

IRISH HILL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

FINAL

OCTOBER 2002



Section I - Foreword



FOREWORD

Irish Hill is perched on the east edge of downtown Louisville. Its location makes our neighborhood a key to achieving Mayor Armstrong's plan of making Louisville a city in which to "live, work, and play." Our neighborhood carries all these qualities: residences minutes from downtown, places of employment along the edge of downtown, and parks that anchor the ends of the neighborhood. Irish Hill carries potential for filling housing needs, preserving historical character, and being progressive in community building. However, in recent years many adverse land uses have diminished neighborhood quality of life and the character of the neighborhood's residential fabric.

The purpose of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan, therefore, is to:

- ensure correct and compatible land use and zoning
- to highlight and promote the neighborhood's historical character
- to identify community needs
- to prepare a plan of action to secure the neighborhood's future



Section II - Plan Process



PLAN PROCESS

Work to develop this Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan commenced in January, 2002, following the appointment by Mayor David L. Armstrong of a neighborhood planning task force pursuant to City of Louisville ordinance No. 22, Series 1980¹, which guides the development of plans for City of Louisville neighborhoods. The Louisville Development Authority (LDA), the city's principal community planning and development agency, was authorized by Mayor Armstrong to conduct the planning process. LDA, in turn, asked the Louisville Community Design Center (LCDC) to assist in plan development. The cost of the planning process was supported both through LDA's annual operating budget, as well as through grants from First Ward Alderwoman Tina Ward-Pugh and Fifth Ward Alderman Steve Magre.

Following the framework prescribed by Ordinance No. 22, Series 1980, the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan Task Force developed a set of plan goals and conducted neighborhood surveys intended to reveal needs for neighborhood repair and improvement. With the completion of these assessments, as well as the articulation of plan goals, the task force completed their deliberations by developing objectives and strategies associated with each of the plan goals.

¹ Relevant chapters and sections are included as an appendix.



Section III Background

Mr. Guthrie from the Committee of Finance to whom was referred a Resolution authorizing said committee to purchase a site for a Grave yard for the upper part of the City. Report, that they have contracted with Joseph Chamberlain for one hundred acres of land known as “the Cave Spring tract” at \$100 per acre. ...

The Committee think the purchase should be made. The 100 acres will furnish an excellent site for a work & poor House, and has excellent stone quarries on it, and will be extensive enough for a grave yard in all time to come. ...

Journal of the [City of Louisville] Common Council, 7 December 1835.

Resolved, that his honor the Mayor be and is hereby authorized and requested to rent out for the term of one year the Cave Hill farm (belonging to the City) or so much thereof as may be necessary for the Protection and Preservation of the Premises reserving the Stone quarries, Pest house and as much ground as may be necessary for the opening and establishing of a Public burying ground.

Journal of the Common Council, 5 March 1838.²



² from Cave Hill Cemetery: A Pictorial Guide and Its History, by Samuel W. Thomas, p. 38. Cave Hill Cemetery Company, Louisville. 1985.



BACKGROUND

Despite the rather slow pace of residential subdivision east of [downtown] Louisville, numerous industrial and institutional activities had taken root in the area by the mid 1850's. As a consequence of the abundant quantities of high quality limestone that undergirded the city, numerous stone quarries dotted the landscape along the Shelbyville and Louisville Turnpike at its southern branch, now Lexington Road. These quarries no doubt accounted for the decision in 1850 to move the city's workhouse from its original location on Chestnut Street between Eighth and Ninth streets to a new site in the vicinity of Payne Street and its present intersection with Lexington Road near Cave Hill Cemetery. ...³

While residential development did not particularly accompany the establishment of institutional and industrial activities along the turnpikes which entered Louisville from the east, some residential subdivisions did begin to emerge along the east side of the South Fork of Beargrass Creek during the 1850's. ...

Lying to the north of Highland [Avenue] is the neighborhood which is today known as Irish Hill. It is bounded on the west by Baxter Avenue, which in the mid-nineteenth century was part of Bardstown Pike, on the south by Eastern Cemetery, on the north by Beargrass Creek, and on the east by the Clifton neighborhood. Once known as Billy Goat Hill, after the hundreds of goats which grazed on the hillside on Whaley's goat farm, the neighborhood's first dated subdivision was Adams and Hull's Addition, which was laid out in 1859 by Benjamin J. Adams and John J. Hull. Bounded on the north by Lexington and Payne Street on the south, this single subdivision forms the heart of the neighborhood. In 1864, Ward Payne subdivided the land between Eastern Cemetery and the street that bears his surname, and in 1884 William Schneikert and George Schuele resubdivided the lots in Adams and Hull's Addition demarcated by Cooper Street, Hull Street, Pine Street, and Lexington Road.

Like other districts in the vicinity, nineteenth century Irish Hill had its local slaughter house, known as the Beargrass Creek Pork House, located on a lot bounded by Work House Road (now Lexington Road), Baxter Avenue, Hull Street and Cooper Street. But [Irish Hill] was primarily a residential neighborhood, consisting mostly of frame shotgun houses with a scattering of brick homes along the north side of Payne Street between

³ "A History of Eastern Louisville," by Carl E. Kramer, p. 46. Louisville Survey East Report. City of Louisville, Community Development Cabinet. October, 1979.

Cooper and Pine streets and along the west side of Baxter Avenue between Hull and Payne.

The largest house in the neighborhood is a handsome Renaissance Revival structure built around 1869 for Louisville tobacco merchant Nicholas Finzer. Located at 1212 Hull Street, the Finzer house is a two-story brick structure of symmetrical arrangement with a central entry way flanked by two windows on either side of the first floor. Finzer himself arrived in Louisville in 1853, having emigrated from Switzerland with his parents and four older brothers. In 1866 the brothers established the Five Brothers Tobacco Works. Although the initial operation was small, it prospered quickly and grew steadily. Twenty-three years after the company was founded, Nicholas Finzer succeeded to the presidency, and under his leadership the firm became one of the largest manufacturers of plug and smoking tobacco in the United States. ...⁴

⁴ Kramer, pp. 48-49.



Section IV – History of Irish Hill



HISTORY

The Irish Hill Neighborhood includes a colorful and varied past that has added to its future. The original neighborhood was created through the establishment of homes where the workers of the adjacent “packing houses” lived. One of the original maps of the neighborhood indicates numerous “meat packing” businesses along Lexington Road and several growing neighborhoods to the southeast of these locations.

In late 1878 the Work House opened at the intersection of Lexington Road and Payne Street. Prisoners were brought in shackled and broke stone in the quarry. Stones from the quarry were used in forming the street curbs in the neighborhood. The prison office later burned in a tremendous fire, yet the Work House still stands. The Work House grounds are now known as Breslin Park, which was attained and developed for the neighborhood with the help of Alderman, Melissa Mershon.

The original St. Brigid’s Church was located at the corner of Payne Street and Bishop Street but eventually moved to its present location in the Original Highlands neighborhood. The parishioners were none too happy, so the Archdiocese of Louisville sent Father Joseph A. O’Grady to lead the heavily Catholic population of Irish Hill. The middle initial of Fr. O’Grady’s name may have been how the parish came to be called St. Aloysius. However the name, St. Aloysius was the cornerstone for the Irish Hill neighborhood and the source for the development in the future.

On May 3, 1890, The St. Aloysius church was dedicated in standing room only. The little church was considered very beautiful. The highlight was the Gothic Altar, which was donated by Mr. James Morrison. By 1905, the parish school was complete with over 100 pupils attending.

A sampling of the 1895 city directory notes the following professions were held by residents in the Irish Hill Neighborhood: huckster, carpenter, grocer, shoemaker, seamstress, firemen, stock trader, railroad employees, saloon keeper and plumber. At this time, there were around 300 families in the Irish Hill neighborhood.

Irish Hill was a bustling small neighborhood surrounded by Baxter Train Station, Kentucky Distillery and Warehouse – the largest whiskey warehouse in the world and Cave Hill Cemetery. The neighborhood contained a number of neighborhood businesses such as Roppel’s Grocery, Stottmans’ Café, Doll Lumber, Otte’s Grocery and Seitz’s Drug Store.

The 1930's were painful years for the members of Irish Hill. Irish Hill was not a wealthy neighborhood, yet it was strong, close-knit and proud. The community survived the financial and unemployment problems of the times.

The flood of 1937 frightened the neighbors of Irish Hill, but the waters never reached beyond the bottom of the hill at Baxter Ave. The sewers backing up caused the greatest hardship on the neighborhood besides the many hours the residents put in helping the people who were coming across the pontoon bridge to get to the higher ground of the "hill." The National Guard and local fold constructed the bridge of whiskey barrels from the distillery. It passed over the flooded area to the safety of Irish Hill. Food was scarce and the parishioners of St. Aloysius aided over 20000 people with food and shelter until they were moved on the Highlands or Crescent Hill for refuge.

Until 1944, Irish Hill residents were almost exclusively Catholic and St. Aloysius' school needed to expand. In 1947, the new 3-story school was dedicated on August 31st.

The small neighborhood continued amongst the growth of commercial businesses all around. The firehouse on Rogers St. closed and many of the neighborhood businesses ceased to exist. Yet, the neighbors, some of whom were third generation Irish Hill families, stayed strong and proud. The first Irish Hill Neighborhood Association was established in 1978 and introduced the neighborhood saying, "Love thy neighbor, Keep the Ten Commandments and when you die you will go to Irish Hill.

In 1996, the Archdiocese of Louisville closed the church and school of St. Aloysius after a diligent struggle by the parishioners with local church officials and appealing directly to Rome. The parish was 106 years old and a true deep loss to the community of Irish Hill.

The newly developed Irish Hill neighborhood Association is again on the rise to improve and preserve our unique neighborhood. The pride of this small neighborhood is larger than ever.



Section V – General Description



GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Irish Hill neighborhood is located on land rising from the Ohio River and Beargrass Creek floodplains, a site that is likely the northernmost escarpment of an extensive limestone formation that under girds the several Louisville neighborhoods known as “The Highlands.” Because the uplands of the neighborhood are drained both by the Middle and South forks of Beargrass Creek – which converge at the north central corner of Irish Hill – the neighborhood is not highlands alone, but highlands and lowlands combined. The Middle Fork of Beargrass Creek descends into the neighborhood from Cherokee Park through a valley parallel to Lexington Road that was engineered in the 1960’s during the construction of U.S. Interstate 64. The creek then returns briefly to its original stream bed as it nears Payne Street, crossing back and forth under Lexington and then under Payne before completing its course at its convergence with the South Fork near Mellwood Avenue. This final segment of Beargrass, from Payne to Mellwood, is concealed from view by surrounding industrial development, although the creek makes itself known to these properties – and to the neighborhood generally – during seasonal floods. In 1997 one such flood caused significant property damage throughout the neighborhood, a reminder that not all of Irish Hill is, in fact, on a hill high and dry.

Just as the most significant natural features of the neighborhood are a limestone rise and a creek valley below, the other features defining the neighborhood’s settlement pattern are its transportation infrastructure – i.e., major and minor streets and alleys, and a railroad. Lexington Road, traveling roughly parallel to Beargrass Creek, generally bisects the neighborhood, with the majority of Irish Hill’s residences standing to the south and west of Lexington Road, and the majority of its industrial properties standing to the north and east. Lexington Road is a heavily-traveled arterial, being a segment of U.S. 60 and a traditional commuter route connecting downtown Louisville to Shelbyville Road and to eastern Jefferson County. To the west of Payne Street on the north side of Lexington Road is located a twenty-three acre scrap metal processing facility which has long dominated the landscape and character within this district of the neighborhood. Currently owned by River Metals LLC, the firm has indicated its intentions to vacate and to market the facility within the coming five years. Even in the presence of this and other industrial and commercial neighbors, a neat row of bungalow homes stand along the same north side of Lexington, buffered from River Metals by a heavily wooded swale serving a small tributary of Beargrass Creek.

Meanwhile, Payne Street transects the neighborhood southwest to northeast, and itself serves as a major arterial connecting Baxter Avenue to the Clifton neighborhood and subsequently to Frankfort Avenue. Together, Lexington Road and Payne Street present mixed blessings to Irish Hill, making the neighborhood highly accessible yet constantly impacting the neighborhood with heavy volumes of through traffic, speeding, and recklessness. Because Lexington and Payne intersect practically at the center of the neighborhood, it is no wonder that this intersection of two heavily-traveled thoroughfares is the site of frequent traffic accidents. At this same intersection stands a landmark complex of brick and heavy timber industrial structures – originally a whiskey distillery and associated warehouses – that has been converted to successful office complex known as Distillery Commons. Ironically, while there is much vacant and underutilized land in the vicinity, the owners of Distillery Commons have been unable to convert their last historic warehouse structure at the corner of Payne and Lexington due to the lack of on-site parking.

Baxter Avenue, one of Louisville's earliest turnpikes out of downtown, forms Irish Hill's western edge, while Interstate 64 – one of the city's newest turnpikes – comprises the neighborhood's eastern boundary. The northern edge of Irish Hill is effectively defined by the rail bed and elevated viaduct of the CSX railroad as it passes from neighboring Clifton in the east and turns toward South Louisville. While the official neighborhood boundaries claim a triangle of land north of the railroad along Mellwood and Spring, the neighborhood's reach effectively ends at the Spring Street railroad overpass.

In addition, Irish Hill claims a dogleg of land extending along Lexington Road south from Payne Street to Grinstead Drive. This strip of land – bounded on either side by Lexington Road and Interstate 64, with Beargrass Creek as its approximate center line – includes a commercial and office node extending northwest along Lexington Road from Grinstead, as well as a less intensively developed and undeveloped segment of Lexington Road extending northwest from the Grinstead commercial node to the confluence of Lexington Road and Spring Street.

Spring Street itself serves as the neighborhood's other principal thoroughfare, although its importance as a passageway is secondary to that of Lexington Road or Payne Street. Spring Street, which connects Lexington Road and U.S. 60 to Mellwood Avenue, Story Avenue, the Butchertown neighborhood and downtown Louisville, is characterized by the same mix of land uses typical of Irish Hill, including commercial and industrial uses as well as more modestly-scaled businesses, traditional corner business establishments, and several contiguous rows of “shotgun” style single-family homes.

The core of Irish Hill's residences, however, stand along a few blocks of secondary streets on both sides of Payne on the neighborhood's west side – the hill rise from which the neighborhood takes its name. The lay of these streets is in the pattern typical of Louisville's nineteenth century neighborhoods: rectilinear streets supported by alleys at the rear, with relatively long and narrow building lots occupied by similarly long and narrow (“shotgun”) residences. These several residential blocks along Rogers, Payne, Hull, Cooper and Pine streets are composed almost exclusively of single family homes,

with only a few exceptions – most notably the Finzer House on Hull Street and Valentine House on Pine Street. Each of these historic structures was originally a mansion home built by a prominent early Louisville family, and later converted to a multi-family residence. Within the past decade, a few new residential structures have been built on vacant lots within the neighborhood, including two multifamily condominium structures and a few new single family or duplex structures similar in scale to the shotgun style typical of the area.

Irish Hill's primary residential enclave is bounded by residential and commercial development along Baxter Avenue on the west, by Eastern Cemetery on the south, and by a mix of industrial, residential, and commercial uses along Lexington Road to the north. The greatest point of conflict is along Lexington Road, owing to the close proximity of residential, industrial and commercial land uses, with little or no effective buffers or separation between them. Within this northwest quadrant of the neighborhood is concentrated a number of intensive industrial uses, including meat processing and scrap metal industries. The inherent conflict that has long simmered between these "old" industries and their residential neighbors served both as a principal motive for the development of a neighborhood plan, as well as a principal focus of the task force's thinking.



Section VI – Introduction to Goals



INTRODUCTION TO GOALS

The Irish Hill Neighborhood Association determined early on that their Neighborhood Plan would also be a Strategy Plan. As the Neighborhood Association began early discussions a goals and objectives format was the result of their commitment to the future of the neighborhood.

The Neighborhood Association developed and committed to the following listing of goals and objectives. These goals were always kept in the forefront of their plans and ideas and their consideration is part of the implementation of the future community.



GOALS

The MISSION of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan is to develop strategies and controls that will support a vital residential core within the context of compatible but broadly diverse land uses.

- I. **GOAL:** Improve the cleanliness, air quality, appearance and safety of the neighborhood, including residential, commercial, and industrial areas.
- II. **GOAL:** Encourage a complementary mix of residential and commercial uses but also provide for effective separation of uses to reduce encroachment and conflict. Enforce existing zoning designations, and change zoning where appropriate. Prevent the expansion uses incompatible with the neighborhood. Support and reinforce the neighborhood residential character.
- III. **GOAL:** Improve the appearance, environmental quality, and public enjoyment of the Beargrass Creek Corridor, and increase access to the corridor both for Irish Hill residents and for visitors. Preserve and enhance Lexington Road as a parkway and greenway corridor. Complete and implement master plans for Breslin and Irish Hill parks.
- IV. **GOAL:** Make streets and sidewalks safer and more accessible to residents. Improve traffic safety within the neighborhood, and significantly reduce speeding on neighborhood streets. Enhance the neighborhood's stature as a convenient urban neighborhood by increasing the utility and accessibility of alternative transportation modes (e.g. bus, bicycle, light rail).

- V. **GOAL:** Increase the availability and convenience of residential parking, and reduce commercial parking and parking encroachments within residential areas.
- VI. **GOAL:** Encourage the maintenance and upkeep of all properties through education, volunteerism, advocacy, and regulatory enforcement.
- VII. **GOAL:** Increase neighborhood-serving commercial development within established commercial districts and nodes.
- VIII. **GOAL:** Encourage the down-sizing of industrial activities and the corresponding redevelopment of industrial districts to uses more compatible with the neighborhood's residential core.
- IX. **GOAL:** Preserve the neighborhood's unique historical features, homes, architecture, and individual landmarks (e.g. "The Cave," Distillery Commons, Baxter Avenue Station, Valentine & Finzer Houses, Liebert House, public works and quarry).



***Section VII –
Housing/Neighborhood
Character***



HOUSING and NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Irish Hill has retained a great percentage of its original housing stock, largely comprised of single-family “shotgun-style” structures – both brick and frame – that were built at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Indeed, the neighborhood’s character derives largely from the rows of well-kept shotguns along streets such as Rogers, Hull and Pine, as well as from the twentieth century bungalows that have anchored Lexington amid otherwise adverse industrial surroundings. The task force endorsed voluntary measures that would encourage homeowners and rental property owners to maintain their residences in ways that would reinforce the historic character of the neighborhood. The task force also suggested that the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association establish and disseminate design guidelines for new construction that would ensure the compatibility of new homes and multifamily structures with the architecture and scale of the historic neighborhood.

Meanwhile, Irish Hill is greatly distinguished by the care with which property owners maintain their yards and home landscapes, and by the individuality reflected in the design of each private yard, flower garden, and fencerow. The task force recommended that the neighborhood association take measures to further encourage neighbors to express this pride of place, such as through arranging discounts for plant materials at local stores, by regular features in the neighborhood newsletter highlighting a particular homeowner’s achievement, and annual awards for exceptional contributions to beautifying Irish Hill.

The Irish Hill Neighborhood Association also has formed a Beautification Committee that developed, in conjunction with the neighborhood plan, a number of observations and recommendations regarding activities that could encourage residents and property owners to improve neighborhood appearance, as well as public improvements – such as thematic street lights – that would give Irish Hill a more distinct “feel.” Much of the committee’s thinking is reflected in the goals and objectives of the plan, and the full report of the Beautification Committee is included in the plan’s appendix.

The Task Force wishes to promote a character for Irish Hill based in the neighborhood’s historic residential architecture and infrastructure. To do so, the City must conserve surviving features of the neighborhood’s early infrastructure; notable examples include stone retaining walls, brick sidewalks, intact stone curbs, and brick alleys. In parallel to

conservation of these public features, the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association and appropriate City agencies should promote rehabilitation and property maintenance practices that enhance and preserve the neighborhood's historic architecture, particularly among the single-family homes that constitute the bulk of the neighborhood proper.⁵ In tandem with these preservation policies and approaches, the neighborhood association should adopt voluntary design standards that can serve as a guide to builders and developers wishing to construct in-fill homes and apartments on land within the neighborhood. By monitoring real estate transactions, the neighborhood association could establish an "early warning system" to engage and inform prospective builder/developers about these standards at the very earliest stage.

⁵ Ben Tyler, a building contractor with a long history of involvement in Irish Hill, might be invited to assist the neighborhood in developing affordable standards for rehabilitation and remodeling that could then become a regular feature of the IHNA newsletter.



Section VIII – Land Use/Zoning



LAND USE and ZONING

The zoning recommendations set forth by the task force focus entirely upon reinforcing the residential character of the neighborhood, particularly in areas along Lexington Road where existing residential fabric and character are at risk due to the proximity of intensive industrial and commercial uses. The task force's long-term vision for this segment of Lexington Road is for a more coherent and complementary mix of light industrial, commercial, and residential uses, a vision that will only be accomplished through a redevelopment effort of significant scale and magnitude. For the short run, however, the task force recommends a relatively small number of zoning changes along Lexington Road that will both promote sustained residential use at the affected addresses while reinforcing the value and stability of other residential properties within their immediate vicinity.

And while generally supportive of neighborhood-compatible commercial activities along Baxter Avenue, the task force cautioned against the proliferation of non-conforming business uses in residentially-zoned cottages along Baxter, particularly in the 600 block.

Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan RECOMMENDED ZONING CHANGES

- 1201, 1203, and 1205 Lexington Road. Change from R-7 Residential Multi-Family District to R-6 Residential Multi Family District, consistent both with use and with R-6 zoning predominant in the in the blocks to the immediate south of the subject properties.
- 1211 Lexington Road. Change from M-3 Industrial to R-7 Multi-Family, consistent with use and with Multi-Family residential zoning and use predominant in the blocks to the immediate south of the subject property.
- 1234 Lexington Road. [Lexington House Condominiums] Change from OR-2 Office/Residential to R-7 Multi-Family, consistent with current use as residential condominiums.
- 1234 Lexington Road, *rear*. [Valentine House Condominiums and auxiliary carriage house (separately platted)] Change from OR-2 Office/Residential to R-7 Multi-Family, consistent with current use as residential condominiums.
- 1305 and 1311 Lexington Road. Change from R-7 Residential Multi-Family District to R-6 Residential Multi Family District, consistent both with use and with R-6 zoning and single-family residential use predominant in the in the block to the immediate east of the subject properties.
- 1307 Lexington Road (part). Change from M-3 to R-6 Residential, consistent with the zoning and use predominant in the in the block to the immediate east of the subject property. *NOTE: 1307 is a vacant lot between homes standing at 1305 and 1311 Lexington, and is currently contiguous to and combined with an M-3 property owned by River Metals LLC. This zoning recommendation is only for previously separate parcel at the address 1307 Lexington Road.*
- 1110 - 1180 Neon Way. Change from C-2 Commercial to R-7 Multi-Family, consistent with current use as residential condominiums and with residential zoning and use in the block immediately east.
- Northeast Corner, Baxter Avenue and Payne Street. [Housing Authority of Louisville scattered site] Change from C-2 Commercial to R-7 Multi-Family, consistent with current use as residential apartments and with residential zoning and use in most of the remaining block.



*Section IX – Open
Space/Greenways*



OPEN SPACE, PARKS and GREENWAYS

The task force identified the Middle Fork of Beargrass Creek – extending the length of the neighborhood – as a neighborhood asset whose potential, if fully realized, could dramatically transform the character and environment of Irish Hill.

The task force asserted the importance of preserving the historic and scenic character of the remaining undeveloped section of Lexington Road between the Liebert House and the Beargrass Creek bridge near Payne Street. Consistent with this assertion, the task force recommended that current residential zoning along the corridor be maintained both to preserve the character of the corridor and to prevent the further extension of office or commercial development either from the east or west.

The task force envisions a greenway that would combine the Beargrass Creek valley corridor and the section of Lexington Road between Grinstead and Payne to create a linear park connecting Irish Hill to Cherokee Park. This parkway plan would promote a coordinated approach along this segment of Lexington Road so that green space and private development would be integrated in an effective and compatible manner. The greenway along Beargrass Creek would increase recreational opportunities along this segment of the creek corridor, while providing an amenity for new private development along Lexington Road, which would in turn be designed in a way that would contribute to overall setting. In recognition of the property's important contribution to the character of this segment of Lexington Road, the task force expressed a strong preference in favor of preservation of the Liebert property and landscape.

Meanwhile, the Louisville and Jefferson County Parks Department has been working with the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association to develop plans for the improvement of both Breslin Park and Irish Hill Park. Consistent with their vision of establishing a Lexington Road greenway, the task force urged the department to complete and to implement plans for the improvement of both parks.

The task force expressed concern about the current status and long-term maintenance of Eastern Cemetery, and recommended that the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association remain continuously apprised of the situation until permanent measures are in place to ensure the cemetery's permanent care.



***Section X – Neighborhood
Commercial***



NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

Neighborhood-serving businesses and commercially-zoned properties are well distributed throughout Irish Hill at four principal locations: along Baxter Avenue, at Payne and Cooper streets, at Payne and Lexington Road, and along Spring Street. The most significant conflict that arises from these uses is as the result of insufficient parking during peak business hours, a problem common to older residential neighborhoods with business sites that predate modern parking requirements and one with no ready or easy solutions. The task force cited the history of dialogue between business owners and the neighborhood association in the effort to work through problems and conflict, and encouraged the both parties to continue in that manner. The task force recommended extending the Bardstown Road/Baxter Avenue design overlay district north to Chestnut Street to afford Irish Hill and neighboring Phoenix Hill the power to promote coherent and hospitable design as the popularity and success of the Bardstown Road corridor migrates north along Baxter Avenue.



***Section XI – Lexington Road
Industrial Corridor***



LEXINGTON ROAD INDUSTRIAL CORRIDOR

As their long-term vision, the task force foresees wholesale redevelopment of the Lexington Road industrial corridor, especially northwest of the intersection of Payne and Lexington. To accomplish this goal, the Task Force recognizes that market forces, along with modest public sector subsidies and incentives, must be brought to bear in order to bring out an effective succession of land use and ownership.

During the neighborhood planning process, the task force convened an urban design assistance team to develop preliminary concepts for such a redevelopment, taking as its inspiration the conversion of the former Bourbon Stock Yards site by the Home of the Innocents and the future construction of an “assisted living facility.” The design assistance team produced concepts for a “transit oriented development district” that would integrate the Beargrass Creek greenway with a mixed- use development centering on the site currently owned and occupied by River Metals LLC. This site, in turn, would derive great additional significance through the proposed creation of a commuter rail station on the CSX railroad line that constitutes the site’s northern boundary. Although the feasibility of the overall redevelopment concept is not tied to the establishment of this commuter rail hub, the design assistance team believes that the positive economic impact and synergy created by this feature would be considerable.

The task force and design assistance team envisioned a plan that would transform the corridor into a district that would feature open space and amenities for public recreation within the existing Beargrass Creek flood plain; an office and light industrial complex occupying the River Metals site and the former slaughterhouse site, Dawson-Baker, compatible with the adjacent Distillery Commons; and a residential district including a multi-family apartment or condominium district as well as a subdivision of detached single-family homes. The overall district would be designed so that the use and density of structures would “step down” from the most intensive to the least intensive so that, in the end, the resulting development will be wholly compatible with both Distillery Commons at one end, and with the single family homes that stand on both sides of Lexington Road between River Metals and Irish Hill Park.



***Section XII – Goals And
Objectives***



GOALS and OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIES

The goals and objectives that constitute the driving core of the neighborhood plan were developed by the task force over a three month period, January – March , 2002.

While the goals provided a framework for the plan, certain goals required extensive research and development by the task force before the plan would be complete. In particular, the Transportation Committee of the task force conducted a block-by-block survey of the neighborhood to identify traffic, transportation and related infrastructure problems, the results of which are included in the plan. Also, the task force's considerations regarding the neighborhood's industrial district led to the discovery that River Metals LLC intends to relocate and consolidate their Lexington Road scrap metal processing facility elsewhere, and therefore to vacate the twenty-three acre Lexington Road site. This discovery diverted the work of the task force for several weeks in order to develop a preliminary master plan for the possible redevelopment of the industrial corridor in keeping with the neighborhood plan's goal of encouraging "the down-sizing of industrial activities and the corresponding redevelopment of industrial districts to uses more compatible with the neighborhood's residential core."

The MISSION of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan is to develop strategies and controls that will support a vital residential core within the context of compatible but broadly diverse land uses.

I. GOAL: Improve the cleanliness, air quality, appearance and safety of the neighborhood, including residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

- A. Determine sources of air pollution affecting Irish Hill, and enact remedies. *[Air Pollution Control District]*
- B. Extend the Bardstown Road Overlay District from Broadway to Chestnut. *[Louisville Development Authority (LDA), City Department of Inspections, Permits, and Licenses (IPL)]*
- C. Develop collaborative relationships and activities with existing public and private beautification efforts *[City Department of Solid Waste Management (SWMS); Brightside]* to clean up and beautify Irish Hill.
- D. Encourage the enforcement of existing health, safety, and property maintenance codes. *[City Inspections, Permits and Licenses (IPL)]*
- E. Develop and enact a program for improvement of existing homes. *[City Department of Housing]*
- F. Produce a guide book with landscaping ideas, tips, and techniques, including discounts from local stores for the purchase of planting materials and supplies. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association, Brightside]*
- G. Organize and implement a Neighborhood Watch program. *[City Department of Neighborhoods]*

II. GOAL: Encourage a complementary mix of residential and commercial uses but also provide for effective separation of uses to reduce encroachment and conflict. Enforce existing zoning designations, and change zoning where appropriate. Prevent the expansion uses incompatible with the neighborhood. Support and reinforce the neighborhood residential character.

- A. Identify land use conflicts and possible zoning remedies, then develop priorities according to probability of success. *[Louisville Development Authority (LDA), County Department of Planning and Development Services (DPDS)]*
- B. Inventory all neighborhood commercial spaces, with priority on vacant or underutilized structures. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*

- C. Approach non-profit housing providers, such as the Phoenix Hill Association or the Housing Authority of Louisville, to explore affordable housing development opportunities. [The Housing Partnership, others]

III. GOAL: Improve the appearance, environmental quality, and public enjoyment of the Beargrass Creek Corridor, and increase access to the corridor both for Irish Hill residents and for visitors. Preserve and enhance Lexington Road as a parkway and greenway corridor. Complete and implement master plans for Breslin and Irish Hill parks.

- A. Identify related plans, programs, and public agency initiatives. *[Mayor's Office, Louisville Development Authority (LDA), Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD), Friends of Beargrass Creek, KY Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Cabinet, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)]*
- B. Determine plans for major developments, acquisitions or ownership transfers (e.g. Beargrass Creek greenway, Klempner Brothers, Waggin' Tail, Liebert, Underwood, Breslin and Irish Hill parks). *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*
- C. Host a Beargrass Creek corridor cleanup event, with canoes and volunteers from the neighborhood and neighborhood-based businesses and industries.
- D. Research federal "Brownfields" remediation grant programs for acquiring and remediation sites within Irish Hill. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association, LDA Brownfields]*

IV. GOAL: Make streets and sidewalks safer and more accessible to residents. Improve traffic safety within the neighborhood, and significantly reduce speeding on neighborhood streets. Enhance the neighborhood's stature as a convenient urban neighborhood by increasing the utility and accessibility of alternative transportation modes (e.g. bus, bicycle, light rail).

See Appendix II/Transportation Plan for details.

V. GOAL: Increase the availability and convenience of residential parking, and reduce commercial parking and parking encroachments within residential areas.

- A. Enforce existing parking regulations. *[City Department of Public Works/Traffic Engineering (DPW), Louisville Division of Police (LPD)]*
- B. Obtain and implement, where appropriate, findings of the 2001 Bardstown Road/Baxter Avenue corridor parking study. *[Louisville Development Authority (LDA), Parking Authority of River City (PARC), University of Louisville/University of Kentucky Urban Design Studio (UK/UL UDS)]*
- C. Identify and address parking encroachments. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association, affected businesses]*
- D. Develop generic design specifications for rear parking prototypes. *[Louisville Community Design Center, Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*
- E. In cooperation with a local lender, establish a low-interest loan pool for construction of rear yard parking improvements. Use aldermanic funds to “buy down” private lender interest rates. *[Local bank or lending institution, Board of Aldermen, Municipal funding, CDBG future capital funding]*

VI. GOAL: Encourage the maintenance and upkeep of all properties through education, volunteerism, advocacy, and regulatory enforcement.

- A. Promote more effective regulation and enforcement of owner-occupied, renter-occupied and industry-occupied buildings and facilities. *[City Department of Inspections, Permits and Licenses (IPL), City Department of Public Works (DPW), Louisville Division of Police (LPD) – First District]*
- B. Invite Home Depot or Lowe’s to sponsor neighborhood workshops on simple home repairs and improvements. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*
- C. Promote community education and volunteerism. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association, Brightside]*
- D. Ensure the sound maintenance and upkeep of public properties, specifically the Public Works Compound, within the neighborhood. *[City Department of Public Works (DPW), Metro Parks]*

VII. GOAL: Increase neighborhood-serving commercial development within established commercial districts and nodes.

- A. Organize and involve business associations to promote and develop neighborhood business districts. *[City/County Office of Business Services, Greater Louisville, Inc. (GLI)]*
- B. Approach individual property owners to promote new, compatible neighborhood commercial development. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*
- C. Promote reuse of the former St. Aloysius sanctuary by another religious institution (i.e. church, temple, mosque) *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*
- D. Invite the Louisville Board of Realtors to a “Neighborhood Showcase” and tour of Irish Hill, intended to increase their awareness of Irish Hill for marketing home-buying opportunities. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*

VIII. GOAL: Encourage the down-sizing of industrial activities and the corresponding redevelopment of industrial districts to uses more compatible with the neighborhood’s residential core.

- A. Contact Klempner Brothers/River Metals LLC and adjacent property owners regarding long-range plans for current industrial sites along Lexington Road. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association, First Ward Alderwoman, Louisville Development Authority (LDA), Housing Partnership]*
- B. Facilitate “brownfields” remediation of current industrial sites, and conversion to more hospitable uses. *[Louisville Development Authority (LDA), Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*

IX. GOAL: Preserve the neighborhood’s unique historical features, homes, architecture, and individual landmarks (e.g. “The Cave,” Distillery Commons, Baxter Avenue Station, Valentine & Finzer Houses, Liebert House, public works and quarry).

- A. Pursue designation of Irish Hill on the National Register of Historic Places, where appropriate. *[Louisville Landmarks Commission]*
- B. Develop a thorough inventory of local landmarks and historic features. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association]*
- C. Develop design guidelines. Develop architectural painting schemes, and a plan for installation of banners, streetlights and historic streetscape fixtures, to accent the neighborhood’s historic character. *[Irish Hill Neighborhood Association – Beautification Committee, Louisville Community Design Center, Landmarks Commission]*





***Section XIII – Plan
Implementation***



PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The objectives associated with each of the goals reflect the best thinking of the task force regarding strategies that might advance the accomplishment of their respective goals. Ultimately, the responsibility for pursuing these strategies will be that of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association, the voluntary association with the greatest stake in the future of the neighborhood. While the goal and objectives list public agencies and organizations that can help to accomplish the goals of the plan, the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association must be the party responsible for engaging these collaborations on behalf of the neighborhood. Furthermore, the agencies and organizations listed represent only a beginning. The neighborhood association must be resourceful and, at times, aggressive in pursuing aid and support from others in the accomplishment of neighborhood goals.

Finally, the goals and objectives of the plan must not be viewed as static prescriptions for neighborhood renewal. Instead, the strategy will always be a work in progress, where the neighborhood association is constantly attuned to both the unmet needs and to unexpected opportunities that will arise to advance the betterment of the neighborhood. Similarly, the extent to which the neighborhood association organizes itself to attend to the various goals and objectives stated here – that is, the ability of the neighborhood to assume full responsibility for accomplishing the goals rather than looking to some external agency – will determine the ultimate value of the neighborhood plan.



Section XIV- Appendix

APPENDIX 1

MAPS

Land Use

Zoning

Topography

Traffic Control

APPENDIX 2



TRANSPORTATION PLAN

- IV. **GOAL:** **Make streets and sidewalks safer and more accessible to residents. Improve traffic safety within the neighborhood, and significantly reduce speeding on neighborhood streets. Enhance the neighborhood's stature as a convenient urban neighborhood by increasing the utility and accessibility of alternative transportation modes (e.g. bus, bicycle, light rail).**

The Transportation Committee for the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association addressed many concerns of the area's residents in public transportation, safety concerns and accessibility of alternative modes of transportation.

The committee performed a variety of surveys to ascertain what the problems were in these three areas. After establishing the categories, the committee set up a rating scale in which they were able to rate the severity of the conditions for improvement. Included within this Neighborhood Plan are samples of the surveys that were designed.

The unformulated goal of the Transportation portion of this Neighborhood Plan includes the desire to begin a relationship with the city agencies so that Irish Hill can help take care of their own problems directly with the appropriate agencies.

For example, in many cases through out the survey results, it was noted that parking violations were occurring. The Irish Hill Neighborhood Association would like to create a system in which these violations are easily communicated to the Louisville Police Department.

Also noted within the survey were several occurrences of substandard and damaged sidewalks. The Irish Hill Neighborhood Association would like to create a system in which these locations are easily communicated to the Department of Public Works in a manner that will be addressed efficiently and timely. Also included within this Plan is a

Capital Improvement Budget that was compiled using budgetary estimates for completing the requested work.

All of the specific violations, locations and necessary improvements are listed separately within the Appendix and indicated graphically on a map.

Public Transportation Transit Authority of River City (TARC)

The Transportation Committee of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association has studied the existing bus routes by the Transit Authority of River City (TARC) and how they intersect with the neighborhood. The conditions of the existing bus stops were also studied. Suggestions and specific requests have been outlined in this section.

The two primary bus routes running through the neighborhood are the #17 and #19. The Transportation Committee is requesting a change in the #19 route in order to facilitate a more convenient and easier access to the #17. The request is to have the #19 stop at the intersection of Lexington and Baxter Rds. in both directions. The connection to the #17 would be convenient and pedestrian traffic would be easily accessible using existing crosswalks.

The Committee is also requesting changes in stops on routes of five (5) other bus runs. (See the Appendix for details.)

The Committee along with many neighborhood businesses would endorse the addition of a weekend shuttle which would operate along Baxter and include stops on Lexington Rd.

The Transportation Committee would like to request a study by TARC to determine the demand for service from 4th and Broadway along a route including Payne, Spring, Mellwood and Frankfort Sts.

Many of the existing bus stops within the Irish Hill neighborhood do not have any type of shelter from the elements. The Transportation Committee is requesting a bench and/or shelter be constructed for these stops. (See Appendix for an itemized listing of these requests.)

The Transportation Committee of Irish Hill Neighborhood Association supports the study and planning of future light and heavy rail endeavors in the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Association is interested in accommodating future plans for alternative modes of transportation adjacent to and directly through the Irish Hill neighborhood.

Included within this Plan is a proposal which includes a “heavy rail” station adjacent to the Irish Hill neighborhood. The Task Force and the Transportation Committee are supportive of the development of this proposal. AREA 2: Safety Concerns

Louisville Police Department

The Task Force and Transportation Committee of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Association would like to initiate a relationship with the Louisville Police Department that would provide assistance and guidance in determining the traffic issues that need to be addressed in the neighborhood. (A listing of specific violations is included within the Appendix.)

The Irish Hill Neighborhood Association wants to continue to make Irish Hill a safe and convenient neighborhood in which to live. Many traffic issues occurring within the neighborhood are related to parking and speeding on neighborhood streets. They range from parking over sidewalks, illegal street parking to excessive speeds on 25 mph streets.

The Neighborhood Association will be planning educational seminars for the residents to inform them of the laws pertaining to parking and speed limits throughout the neighborhood.

The Transportation Committee is concerned with inadequate lighting on many of the neighborhood streets. Specific locations are under study by the Committee and advisement is being requested by the appropriate city agencies.

Department of Public Works

The Transportation Committee has surveyed and researched the condition of the pedestrian accessibility through out the neighborhood. In many areas the sidewalks require repair and in some cases total reconstruction.

The Transportation Committee has prioritized many of the pedestrian safety issues and is requesting additional study and research by the Department of Public Works of the requested changes. The Committee would like consideration given to the addition of 4-way stops at three (3) intersections. Also requested are speed limit signs installed, turn signals at two (2) intersections and the installation of a crosswalk for bus access at one (1) intersection. Details of specific locations are included on the map and within the Appendix.

Capital Improvements

The Transportation Committee executed a walking survey of the entire neighborhood to determine the locations in need of serious repair or total reconstruction of all sidewalks.

Location and Description:

1339-1371 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Sidewalk
1313 Hull	Damaged Sidewalk
1201 Payne	Damaged Sidewalk

445 Baxter	Damaged Sidewalk
1128 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Sidewalk
1400 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Sidewalk
300 Spring St.	Damaged Sidewalk
Payne and Lexington	Damaged Sidewalk
1387 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Sidewalk
1386 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Sidewalk
1381 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Sidewalk
637 Baxter Rd.	Damaged Curb
Lexington Rd./Brewery	Damaged Curb
1202 Lexington Rd.	Damaged Curb
400-402 Cooper Rd.	Damaged Curb
1338 Hull	Replace Sidewalk
Lexington/Pine/Payne	Replace Sidewalk
Payne/Pine/Lexington	Replace Sidewalk
Pine/Hull/Payne	Replace Sidewalk
Baxter/Rogers	Replace Sidewalk

Estimates for Budgetary Purposes:

Demolition of existing curbs and walks	\$3.45/Lineal foot
New Curbing, 6" X 18", straight, wood forms	\$6.45/Lineal foot
New Curbing, 6" X 18", radius, wood forms	\$12.70/Lineal foot
New Sidewalk, concrete, 3000 psi, broom clean finish, No base, 4" thick	\$2.74/Lineal foot

Beargrass Creek and Bikeway

The Transportation Committee has studied the existing bike path along Beargrass Creek. The majority of the concerns for this path are clean up and maintenance of the route. The Committee is requesting additional signage to signify the entrances to the route and also to inform drivers of the presence of cyclists.

The Task Force and Transportation Committee endorse the concept of additional bike routes through out the neighborhood and support the renewal and beautification along Beargrass Creek of a walking/bike path. (See map and Appendix.)



APPENDIX 3

LEXINGTON ROAD REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

Around March, 2002, the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan Task Force learned from River Metals, Inc., owners of a 23-acre industrial site on Lexington Road, that the company plans to vacate its Irish Hill facility within the coming four years. This news prompted the task force to begin considering the redevelopment potential for the corridor in which River Metals (formerly Klempner Brothers) currently operates. The task force's aim was both to suggest alternate uses that would prove more compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood, while ensuring that the current owners of land along the corridor could redevelop their properties to a higher economic use than is currently the case.

The Lexington Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan that accompanies this text was produced as the result of a design workshop convened by the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan Task Force in March, at which time task force members, planners, landscape architects, and architects from the Louisville Development Authority and Louisville Community Design Center conceived an overall schematic plan for the corridor. Following the design workshop, Michael McCoy, ASLA, developed the plan's details on behalf of the task force.

The Lexington Road Corridor Redevelopment Plan is incorporated as an element of the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan adopted by the Irish Hill Neighborhood Plan Task Force in July, 2002. More specifically, the redevelopment plan articulates further **Plan Goal VIII**,

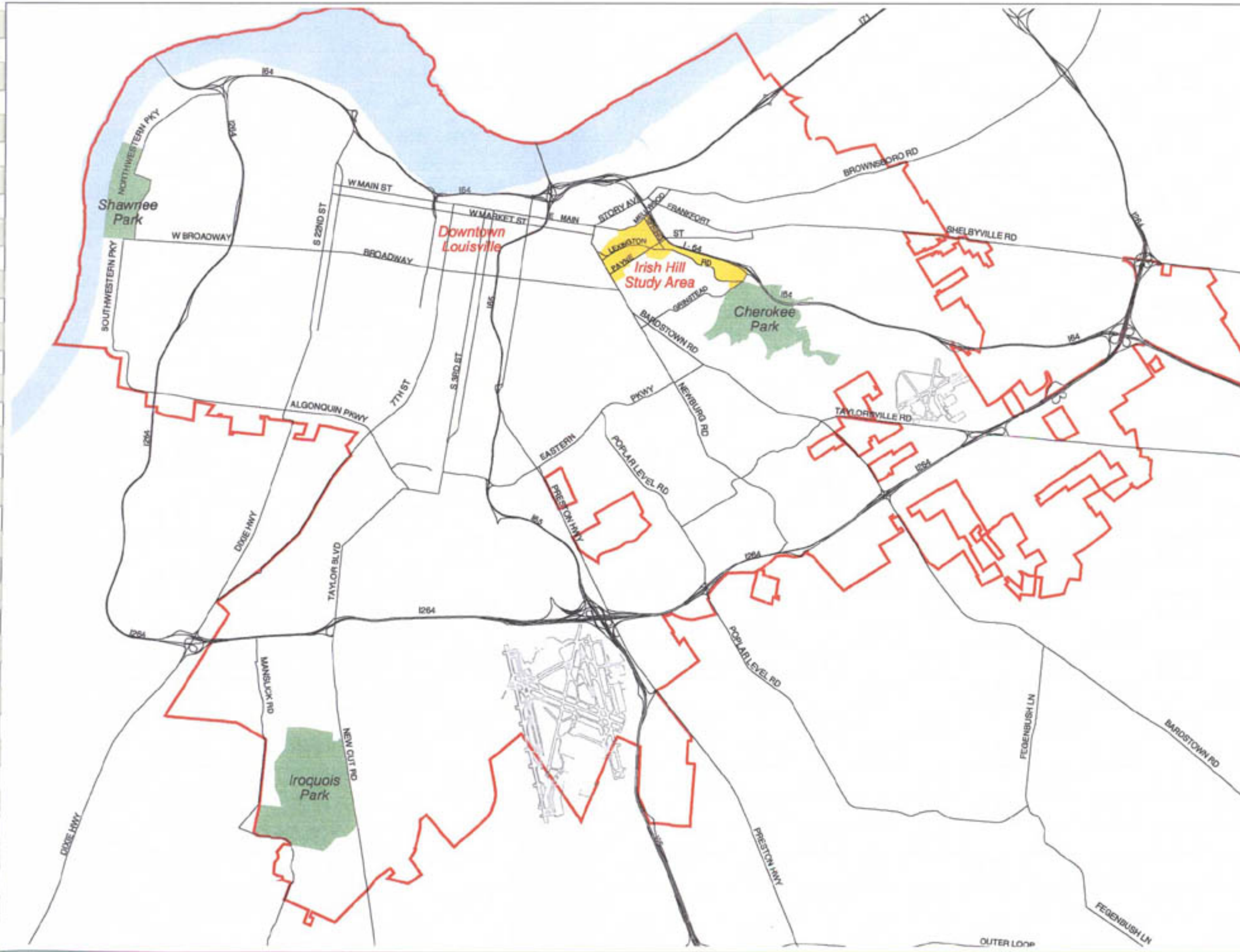
“Encourage the down-sizing of industrial activities and the corresponding redevelopment of industrial districts to uses more compatible with the neighborhood's residential core”

Elements of the Plan. The goals of the Lexington Road Corridor Master Plan are:

- to restore the Beargrass Creek corridor as a greenway, waterway and linear park integral to the Lexington Road corridor specifically and to the Irish Hill neighborhood generally;
- to capitalize on the heavy rail corridor bounding Irish Hill to the north and west by locating a commuter rail station at the point closest to the central business district;
- to convert the heaviest industrial sites to light and clean industrial and commercial use
- to create a “gradient” of uses within the district west of Payne Street that steps down, east to west – from the most intense light industrial use on the River Metals site; to less intense commercial and residential use just west of River Metals; to detached single family use in the zone closest to the historic neighborhood.

Irish Hill Study Area

*In Relation To
The City of Louisville*

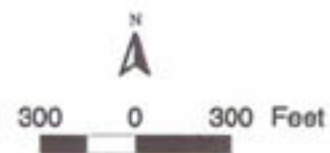
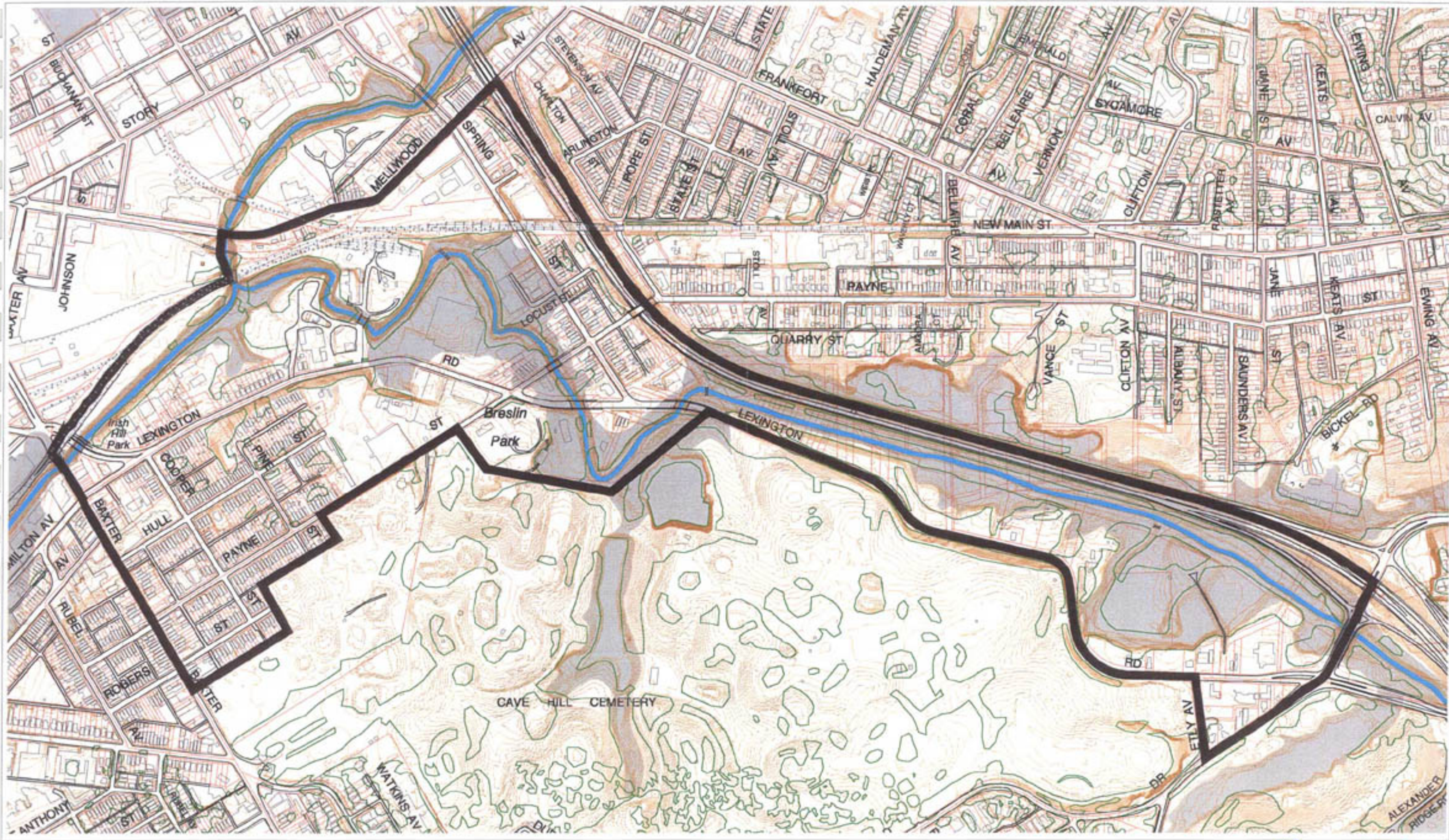


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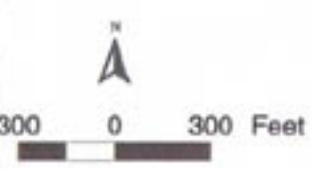
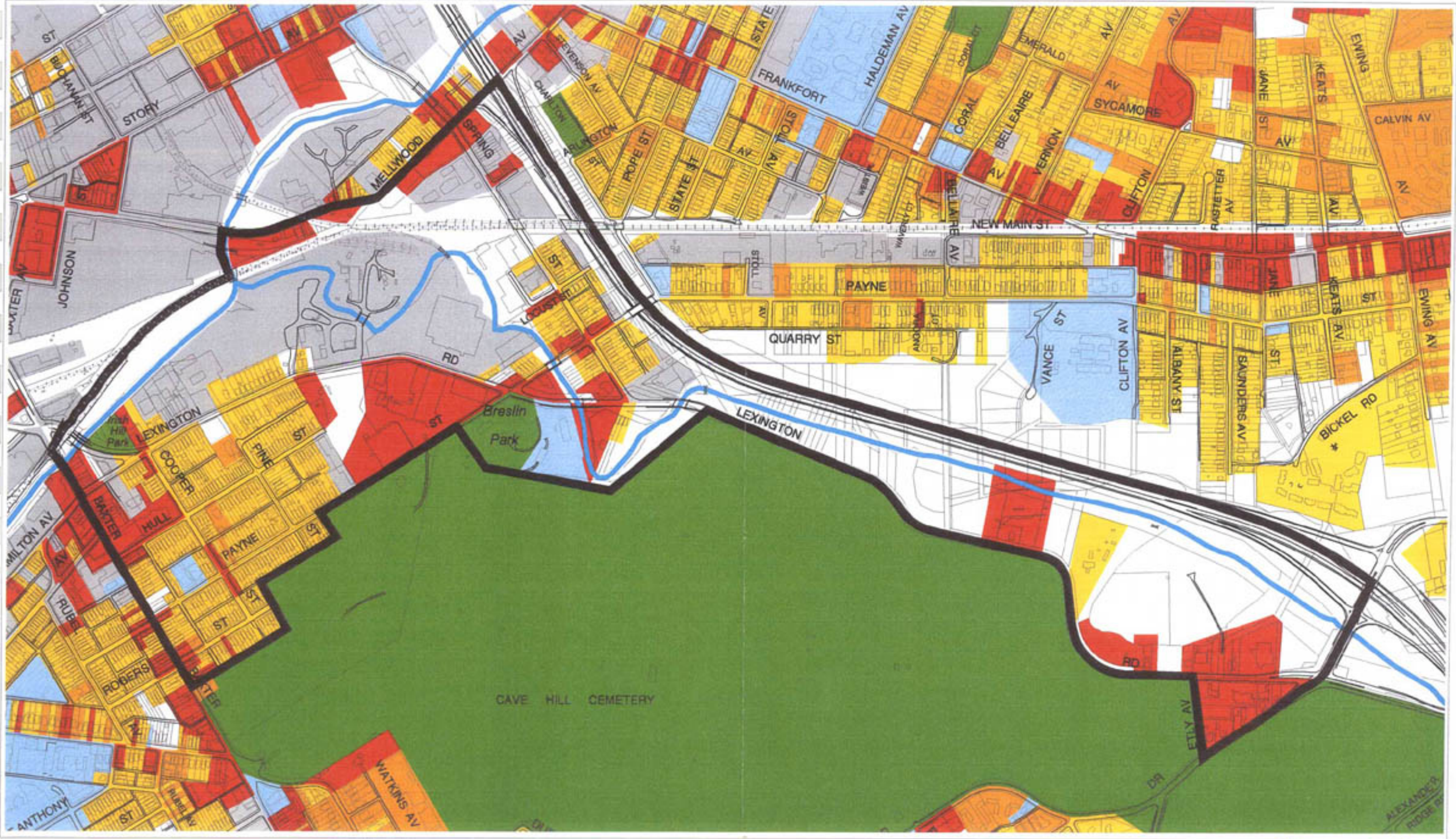
Louisville Development Authority, 6-02



- Railroad
- ▬ Neighborhood Boundary
- Vegetation Line
- Contour Interval (2-Ft)
- Beargrass Creek
- ▬ Floodplain (100-Yr Only)

Irish Hill Neighborhood

Topography, Floodplain, and Vegetation Lines



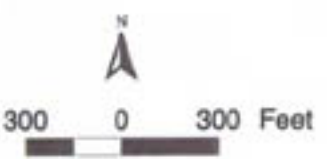
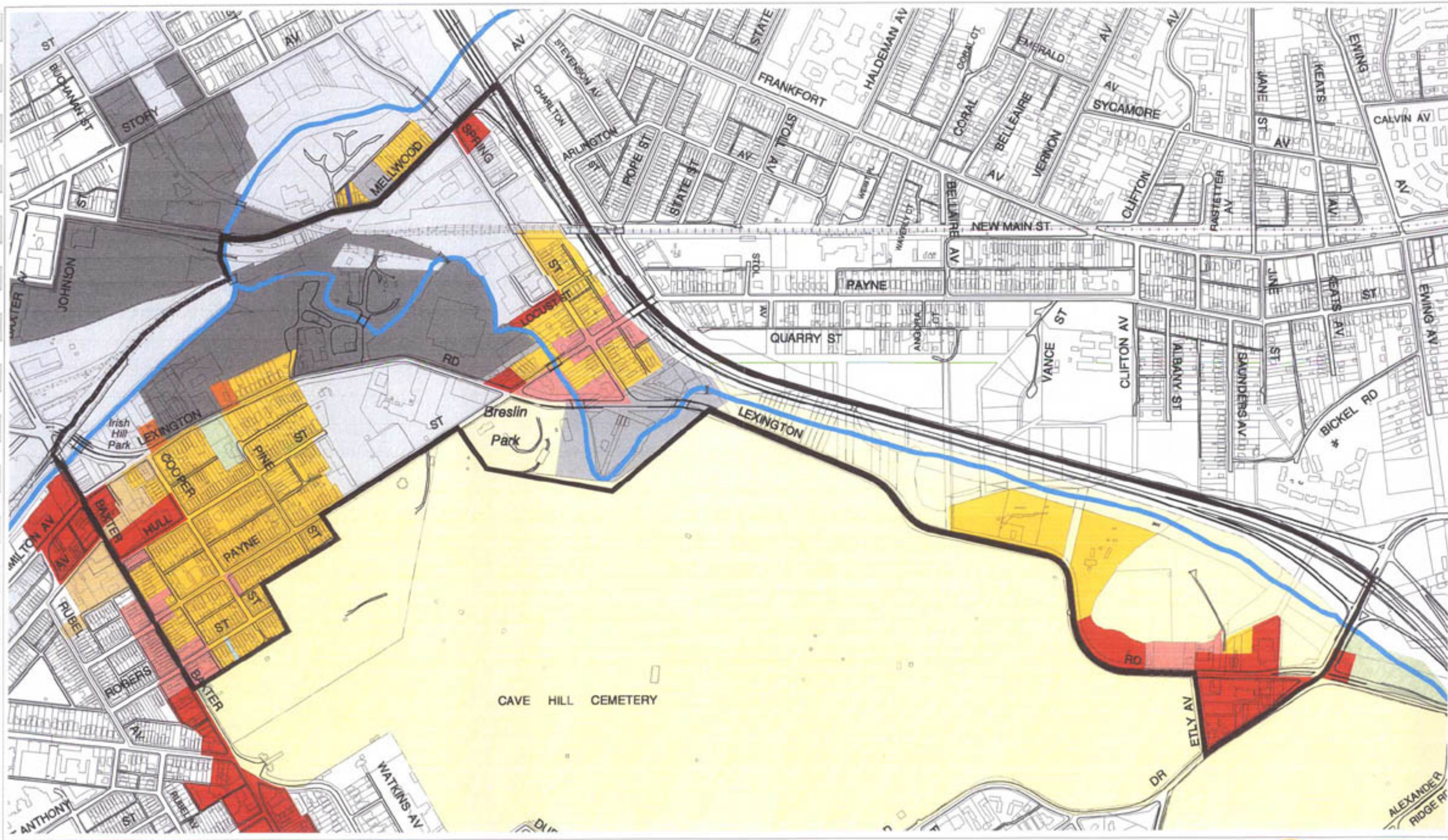
- Structures
- Parcels
- Railroads
- Roads
- Streams
- Neighborhood Boundary

- General Land Use**
- General Comm. and Office
 - Single Family Residential
 - Multi-Family Residential
 - Parks, Cemeteries, Greenspace
 - Public and Semi-Public
 - Vacant, Undeveloped, Highway Right-of-Way

Irish Hill Neighborhood

1992 General Land Use

Source: Jefferson County Division of Planning and Development Services



- | | |
|--|---|
| C1 | OR2 |
| C2 | OR3 |
| CM | R1 |
| EZ1 | R6 |
| M2 | R7 |
| M3 | CR |
| | ROW |

Neighborhood Boundary

Irish Hill Neighborhood

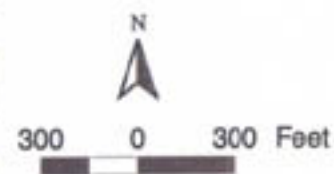
Zoning: September, 2002

Source: Jefferson County Division of Planning and Development Services



Irish Hill Neighborhood
Parcels Proposed For Rezoning





● Sidewalk Repair

Irish Hill Neighborhood

Proposed Sidewalk Improvements



Irish Hill Neighborhood

Bus Stops and Proposed Traffic Control Improvements

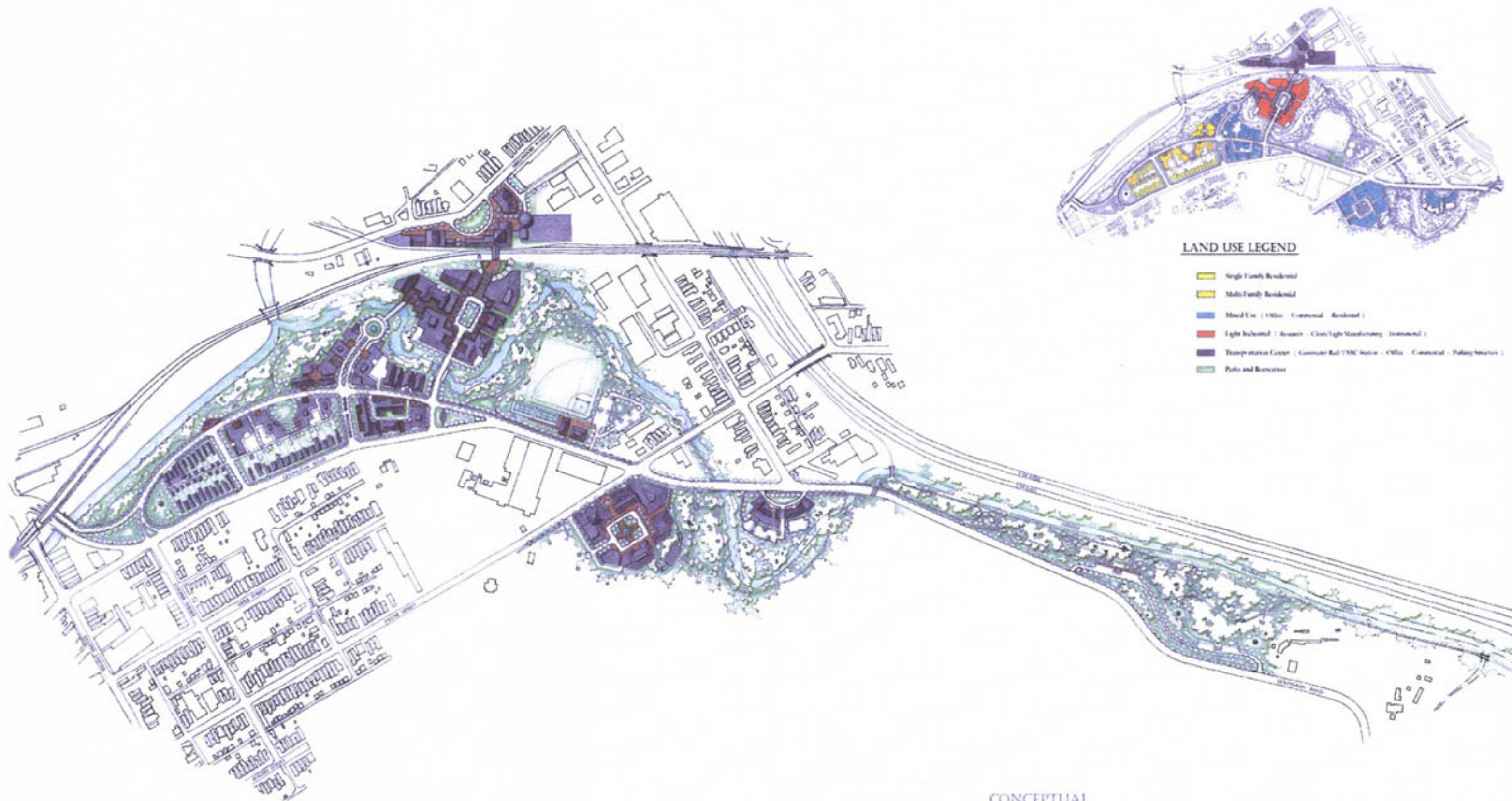
- Traffic Control
- Bus Stops



CONCEPTUAL

LEXINGTON ROAD CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

■ TRADITIONAL SCHEME ■



CONCEPTUAL

LEXINGTON ROAD CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

▪ BOULEVARD SCHEME ▪