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PREFACE

INTRODUCTION
Great things are happening in Omaha. The opening of the 21st century has witnessed a renaissance for this city in many areas including urban design. The renaissance of downtown includes the Qwest Center Omaha, the Performing Arts Center, and the Riverfront among others, and illustrates the synergy possible through public and private sector partnerships. Omaha by Design, an organization whose success depends upon such partnerships, seeks to build upon Omaha’s improving urban aesthetic by promoting smart planning and growth at both the citywide and neighborhood levels.

The Benson-Ames Alliance is an example of neighborhood planning. Located in one of Omaha's most distinctive and historic districts, the Alliance was formed in September 2005 to plan for and implement the revitalization of the Benson-Ames area. It is the first of 15 neighborhood alliances to be formed throughout Omaha.

THE ALLIANCE
The Benson-Ames Alliance is a partnership of neighborhood and business associations, educational institutions, social service and civic organizations, community and religious leaders, developers, and design professionals - all working together to promote the area’s economic and social vitality.

Covering a portion of north-central Omaha roughly six miles in area, the Alliance contains over 800 businesses (including schools and religious organizations) and 15,543 households. Its population of 36,875 is the equivalent of the fifth largest city in Nebraska. The Alliance is bound by Western Avenue on the south, Sorensen Parkway on the north, Saddle Creek Road/Fontenelle Boulevard on the east, and 72nd Street on the west. The City of Omaha drew the boundaries based on the recommendations identified during the comprehensive urban design planning process and previous assessments conducted by the Planning Department in the mid 1980’s.

THE PROCESS
This document represents the culmination of nine months of research, planning, and public engagement. It is also part of a broader effort dating from 2003. At that time, Omaha by Design, Mayor Fahey, and the Planning Department initiated a two-year project to create a comprehensive urban design plan for the city. The result was the Urban Design Element of the City’s Master Plan, adopted in late 2004 by the City Council. A section of the plan entitled 'Neighborhood Omaha' focuses on preserving older neighborhoods, improving newer ones, and creating pedestrian-friendly new neighborhoods as the city continues to grow. Implementing this task calls for the formation of 15 neighborhood alliances. The purpose is to help the City ensure the community’s needs are reflected in city planning by providing local information and perspectives. As this occurs, each alliance will help the City deliver services and determine specific needs such
as recreation, commercial centers, housing needs, architectural design, and/or development or renovation of an area. In early 2005, Mayor Fahey designated the Benson-Ames area as the first city sponsored neighborhood alliance. Soon after the announcement, a partnership to coordinate the efforts of the Benson-Ames Alliance was formed among Omaha by Design, the City Planning Department, the Office of the Mayor, the University of Nebraska at Omaha College of Public Affairs and Community Service (UNO), and the Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha. The coalition was termed the "Work Group" and they organized an advisory committee, hired a professional urban design and planning consultants, conducted research, and developed a schedule for completing the comprehensive plan for the area. Omaha by Design served as project manager. As soon as the consultants were hired, they joined the Work Group and led the planning process. UNO conducted research and demographic analysis of the Alliance area including a neighborhood survey, an inventory of housing conditions, and a demographic and economic study. The results of the research are contained in the technical report. A parallel purpose of the Work Group was to draft a model process to guide future neighborhood alliance initiatives.

The process benefited greatly from the active involvement and support of many people but most importantly from the Advisory Committee. It was composed of civic and community leaders, representatives of local neighborhood associations and businesses, academics, and social service agencies. They played a leading role in developing the comprehensive plan and communicating it to the public. The Advisory Committee met monthly and provided direction and guidance on all components of the final plan.

Five community input sessions were held; two in February, one in March, May and September. Community members voiced their opinions on the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities within the area. They articulated their vision, critiqued framework concepts, and identified commercial corridor locations, housing issues and transportation options. Not only did they attend meetings, but they completed surveys and kept informed on activities, events, and new planning concept via the Omaha by Design website and direct email communications. The website posted meeting notices, evaluations from public meetings, research analysis, planning concepts and comment sections. Members of the Work Group made presentations at neighborhood, business and civic meetings, and met one on one with concerned citizens.
THE PEOPLE
The Benson-Ames Alliance was funded by the generous contributions of the following businesses, government and civic organizations:

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

PROJECT SPONSORS
Alegent Health Community Benefit Trust
Nebraska Investment Finance Authority
City of Omaha

PROJECT DONORS
Commercial Federal Bank
Sorensen Park Plaza
Woltemath-Otis Development, Inc.
Great Western Bank
Kimco Development, Inc.

LOCAL SUPPORTERS
Benson Neighborhood Association
Benson True Value Hardware
Catholic Charities
Greg Bourne Clock and Watch Repair
Leo's Diner
N-R Partnership
Pizza Shoppe & Pub
St. James Manor
To Maternity and Beyond
Benson Presbyterian Church
Blue Pomegranate Studio
Edward Jones
Haney Shoe Store, Inc.
Metropolitan Building & Loan Association
Petals by Janet Floral & Gift
Placzek Studios
Tip Top Thrift Shop
Triangle Body Shop

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Co-Chairs
Dr. Del Weber, Omaha by Design
Steve Jensen, Planning Director

Members
George Achola, Omaha Housing Authority
Greg Bourne, Benson Business Association
Christian Christensen, Bluestone Development
Andrea Anderson-Lucas, North Omaha Weed and Seed
Eric Butler, Union Pacific
Roger Christianson, OPPD

The finish of the planning process signals that the real work of the Benson-Ames Alliance is only beginning. A permanent steering committee has been created to oversee the implementation of the plan, serving as an incubator and watchdog for future development and redevelopment initiatives within the Benson-Ames Alliance. Equally important, the steering committee will serve as a vital link between the community and the City Council in matters pertaining to urban design and development.

It is our hope that this plan will lead to substantive efforts to bring positive change to the Benson-Ames community. These pages provide a roadmap, but it is the responsibility of the citizens of the Alliance to help make it reality.
I. INTRODUCTION
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The Benson-Ames Alliance Area is one of 15 Alliances created through the Omaha by Design effort. As part of the Urban Design Element of the *Omaha Master Plan*, Omaha established the alliance framework as a way to address planning needs by geographical area. The Alliances are intended to foster individual neighborhood development yet recognize that many services, systems and facilities serve a greater area than the individual neighborhood.

The goal statement supporting these alliances states, “The City should create planning districts that foster strategic alliances of individual neighborhoods defined by mutually acceptable boundaries.” The objectives supporting this goal focus on creating alliances of neighborhoods and a plan for each.

Omaha defined the Alliance Areas using physical terms, such as major roadways and geographic features with the recognition that these areas may require some refinement based on functional elements of the community, such as neighborhood organizations and school service areas. Also, it was recognized that creating effective Alliances would be critical to successful implementation of the *Omaha Master Plan*.

Approximately 6 square miles and 36,000 people comprise the Benson-Ames Alliance Area. As the first area selected in pursuit of the above goal, the Alliance carried the responsibilities of both creating a plan for the Area and developing a model process for future planning efforts in other areas. Many lessons have been learned and adjustments made in this planning effort. Each of these lessons aided in the creation of the model process that will serve future Alliances.
I.B. Benson/Ames Alliance and The Model Process

The model process outlines 5 steps to establish an Alliance and conduct planning for it. (Greater detail regarding the Model Process is provided in a supplementary document.)

**STEP 1: QUALIFICATION**
Needs and capacity assessments are conducted to determine the qualification of Alliance Areas for future planning efforts.

**STEP 2: SELECTION**
A qualification / recommendation application is made to the City of Omaha for selection of the next Alliance Area, with the Mayor making the selection of the next Alliance area to go through the planning process.

**STEP 3: ALLIANCE ACADEMY**
Members of the Advisory Group for the selected Alliance Area participate in training sessions for capacity and alliance building, education and strategizing public involvement.

**STEP 4: PLANNING**
Upon successful completion of the Alliance Academy, the planning process is conducted within the selected Alliance Area.

**STEP 5: IMPLEMENTATION / MONITORING**
The Alliance works to implement the plan’s strategies and recommendations, as well as to both monitor and evaluate plan implementation efforts and the Alliance structure in order to make timely changes or adjustments and continue progress in the Area.

This Model Process is intended to avoid pitfalls and address lessons learned that can be barriers to creating a successful future Alliance and Alliance Area Plan.

Such barriers can be large or small. For example, the area originally conceived as the Benson Alliance Area, was selected based upon a very active business organization.
associated with "Downtown Benson" and the perceived strength of the "Benson" name as an identifier. Through the planning process, assumptions that led to the creation of the Alliance name were challenged, and the name of the Alliance Area was changed to Benson-Ames based on community input. The steps in the model process are intended to avoid this type of situation.

It is a goal of this plan that the members of the Benson-Ames Alliance continue working together to not only to implement the plan, but also take advantage of the insights gained through the Model Process. This will help to further establish the Alliance as an effective group for community development.

I.C. Benson/Ames Alliance Planning Process

The Alliance planning process was guided by a Work Group and an Advisory Group. A small Work Group made up of representatives from Omaha by Design, the City of Omaha Planning Department, the Neighborhood Center of Greater Omaha, the University of Nebraska – Omaha, and the consultant team provided technical guidance, conducted research and analysis and facilitated public events. The Advisory Group, composed of citizens and stakeholders in the Alliance Area, met monthly to provide feedback related to issues, findings and concepts arising throughout the process. These citizens participated in the public events and served as a working group for discussing various aspects of the Alliance Area and the planning process.

In addition to these two groups, the planning process included several rounds of public events, as well as two community surveys. The public played a key role in defining issues, assets, and goals for the Area through their participation in the first public meeting and the community surveys. Additionally, public guidance was provided through an open house event where the public was invited to review and evaluate a series of concepts and ideas addressing the issues and goals identified previously. The results from these meetings and surveys can be found in supplemental technical documents provided to the Benson-Ames Advisory Group and Omaha by Design.
The Plan, resulting from the planning process, is divided into three sections including this introduction. The focus of the plan is the physical development of the Area reflecting the desires of the community and the Urban Design and Land Use elements of the Omaha Master Plan.

Section II provides a broad based vision, as well as planning guidance for accomplishing the vision. There is a framework for both the general approach to the Area's future and four key sub-areas within it. Section III – outlines the recommended actions and strategies needed to accomplish the vision for the Area.

The goal of this document, as reflected through these three sections, is to provide the necessary vision and guidance for implementing the plan and to encourage wide distribution and use of it. To establish a baseline of data for recommendations, a technical supplement consisting of several documents summarizing existing demographic and physical conditions is provided as part of the plan documents.
The Benson-Ames Alliance Area is characterized by its diversity - diversity of people, patterns of development, physical environment and economic conditions. What ties this diverse area together is the common mission of making the Benson-Ames Alliance Area a desirable place to live, raise a family and do business.

Understanding the relationship of the Benson-Ames Alliance Area to the greater Omaha community is also important. The Alliance Area includes many community resources. It contains employment and commercial centers, housing, educational facilities, places of worship and public facilities that support the entire city. Integrating the needs of the city as a whole, with needs of the residents and business in the Alliance Area is a step toward ensuring a high quality of life for entire community.

The following section explains the vision the Benson-Ames Alliance has chosen to pursue, and subsequent sections explain the plan for pursuing that vision.

II.A.1. Vision

The vision for the Benson-Ames Alliance Area is one where sustainable and unique commercial centers serve as community destinations for residents of Alliance neighborhoods and other parts of Omaha. The vision promotes social interaction and business development. It includes beautiful linkages that encourage safe movement, through and around the area. These linkages connect our neighborhoods with viable commercial centers accommodating the pedestrian, transit and automobile user.

Our vision provides opportunity for our children to experience what is special about a neighborhood and a town within a city. Our schools, places of worship, public spaces and parks, homes and neighborhoods reflect our values. Our vision is realized through the way we work together to resolve problems and take care of one another. Ultimately, we envision the Area as not just a place or group of residents, or a series of structures and commercial areas. Rather, Benson-Ames Alliance is a place that fosters unique communities within a larger community.
To accomplish this vision, positive change must occur. We recognize that not all this change is physical but it is the physical changes that this plan addresses. Physical improvement and redevelopment is essential to realizing our vision. Such improvement and development must respect the values outlined by the community and the existing context of our neighborhoods. Therefore, these changes must occur through the pursuit of several core objectives.

II.A.2. Objectives

Six objectives have been identified that support our vision for the future. Each of these objectives has broad application to our neighborhoods or commercial centers.

Consolidate and Mix Uses

The Benson-Ames Area is home to several different types of uses including: retail, office, residential, light industrial, institutional, recreational and open space. However, in most cases these uses have been developed independent of one another. In addition to the independent nature of development, commercial development has occurred in a “strip” along the primary travel corridors in the Area. The pattern and form of development in Benson-Ames does not adequately or efficiently serve its population. The congregation and mixing of uses into centers, will create community destinations where several activities can take place in a single visit. Additionally, unique, mixed-use centers will have positive effects on the surrounding community, including reduced auto dependent trips and congestion; daily support goods and services in proximity to neighborhoods; new and diverse types of housing; and, a strengthened market for retail and service oriented shops.

Objective #1: Support development that consolidates the existing strip commercial development pattern and promotes mixing uses, specifically commercial, public and residential uses, into centers that serve as community destinations.

Unique Character

Several mixed-use centers are proposed. To ensure that each center is successful, the location must respect market trade areas, and each center should have a unique character and/or role with which it is identified. For example, “Downtown Benson” has a small town
main street character that should be maintained and enhanced. If an area has a defining feature or design quality that gives the area a desirable character, build upon that established character. The unique character along with the businesses in a center, will set it apart from other centers in the area and city. Where new centers are proposed a unique character or quality should be defined through the development pattern, uses and design. The character of the surrounding neighborhood can also contribute to the definition of a center. Conversely the design and development of a center should respect the existing adjacent neighborhoods so as not to detract from their identity and character.

**Objective #2:** Create unique, identifiable centers that respect and enhance the existing market context and surrounding neighborhoods.

**Urban form and pattern**
The Area is a blend of urban and suburban development patterns. There are automobile oriented places and pedestrian oriented places; "main street" experiences and strip development; grid and curvilinear streets; and large and small residential lots. This blend offers many choices but also has created pockets that are physically isolated or separated from other parts of the Alliance Area.

Consistent application of urban development standards with multi-use buildings addressing the street in a positive manner, appropriate on-site and on-street parking, connections throughout the Area and defined public open spaces for gathering should be promoted throughout the Area.

**Objective #3:** Encourage development in an urban form and pattern that enhances the character and connections to neighborhoods and centers.

**Street life**
The hallmark of a successful place is the existence of street life. Street life - people walking, biking, moving from place to place, recreating, shopping or watching other people is supported by safe and pleasant public areas and locations. In neighborhoods, the space between the front of one house and the house across the street is the most
public area of the neighborhood. The design of this public space, whether the front of the house, the front yard, the sidewalk or the street, should promote safety and encourage interaction among neighbors and visitors.

In commercial centers, activity on the street is promoted by the effective mixture of uses and the support of a pedestrian friendly experience. The ability to make multiple convenient stops, without repeatedly going to the automobile aides in promoting street life. Street life is also promoted by accommodating outdoor gathering spaces, such as cafes and public areas, as well as by the placement of commercial retail activities on the first floor of commercial buildings.

**Objective #4:** Promote development patterns and design characteristics that activate the street, encourage walking and support vibrant street life in a safe manner.

**Connections and Circulation**

People from the Benson-Ames neighborhoods and visitors to the Area must feel that moving through the Area is convenient and safe. The Area is fortunate to have good open space, greenways, sidewalks, transit routes and roadways supporting movement in the Area. However, many of the components are in need of improvement. The improvements should work together to provide an integrated system of connections throughout the Area and between the neighborhoods and centers. The connections and circulation routes should be improved in a manner that invites people to use them.

**Objective #5:** Improve the physical connections and circulation routes to encourage multimodal circulation, convenience and accessibility.

**Objective #6:** Encourage a diversification of residential development, respectful of the context of the surrounding neighborhoods, that supports various means of transportation and provides alternative residential formats, such as apartments, townhomes, condominiums, for people who desire to live in Benson-Ames.
**Increased Residential Density and Styles**

In order to support transit, density must be increased. Diversifying housing styles to include flats, rowhouses and/or townhomes will raise the density of the area to a level that supports transit while still respecting the character of the existing neighborhoods.

Diverse housing styles will also add housing choices for those who want to live in the Benson-Ames Alliance, but desire something other than a traditional single family house.
II.B. BENSON-AMES ALLIANCE AREA PLAN FRAMEWORK

In accordance with the stated vision and objectives, this section of the Alliance Plan provides a land use, design and development framework for the future of the entire Benson-Ames Alliance Area. This framework is the foundation for pursuing the vision and objectives by addressing Land Use / Development, Neighborhoods and Mobility.

II.B.1. Land Use / Development

The primary components of the Land Use / Development element of the plan are Centers and Neighborhoods. The Future Land Use and Development Map depicts the proposed future land use and development pattern within the Area. Centers are the places where people come together to shop and work. These places feed off the identity of the surrounding neighborhoods but also provide a community destination and daily support for the neighborhoods. Neighborhoods within Benson-Ames Alliance represent an Omaha development timeline. Some contain historic structures while others are characterized by units built within the last few years. Both old and new structures are in various states of physical condition. The neighborhoods are predominately single family residential in nature, with some higher density residential units at the north end of the study area. The Centers and Neighborhoods are described in the next section of the plan. They work together and rely on each other to be truly successful.

II.B.1.a. Centers

To achieve the vision and objectives identified, the future land use and development framework focuses on the creation of unique centers. A center can be defined as a location where a variety of commercial goods and services, employment opportunities and residential opportunities exist in an integrated manner. To strengthen existing centers and ensure the success of new centers the International Council for Shopping Center (ICSC) standards are used as a guideline. ICSC recommends that the establishment of a commercial development pattern be based on reinforcing existing centers with strong market characteristics, redirecting weak commercial uses to other centers and identifying and developing new centers in new market trade areas. The ICSC information is supported by the Centers definitions found in the Land Use Element of the City of Omaha’s Master Plan.

There are nine centers that exist or are proposed for the Benson Ames Alliance, they include:

- Sorensen Parkway and North 42nd Street (Convenience)
- 72nd Street and Maple Street (Convenience)
- 60th Street and Ames (Neighborhood)
- Saddle Creek Road and Military Road (Neighborhood)
For the Benson-Ames Area, three different types of centers are proposed each focused on a different level of service provision: convenience, neighborhood and community. The convenience centers are intended to include retail and office uses that only provide daily goods and services to neighborhood residents. The neighborhood and community centers are mixed-use by definition, integrating a mix of commercial, office and residential uses.

There are three different levels of community centers proposed for the Benson-Ames Alliance Area: 60, 80 and 165. In general the numbers refer to the size and scale of the different centers and the level of services that they provide. A Community 60 center is the smallest, Community 165 the largest and Community 80 in the middle. Downtown Benson has been defined as a Community 80 center that provides goods and services such as a bakery, small gas station, small office and local eating establishments. Similarly the area at 72nd and Sorensen Parkway has also been defined as a Community center, but as a 165 center where you will find large scale retailers like Target and a hospital. Community 60 centers, like that at 50th and Ames, provide a similar level of serves; however, on a smaller scale that a community 80 center.
The goods and services provided by a convenience and neighborhood center serve the people in the immediate surrounding area while community centers provide services for a collection of neighborhoods in the vicinity. Large community centers not only serve the surrounding neighborhoods but also a broader portion of the city. The types of centers are described in detail in the next portion of this section with specific development/design criteria based on the size of market area it is intended to serve.

**Convenience Centers**

- Sorensen Parkway and North 42nd Street
- 72nd Street and Maple Street

A convenience center is a small, *commercial service only*, center that provides goods to residents and those persons passing by on the street network or those who live in the immediate area. These centers provide necessary services in small quantities in key locations. The provision of higher density residential structures adjacent, or in proximity to a convenience center is encouraged. Convenience centers incorporate development and design standards of the surrounding neighborhood. By incorporating small centers into neighborhoods they become a valued community asset. The convenience center uses should complement and not directly compete with the neighborhood and community centers and be guided by the following criteria:

**Uses:** Convenience stores, gas stations, ATM’s, small retail and offices.

**Location:** Generally, at the intersection of a collector and minor arterial or intersection of major streets. *(Street types defined in Section II.B.2 Mobility)* Centers should not be located within one-mile of one another.

**Size:** 10 acres maximum.

**Neighborhood Centers**

- 60th Street and Ames Avenue
- Saddle Creek Road and Military Road
- Blondo Avenue and at 72nd Street

A Neighborhood Center is a mix of uses or a small commercial/retail development with locally focused businesses supporting adjacent neighborhood(s).
Neighborhood Centers provide convenience goods and personal services within an approximate 1 to 1½ mile service area radius. These centers should be dispersed throughout the Benson-Ames Area so there is no overlap in market area. This will allow each center to function without undue competition from other Neighborhood Centers.

Like convenience centers, neighborhood centers follow existing neighborhood development and design standards and provide neighborhood-level services. They should be developed to the following criteria:

*Uses*: Small retail and services (less than 3,000 sq. ft.), small offices and clinics (less than 2,500 sq. ft.) neighborhood market, religious institutions (less than 5 Acres), neighborhood school, small scale park and community center and medium density residential including apartments and townhomes.

*Location*: At the intersection of arterial and/or collector streets and not within 2 miles of another neighborhood center (depending on residential densities) may be within the market area of different sized community centers.

*Size*: 30 acres maximum and 3 stories in height maximum.

**Community Centers (60 or 80)**
- 50th and Ames Avenue (60)
- Downtown Benson (80)
- Military Road / Ames Avenue and 72nd Street (80)

A Community Center is a general merchandise destination for residents area wide. It can include a wide range of commercial uses, such as small box retail, fast food restaurants and office space, as well as some multistory or upper floor residential formats.

Community Centers serve citizens in a 2 to 3+ mile service area radius. These centers must be controlled in terms of approved uses and size of overall development to ensure that the center complements, not competes, with Community (165) and Neighborhood Centers with overlapping market areas. It is recognized that these three community centers fall within the market trade area for each
other. However, given the difference in established development pattern, design and level of goods and services provided of each, the potential for competition is reduced. Community centers need visibility and accessibility to be successful. They do not integrate into the neighborhoods easily and are generally found on the edges of neighborhoods.

Community centers provide services to multiple neighborhoods and should be developed to the following criteria:

*Uses:* Retail business (greater than 40,000 square feet), shopping centers (greater than 70,000 sq. ft.), restaurants (fast food and dine-in), auto sales and repairs, hotels and motels and multifamily residential, including apartments and townhomes.

*Location:* At the intersection of arterial roadways and/or expressways and no closer than 4 miles from another community center. May be within the trade area of a Community (165) Center or Neighborhood Center.

*Size:* 60 to 80 acres maximum

**Community Centers (165)**

- 72nd Street and Sorensen Parkway

A Community Center (165) contains retail shopping, restaurants, employment, and entertainment. A community center of this size can draw people from a market trade area equivalent to 45 minutes driving time and be 100 or more acres of land in size.

These centers are focused on providing services citywide and should be developed to the following criteria:

*Uses:*

Grocery stores, larger scale retailers, medical and education institutions, large-scale auto-related uses, large scale civic and cultural facilities, community recreational centers, high-density residential uses, including apartments and townhouses, larger scale office buildings, open space, and civic uses.
**Location:**
At the intersection of arterial roadways and/or expressways and no closer than 5 miles from another Community Center (165). The distance between may depend on the mixture of uses and businesses and uniqueness of the centers.

**Size:** 165 acres maximum and 6 stories in height maximum.

### II.B.1.b. Neighborhoods

The predominant land use and development pattern in the Benson-Ames Area is single family, residential neighborhoods in a variety of formats - from smaller lot historic areas, to suburban style subdivisions, to larger individual lots. There are also occasional concentrations of multi-family units in the form of duplexes and apartments.

The neighborhoods and residents of the Area form the foundation for the strength of the Benson-Ames Alliance. While the commercial centers can provide an image for the Area and draw people from other parts of Omaha, it is ultimately the residents and the residential qualities of the neighborhoods that will determine the fate of the Alliance and its neighborhoods.

Diverse high quality residential opportunities and strong neighborhoods appeal to many segments of the population and create strong markets for businesses. But more importantly, great neighborhoods also instill community spirit that can accomplish great things over time. The neighborhoods of the Benson-Ames Alliance have already accomplished a great deal, but there is always more to be done.

The future of Benson-Ames Alliance will ultimately be determined by organizing the neighborhoods, working together and instilling community ownership of the Area. Working cooperatively as an Alliance and committing to continuous improvement will make the vision a reality and by doing so make every resident feel like they are part of something special.

The key to realizing the vision is to taking and incremental and strategic approach. To establish an overall strategic neighborhood improvement framework, areas have been generally mapped (see map on next page) and outlined so that appropriate approaches and programs and policies can be applied in a targeted fashion. The geography for these areas is somewhat subjective because it is based on an interpretation of socio-demographic indicators, the neighborhood scan results and census tract / block group geography. As part of the planning process, the map provides general initial guidance in making decisions related to neighborhood improvement.
The neighborhood improvement map and the narrative relate to housing conditions and should be viewed as tools to improve all neighborhoods through an honest assessment of conditions and a responsible and caring approach to addressing issues appropriately.

**Conservation Areas**
Areas within Benson-Ames designated as "conservation" are typically well maintained with little or no vacant or undeveloped land. These areas are ordinarily physically sound and economically viable. Typically, conservation areas do not need major redevelopment efforts, rather they need minor rehabilitation and maintenance services. Examples of conservation areas are prevalent throughout the Area and can be identified by their quality housing stock and in some cases by their historic character. Areas that fit this description need to be enhanced and protected from physical and fiscal decline.

**Improvement Guidelines:**
- Promote detailed land use planning that seeks to minimize conflict between differing land uses and to protect the existing land use patterns.
- Implement design standards to ensure the uniqueness of an area by protecting the existing character and promoting quality development through the use of overlay districts.
- Promote proactive code enforcement to protect the physical and visual quality of the Area.
- Continue to upgrade maintenance of public facilities and amenities, such as streets and parks, to preserve the quality appearance and character of the Area.
- Retain neighborhood institutional elements and public places (schools, churches, parks, etc.)

**Stabilization Areas**
Areas within the Benson-Ames Alliance that are exhibiting an initial decline in their physical and economic characteristics are classified as stabilization areas. The primary concern in these areas is to reduce further deterioration and establish a framework for improvement. Policies should be established to stabilize these areas, enhance their attractiveness, seize market and...
development opportunities and promote quality maintenance and redevelopment. These areas are beginning to see vacant land and structures and there is a general decline in the appearance of the area. The primary goal of stabilization is to attract private investment to the area. This is typically achieved through public investment in maintenance oriented programs and resources. It is the intent of this plan that pride in these areas can be energized in an effort to move toward becoming conservation areas. Private investment is necessary and could be encouraged by targeting appropriate actions and resources.

**Improvement Guidelines:**
- Improve the full range of community services including police and fire protection, public space and infrastructure maintenance and improvement.
- Prepare design standards through overlay districts to ensure quality infill development for commercial and residential properties, as well as public areas.
- Make greater investments in strategic capital improvements such as streets, sidewalks, streetscapes, and public spaces to enhance the appearance of the Area and spur private reinvestment.
- Target financial incentive programs to encourage private improvements.
- Step-up cooperative code enforcement to repair and / or enhance deteriorated or vacant properties.

**Re-establishment Areas**
Areas that exhibit severe deterioration and prolonged neglect as evidenced by damaged foundations, deteriorated roofs, an abundance of vacant lots and general structural damage are classified as re-establishment areas. This classification denotes areas with insufficient physical fabric and possibly poor social organization for revitalization or stabilization. These areas have typically been deteriorating over a long period of time. The primary goal for these areas is to attract private reinvestment to assist in re-establishing the built environment and social organization. In many instances wholesale redevelopment of locations in this Area is necessary. In addition to physical redevelopment of the Area, social, educational and economic rehabilitation services for residents may also be needed.
Improvement Guidelines:
- Provide City assistance in the acquisition and preparation of land for redevelopment.
- Establish targeted programs that promote property revitalization and major repair, such as low interest loan funds.
- Target incentives for redevelopment.
- Establish a proactive and aggressive code enforcement policy that does not place undue hardships on remaining property owners and residents.
- Target social programs such as education, job training, community outreach, counseling, and health services.
- Focus efforts on the use of residential incentives such as tax increment financing to promote redevelopment and preservation of housing stock.

This initial framework for improvement should guide the application of programs associated with housing and neighborhood development. A list of such programs and their application is provided to serve as a guide for targeting the application of programs to appropriate locations in the Alliance Area.

### Neighborhood / Housing Programs for Benson-Ames Alliance Area

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<th>Stabilization</th>
<th>Re-establishment</th>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Rental Rehabilitation Program</td>
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II.B.2. Mobility

Mobility is the ability to physically move about an area. Mobility involves moving through and around the area, traveling to places within and outside the area using effective wayfinding and identifying adequate parking. As a very mobile society, it is important that various modes of movement are provided and supported. These modes of movement include transit (bus), automobile, pedestrian and bicycle.

II.B.2.a. Circulation

In addition to methods of movement, mobility relates to circulation and connection. An effective mobility system takes into account various modes of movement and how they work together to create efficient circulation and effective connections. These connections must allow people to go from place to place within their neighborhood, among neighborhoods, between neighborhoods and centers / destinations and to and from other parts of the City.

The circulation system is very complex and each mode of transportation requires specific conditions to be safe and effective. An effective transit system is dependent on a development pattern that places a large number of people near routes and stops and serves desired destinations through fast, frequent, and affordable means. An effective automobile system must be resilient, allowing efficient movement of through traffic while accommodating local traffic. While pedestrian and bicycle systems must be safe, with minimal conflicts with automobile systems. By designing the mobility system to integrate land use and development patterns, the primary purpose of a roadway or travel corridor can be identified and appropriate solutions implemented.

The Mobility Map identifies four different types of roadway corridors and one type of travel corridor in the Benson-Ames Alliance Area. It also identifies appropriate access throughout the area and connections to other areas via the Greater Omaha roadway system.

Citywide

The citywide corridor label identifies roads that serve a citywide function. These are most commonly highways and / or major arterials roadways. The primary purpose of these roadways is to move automobiles through the city and to connect destination points throughout the city. In the Benson-Ames Alliance Area four roads have been identified as Citywide corridors:
A unique distinction of the Citywide Streets within the Benson-Ames Alliance Area is that they also represent the *Green Streets* as included in the *Omaha Master Plan*. The typical sections shown in this document incorporate the design elements that are proposed by the City’s Green Streets Master Plan in the context of the Benson-Ames Area.

Roadway corridors should be designed to accommodate traffic with minimum conflicts with other modes of movement. Speed limits and design characteristics should be responsive to the adjacent land use and development patterns. The general characteristics of these roadways include:

- Significant streetscape and landscape features including opportunities for public art, gateways and wayfinding elements.
- Minimal direct private drive access points into adjacent development or destinations. Access should be through shared mid-block points and alleyways behind buildings or from side streets.
- No on-street parking.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities, such as sidewalks and trails, if provided, should be separated from the roadway by a landscape area or other appropriate buffer (in some cases sidewalks and trails may not be provided along portions of these roadways).
- Major intersections with other citywide, area and local corridors need to incorporate significant pedestrian accommodations and improvements to encourage the use of appropriate crossing points and provide a safe pedestrian / bicycle experience.

The design of these roadways is affected by existing ROW widths and should be adjusted...
somewhat when residential development with direct roadway access exists on both sides of the roadway. In such cases, as along portions of Fontenelle Boulevard reducing speed limits, roadway lane widths, number of lanes and creating the feel of a neighborhood experience needs to be considered to retain residential qualities.

**Area**

Minor arterials and collectors typify roadways in the area corridor category. These corridors provide direct connections to centers or other destinations and to citywide corridors for automobile and transit users. Automobile and transit use are predominant along these roadways. The following roadways are viewed as Area corridors:

- Ames Avenue
- Maple Street (from Northwest Radial Highway west to 72nd)
- Saddle Creek
- Blondo Street
- 60th Street (from Northwest Radial Highway north to Sorensen Parkway)

Except for significant segments of Ames Avenue, Maple Street and Saddle Creek, much of the land use and development pattern along these corridors is residential in character. The residential character makes it important to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle use in addition to automobile. The general characteristics of these roadways include:

- Landscape separation between the roadway and the sidewalk.
- Minimal direct private ingress and egress points into adjacent commercial, development or community destinations. Mid-block driveways, alleyways or side streets should serve as the entry and exit points.
- Dedicated bicycle lanes and transit stops, possibly bays for transit stops at key transfer points and destinations.
- Limited on-street parking that does not interfere with traffic movement.
Four or five lane configurations, with the fifth lane allowing left hand turns at key intersections. Landscaped medians may be placed periodically to highlight gateways or centers.

Enhanced pedestrian crossings at intersections of centers, gateways, and crossings with other Citywide, Area and Local corridors.

As with Citywide corridors, a number of these Area corridors are framed by residential development that fronts the roadway. In this situation differentiation must be made based upon the future land use and development pattern for the individual corridor. For instance along Ames Avenue single family residential development fronting on Ames Avenue is not seen as a desirable future use along the corridor. By contrast, residential use along 60th Street may be viable in the future.

Local

Local corridors are associated with minor arterial and collector type streets that connect neighborhoods with Citywide and Area corridors in the mobility system. Along these corridors pedestrian and bicycle movement is as important as automobile movement, and the primary land use and development pattern is residential. The local corridors in Benson-Ames are:

- 52nd Street
- 60th Street (from Northwest Radial Highway south to Western)
- Hartman Avenue

These roadway corridors, with slower traffic, have a more pedestrian and residential neighborhood feel. The general design characteristics of these roadway corridors include:

- Landscape separation between the roadway and the sidewalk on both sides of the street (an option is no landscape separation in areas with smaller rights-of-way).
- Dedicated bicycle lanes.
• Dedicated on-street parking lanes (parking lanes can serve as a separation between the travel lanes of the roadway and the sidewalk) except on 52nd Street and Hartman Avenue.
• Two lane or three lane configurations with the third lane allowing for left hand turns at key intersections.
• Enhanced pedestrian crossings at intersections associated with centers, gateways and crossings with other Citywide, Area and Local corridors.

**Neighborhood**

All other roadways in the Area are viewed as Neighborhood level streets, intended to serve adjacent residential development. These roadways incorporate sidewalks, parking and narrow lane widths to slow traffic and to support safe movement from the neighborhoods to Citywide, Area and Local corridors. These elements make it convenient to travel from neighborhood to neighborhood centers and other destinations, whether on foot, bicycle, automobile or transit. The design features of these roadways include:

• Landscape separation between the roadway and the sidewalk on both sides of the street (an option in areas with smaller rights-of-way, is no landscape separation).
• On-street parking (parking lanes can serve as a separation between the travel lanes of the roadway and the sidewalk).

**Greenways**

Greenways are viewed as multipurpose corridors that are pedestrian and bicycle oriented. A Greenway corridor is a path or trail separated from the roadway to create a community environmental, movement and recreation asset. Three such corridors have been identified in Benson-Ames:

• Cole Creek - a trail that is separated from roadways and follows Cole Creek from Sorensen Parkway to 72nd Street. This dedicated greenway is recreational in nature with frequent connections to adjacent development and neighborhoods.
• Fontenelle Park / Benson High School - this path connects several public green spaces and the Benson High / Monroe Middle School campus. The route follows 48th Street, Swigart Avenue, Binney Street and Maple Street. This greenway can tie into a pedestrian / bicycle trail separated from the roadway on the north side of Northwest Radial Highway / Military Avenue to connect with Benson Park and the Cole Creek Greenway.

• Happy Hollow - in this case the greenway follows the green space along Happy Hollow through the Saddle Creek area as a segment of the an identified connector between the Omaha Riverfront Trail and the Keystone Trail.

In each of these cases there are significant opportunities to provide aesthetic and environmental assets to the Area as part of tying into a larger citywide trail system.
II.B.2.b. Wayfinding and Gateways

To enhance the experience of moving about the Benson-Ames Area, an effective wayfinding and gateway system should be developed. This system should complement the citywide gateway and wayfinding system, yet allow the flexibility to identify particular destinations and routes within the Area.

A number of gateway locations are identified on the Mobility Map. These locations are associated with identifiable commercial districts - Saddle Creek, Downtown Benson, 72nd and Military, and the Ames Avenue corridor. The specific locations for these gateways are identified later in this plan. In addition to these gateway locations, neighborhoods should be encouraged to identify locations for neighborhood gateways. Such gateways can be modest in nature yet help to define neighborhoods and provide a sense of pride in the place people live.

In addition to the gateways, wayfinding signage and elements at key intersections are important features of any community. The gateways can serve as a wayfinding element indicating arrival in a district, area or neighborhood. Supplementing gateway features with informational / directional wayfinding signage is also important. Key wayfinding locations include:

- Sorensen Parkway at the intersections of 72nd, 60th, 52nd and Fontenelle Boulevard
- Fontenelle Boulevard at the intersections of Northwest Radial Highway and Ames Avenue
- Northwest Radial Highway at Saddle Creek
- 72nd at Ames Avenue / Military Avenue
II.B.3. Framework Recommendations

The following recommendations relate to the Future Land Use / Development and Mobility Framework for the entire Benson/Ames Area. In addition to these recommendations, later sections of this chapter identify recommendations for the four detailed planning areas in Benson-Ames.

- Strengthen the Benson-Ames Alliance by:
  - Identifying the leadership group to implement the plan
  - Holding the Alliance Academy for the leadership group
  - Supporting the development of the leadership group to ensure active participation and commitment toward working together as an Alliance

- Consider Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or other development incentives to encourage commercial / mixed-use centers at:
  - 50th and Ames (community 60)
  - 60th and Ames (neighborhood)
  - Saddle Creek and Northwest Radial Highway (neighborhood)
  - Downtown Benson (community 80)
  - 72nd and Military (community 80)

- Use the North Central Omaha TIF district to support projects that consolidate commercial and office uses into the neighborhood center at 60th and Ames or the community 60 center at 50th and Ames and enable the establishment of new residential development in the remainder of the corridor.

- Develop a strategic methodology for creating, identifying, pursuing and implementing development/investment incentives for the Alliance Area.

- Develop and implement a neighborhood self-assessment process to refine the Neighborhood Improvement Framework Map and establish stronger neighborhood organization. Identify specific needs in smaller areas within the Area and create a work program for neighborhood improvement to be conducted by the Alliance and / or neighborhood level groups.

- Design and develop Citywide corridors according to the characteristics identified in the plan on the following streets:
  - 72nd Street
- Sorensen Parkway
- Fontenelle Boulevard (with special design considerations for residential segments)
- Northwest Radial Highway / Military Avenue

- Design and develop Area corridors according to the characteristics identified in the plan on the following streets:
  - Ames Avenue
  - Maple Street (from Northwest Radial Highway west to 72nd, with special design considerations for the segment between Northwest Radial Highway and 63rd)
  - Saddle Creek (with special design considerations in residential areas)
  - Blondo (with special design considerations in residential areas)
  - 60th Street (from Northwest Radial Highway north to Sorensen Parkway with special design considerations in residential areas with direct access to the road)

- Design and develop local corridors according to the characteristics identified in the plan on the following streets:
  - 52nd Street
  - 60th Street (from Northwest Radial Highway south to Western)
  - Hartman Avenue

- Design and develop three greenway elements:
  - Cole Creek from Sorensen Parkway to 72nd
  - Fontenelle Park / Benson High School / Benson Park
  - Happy Hollow

- Establish a wayfinding system that identifies centers and destinations in Benson-Ames Alliance Area. Wayfinding locations include:
  - Sorensen Parkway at 72nd, 60th, 52nd and Fontenelle
  - Fontenelle at Ames, Northwest Radial and Saddle Creek
  - 72nd at Maple and Military / Ames Avenue

- Develop a transit transfer station in the vicinity of 72nd and Ames / Military and a neighborhood or local transit circulator to serve residents in Benson-Ames, as well as the centers and destinations within the Area.

- Evaluate the condition and need for the Area’s pedestrian bridges. Assess the need for each bridge, identify necessary structural improvements and determine the level of aesthetic improvement needed for the structure to become a visual asset to the community.
II.B.4. Conclusion

The next four sections of this plan focus on the application of the broad framework recommendations to four specific development areas: Downtown Benson, the Ames Avenue Corridor, 72nd and Military, and North Saddle Creek. Strategies for each area are developed based on the overall vision for the Alliance Area as well as center specific character and classifications.
II.C. Downtown Benson

Located at the crossroads of Maple Street, Military Avenue, and NW Radial Highway, Downtown Benson represents the historic commercial district of the Town of Benson. Prior to annexation by the City of Omaha, Benson was a separate community with a downtown area that provided commercial services to the town’s residents. Today, similar to the original commercial district, Downtown Benson is a location that provides goods and services to the residents of the Benson-Ames Area and North Omaha. While the Area has changed as the times and consumers have changed, the district still functions as an everyday part of peoples lives.

Today, Downtown Benson is a place defined by its urban, historic character for which an opportunity still exists to maintain and enhance the traditional “main street” downtown commercial district. Future development of Downtown Benson should occur in a manner that enhances the existing form, pattern, and context. Development should also respect the existing context of the surrounding neighborhoods while strengthening the connections to the Downtown.

Downtown Benson is a district that people identify with and appreciate because of its character and local business flavor. Maintaining these characteristics is important as the area continues to develop. The goals and recommendations identified for here will provide the guidance necessary to maintain and enhance the character and viability of the Area.

If the Downtown is to remain a vibrant place in the future, it will require property owners, business owners and residents to work proactively to create a unique location within Omaha. A mix of small businesses, within the historic context along Maple, can establish a foundation for success, but additional living and working opportunities within the Area will sustain the health of these businesses into the future.
Figure IIC-1: Downtown Benson Development Concept Map

Legend:
- Commercial/Mixed-Use (commercial on the first floor)
- Office/Mixed-Use (commercial, office, residential)
- Residential/Mixed-Use (mainly residential, small commercial & parking allowed)
- Higher Density Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Open Space
- Public Use
- Public Parking
- Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing with Pedestrian Activated Signals
- Attached Patio Homes
II.C.1. **Goal**

*Sustain Downtown Benson as a vibrant and unique urban "main street" destination for people in Omaha.*

II.C.2. **Recommendations**

- Redesign the intersection at 63rd and Northwest Radial Highway/Military and incorporate a Downtown Benson gateway features at this location.

- Implement citywide Green Street standards along Northwest Radial Highway and significantly upgrade the landscape elements to create a parkway feel adjacent to Downtown Benson. Incorporate a separated pedestrian/bicycle pathway along the northside of the roadway.

- Improve the intersections of 60th and 61st at Northwest Radial Highway to accommodate and encourage safe pedestrian/bicycle crossing.

- Establish Downtown Benson gateway features at:
  - 63rd and Military / Northwest Radial Highway
  - 63rd and Maple Street
  - Northwest Radial Highway and Maple Street

- Remove direct access from private property to Northwest Radial Highway, allowing adjacent development/parking to be accessed from other streets.

- Enhance the streetscape along Maple to incorporate:
  - Appropriate landscaping and complementary streetscape furnishings.
  - Improved pedestrian amenities at the intersections of 60th, 61st, and 63rd streets, including narrower crossing distances, wider crosswalks, and decorative paving.
- Pedestrian activated crossings at mid-block locations associated with pedestrian access ways to district parking.
- Better definition of parking lanes along both sides of Maple.
- Identified and defined transit stops.

- Investigate further the improvement or removal of traffic signalization at 60th and 61st streets to replace with synchronized signals, 4-way stop signage, or pedestrian activated signalization.

- Enhance streetscape and pedestrian amenities throughout the Area - improving sidewalk, defining pedestrian crosswalks at minor intersections - but not to the level of Maple or Northwest Radial Highway.

- Develop a pedestrian oriented wayfinding and street signage system for the Area.

- Develop a district parking plan and strategy that includes maximizing: on-street parking, shared access and joint use parking agreements, district-wide off-street parking lots or garages, and parking behind buildings, whenever possible.

- Design off-street surface parking locations, if adjacent to a public street, to incorporate a defined landscape edge with a wall or fence element that serves to extend the feel of the building line.

- Design parking structures, if adjacent to public streets, to be mixed-use with appropriate uses at street level per applicable design guidelines.

- Develop and establish design guidelines or a zoning overlay district for development in Downtown Benson. These polices should be divided into two sections - Maple development (to the alleyways north and south of Maple)
and development north of Maple (to the alleyway north of Maple to Northwest Radial Highway). Key design guidelines:

**Maple Street**
- Single use (commercial retail) or mixed-use development, with commercial retail / entertainment uses required on the first floor of structures with office and residential uses above.
- Buildings should be multi-story.
- Buildings should be located at the front property line (zero setback), except for the creation of small outdoor areas that serve as entries, public plazas, courtyards, or outdoor eating areas.
- Front facades should include significant amounts of transparent glazing and use of masonry stone materials to reflect the history of the Area.
- No off-street parking areas or direct access drives to parking areas. Pedestrian access ways to parking are allowable at mid-block locations.
- Creative signage and use of effective exterior lighting.

**North of Maple Street**
- Single use (public, commercial, office, or residential town homes, rowhouses, condominiums, lots, etc.) or mixed-use development with an emphasis on urban residential formats.
- Buildings may be 3 to 4 stories in height with parking provided on site or through district parking facilities.
- Buildings should be located at the front property line (zero setback), except for the creation of small outdoor areas that serve as entries, public plazas or courtyards or outdoor eating areas.
- Front facades should include significant amounts of transparent glazing.
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II.D. Ames Avenue Corridor

Ames Avenue is a continuous east-west corridor through the Benson-Ames Area that developed parcel-by-parcel as strip commercial with a variety of uses. From block to block, character and pattern may change dramatically with automobile oriented commercial services, residential uses, both single family and higher density units, institutional uses and open space. Commercial uses include fast food and convenience type uses. The adjacent neighborhoods are stable but in some cases need improvement. The corridor has many assets such as the Omaha Home for Boys complex, Fontenelle and Benson Parks, but it also has many challenges like the retail vacancies and the 48th and Sahler residential area.

Today, scattered remnants of the services and amenities that once served the neighborhoods still remain. As new commercial areas developed, many of the original commercial uses moved and the corridor lost position in the marketplace. Today, the Ames Avenue corridor is an area in transition and, if action is not taken, the downward trend may continue. The Ames Avenue corridor represents an opportunity to redevelop a neighborhood center to provide daily goods and services while improving the surrounding neighborhoods. Future development of the Ames corridor should occur in a cohesive, planned manner to address both the commercial and residential needs of the Area.

Redevelopment of this corridor offers a chance to address the needs of the neighborhoods and create a community asset. A resurgence of activity along Ames Avenue including increased densities in the form of new housing opportunities is necessary. Additional residents contribute to the market strength of the area which, in turn, leads to additional development of commercial business and employment uses. This corridor can support the opportunity to create a living environment with assets such as Fontenelle and Benson Parks, renewed commercial concentrations and access to other parts of Omaha.
Figure IID-1: Ames Avenue Corridor Development Concept Map

LEGEND
- Commercial/Mixed-Use (commercial on the first floor)
- Higher Density Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Open Space
- Public Parking

Gateway with improved Pedestrian Crossings
Redesigned 60th Street
Existing Residential Neighborhood
Public Open Space
Attached Patio Homes
Enhanced Ames Ave Streetscape
Ames
Higher Density Residential
Neighborhood Center
Taylor
Fowler Ave

AMES AVENUE CORRIDOR • CHAPTER II
BENSON-AMES ALLIANCE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
Figure IID-2: Ames Avenue Corridor Development Concept Map

Legend:
- Commercial/Mixed-Use (commercial on the first floor)
- Office/Mixed-Use (commercial, office, residential)
- Higher Density Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Open Space
- Public Parking

Ames Avenue Corridor Development Concept Map

Ames

Pedestrian Connection

Gateway

Pedestrian Connection

Public Open Space

Omaha Home for Boys

Town Homes

Enhanced Fontenelle Park

North (N)
II.D.1 GOAL

AN ACTIVE CORRIDOR THAT SUPPORTS A VARIETY OF HOUSING AND TRANSPORTATION CHOICES WITH CONCENTRATED COMMERCIAL/MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENTS THAT SERVE AS COMMUNITY DESTINATIONS

II.D.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

• Establish viable nodes of mixed-use development at:
  - 60th and Ames (Neighborhood center)
  - 50th and Ames (Community 60 Center)

• Use development/investment incentives, like TIF, to encourage investment in this area per desired design and development standards that reflect an urban development form:
  - Commercial buildings should be 1 to 2 stories high located at the street and abutting adjacent structures. Mixed-use buildings may be 3 stories or higher based upon location within the development.
  - Commercial parking is provided on-street, on cross streets and on site but behind buildings or integrated into a walkable environment.
  - Residential development can be up to 3 stories high.
  - Pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities are directly accessible and connected to citywide systems.

• Develop development/investment incentives to move commercial activities along the corridor into the concentrated development areas at 60th and Ames, and 50th and Ames.

• Establish corridor gateways at:
  - Fontenelle, 48th Street, 52nd Street, 60th Street and Benson Park
• Build pedestrian, bicycle and transit oriented facility improvements along the entire length of the corridor to create a multi-modal transportation corridor.

• Continue to make improvements to Benson and Fontenelle Parks, and supplement these open spaces with community oriented open spaces as part of new development along the corridor - especially at 50th and 60th Streets.

• Integrate adjacent institutional uses (churches, schools, Boys Home, etc) into the corridor development pattern via pedestrian connections.

• Create a corridor streetscape plan that perceptually ties together development along the corridor together and supports multi-modal transportation.

• Encourage and support residential development projects through development/investment incentives that increase residential densities and provide a variety of housing choices and formats (townhomes, row housing, condominiums, lofts, flats, patio homes, etc). Key residential project locations include:
  - 48th Street and 50th Street (Sprague to Fowler)
  - Adjacent to the Neighborhood Center at 60th Street
  - 60th Street to Benson Park (Taylor / Boyd to Fowler)

• Stabilize adjacent single family neighborhoods through appropriate programs for infill housing and housing improvement.
II.E. 72ND & MILITARY ROAD

The Benson-Ames Alliance Plan identifies the 72nd Ames / Military area as a community mixed-use center in the future. This designation is driven by the existence of relatively new commercial development in an automobile oriented format. Large and small retail chain stores including Home Depot, Bakers, Quick Trip, Famous Dave’s, and McDonalds. Other commercial establishments have aggregated around this intersection in a manner that typifies suburban strip development.

While this development is relatively new, an opportunity exists south of Military along 72nd to Bedford and between 72nd and Cole Creek on the east. Currently the area is part of the strip development pattern along 72nd Street with school bus operations and other automobile oriented businesses.

As envisioned the redevelopment of this location can take advantage of a unique asset to the area - the Cole Creek Greenway. Cole Creek would remain in its natural state as an environmental feature, but flooding problems and issues would be resolved and a trail would be created along the creek. The land development pattern in this area would be reconfigured to create a compact mixed-use center that would include residential opportunities in the form of loft apartments or condominiums above commercial businesses, as well as small offices. This development would be connected to adjacent neighborhoods via the roadway system and trail connections that lead directly into the center.

The Cole Creek Center would be an integrated mixture of uses and activities including: public open space, landscaped pedestrian pathways, outdoor dining along the creek and specialty stores. Nearby neighbors would be able to walk to the area and be connected to the Cole Creek Greenway and Trail.
II.E.1. Goal Statement

Creation of a mixed-use community center taking advantage of an environmental feature that is linked to the Benson-Ames Area via the Cole Creek Greenway, street grid, and pedestrian connections.

II.E.2. Recommendations

• Investigate the use of multiple programs to leverage funds and incentives for redevelopment of this area including:
  - Development/investment incentives
  - Recreational resource development
  - Flood mitigation
  - Wetland and wildlife
  - Transportation improvement
  - Land assembly and acquisition

• Create a specific development and design guidance package for redeveloping the area to ensure that community values and goals are incorporated into any proposed development.
  - Ensure that development relates to the Cole Creek Greenway.
  - Minimize direct access to 72nd Street through designated shared access points and side streets.
  - Require a mixed-use development format that incorporates residential use either as single use structures or as part of multiple story structures.
  - Incorporate public open or activity space as a prominent feature within the development that is tied to the internal pedestrian system and linked to Cole Creek and adjacent neighborhoods.
  - Shared use parking arrangements.
- Limit heights of buildings to 3 to 4 stories.
- Prohibit large expanses of blank walls or back walls for structures along 72nd Street.

- Make improvements to resolve flooding issues, associated with Cole Creek, in a manner that enhances the recreational and natural characteristics along the creek.

- Reconfigure the existing northbound right hand turn lane from 72nd to Military and establish wayfinding and gateway features at this location.

- Establish greenway trail connections directly into the development area and extend the pedestrian system from Manderson, Evans, and Pinkney streets to the greenway trail and the mixed-use development.

- Extend the roadway grid system at Spaulding Street to cross Cole Creek.

- Utilize the Cole Creek Greenway as a buffer between new mixed-use development and established residential neighborhoods.

Gateway at 72nd Street/Military Road/Ames Avenue
Source: Gould Evans Associates
II.F. SADDLE CREEK

Located generally at the intersection of North Saddle Creek Road, Hamilton Street and Northwest Radial Highway, the Saddle Creek area is in transition. Many small local shops that once served the Benson area and the Country Club neighborhood have closed. Local service providers have been replaced by larger convenience uses that cater to automobile traffic that passes through the Area on Northwest Radial Highway. As larger developments have taken place south of Cuming Street on Saddle Creek Road, the area around Hamilton, off of Northwest Radial Highway has declined. Today, only remnants of commercial services that once served the neighborhood remain and much of the commercial area is underutilized land and/or vacant buildings. The Area is in need of a development strategy that can reestablish and better support the surrounding neighborhoods.

The future development of the Saddle Creek area is dependent on providing services to two segments of the population, the local residents and visitors. The presence of the convenience uses that have developed along Northwest Radial should not be ignored. However, the surrounding neighborhood has the potential to support convenient, quality goods and services. Redevelopment of the Saddle Creek area depends on striking the right balance in serving two distinct market segments.

Saddle Creek represents a tremendous opportunity to establish a viable neighborhood center that can provide daily goods and services to patrons. A solid foundation for redevelopment exists with the presence of well established commercial businesses such as Janousek Florists, Sgt. Peffers and the Homy Inn, to name a few. This neighborhood center can be restored through a combination of commercial land reconfiguration and new residential opportunities, creating an environment that includes residential townhomes and apartments or condominiums (including senior independent living). Enhancing the aesthetic qualities of the peanut and green space adjacent to Happy Hollow, along with a trail connector between the Keystone Trail and the Missouri Riverfront Trail, would further serve existing neighborhoods and new residential development.
Figure IIF-1: Saddle Creek Development Concept Map
II.F.1. **Goal Statement**

**Reestablish Saddle Creek as a vibrant neighborhood center that provides goods and services to adjacent neighborhoods, as well as people passing through via the trail or roadway system.**

II.F.2. **Recommendations**

- Aesthetically improve “The Peanut” (at the convergence of Saddle Creek, Happy Hollow and 50th Street) to incorporate a gateway feature.

- Establish a gateway and wayfinding feature at Saddle Creek Road and Northwest Radial Highway.

- Improve the linear green space along Happy Hollow Boulevard to include recreational amenities and a trail.

- Develop the Happy Hollow segment of the connecting trail between the Keystone and Missouri Riverfront trails and establish a trailhead location in the Saddle Creek Neighborhood Center.

- Maintain the modified grid pattern created by the existing streets.

- Create public space on triangular parcels created by intersections with Saddle Creek Road. Such spaces are opportunities for public art and other passive pedestrian oriented experiences.

- Reestablish a commercial and mixed-use core, centered in the vicinity of the intersection of Charles Street and Saddle Creek and encourage on-street parking throughout development area.
• Redevelop residential areas within the Saddle Creek Neighborhood Center to create townhomes, flats, apartments, senior living and condominium living opportunities.

• Utilize development/investment incentives to encourage redevelopment in this area per desired design and development standards that reflect an urban development form (except for property fronting on Northwest Radial Highway):
  - Commercial buildings 1 to 2 stories high located with zero front and side setback requirement.
  - Commercial parking on street or at shared use locations behind buildings.
  - Residential parking off street as part of the development.
  - Residential buildings up to 3 stories high.
  - Smaller format neighborhood businesses and support services.

• Develop the vacant property behind QuickTrip in an urban commercial format.

• Improve the pedestrian bridge crossing Northwest Radial Highway north of Hamilton.
III. IMPLEMENTATION
III.A. Framework for Action

Implementation is the process of putting an Alliance Plan into action. Implementation is not the culmination of the planning process, rather it is part of the continual planning cycle of input, analysis, evaluation, plan development, and action. The Alliance Plan is a long-range plan; therefore implementation is incremental and cumulative - occasionally involving large-scale projects, however more frequently involving small projects and the day-to-day decisions of stakeholders.

Putting the plan into action occurs through private development, City investments and improvements, private partnerships that serve as community catalysts to organize citizens, and private funds and local businesses starting, growing and changing. The decisions that put the plan into action come from a variety of sources - both public and private - and from a variety of perspectives - regulatory, fiscal, and strategic.

Many partners will be involved in aspects of plan implementation. Specific plan recommendations and strategies with implementation responsibilities are outlined in this chapter.

III.A.1 Organization

The effective and successful implementation of the Benson-Ames Alliance Plan will involve many different people, groups, businesses and community institutions. During the planning process the Alliance Advisory Group was created as a project committee that was charged with guiding the planning effort. This group was forged by bringing together active and interested stakeholders from a variety of organizations and businesses in the area. These individuals, were asked to work together to create a foundation for the future of the Benson-Ames Alliance community.

At the completion of the planning process, an Alliance Steering Committee has been created to continue the Advisory Group's leadership and spirit of partnership throughout the implementation process.

The Steering Committee will be the primary force behind plan implementation efforts. It will serve as a body to communicate, advocate, monitor and evaluate implementation actions. Working with Omaha by Design, the City of Omaha and Neighborhood Center of Greater Omaha, the Steering Committee will periodically review and adjust the plan to ensure that improvements are being made, accomplishments are being celebrated, necessary changes occur and effective partnerships are retained so the Benson-Ames Alliance can remain viable within the changing context of Omaha.
The Alliance and the Steering Committee is truly about partnership. It is where all stakeholders - residents, property owners, business owners, developers, government agencies, neighborhoods and community institutions - come together to find solutions to common issues and build upon shared resources. Because the Alliance is a collection of individuals and groups it is logical that implementation of the recommendations and actions in this plan are the responsibility of this collection of individuals and groups.

Implementation is not the sole responsibility of the City of Omaha, Omaha by Design, neighborhood or business associations or any other single stakeholder. Instead, implementation is the responsibility of all the stakeholders in the Benson-Ames Area. The Alliance Steering Committee is the conduit for implementation, where all the stakeholders come together and take on their responsibilities as partners. The implementation matrix found later in this section outlines the primary groups that will lead efforts to implement each of the respective plan recommendations and actions.

In light of that matrix, it should be noted that these lead entities will need assistance and partners from the broader community. Each individual resident, property and business owner and other stakeholder in Benson-Ames is important to the future of the Alliance and the community. Implementation is all about people making things happen. The Alliance Steering Committee is the organizational focal point that will bring people together in this effort.

A number of the recommendations and actions in the Benson-Ames Plan directly relate to established City of Omaha development policies and regulations. Specifically, there are a number of design guidelines or standards that are initially identified for the Benson-Ames area and the four specific sub areas - Downtown Benson, Ames Avenue Corridor, 72nd and Military, and Saddle Creek.

The recommended guidelines or standards are intended to preserve the existing character or create character unique to the Benson-Ames Alliance. The goal of the guidelines and standards in this plan is to raise development quality in this area, yet not be overly restrictive so as to prevent necessary economic development opportunities from occurring within the Benson-Ames marketplace.

The four sub areas in Benson-Ames Alliance can become highly identifiable places. Downtown Benson already has a
small-town main street character. Ames Avenue Corridor can become a strong, transit oriented community center. 72nd and Military has the potential interface with Cole Creek, and Saddle Creek can build off of "the peanut" and the green space along Happy Hollow. In each of these cases the creation of zoning overlay districts for administering design guidelines or standards through the zoning code may be the best way to administer desired design guidelines or standards.

The Alliance Steering Committee should work closely with the City of Omaha to see that design guidelines or standards specifically related to these sub areas are incorporated into the City’s policy and regulatory structure. The creation of specific geographic boundaries for various overlay districts will need to be determined. The unique sub area guidelines must also be coordinated with a comprehensive set of urban design guidelines for the entire Alliance Area.

Finally, it is anticipated that the guidelines or standards outlined in the plan will need to be expanded upon in order to fully address all aspects of development - site design, building envelope, building character, landscaping and signage. The plan outlines the desired goal, describes the desired characteristics and provides initial guidelines on key design qualities for the Benson-Ames Alliance and each of the sub areas. The key to effective design guidelines or standards in the Benson-Ames area is understanding the desire that the four sub areas be urban places that build upon unique elements or characteristics within that place.

III.A.3 INCENTIVES

Development and investment incentives can be very effective tools for plan implementation in areas such as the Benson-Ames Alliance. Financial, physical or administrative incentives are effective in capturing momentum related to an initial catalyst program or development.

Administrative incentives can include a streamlined approval process. If a proposed project meets certain performance criteria associated with specific design or development standards then the project can proceed more quickly through the City's approval process. Such incentives are low cost in nature and save on costs associated with planning and starting a project.

Physical incentives include development bonuses. A project may be awarded a density bonus (i.e. additional number of square feet or additional units) for voluntarily meeting design or development standards beyond the normal requirements. Preservation of trees or other environmental features on a site, provision of useable public open space or public facilities or exceeding design criteria for handling storm water drainage may be cause to allow development bonuses that still accomplish the desired outcomes of the plan for the area or location.
Financial incentives can occur through a number of mechanisms. Public investment in an area using capital improvements scheduled and budgeted through the general budget process or a bond can serve as a catalyst for private reinvestment in an area. Capital improvements can be included in the Omaha's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The CIP is a six-year schedule allocating funds for projects like traffic studies and project implementation funding for parks, transportation and sewers. Such capital improvement incentives may come into play during the City's sewer separation project. Other financial incentives could come about through the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID), that can be used to make specified improvements using earmarked funds generated within and for a specific geographic area.

In Nebraska one incentive of choice is Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is a powerful tool and is used to fund public improvements by directing future taxes generated by the development of private property into a designated TIF District. A TIF district is being pursued for a large portion of the Benson-Ames area and should be considered for use in the four sub areas identified in this plan. In addition to the types of investments mentioned above there are other instruments such as tax credits and State and Federal grant programs that can be used to encourage development. Also, a number of local programs are available to encourage reinvestment in Omaha (many of these programs are mentioned in the Neighborhood Improvement Program Matrix in section II of this plan).

No matter the type of incentive program, incentives should be used in a judicious manner and only when a clear public benefit has been identified. In most cases this may mean addressing the public need for jobs, housing, infrastructure or transportation improvements and other identified public goals.

Leveraging incentives to promote development can serve as a great resource for making improvements in the Benson-Ames Alliance Area. It will be very important that the Alliance work closely with the City of Omaha in determining the appropriate pursuit and application of any incentives to accomplish the recommendations and actions in this plan.
III.B. ACTION MATRIX

The following strategies are intended to guide the implementation of the Benson Ames Alliance Plan. They represent the application of the plan framework to the Alliance area and specific development areas including: Downtown Benson; Ames Corridor; 72nd and Military; and Saddle Creek. Specific strategies are provided for each area with a prioritization plan. Those strategies that are high priority should be undertaken immediately to within the next two years. Those ranked as medium priority should be completed next and those lower priorities last.

To ensure that strategies are implemented the responsible parties have been identified. The groups that are identified in the matrix are not solely responsible for carrying out a specific task, rather they are the group(s) that are most likely to lead an implementation effort for the identified action. As previously stated, each of the actions included will take a concerted effort by many different groups and organizations to complete. Based on the organization of the Benson-Ames Alliance the following groups have been identified as action leaders.

- OBD - Omaha By Design
- ASC - Alliance Steering Committee
- BBA - Downtown Benson Business Association
- BAN - Benson-Ames neighborhoods
- B/PO - Business/Property Owners
- MAT - Metro Area Transit
- COO - City of Omaha
- OGA - Other Government Agencies
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benson Ames Alliance</strong></td>
<td>OBD, ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Strengthen Benson Ames Alliance by:</td>
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<td>MID</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Identifying the leadership group that works on implementation</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Having the leadership group go through the Alliance Academy</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Supporting the development of the leadership group to ensure active participation and commitment toward working together as an Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Define a development/investment incentives that encourages development projects for commercial mixed use centers at:</td>
<td>ASC, BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 50th and Ames (Community 60)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 60th and Ames (Neighborhood)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Saddle Creek Parkway and NW Radial Highway (Neighborhood)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Downtown Benson (Community 80)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 72nd and Military (Community 80)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Create an Ames Avenue Corridor development/investment incentives area:</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Up to two blocks on either side of Ames Avenue between Fontenelle Boulevard and Benson Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Support projects for commercial and offices uses in the neighborhood center at 60th and Ames and the Community 60 center at 52nd and Ames</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish new residential development within the corridor</td>
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<tr>
<td>TIF District approved by Planning Board</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LAND USE, DEVELOPMENT AND MOBILITY FRAMEWORK (cont.)</strong></td>
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<td>HIGH</td>
<td>MID</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop and implement neighborhood improvement self-assessment process to:</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Establish stronger neighborhood organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Identify specific needs in smaller areas of Benson Ames</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Create a work program for neighborhood improvements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design and develop citywide corridors to the characteristics identified in the plan, including:</td>
<td>ASC, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 72nd Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sorensen Parkway</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fontenelle Boulevard (with special design considerations for residential segments)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- NW Radial Highway / Military</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design and develop area corridor to the characteristics identified in the plan, including:</td>
<td>ASC, BBA, BAN, COO</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ames Avenue</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Maple Street (between NW Radial Highway and 72nd Street, with special considerations for segment between NW Radial and 63rd Street)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Saddle Creek and Blondo (with special considerations in residential areas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 60th Street (between NW Radial Highway to Sorensen Parkway with special design considerations in residential areas)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design and develop local corridors to the characteristics identified in the plan, including:</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 52nd Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 60th Street (NW Radial to Western)</td>
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<td>- Hartman</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LAND USE, DEVELOPMENT AND MOBILITY FRAMEWORK (cont.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design and develop three greenway elements in Benson Ames:</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Cole Creek (Sorensen Parkway to 72nd Street)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fontenelle Park/Benson High School/ Benson Park</td>
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<td>- Happy Hollow</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish a wayfinding system that identifies the centers and destinations in Benson Ames. Wayfinding locations include:</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Sorensen Parkway at 72nd, 60th, 52nd and Fontenelle</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fontenelle at Ames, Northwest Radial and Saddle Creek</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 72nd at Maple and Military / Ames</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop a transit transfer station in the vicinity of 72nd and Ames / Military and a neighborhood / local transit circulator to serve residents in Benson Ames, as well as the centers and destinations within the area.</td>
<td>ASC, COO, OGA, MAT</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>Location identified and planning begun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assess the condition and need for each of the pedestrian bridges in the area to determine if each bridge should be removed, what structural improvements are necessary, and a level of aesthetic improvement to which the structure can become a visual asset to the community.</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO, OGA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DOWNTOWN BENSON</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Redesign the intersection of Military and Northwest Radial within Downtown Benson to improve operations and increase safety.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Incorporate Downtown Benson gateway feature at the redesigned intersection at 63rd and Northwest Radial Highway / Military.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO</td>
<td>MID</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implement citywide Street standards along Northwest Radial Highway and significantly upgrade the landscape elements to create a parkway feel adjacent to Downtown Benson and incorporate a separated pedestrian / bicycle pathway along the northside of the roadway.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Improve the intersections of 60th and 61st at Northwest Radial Highway to accommodate and encourage safe pedestrian / bicycle crossing.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish Downtown Benson gateway features at: - 63rd and Military / Northwest Radial Highway - 63rd and Maple - Northwest Radial Highway and Maple</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Remove direct access from private property to Northwest Radial Highway, allowing adjacent development / parking to be accessed from other streets.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Investigate further the improvement or removal of traffic signalization at 60th and 61st streets to replace with synchronized signals, 4-way stop signage or pedestrian activated signalization.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enhance streetscape and pedestrian amenities throughout the area - improving sidewalk, defining pedestrian crosswalks at minor intersections - but not to the level of Maple or Northwest Radial Highway.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DOWNTOWN BENSON (cont.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Enhance the streetscape along Maple to incorporate:</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Street trees and streetscape furnishings</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Improve pedestrian amenities at the intersections of 60th, 61st, and 63rd streets - narrower crossing distances, wider crosswalks, decorative paving, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Provide pedestrian activated crossings at mid-block locations associated with pedestrian access ways to district parking</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Better definition of parking lanes along both sides of Maple</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Identified and defined transit stops</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop a pedestrian oriented wayfinding and street signage system for the area.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO</td>
<td>MID</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop a district parking plan and strategy that includes maximizing on-street parking, shared access and joint use parking agreements, creating districtwide off-street parking lots or garages and locating such parking behind buildings whenever possible.</td>
<td>BBA, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>MID</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design off-street surface parking locations, if adjacent to a public street, to incorporate a defined landscape edge with a wall or fence element that serves to extend the feel of the building line.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>MID</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Design parking structures, if adjacent to public streets, to be mixed-use with appropriate uses at street level per applicable design guidelines.</td>
<td>BBA, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>MID</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop and establish design guidelines or a zoning overlay district for development in Downtown Benson. The design guidelines or zoning policies should be divided into two sections - Maple Street(to the alleyways north and south of Maple) and north of Maple (the alleyway north of Maple to Northwest Radial Highway).</td>
<td>ASC, BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>MID</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DOWNTOWN BENSON (cont.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Maple Street:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Single use (commercial retail) or mixed-use development, with commercial retail / entertainment uses required on the first floor of structures with office and residential uses above.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Buildings should be multistory.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Buildings should be located at the front property line (zero setback), except for the creation of small outdoor areas that serve as entries, public plazas, courtyards, or outdoor eating areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Front facades should include significant amounts of transparent glazing and use masonry stone materials to reflect the history of the area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- No off-street parking areas or direct access drives to parking areas. Pedestrian access ways to parking at mid-block locations are allowable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Creative signage and use of lighting.</td>
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<td>• North of Maple:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Single use (public/commercial/office/residential - townhomes, rowhouses, condominiums, lots, etc.) or mixed-use development with an emphasis on urban residential formats.</td>
<td>BBA, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Buildings may be 3 to 4 stories height with parking provided on site or through district parking facilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Buildings should be located at the front property line (zero setback), except for the creation of small outdoor areas that serve as entries, public plazas or courtyards or outdoor eating areas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Front facades should include significant amounts of transparent glazing.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ames Corridor</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish viable nodes of mixed-use development at</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 60th and Ames (Neighborhood center)</td>
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<td>- 50th and Ames (Community 60 Center)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use development/investment incentives to encourage redevelopment in this area per desired design and development standards that reflect an urban development form:</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Commercial buildings should be 1 to 2 stories high located at the street and abutting adjacent structures. Mixed-use buildings may be 3 stories or higher based upon location within the development.</td>
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<td>- Commercial parking is provided on-street, on cross streets and on site but behind buildings or integrated into a walkable environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Residential development can be up to 3 stories high</td>
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<td>- Pedestrian, bicycle and transit facilities are directly accessible and planned to have viable connections to citywide systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop development/investment incentives to move</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<td>commercial activities along the corridor into the concentrated development areas at 60th and Ames, and 50th and Ames as part of development/investment incentives projects.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Establish corridor gateways at:</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Fontenelle Avenue</td>
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<td>- 48th Street</td>
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<td>- 52nd Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 60th Street</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Benson Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Make pedestrian, bicycle and transit oriented facility improvements along the entire length of the corridor to create a multi-modal transportation corridor.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO, OGA</td>
<td></td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Implementation • Chapter III**

**Benson-Ames Alliance Neighborhood Plan**

DRAFT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTION</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITY</th>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>STATUS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AMES CORRIDOR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Integrate adjacent institutional uses (churches, schools, Boys Home, etc) into the corridor development pattern via pedestrian connections.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continue to make improvements to Benson and Fontenelle Parks, and supplement these open spaces with community oriented open spaces as part of new development along the corridor - especially at 60th and 50th Streets.</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create a corridor streetscape plan that perceptually ties development on the corridor together and supports multi-modal transportation users along the corridor.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Encourage and support residential development projects through development/investment incentives that increase residential densities and provide a variety of housing choices and formats (townhomes, row housing, condominiums, lofts, flats, patio homes, etc). Key residential project locations includes:</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 48th Street - 50th Street (Sprague to Fowler)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Adjacent to the Neighborhood Center at 60th Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>- 60th Street to Benson Park (Taylor / Boyd to Fowler)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stabilize adjacent single family neighborhoods through appropriate programs for infill housing and housing improvement.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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</table>
| • Investigate the use of multiple programs to leverage funds and incentives for redevelopment of this area including:  
  - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)  
  - Recreational resource development  
  - Flood mitigation  
  - Wetland and wildlife  
  - Transportation Improvement  
  - Land assembly and acquisition | ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO | HIGH | ✗ |
| • Create a specific development and design guidance package for redeveloping the area to ensure that community values and goals are incorporated into any proposed development.  
  - Ensure that development relates to the Cole Creek Greenway  
  - Minimize direct access to 72nd Street through designated shared access points and side streets  
  - Require a mixed-use development format that incorporates residential use either as single use structures or as part of multiple story structures  
  - Incorporate public open or activity space as a prominent feature within the development that is tied to the internal pedestrian system and linked to Cole Creek and adjacent neighborhoods.  
  - Shared use parking arrangements  
  - Limit heights of buildings to 3 to 4 stories  
  - Prohibit large expanses of blank walls or back walls for structures along 72nd Street | ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO | HIGH | ✗ |
<p>| • Make improvements to resolve flooding issues associated with Cole Creek in a manner that preserves the recreational and natural characteristics along the creek. | B/PO, COO, OGA | HIGH | ✗ |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>72nd and Military (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>HIGH MID LOW</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Reconfigure the existing northbound right hand turn lane from 72nd to Military and establish wayfinding and gateway features at this location.</td>
<td>COO</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish greenway trail connections directly into the development area and extend the pedestrian system from Manderson, Evans and Pinkney streets to the greenway trail and the mixed-use development.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Extend the roadway grid system at Spaulding Street to cross Cole Creek.</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Utilize the Cole Creek Greenway as a buffer between new mixed-use development and established residential neighborhoods.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, OGA</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
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<td>ACTION</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aesthetically improve &quot;The Peanut&quot; (at the convergence of Saddle Creek, Happy Hollow and 50th Street) to incorporate a gateway feature.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a gateway and wayfinding feature at Saddle Creek Road and Northwest Radial Highway.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve the linear green space along Happy Hollow Boulevard to include recreational amenities and a trail.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop the Happy Hollow segment of the connecting trail between the Keystone and Missouri Riverfront trails and establish a trailhead location in the Saddle Creek Neighborhood Center.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO, OGA</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain the modified grid pattern created by the existing streets.</td>
<td>B/PO, COO</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create public space on triangular parcels created by intersections with Saddle Creek Road - such spaces are opportunities for public art and other passive pedestrian oriented experiences.</td>
<td>B/PO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reestablish a commercial and mixed-use core centered in the vicinity of the intersection of Charles Street and Saddle Creek.</td>
<td>B/PO, COO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelop residential areas within the Saddle Creek Neighborhood Center to create townhome, flats, apartments, senior living and condominium living opportunities.</td>
<td>BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop the vacant property behind QuickTrip in an urban commercial format.</td>
<td>B/PO</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve the pedestrian bridge crossing Northwest Radial Highway north of Hamilton.</td>
<td>COO</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SADDLE CREEK (cont.)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Utilize development/investment incentives to encourage redevelopment in this area per desired design and development standards that reflect an urban development form (except for property fronting on Northwest Radial Highway):</td>
<td>ASC, BAN, B/PO, COO</td>
<td>HIGH</td>
<td>MID</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Commercial buildings should be 1 to 2 stories high located with zero front and side setback requirement</td>
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<td>- Commercial parking is provided on street or at select shared use locations behind buildings</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Residential parking is provided off street as part of the development</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Residential buildings can be up to 3 stories high</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Promote smaller format neighborhood businesses and support services</td>
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