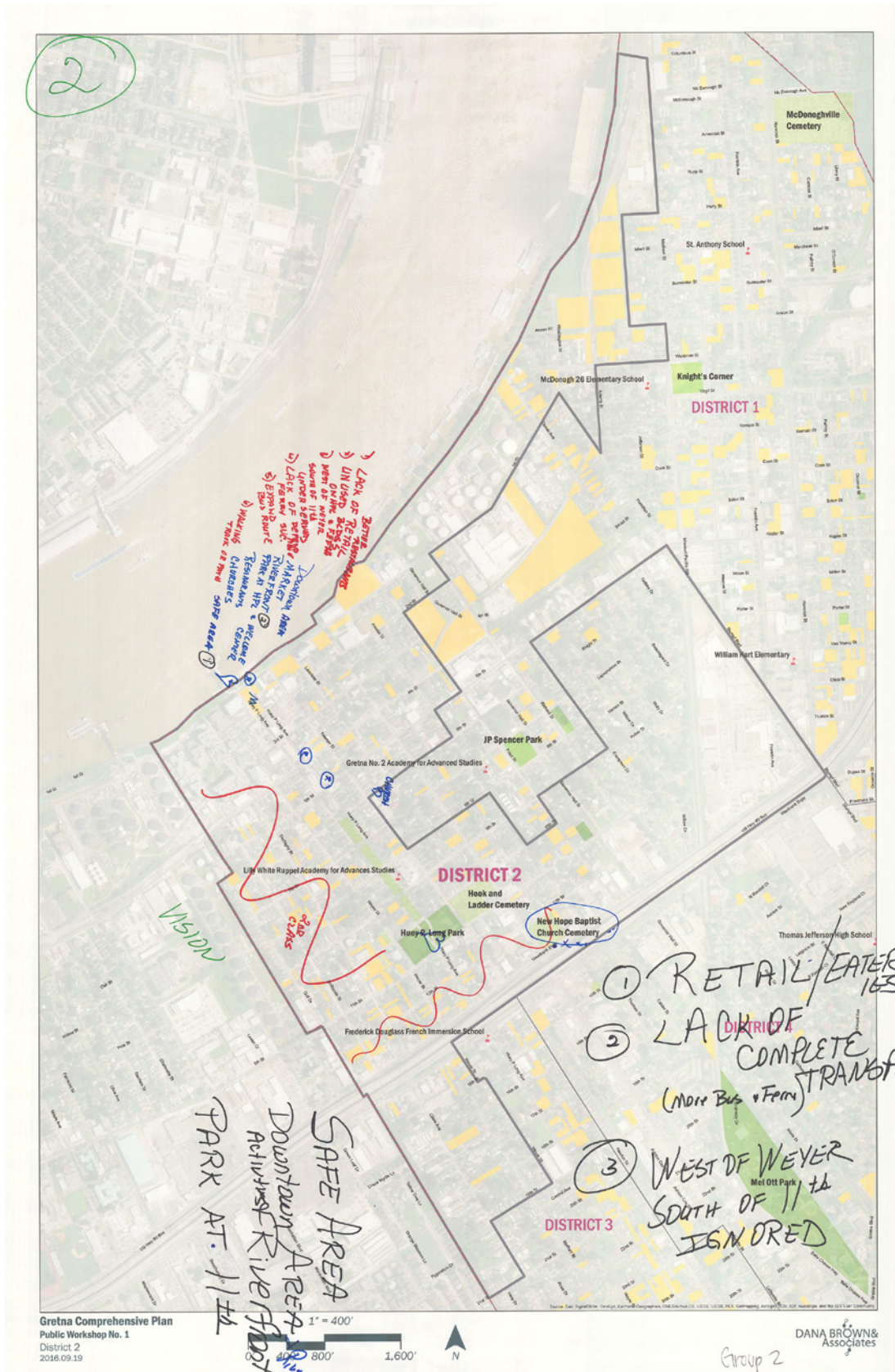
Public Workshop No. 1: District 1, Group 4

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



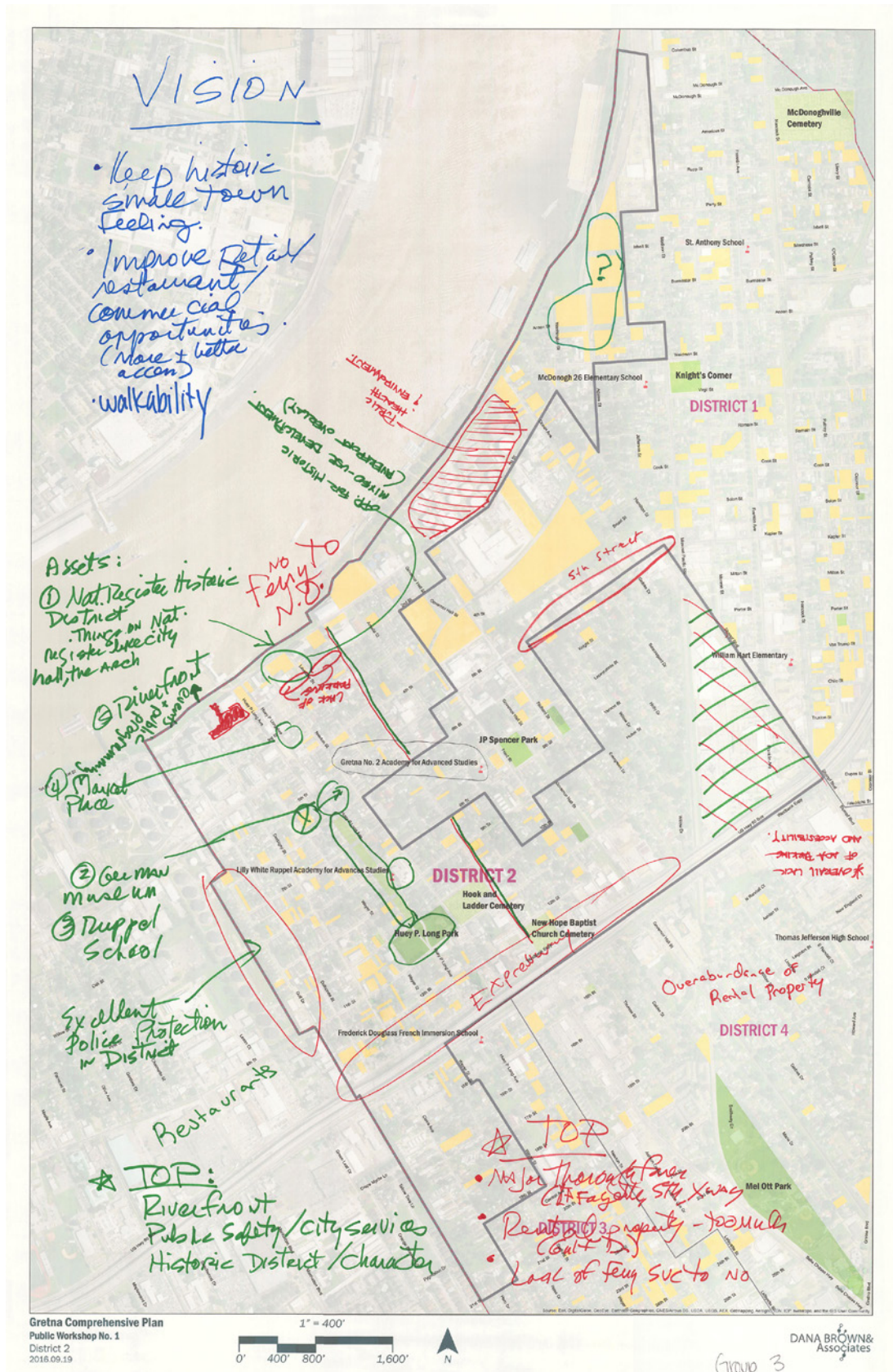
Public Workshop No. 1: District 2, Group 1

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



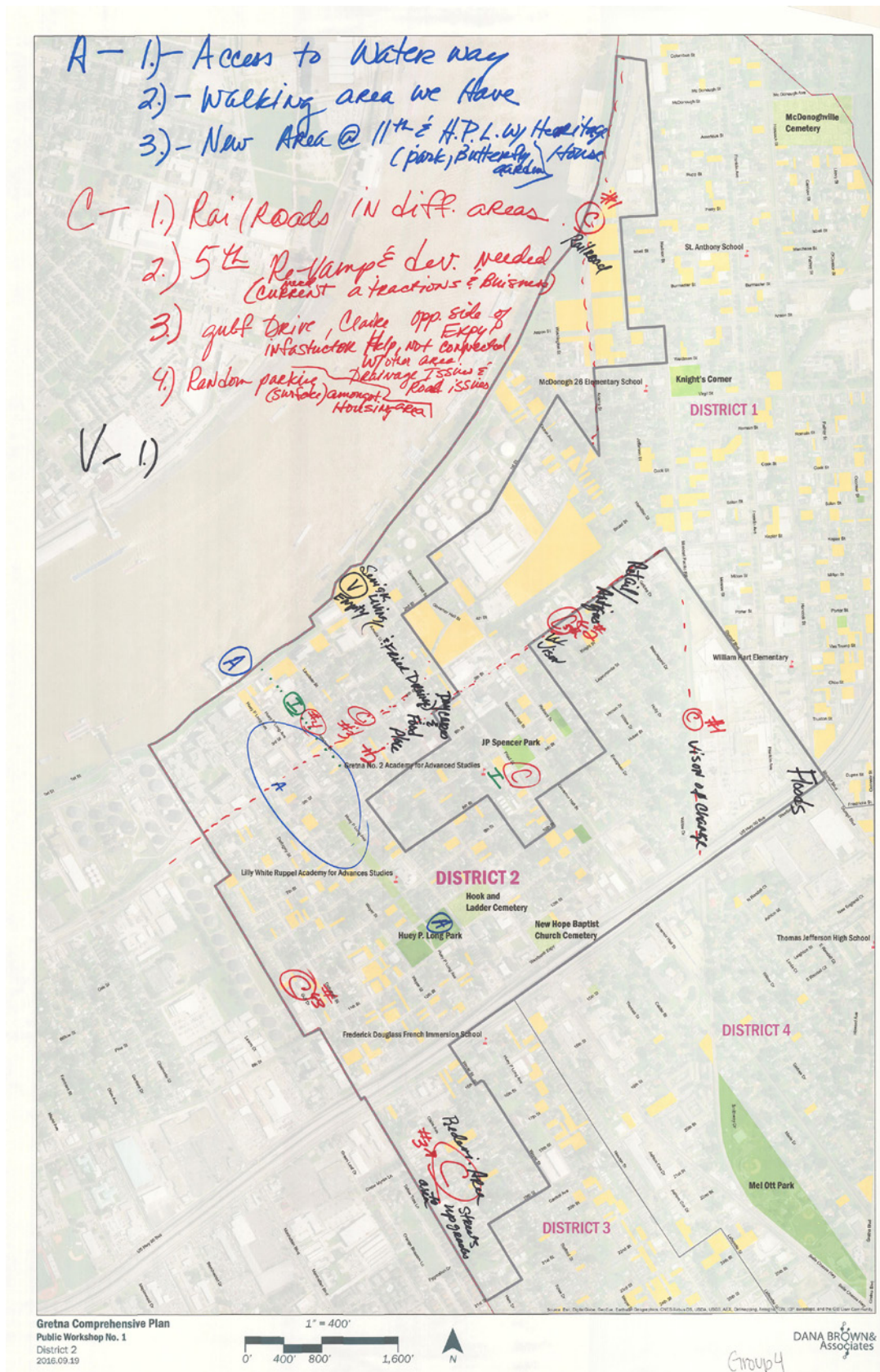
Public Workshop No. 1: District 2, Group 2

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 1: District 2, Group 3

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 1: District 2, Group 3

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 1: Districts 3 & 4, Group 1

Public Workshop No. 1: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work

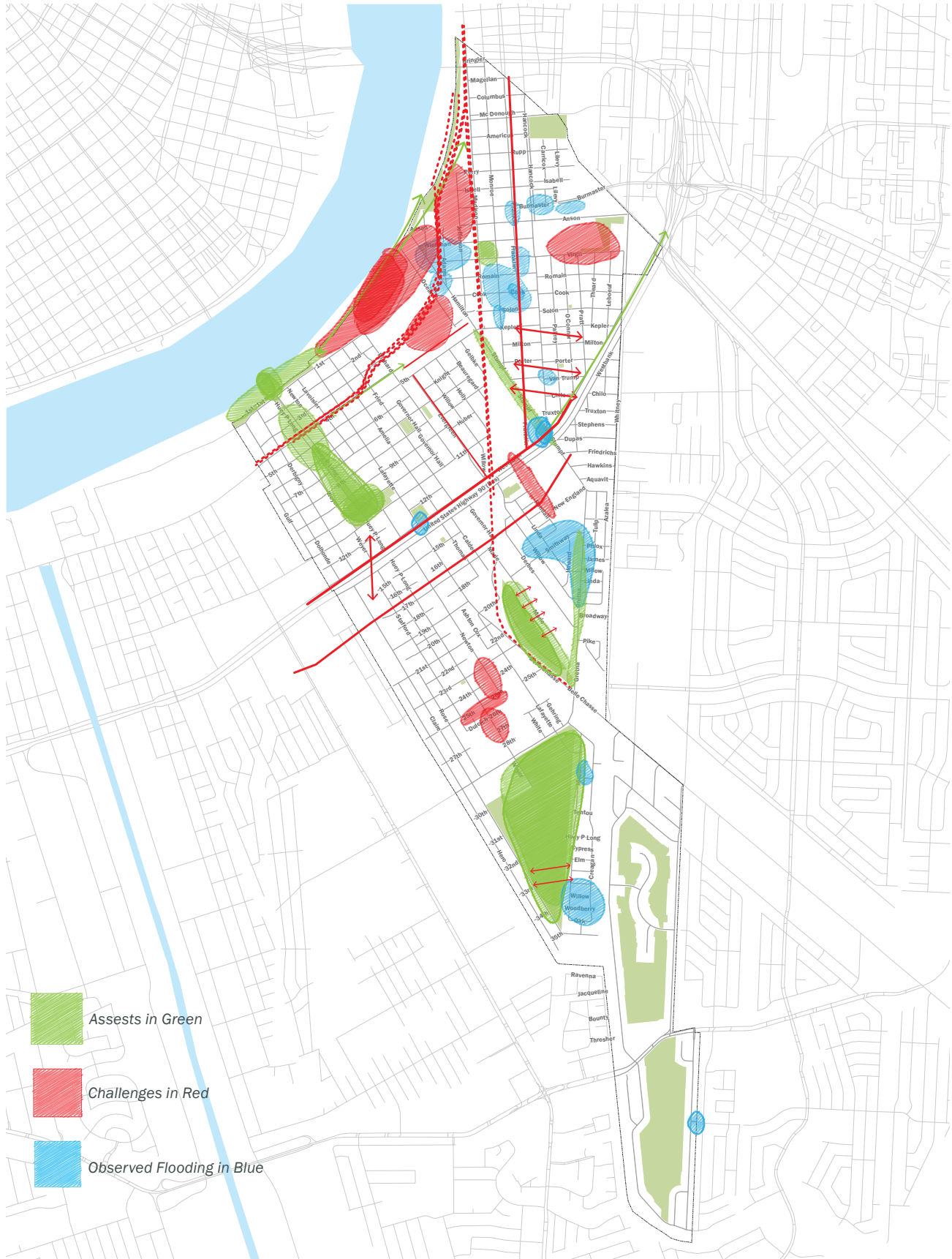


Public Workshop No. 1: Districts 3 & 4, Group 2

0.17



Public Workshop No. 1: Citywide Group Analysis



PUBLIC WORKSHOP NO. 2 - FUTURE SCENARIOS

The second series of public workshops took place in late November and December 2016. There were two public workshops for the four council districts in the City. The workshop for Districts 1 and 2 was held on November 30, and the workshop for Districts 3 and 4 was held on December 7.

The second series of public workshops presented a vision statement for the City of Gretna that was derived from the input at the first series of workshops. The project team then presented a series of visual representations that focused on:

- *Infilling commercial development*
- *Creating mixed-use development*
- *Softening commercial edges*
- *Reducing localized flooding*
- *Creating access to open space*
- *Enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connections and infrastructure*

The attendees were asked to provide their feedback on each of the scenarios, including what they liked and disliked about each one. Overwhelmingly, the community was open to additional commercial and mixed-use infill development, while softening edges and reconfiguring parking in lots and on the street. The attendees were pleased to see a focus on safe transportation for bicyclists and pedestrians, as well as ways to reduce localized flooding through stormwater management. All of these principles combine to create a more attractive place for residents to live, work, and raise a family, which are primary components of the vision statement.

Outreach for the workshops was done through the Comprehensive Plan's Facebook page and website. The City also distributed flyers to civic and religious facilities throughout Gretna, including where the workshops were being held. There were a total of 44 attendees at the second series of public workshops.



Public Workshop No. 2, Districts 1 & 2 - Group in Discussion



Public Workshop No. 2, Districts 3 & 4 - Group in Discussion



Public Workshop No. 2, Districts 3 & 4 - Group in Discussion



Public Workshop No. 2, Districts 1 & 2 - Group Work

PUBLIC WORKSHOP NO. 3 - COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The third and final public workshop was held on April 5, 2017. It was a single, citywide event rather than multiple workshops for different districts. This workshop presented goals and priorities for the City of Gretna to focus on over the next 20 years. The goals were organized into categories for each element of the Comprehensive Plan:

- *Land Use*
- *Economic Development*
- *Housing*
- *Transportation*
- *Community Design*
- *Parks and Recreation*
- *Infrastructure*
- *Environmental*
- *Historic Preservation*

Attendees were tasked with prioritizing the goals for the City to consider moving forward. The second portion of the workshop was divided among neighborhoods. Each neighborhood had a station where residents were asked to place stickers on where they wanted projects to be focused in their area of town. The project stickers were divided into the following topics:

- *Transit options*
- *Increase tree canopy*
- *Gateways*
- *Mixed Use*
- *Overcome Barriers*
- *Revitalize Areas*
- *Improve Bike/Walkability*
- *Commercial Corridors*
- *Naturalize Canals & Water Features*
- *Improve Intersections*

The neighborhood maps and prioritization of goals were used in determining future implementation projects for each neighborhood as well as the City as a whole.

Outreach for the workshop was done through the Comprehensive Plan's Facebook page and website. The City of Gretna also included the flyer for the event on the back of residents' water bills. Flyers were distributed to civic and religious facilities throughout Gretna, including the Mel Ott Multi-Purpose Center where the workshop was being held. There were a total of 81 attendees at the third public workshop.



Public Workshop No. 3 Presentation



Public Workshop No. 3 Group Work




Public Workshop No. 3 Group Work

Public Workshop No. 3: Prioritizing Goals Group Work

Each attendee was given a set of stickers to be placed on one goal from each Element that they believed should be the priority for the City moving forward. The following are the goals from each Element that received the most stickers. Note: color of stickers is insignificant.


LAND USE

GOAL 2:
Establish design and planning standards for major roadway projects that effect residential properties to ensure that development is context sensitive.




ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 3:
Actively recruit new retail to address underrepresented opportunities.




HOUSING

GOAL 2:
Promote the small town character and strong community in Gretna.



TRANSPORTATION

GOAL 3:
Leverage resources to support returning the Canal Street ferry service.



INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL 2:
Create a capital improvement plan to prioritize the infrastructure that needs maintenance, rehabilitation, or repair.



COMMUNITY DESIGN

GOAL 3:
Revitalize underutilized areas of the City and combat blight and neglect. Encourage commercial infill for existing vacant lots and buildings.



PARKS & RECREATION

GOAL 3:
Improve Gretna's parks by softening edges and replacing existing chain link fencing with more neighborhood sensitive alternatives.



ENVIRONMENTAL

GOAL 1:
Improve water quality of stormwater runoff throughout the City. Renaturalize canals and develop riparian buffers along water corridors.

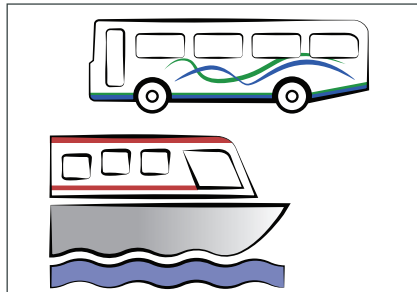


HISTORIC PRESERVATION

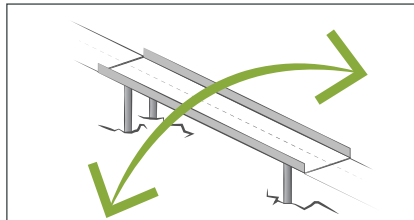
GOAL 1:
Utilize Gretna's history and unique cultural heritage to promote local businesses and tourism.



Public Workshop No. 3: Icons Representing Desired Improvements for the Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Transit Options



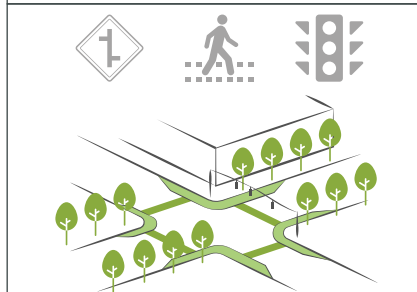
Overcome Barriers



Revitalize Areas



Increase Tree Canopy



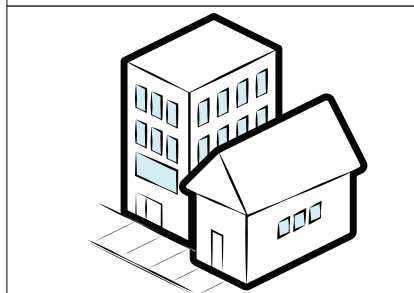
Improve Intersections



Gateways



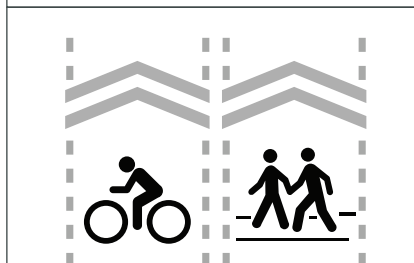
Naturalize Canals/Water Features



Mixed Use



Commercial Corridors



Improve Bike & Walkability

Public Workshop No. 3: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 3: Bellevue Neighborhood Group Work

Public Workshop No. 3: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 3: Jonestown Neighborhood Group Work

Public Workshop No. 3: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 3: McDonoghville Neighborhood Group Work

Public Workshop No. 3: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 3: New Garden Park Neighborhood Group Work

Public Workshop No. 3: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 3: Old Garden Park Neighborhood Group Work

Public Workshop No. 3: Neighborhood Mapping Group Work



Public Workshop No. 3: Timberlane Neighborhood Group Work

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