

# **Vance Neighborhood Community Forum**

**PRELIMINARY DATA BOOK**

---

**December 12, 2009**

Full Copy Available Online:  
[www.planning.memphis.edu](http://www.planning.memphis.edu)  
Community Projects Tab

Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**<sup>®</sup>



# Origins and Boundaries

## Project Origins:

In the summer of 2009, leaders of St. Patrick Roman Catholic Church began discussing the need to create and implement a comprehensive revitalization plan for the area South of the Forum. With the assistance of students and faculty from the University of Memphis' Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning, these leaders established a Steering Committee representing area churches, human service organizations, businesses and resident/tenant associations committed to revitalizing this once-thriving community.

The newly-established Steering Committee for a South of the Forum Revitalization Action Plan is committed to creating a plan that builds upon this historic neighborhood's many assets and preserves its diversity. During the past several months, more than one hundred community and campus volunteers have completed a variety of research and outreach efforts to assist residents, business owners, and institutional leaders in identifying concrete steps that can be taken to strengthen the many unique neighborhoods that exist within the South of the Forum planning district. During the coming months, the Steering Committee will be holding focus group with area organizations and interviewing local residents, business owners, and institutional leaders in order to create a plan that reflects the hopes and aspirations of local stakeholders. Quoting Father Timothy Sullivan O.S.P., Pastor of St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church, "Our goal is to ensure that the development promised to occur in our neighborhood, addresses the needs and wants of the people who actually live and work here." Those interested in joining the planning effort are encouraged to contact: Kasey Talbott, St. Patrick's Planning Intern at: 901.527.2542 ext:1054 or [jktlbott@memphis.edu](mailto:jktlbott@memphis.edu)

## Boundaries:

- North- Beale Street
- East- East Street
- South- Crump Boulevard
- West- 3<sup>rd</sup> Street

The project area is located immediately south of the central business district and downtown area. It has excellent access to major interstates I-40, I-240, and I-55. The total parcel area is 614.76 acres. The total **number of parcels survey is 1153.**

## Important Locations:

- Fedex Forum
- Clayborn Temple
- Robert Church Park
- Universal Life Insurance Building
- First Baptist Church Beale

## Composite SWOT:

### Strengths

- Proximity to downtown
- Rich history
- Wealth of social services
- Local Industry
- Vacant land
- Neighborhood of Choice by city
- Solid infrastructure framework "Good Bones"

### Weaknesses

- Fragmented neighborhoods
- Drive-in churches
- Homeless population
- Little public open space
- High drop-out, unemployment, and poverty rates
- Abandoned property
- Lack of retail services

### Opportunities

- Proposed police precinct
- Higher education institutions
- Nearby employment districts
- Community school movement
- Service agencies expansion
- Retail services
- Cultural tourism
- HOPE VI
- New development=new jobs
- Recently approved hotel plans

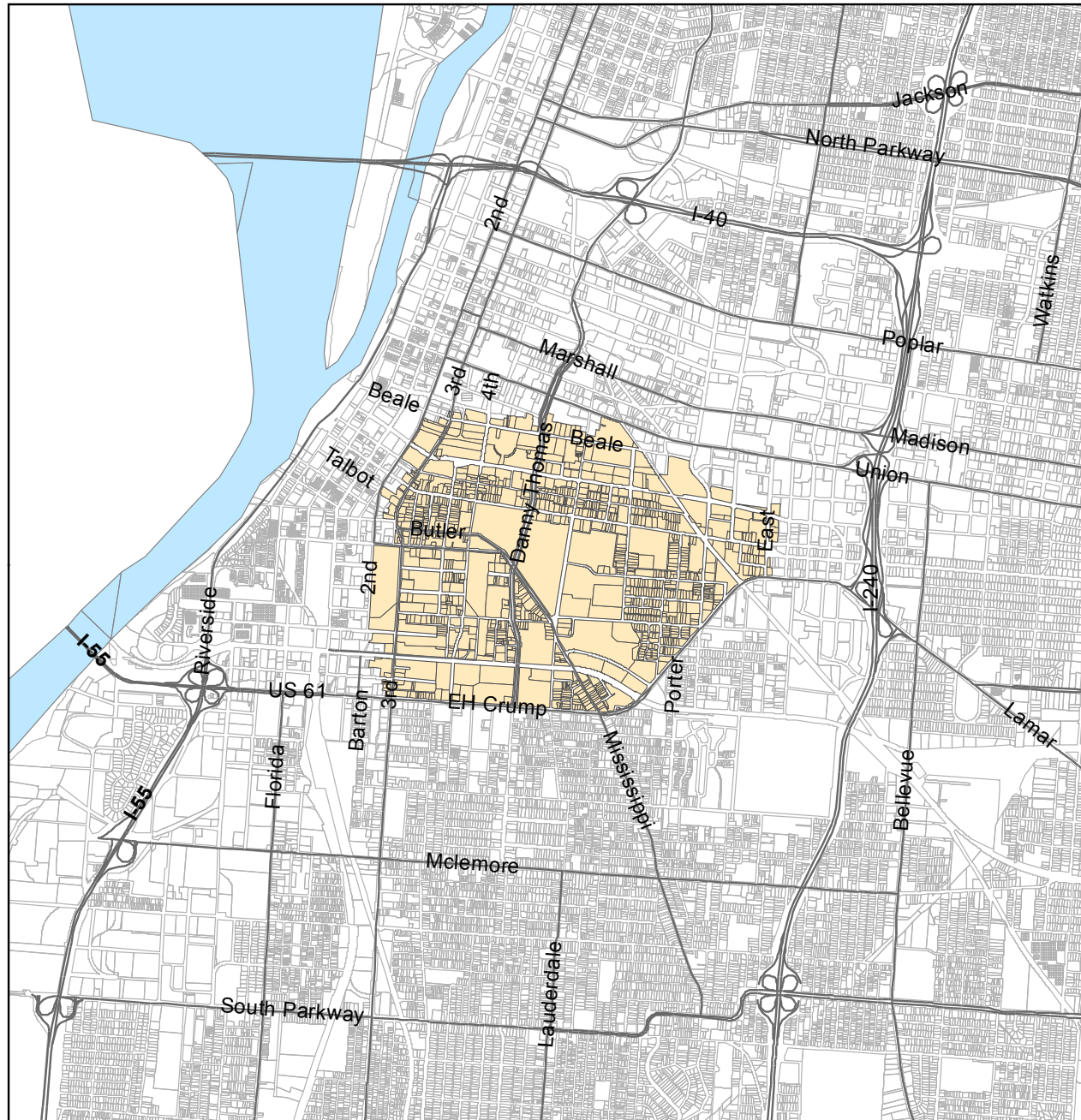
### Threats

- Gentrification threat
- Hope VI and resident displacement
- Sluggish regional and national economy

# Map 1 Vance Neighborhood Location

## Legend

 Study Area



0 1,000 2,000 4,000  
Feet



Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009



# History

## Neighborhood Origins:

The flat and fertile grounds of the mid-south area in the Mississippi Valley make it a predictable agricultural center and Memphis' central geographic location also makes it an attractive transportation hub and logical connection point among many cities. As Memphis grew, another establishment grew just to the south of present day Union Avenue and was dubbed South Memphis. The population set up over time along the long established trading route of Mississippi Boulevard. The concentration of people in 1924 is shown below with the study area outlined in blue. This initial community establishment is the root of the present day neighborhood. Eventually river and rail



connections solidified the city's status as a premier distribution center. The influx of manufacturing and the continued agricultural production in the region, towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century gave it a stable economy that attracted a steadily rising population. During this time, Beale Street had a mix of businesses owned by wealthy members of the community who predominately lived in the nearby neighborhoods that were part of former South Memphis. The yellow fever epidemics that spread through Memphis

starting in 1878 caused a mass exodus of much of the population. Those who remained were predominately African American. Beale Street began to thrive soon after with a mix of businesses owned by African Americans and other minority groups, and began to establish itself and the surrounding area as the cultural and economic center of the African Americans community. During this time Robert Reed Church Sr. established himself as a community leader and businessman, and built Church Park along Fourth Street between Beale and Linden. In 1909 as cultural activities continued to grow, W.C. Handy wrote his famous song of "Memphis Blues" at P. Wee's Saloon at the present site of Hard Rock Café. During this time the area of southern downtown flourished as a tight-knit community consisting primarily of African Americans but also a mix of other minority groups. Italian artist Mario Bacchelli is credited with giving an accurate portrayal of the vibrant African Americans community moving freely around an area that afforded them a place free from



prejudice in "Panama Club, Beale Street" seen here. Memphis was winning awards for being one of the cleanest cities in the nation. After World War II the area saw decline in the residential and business core. Soon after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the city cleared many areas in an ill-fated attempt to improve what they saw as areas of blight. This action, coupled with the development of I-240 would cripple the strength of the community and break up its former identity as the area continued to decline in population and vitality.



### Planning History:

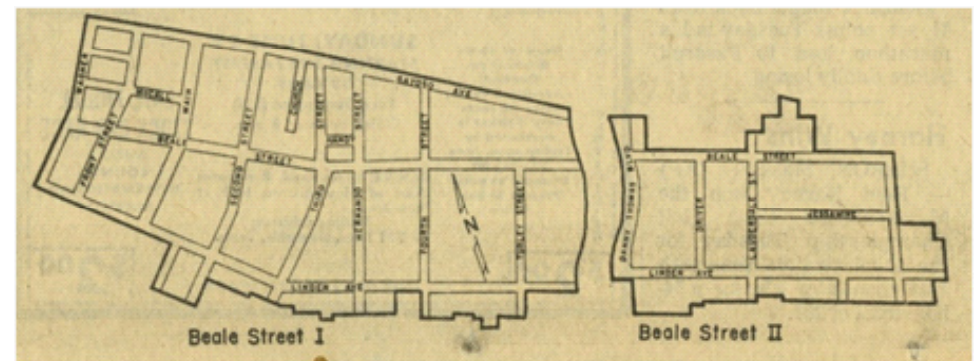
The real beginnings of Memphis commenced in 1819 when William Laurence was commissioned to design city plans by Andrew Jackson, John Overton, and James Winchester. The position on the Chickasaw Bluff was a natural location for a regional development center with its high ground setting at the convergence of the Mississippi and Wolf Rivers. The map of Memphis from Laurence's survey shows a carefully prepared street design using a grid pattern that would support future growth of the city. Eventually river and rail connections solidified the city's status as a premier distribution center. The next major plan for Memphis was prepared in 1924 by Harland Bartholomew. The transportation hub consisting of the river and ten rail connections kept goods and people moving through Memphis. Property owned by the railroad companies in 1924 depicted



here clearly indicates that the city's role as a central hub for the nation would impact the layout of the city for generations to come. Beale Street and the surrounding areas were soon targeted by the Urban Renewal program of the Federal Housing Administration to be cleared and replaced. Only 65 of 625 buildings in the renewal zone would be saved. 1500 residents were displaced as a result of the razing of the area. This action, coupled with the development of I-240, would cripple the strength of the community and continue the descent of the area. After the clearing of structures, the city struggled to assign and approve a developer to renew the area. The neighborhood sat in a state of ruin and decay for nearly a decade before plans to begin rebuilding were slowly adopted and initiated in 1980. Developers wanted to create a tourist attraction similar to Bourbon Street in New Orleans

that ignored the nearby area context. The surrounding community identity and the historic roots of Beale Street were paid no attention. Additional comprehensive plans would be developed over the years for Memphis and included foresight for developing the downtown core and preventing sprawl. Unfortunately, these plans were never taken seriously. An overall lack to adhere to initiatives to provide affordable housing, workforce development, economic incentive, and efficient transportation have left many neighborhoods without the primary resources to revitalize without assistance. Many plans for the area were never more than proposals and the plans that were implemented seem to have only been partially executed.

### Plans Ready for Relocating Beale Area Residents



# Demographics

This section of the data book paints a detailed picture of the population and housing profiles of the Study Area neighborhood. These profiles are based on the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census data. The statistics in this section were the result of compiling data from the following Census Tracts in Shelby County, Tennessee:

- Block Group 1, Census Tract 40
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 40
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 41
- Block Group 1, Census Tract 44
- Block Group 1, Census Tract 45
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 45
- Partial Block Group 1, Census Tract 41
- Minus Block South of Crump in Blocks Group 1, Census Tract 45.

Since Census Tracts 40 and 41 straddle the boundaries of the area, we have used the population of the census blocks to prorate statistics for these straddling areas. Census data is compared to other Memphis neighborhoods to further understand the significance of the statistics for the study area.

<b>Total Population</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>1990-2000</b>			
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>Percent change</b>
<b>Vance Neighborhood</b>	4,222	3,497	-17.2%
<b>South Memphis</b>	8,656	6,998	-19.2%
<b>Uptown</b>	7,295	5,193	-28.8%
<b>Binghampton</b>	7,575	6,444	-14.9%
<b>Fairgrounds</b>	9,153	7,576	-17.2%
<b>Memphis City</b>	610,337	649,845	6.5%
<b>Shelby County</b>	826,330	897,472	8.6%
<b>Tennessee</b>	4,877,185	5,689,283	16.7%

The population for the study area is 3,364 people for the year 2009 and based on citydata.com's projections from the 2000 census.

It's significant to note that the mean household income of the study area has actually decreased from 1990-2000, whereas in the comparison areas, the median income increased.

<b>Median Household Income</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>1990-2000</b>			
	1990	2000	Percent Change
Vance Neighborhood	\$13,448	\$10,237	-24%
South Memphis	\$20,862	\$26,687	28%
Uptown	\$14,797	\$22,734	54%
Binghampton	\$24,702	\$30,632	24%
Fairgrounds	\$20,881	\$26,475	27%
Memphis City	\$39,529	\$41,892	6%
Shelby County	\$47,301	\$51,375	9%
Tennessee	\$43,248	\$47,180	9%

<b>Poverty Rate</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>1990-2000</b>			
	1990	2000	Percent Change
Vance Neighborhood	80%	72%	-8%
South Memphis	46%	40%	-6%
Uptown	66%	51%	-15%
Binghampton	42%	37%	-5%
Fairgrounds	43%	37%	-6%
Memphis City	23%	20%	-3%
Shelby County	18%	16%	-2%
Tennessee	16%	13%	-3%

It is significant to note that the percentage of individuals without a high school diploma in the study area is 29% percentage points higher than the City of Memphis as whole in the year 2000. The percentage of individuals with a college degree in the study area is 13 % percentage points lower than the City of Memphis as whole in the year 2000.

<b>Educational Attainment for 25 and Older</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>2000</b>					
	Year	Less than High School	High School Diploma	Some College	College Degree
Vance Neighborhood	1990	67%	27%	5%	1%
	2000	58%	29%	10%	3%
South Memphis	2000	54%	28%	14%	5%
Uptown	2000	60%	24%	14%	2%
Binghampton	2000	44%	31%	17%	7%
Fairgrounds	2000	53%	29%	14%	4%
Memphis City	2000	29%	29%	27%	16%
Shelby County	2000	25%	28%	29%	19%
Tennessee	2000	32%	31%	23%	15%

# Demographics

The percentage of individuals in the study area under the age of 18 is 50%, nearly double the City of Memphis percentage. The number of individuals over 64 is significantly lower than other areas in the City of Memphis.

<b>Age by Percent</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>1990-2000</b>				
	<b>Year</b>	<b>Younger than 18 years</b>	<b>18 to 64 years</b>	<b>Older than 64 years</b>
<b>Vance Neighborhood</b>	1990	38%	52%	12%
	2000	50%	42%	8%
<b>South Memphis</b>	1990	30%	55%	15%
	2000	29%	55%	16%
<b>Uptown</b>	1990	39%	50%	11%
	2000	36%	54%	10%
<b>Binghampton</b>	1990	31%	55%	14%
	2000	30%	59%	11%
<b>Fairgrounds</b>	1990	28%	54%	18%
	2000	28%	57%	15%
<b>Memphis City</b>	1990	27%	61%	12%
	2000	28%	61%	11%
<b>Shelby County</b>	1990	27%	62%	10%
	2000	28%	62%	10%
<b>Tennessee</b>	1990	25%	62%	13%
	2000	25%	63%	12%

A majority of the study area residents work in the retail and business service industries.

<b>Occupation by Percent</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>1990-2000</b>						
	<b>Year</b>	<b>Healthcare</b>	<b>Maufact.</b>	<b>Gov't</b>	<b>Retail/Buss. Service</b>	<b>Labor / Trans</b>
<b>Vance Neighborhood</b>	1990	7%	11%	2%	18%	7%
	2000	8%	5%	29%	43%	27%
<b>Memphis City</b>	2000	1%	10%	23%	20%	19%
<b>Shelby County</b>	2000	12%	10%	23%	20%	17%
<b>Tennessee</b>	2000	11%	19%	23%	17%	23%

The percentage of married couple households in the study area is half that of the City of Memphis. There is also a significant percentage of female head of households.

<b>Households by Family Type</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>2000</b>				
	<b>Vance Neighborhood</b>	<b>South Memphis</b>	<b>Memphis City</b>	<b>Shelby County</b>
<b>Total Households</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>2,445</b>	<b>250,907</b>	<b>338,560</b>
Individual Households	31%	31%	30%	27%
Multi-person Households	69%	69%	70%	73%
<b>Multi-person Households</b>				
<b>Total (100%)</b>	<b>826</b>	<b>1,682</b>	<b>174,404</b>	<b>247,443</b>
<b>Married Couples</b>				
Without Children	5%	13%	28%	31%
With Children	5%	9%	22%	28%
<b>Male Head of Household</b>				
Without Children	4%	11%	4%	3%
With Children	1%	6%	4%	3%
<b>Female Head of Household</b>				
Without Children	16%	29%	13%	11%
With Children	61%	24%	21%	17%
<b>Other Household</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>7%</b>



# Demographics

There is a significantly disproportionate relationship between homeowner occupied and renter occupied dwelling units. The vacancy rate is almost triple that of the City of Memphis as a whole.

Dwelling Units and Occupancy Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas U.S. Census 1990-2000						
	Year	Total Units	% Change in Total Units	Homeowner Occupied	Renter Occupied	Vacant
Vance Neighborhood	1990	2,260	-29%	5%	80%	15%
	2000	1602		5%	72%	23%
South Memphis	1990	3,225	-12%	46%	46%	8%
	2000	2,835		46%	42%	12%
Uptown	1990	2,631	-22%	28%	60%	12%
	2000	2,042		35%	52%	13%
Binghampton	1990	3,353	-16%	33%	56%	11%
	2000	2,807		35%	54%	11%
Fairgrounds	1990	3,683	-11%	44%	47%	9%
	2000	3,282		45%	45%	10%
Memphis City	1990	248,573	9%	51%	42%	7%
	2000	271,723		52%	41%	7%
Shelby County	1990	327,796	11%	55%	38%	7%
	2000	362,954		59%	35%	6%
Tennessee	1990	2,026,067	20%	62%	30%	8%
	2000	2,439,443		64%	28%	8%

The a much higher percentage of the study area residents used public transportation as compared to theCity of Memphis as a whole. A significant number of residents also walk as their means of transportation.

<b>Transportation Use by Area</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>2000</b>				
<b>Mode of Transportation used for Commute</b>	<b>Vance Neighborhood</b>	<b>City of Memphis</b>	<b>Shelby County</b>	<b>Tennessee</b>
<b>Car, truck, or van:</b>	53%	92%	93%	94%
<b>Drove alone</b>	30%	77%	80%	82%
<b>Carpooled</b>	23%	16%	13%	13%
<b>Public transportation:</b>	31%	3%	2%	1%
<b>Bus or trolley bus</b>	30%	3%	2%	1%
<b>Streetcar or trolley car</b>	1%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Motorcycle</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Bicycle</b>	0%	0%	0%	0%
<b>Walked</b>	14%	2%	1%	2%
<b>Other means</b>	0%	1%	1%	1%
<b>Worked at home</b>	2%	2%	2%	3%

<b>Commute Times by Area</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood and Comparison Areas</b> <b>U.S. Census</b> <b>2000</b>				
<b>Length of Commute</b>	<b>Vance Neighborhood</b>	<b>City of Memphis</b>	<b>Shelby County</b>	<b>Tennessee</b>
<b>Less than 5 minutes</b>	0%	2%	2%	3%
<b>5 to 9 minutes</b>	4%	8%	8%	10%
<b>10 to 14 minutes</b>	16%	14%	13%	15%
<b>15 to 19 minutes</b>	17%	20%	18%	17%
<b>20 to 24 minutes</b>	14%	20%	19%	16%
<b>25 to 29 minutes</b>	4%	7%	8%	6%
<b>30 to 34 minutes</b>	24%	16%	18%	14%
<b>35 to 39 minutes</b>	2%	2%	2%	2%
<b>40 to 44 minutes</b>	1%	2%	2%	3%
<b>45 to 59 minutes</b>	6%	4%	5%	7%
<b>60 to 89 minutes</b>	12%	2%	2%	4%
<b>90 or more minutes</b>	0%	2%	2%	2%
<b>Worked at home</b>	2%	2%	2%	3%

# Physical Conditions

Land use: See Map 2, Map 3, and Map 4

Land Use by Area Vance Neighborhood Visual Survey 2009						
	# Parcels	% of Parcels	Area (acres)	% of Area	Minimum (acres)	Maximum (acres)
Undefined	22	1.9%	1.51	0.2%	0.01	0.034
Residential	269	23.3%	131.54	21.4%	0.01	26.55
Commercial	148	12.8%	115.92	18.9%	0.02	8.36
Industrial	53	4.6%	70.26	11.4%	0.06	5.12
Transportation	84	7.3%	39.61	6.4%	0.02	3.44
Infrastructure	12	1.0%	10.95	1.8%	0.16	1.87
Institutional	83	7.2%	130.71	21.3%	0.04	16.87
Open Space	36	3.1%	22.44	3.7%	0.04	5.52
Mixed Use	6	0.5%	4.16	0.7%	0.13	2.23
Vacant	431	37.4%	85.82	14.0%	0.02	1.72
Unknown	9	0.8%	1.84	0.3%	0.07	0.55
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1153</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>614.76</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

- Vacancy accounts for 37.4% and 14% of the study area's acreage. Vacancies are a major issue revealed through the survey.
- Institutions make up another large component of the land use at 21.3% of the study area's acreage. This indicates that the study area is filled with institutions. In this case institutions include churches, non-profits, schools, etc.
- Residential uses are centralized vertically in the middle part of the study area, in close proximity to the core institutions.
- Commercial uses are centralized on the periphery of the study area.
- The industrial area is centralized in the Southwestern part of the study area.
- There are a significant amount of absentee landlords in the study area, many coincide with vacant lots.

## Current Zoning: See Map 5

- It is evident a significant amount of variances have been granted because the land use and zoned use in many cases don't agree. Another issue with the zoning is the large swaths of parcels dedicated to PUDs (planned unit developments) and districts.

## Building Conditions: See Map 6

<b>Building Conditions by Parcel</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood</b> <b>Visual Survey 2009</b>				
	<b># Parcels</b>	<b>% of Parcels</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>	<b>% of Area</b>
<b>Excellent</b>	192	17.0%	160.59	26.2%
<b>Good</b>	254	22.5%	171.71	28.0%
<b>Deteriorated</b>	110	9.8%	116.41	19.0%
<b>Extremely Delapidated</b>	25	2.2%	13.55	2.2%
<b>Burnout</b>	1	0.1%	0.59	0.1%
<b>No Structure</b>	545	48.4%	149.91	24.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1127</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>612.76</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
* Parcels with no structure (545 parcels) and undefined (26) data excluded.				

- 47.3% of the 1153 parcels in the study area have no structure. The parcels in this category are centralized to the older single family homes and open businesses.
- 28.7% of the 1153 can be considered Excellent or Good.
- 11.8% are deteriorated, dilapidate, or burnt out. Much of the housing stock (especially rental housing) is not up to code and should not be inhabitable.

# Physical Conditions

Site Conditions: See Map 7, Map 8, and Map 9

<b>Site Conditions</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood</b> <b>Visual Survey 2009</b>				
	<b># Parcels</b>	<b>% of Parcels</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>	<b>% of Area</b>
<b>Clean/Mowed and Enhanced</b>	301	26.6%	259.29	42.3%
<b>Clean/Mowed</b>	440	38.9%	210.76	34.4%
<b>Code Violations</b>	390	34.5%	143.2	23.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1131</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>613.25</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
* 22 parcels with unknown information were excluded				

- An extremely large portion of the neighborhood is overgrown with weeds.
- Most of the sidewalks are cracked and difficult to walk on.
- A serious litter and dumping problem is prevalent on parcels that are vacant or have vacant structures on them.
- Squatters are evident in many of the vacant structures.
- Most of the code violations like overgrown weeds, litter, squatter, erosion, etc. are centralized around the vacant lots and vacant structure. Areas where businesses are open and residents are currently living are in relatively good condition and kept maintained. The exception is that the public housing projects are litter filled.

<b>Site Conditions by Parcel</b> <b>Vance Neighborhood</b> <b>Visual Survey 2009</b>				
	<b># Parcels</b>	<b>% of Parcels</b>	<b>Area (acres)</b>	<b>% of Area</b>
<b>Cracked Sidewalks</b>	444	38.5%	249.63	40.6%
<b>Absence of Grass</b>	57	4.9%	18.29	3.0%
<b>Erosion/Drainage Issues</b>	26	2.3%	16.55	2.7%
<b>Weeds/Overgrowth</b>	447	38.8%	148.12	24.1%
<b>Litter</b>	328	28.4%	185.79	30.2%
<b>Dumpsites</b>	65	5.6%	21.15	3.4%
<b>Abandoned Construction Materials</b>	20	1.7%	8.35	1.4%
<b>Improper Storage (furniture/appliances)</b>	17	1.5%	22.64	3.7%
<b>Inoperable Car in Yard</b>	11	1.0%	6.17	1.0%
<b>Demolition Debris</b>	16	1.4%	22.61	3.7%
<b>Graffiti</b>	10	0.9%	23.3	3.8%
<b>Evidence of Squatters</b>	26	2.3%	5.6	0.9%

### **Social Services and Institutions:**

- There are numerous institutions and social services.

### **City Facilities:**

- There is a fire station in the central portion of the study area.
- There is not a police precinct within the study area, but one is adjacent. There is a substation.
- There is a historic library, the Cornelia Crenshaw Library, in the study area.
- There is elementary, middle, and high schools in the study area.
- There are very few public parks.

### **Transportation:**

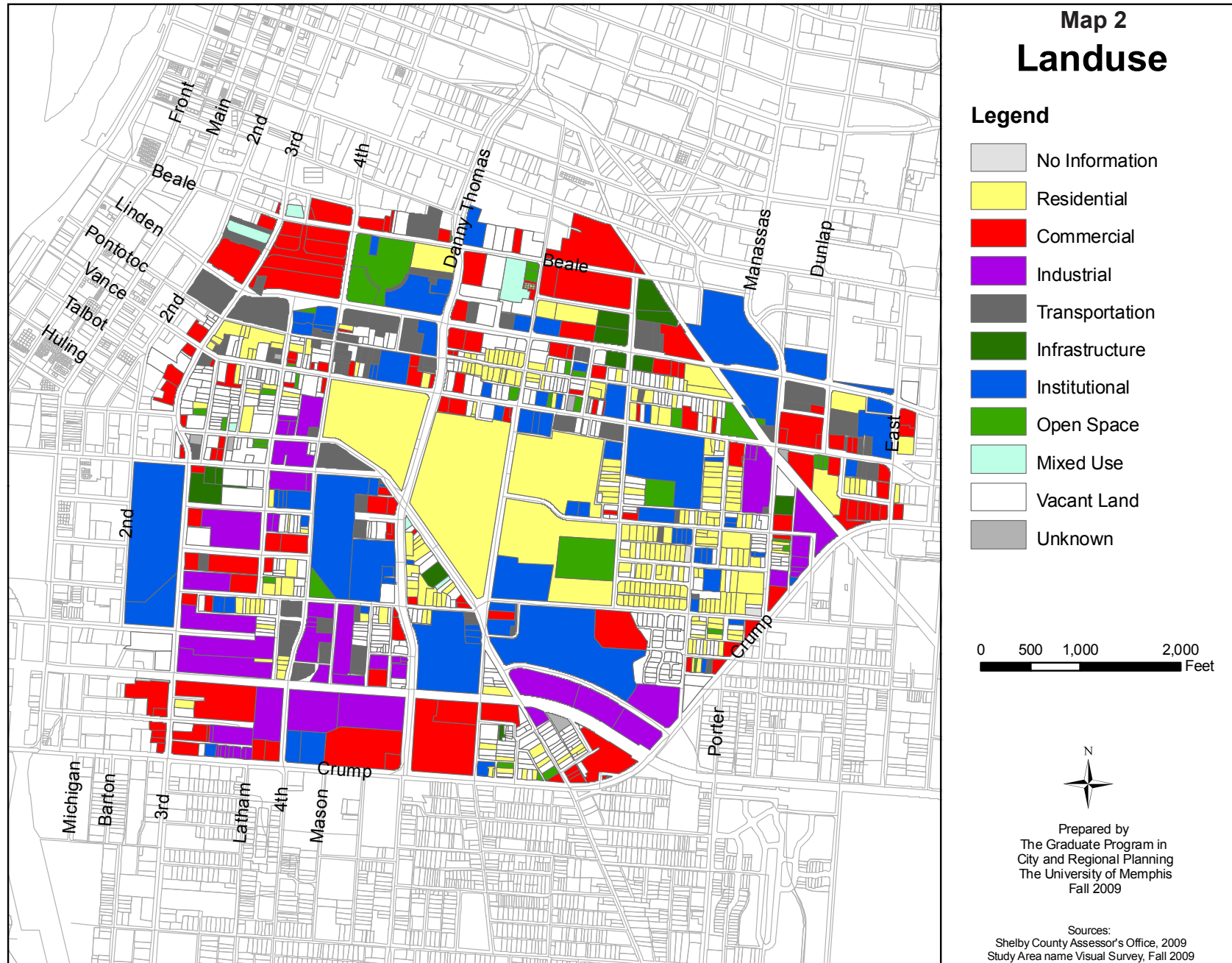
- The MATA system, used by 31% of the population, has a large number of stops within the study area. Many of them are in too close proximity to one another and the number could be lowered to increase efficiency.
- There are only 3 MATA stops in the study area that are sheltered.

### **Environmental: See Map 10, Map 11, Map 12, and Map 13**

- Drainage occurs within two watersheds, the Lower Mississippi and the Wolf (which conveys to Mississippi).
- The railroads are major ridges.
- Other major ridges are the diagonal roadways, which were originally Native American trails, which followed the high grounds.
- The study area is not within the floodways.
- There are very few areas with significant slopes. Most has been graded by man.
- There are no surface streams in the study area; most drainage is underground via sewer pipe.
- The tree canopy analysis reveals the very large absence of larger, mature trees in most of the study area.
- The areas with a high percentage of canopies, like the Northern and Eastern parts of the study area are mostly older, single family residential.
- The housing projects and industrial areas lack in the tree canopy category.
- A large amount of the study area has over a 90% level of imperviousness.
- There soils types are Memphis Silty Loam, Filled Soil, and Grade Soil. Most of the area has been disturbed and graded for the development.
- The filled land is indicative of what may have been drainage basins or surface streams at one point.



# Physical Conditions



# Map 3 Property Owners

## Legend

- In Community
- Out of Community
- Out of State
- No Data

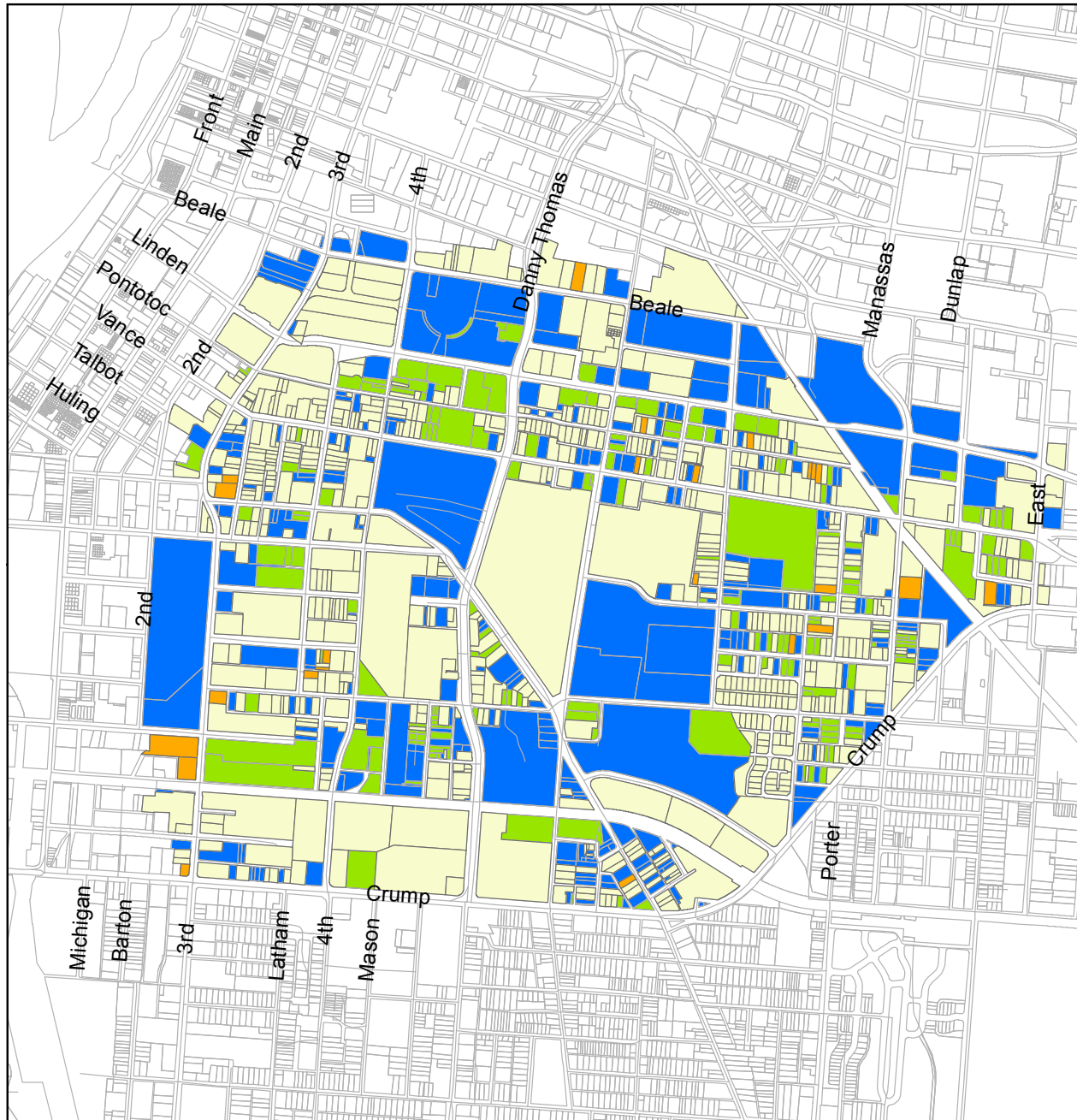
Definitions:  
 -In Community- includes the 38126 ZIP Code area  
 -Out of Community- includes all other zip codes in TN  
 -Out of State- includes all out of state owners  
 -No Data- no information on tax roll

0 500 1,000 2,000  
 Feet

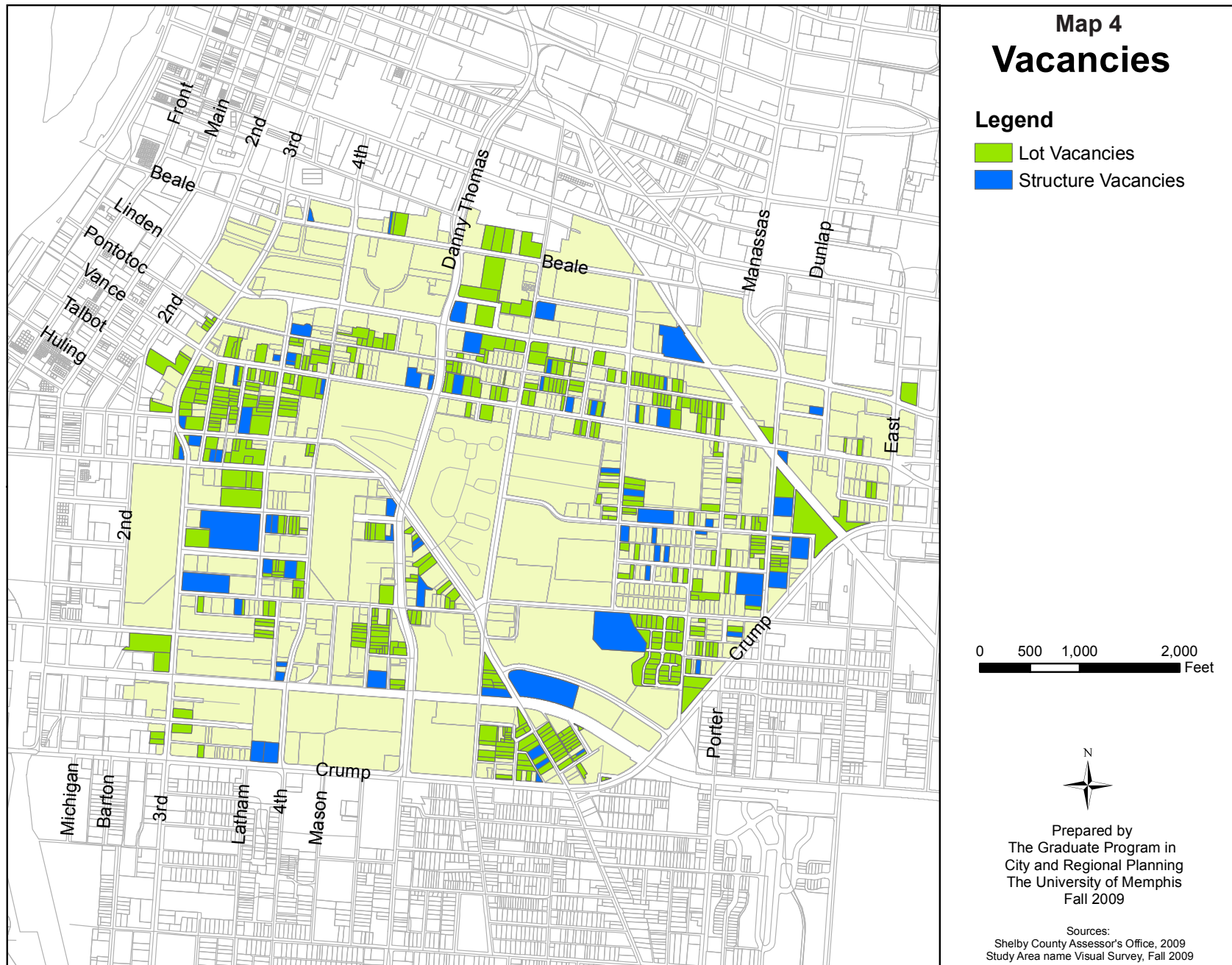


Prepared by  
 The Graduate Program in  
 City and Regional Planning  
 The University of Memphis  
 Fall 2009

Sources:  
 Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
 Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009














# Physical Conditions





## Map 5 Zoning

### Legend

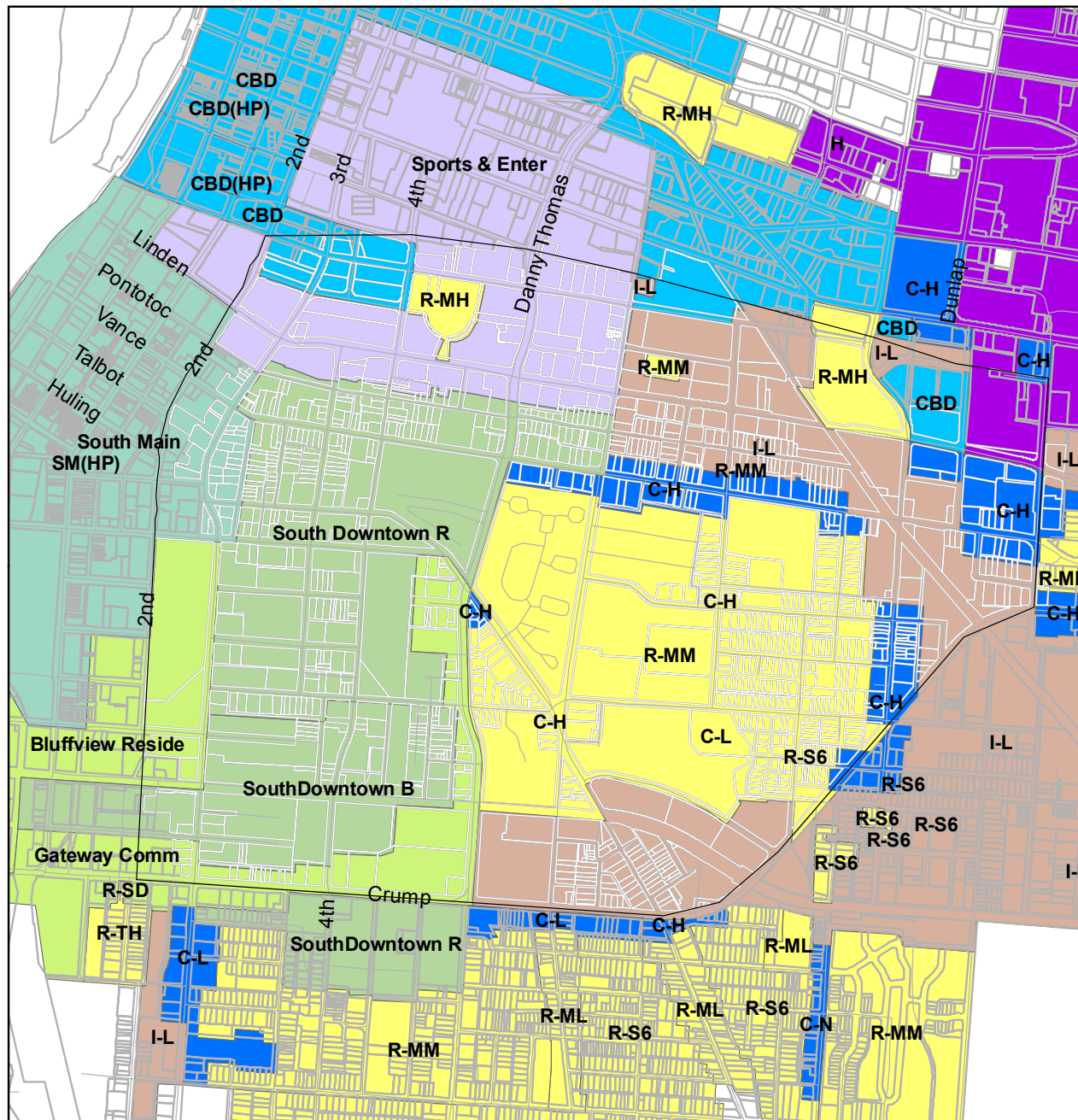
-  StudyArea
-  Commercial
-  Central Business
-  Institution
-  Industrial
-  Office
-  Residential
-  Sports
-  South Main District
-  South Downtown
-  PUDs

0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet

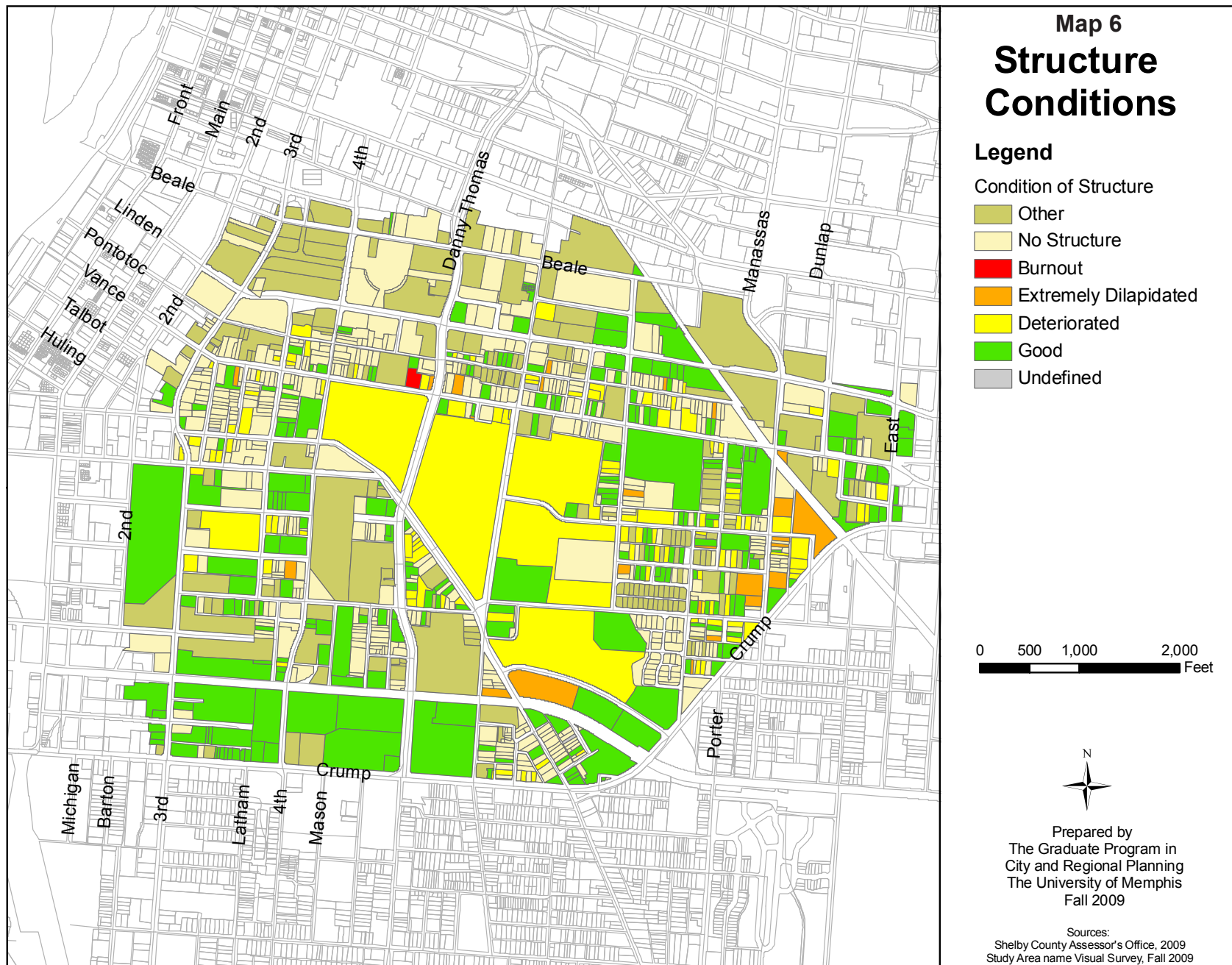


Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009







# Physical Conditions

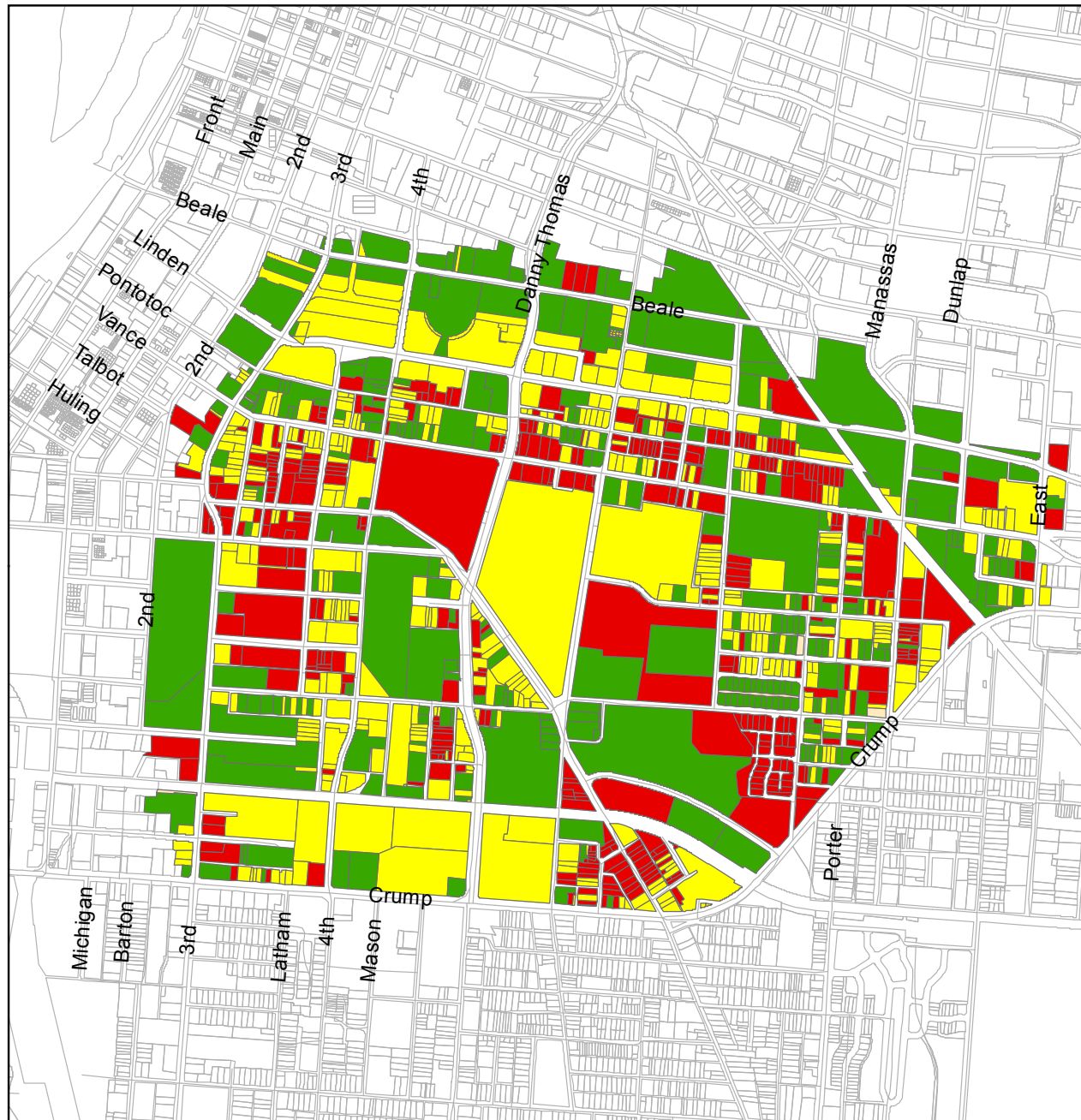




## Map 7 Site Conditions

### Legend

-  No Data
-  Clean/Mowed/Enhanced
-  Clean/Mowed
-  Code Violations



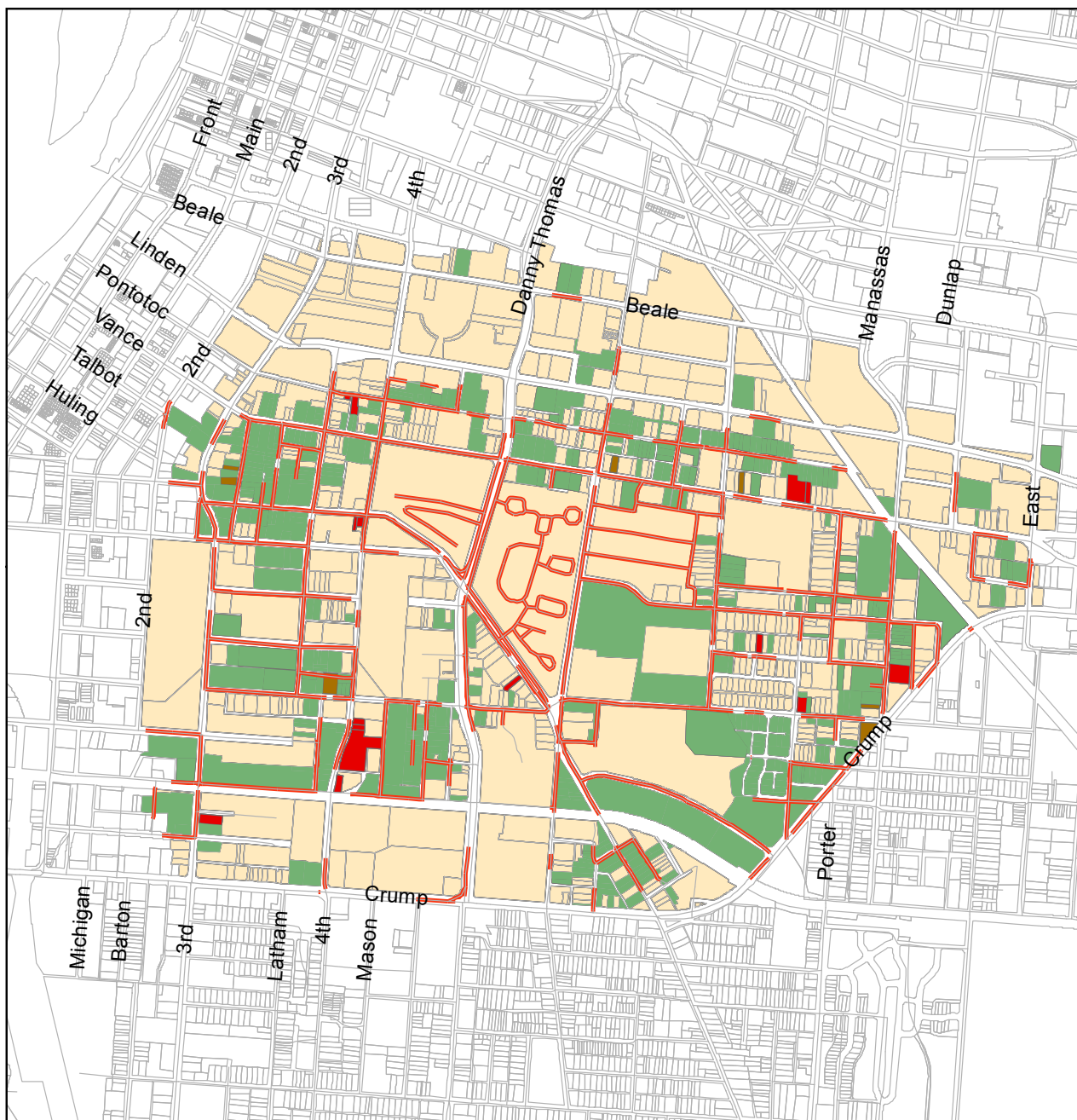
0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet



Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009





## Map 8 Site Conditions

### Legend

- Cracked Sidewalks
- Weeds
- Erosion
- Bare Ground

0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet










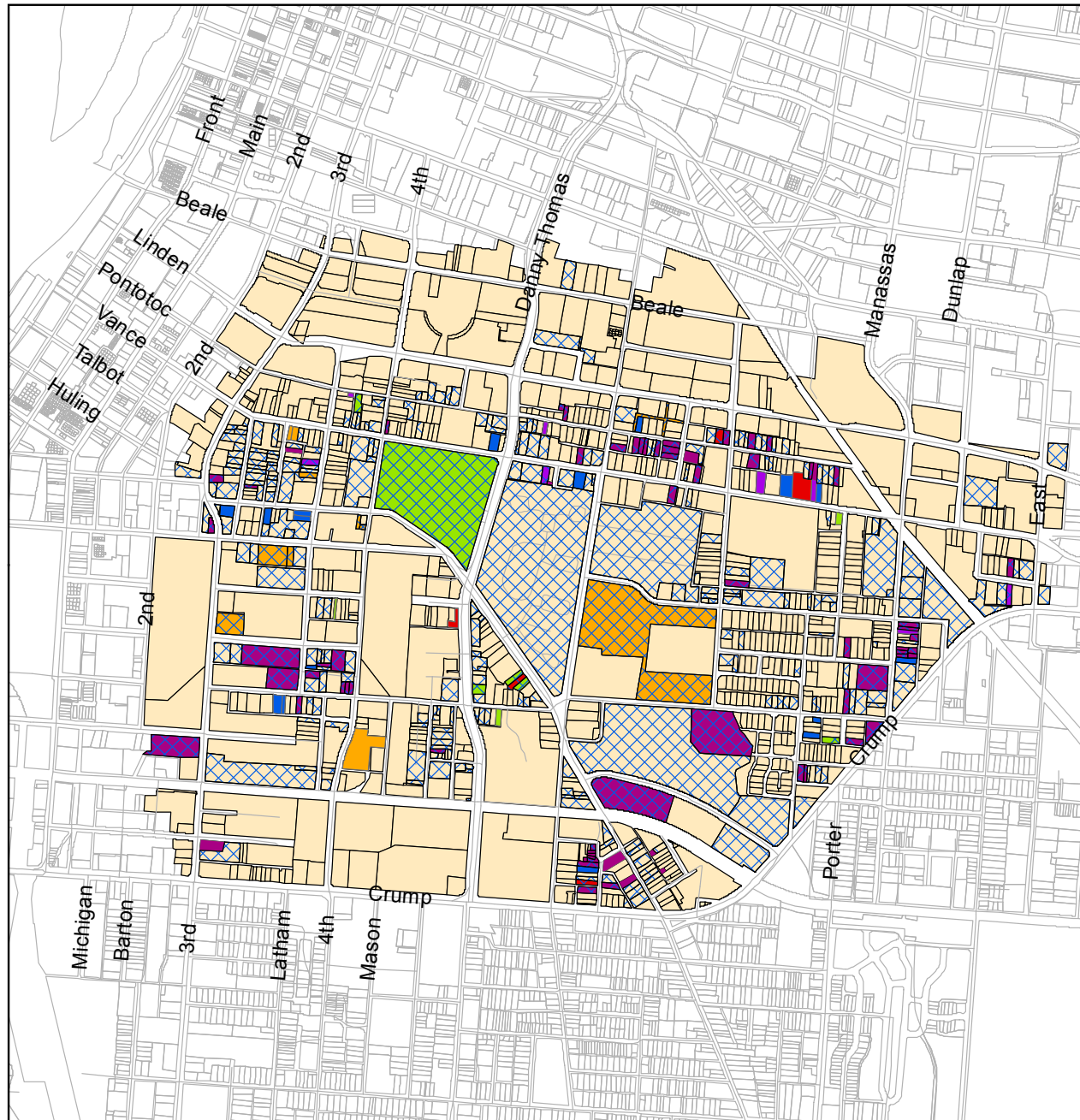
Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009

## Map 9 Site Conditions

### Legend

-  Litter
-  Dump Sites
-  Inop Car in Yard
-  Abandoned Construction Mat
-  Demo Debris
-  Appliance in Yard
-  Car in Yard



0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet



Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009





## Map 10 Hydrology

### Legend

- Floodway
- Streams
- Surface Water
- railroad
- Watersheds
  - Lower Mississippi
  - Wolf Mississippi
  - Region Rivers

0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet






Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

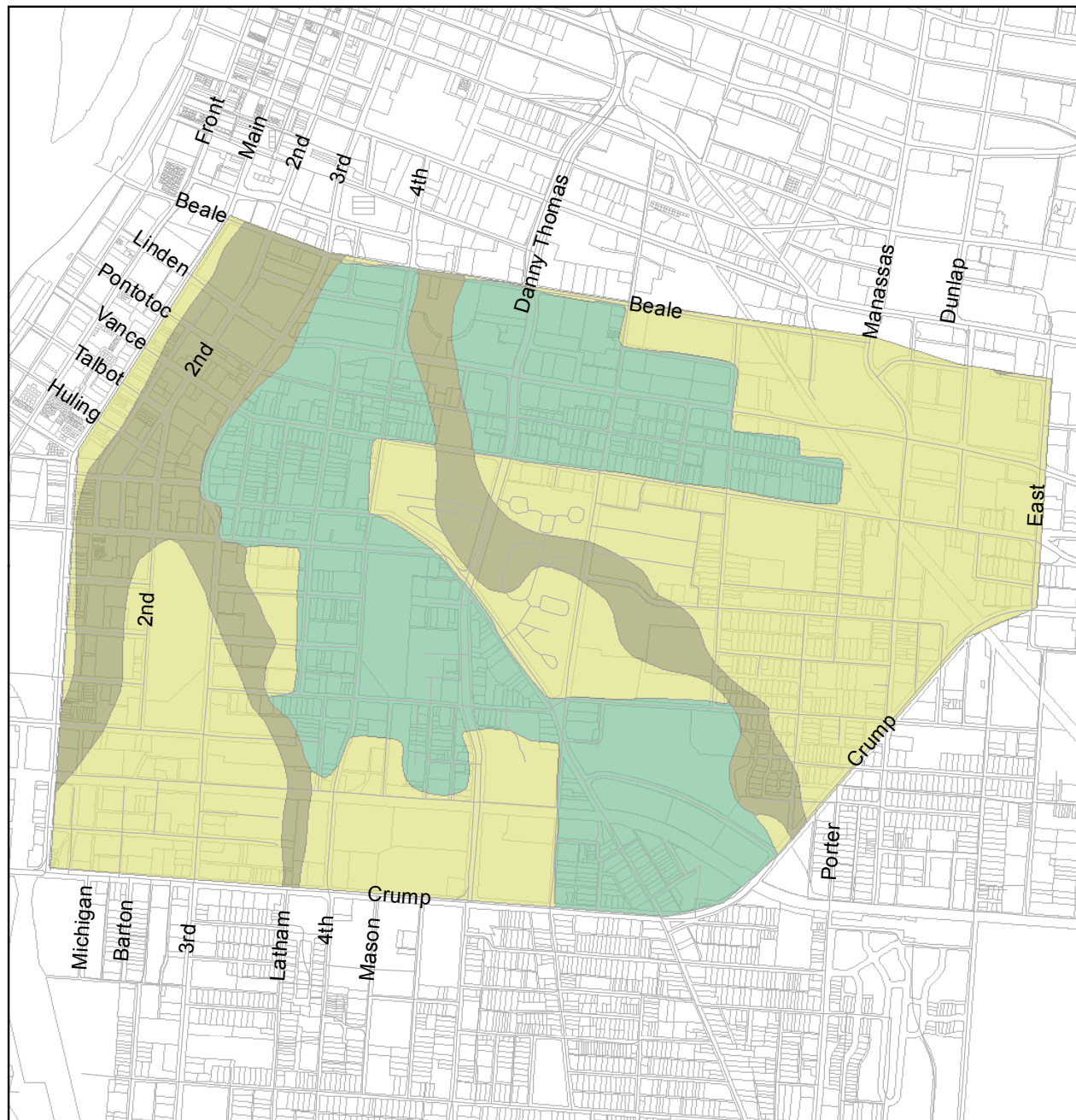
Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009

## Map 11 Soil Types

### Legend

#### Soil Types

-  Filled Land
-  Graded Land
-  Memphis Silt Loam



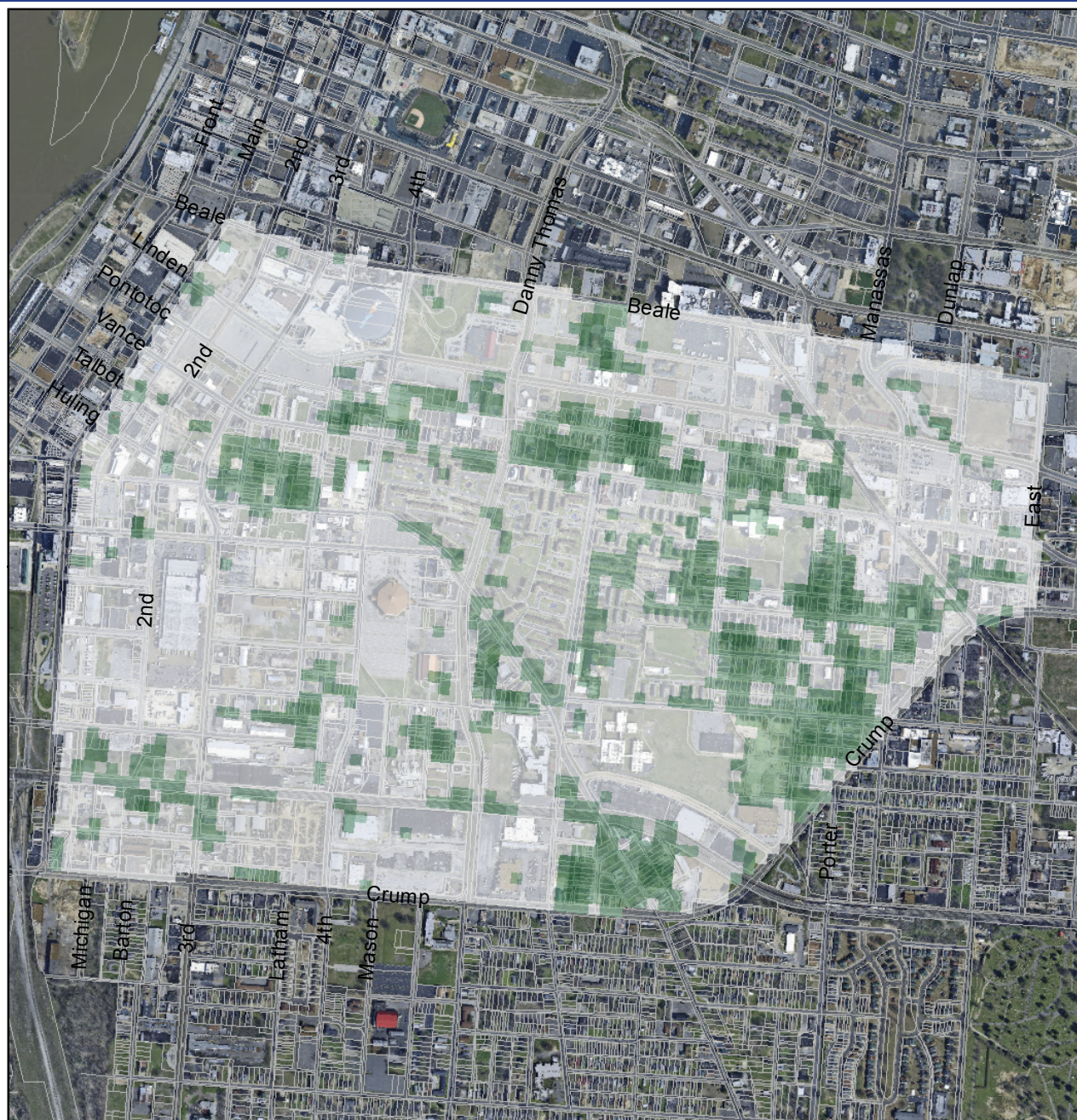
0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet



Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Web Soil Survey, NRCS, 2009  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009

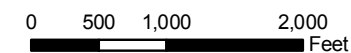
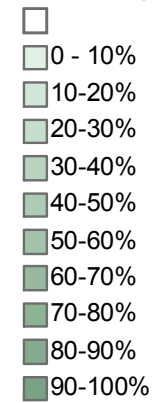




## Map 12 Canopy Cover

### Legend

Tree Canopy



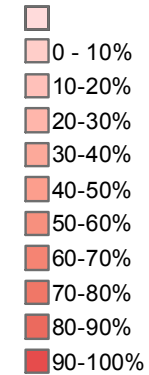
Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009



## Map 13 Pervious Cover

### Legend

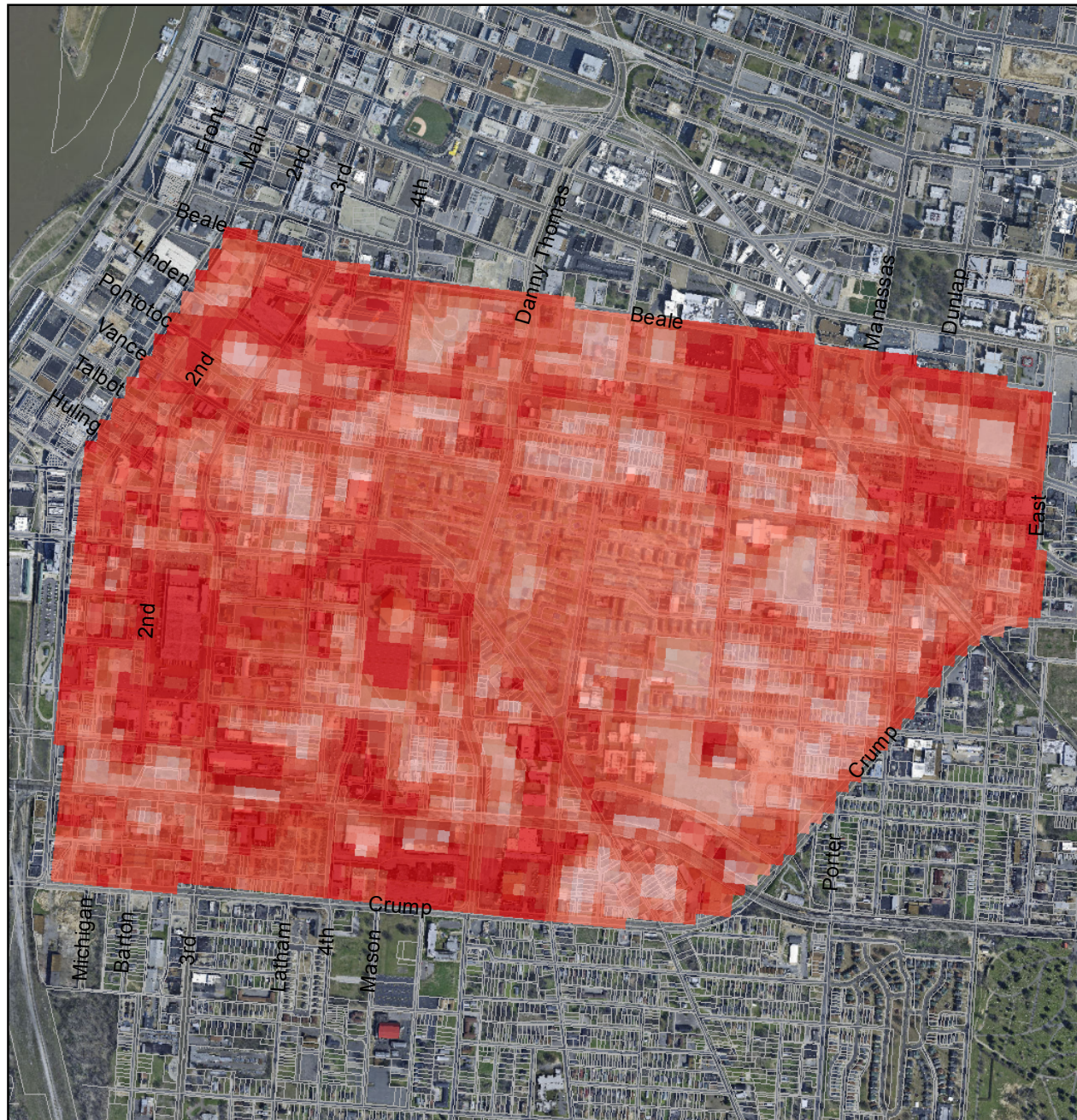


0 500 1,000 2,000  
Feet



Prepared by  
The Graduate Program in  
City and Regional Planning  
The University of Memphis  
Fall 2009

Sources:  
Shelby County Assessor's Office, 2009  
Study Area name Visual Survey, Fall 2009





# Interview and Focus Group Summaries

## Summary of Institutional Interviews

Betty Isom, a longtime resident of the study area, has lived in Cleaborne Homes for over 30 years. She has worked at the Emanuel Episcopal Center for 20 years and was actually featured in a 1999 Commercial Appeal article (March 28, 1999). Being a resident of Cleaborne Homes, Betty is aware of what will be happening in regards to the proposed HOPE VI redevelopment. She feels that while the HOPE VI project is a good thing for the area, she does not want to leave her home at Cleaborne Homes. Betty suggested that, when conducting community organizing in the study area, **it is important to quickly show successes**. Changes such as a community garden or a grocery store are what Betty recommended to the interview team. Betty feels that the team should reach out to the following churches: Mt. Olive, Progressive, Mt. Herman, Mt. Nebo, Uptown, St. John and the Temple of Deliverance. Betty also feels **that the name “SOFO” should not be used when describing the neighborhood**.

Reverend Noel G. L. Hutchinson Jr. is the current pastor of the 1<sup>st</sup> Baptist Church on Lauderdale. Rev. Hutchinson oversees the church, which is also home to Mustard Seed. Mustard Seed is a non-profit organization that developed out of the church approximately 8 years ago. It started out as a bible study mission but has expanded to include tutoring sessions (after school) for the neighborhood elementary, middle, and high school kids, as well as offering GED and job readiness classes. Mustard Seed also has a computer lab that is open to the residents of the community. The motto of the organization is “Making the Impossible, Possible.” Mustard Seed also offers services to senior citizens. Rev. Hutchinson stated **that of the graduating seniors from Booker T. Washington high school in the 2008-2009 school year, about half of those seniors who received scholarships and enrolled in college had received services from Mustard Seed**. Those services included tutoring, computer training, etc.

Rev. Hutchinson feels that the most important community assets are the schools that are located in this community (Georgia Ave, Vance Middle, and Booker T. Washington High). He states that a lack of a working relationship between community organizations is one of the most important challenges that the community faces. Rev Hutchinson observed that **the history of the neighborhood is the greatest undiscovered asset of the community**. He stated that part of the current story of the neighborhood is Michael Orr, the subject of the new movie “The Blind Side”. Orr’s birth mother lives a few blocks from the church in the neighborhood. Rev. Hutchinson says that there is concern about **the displacement of the families that live in those public housing communities which anticipate being displaced by HOPE VI redevelopment**. When asked what the biggest barriers towards improving the neighborhood are, Rev. Hutchinson replied that **the biggest barrier was that the neighborhood organizations have knowledge of each other but no working relationship**.

Alisha Kiner is the current principal of Booker T. Washington. Principal Kiner reports that the organizations in the community that **are most proactive with the students are Streets Ministries and the Emmanuel Center**. She also says that Booker T. Washington is identified as a high priority school because of the school’s graduation rate. Principal Kiner explains that the graduate rate is skewed because of the out-migration of families with children. When a student leaves the school, that student is counted as having never graduated, thus bringing down the rate. Principal Kiner also revealed that **Booker T. Washington is considered a “Crypt School”, as it has a high percentage of students who identify with being members of the Crypt street gang**. She would like to **see jobs made available for teenagers and young adults because it creates a very different dynamic that discourages getting involved in gang activity**. The school has a very active alumni base that claims such local notables as Robert Lipscomb.

James Levine is a development fellow and fundraiser with Workers Interfaith Network (WIN). WIN works mostly through churches, but also assists workers unions as an unbiased third-party. The organization is a faith-based organization that assists all workers, regardless of ethnicity. Mr. Levine reports that the group also assists many immigrant workers. The biggest problem that WIN faces with regards to immigrant workers is that an employer will have an illegal employee work for months for them without paying them. After the work is done and it’s time to pay the worker, the employer reports the worker as an illegal immigrant. The worker is then often deported without pay. Mr. Levine reports that **the most important assets in the community are the large population of people who want to work**. He also says that there are great schools for higher education. The area possesses good infrastructure and transportation and is located in a great geographic location. When asked what are the **most important challenges that the community currently faces, Levine cited education and racial divide. Crime, low achieving schools and teenage pregnancies also were problems that the community faces**. To Mr. Levine, the community’s **greatest untapped resources were children and the geographic location of the area**. From his point of view, the most important changes that the plan should aim for were listed as being **“quality housing, amenities that create an identity, everything you would need to live.”**

Roby Williams is the current president of the Black Business Association and has served in that capacity since 2002. The Black Business Association works in concert with the Tennessee Small Business Development Center, the Small Business Administration and the Memphis Area Minority Contractors Association. The Black Business Association measures its success by the success of the people that come to see them. They help

people every day to improve their businesses, save money, increase their sales, lower purchasing costs and even by helping them find the employees and professional services they need. The association attempts to help their clients with every facet of their business. Mr. Williams serves on the board of directors for the Coalition of a Better Memphis, the board of directors of the Chamber of Commerce, the Better Business Bureau, and Emerge Memphis, the Memphis business incubator. He also serves on the board of directors of Life Blood and is a graduate of LeMoyné-Owen College. He is also currently vice president of the alumni association. When asked what the **most important assets of the area were, Mr. Williams listed the following. Important monuments and edifices that relate to the historic events and meetings in Civil Rights movement of the 1960's, like Clayborn Temple.** Many of the Civil Rights marches began at that structure. Booker T. Washington High School. It is so important because so many of our leaders have attended that school. Do you know who Ben Hooks is? There's a center institute at the University for him. He's a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School. The late Dr. Vasco Smith who served as the County Commissioner and a thought leader of the Civil Rights era went to that high school. Dr. Watson, president of LeMoyné-Owen College, is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School. Former Mayor Herington is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School. The Director of Housing and Community Development, Mr. Robert Lipscomb is a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School. **The Tri-State Defender, one of the longest continually published African American newspaper's office is located in the study area.** Mr. Williams recommends that the overall plan for the community is congruent with the comprehensive plans for housing, the community would develop with a sensitivity to the history, and the plan should be as holistic as possible with the city and region as a whole.

Raychellet Williamson is the principal of Georgia Avenue Elementary School. **She lists Streets Ministries and the Emanuel Center as two of the heavy hitters in the community.** Principal Williamson listed that the single **most important change that the neighborhood needed was an initiative that empowered families.** Her biggest concern was economic empowerment and **the need to give families enough power to pull themselves off of welfare.** She recommended that any revitalization effort hit all areas of the neighborhoods social and economic fabric at once in order to produce the biggest change. She felt that **the biggest barrier facing any movement to revitalize the community would be getting buy-in from the residents.** She advised that you must seek out church leaders, the people who hold the trust of the community. If you can get faith-based leaders to buy in to the plan and the movement then most of the community would follow.

## Focus Group Summaries:

In an effort to ensure that the community's needs and wants are accurately depicted, we conducted several Focus Groups within the study area. The Focus Groups were short, interactive meetings conducted at various service centers within the neighborhood. It consisted of three participatory sections: Creating one conceptual map, identifying personal visions for the neighborhood, and defining the top three changes as a group that they would like to see implemented. Though the Focus Groups were assembled to provide additional information on what the residents want, they were also designed to foster a sense of community and bonding between those who attended.

### Focus Group I-Advance Memphis

#### Conceptual Map:

Participants identified Advance Memphis, MIFA, and neighborhood schools, Mustard Seed, Inc., St. Patrick's Catholic Church and Streets Ministries as positive aspects of the community. Vacant and abandoned structures were listed as both opportunities and weaknesses within the community. Community members identified the intersection of Fourth and Vance as "4V".

#### Personal Neighborhood Visions:

All residents agreed that they desire quality, affordable housing. They want to live in an aesthetically pleasing area, noting that Uptown Memphis a few blocks away is a good model. They also want tenured rights to return after the completion of the City's proposed Hope VII project. Residents noted that there is no space for outdoor recreation aside for street corners. Also, they would like more diversity in sports. They desire quality public parks and outdoor seating. Realizing that family issues cause stress on developing children and teens, residents want additional social services for children including, but not limited to, youth development mentors and volunteer community counselors. Community members suggested using abandoned buildings for community centers and use these centers as a meeting place for people as well as a medium to publicize services within the area. Residents specified that these aforementioned community centers should be run by people within the community. Community residents agreed that there should be more opportunities for adults including jobs and recreational activities, along with help for ex-offenders, high school drop-outs and struggling teens.

#### Top Three Community Goals:

1. Equity and Affordable Housing
2. Job Training and Job Opportunities
3. Youth Development and Social Services for Youth

# Interview and Focus Group Summaries

## Focus Group II- MIFA (Staff)

### Conceptual Map:

Participants identified L.E. Brown Park and Porter School as positive features of the community. Permanent housing at Pontotoc and Orleans is essential to the neighborhood, giving graduates of transitional housing a stable living environment. The Le Passé Lifestyle Center is also very vital as they provide case managers for the transitional housing program. The Memphis Grizzlies provides outreach to the area and continuously works to improve it. Mt. Nebo Church is historically the oldest African American church and continues to be active within the community.

### Strengths:

- COOL After School Program, headed by MIFA's Derrick Henson
- School Catchment Area feeds the schools
- Cornelia Crenshaw Librarian, Akiba Shabbazz, an asset to the community
- Gentrification balances reinvestment with the protection of the neighborhood and affordable housing
- Medical Center Group has valuable resources
- Strong history of influential people
- Neighborhood has International history, first settled by the Irish, then the Italian, and currently African American
- Proposed police precinct, south of East Street
- Church Triangle: Mt. Olive CME, First Baptist Beale, and Clayborn Temple

### Opportunities

- Take neighborhood changes to the City Council through members who are respected within the community (i.e. Harold Collins, Myron Lowery, and Joe Ford)
- Clayborn Temple, a historical site, can be used as a National Economic Development Tool
- Rich history of development: diagonal roads which are former Indian Trails go through this area, farmers ultimately became brokers and merchants and developed the area along the trail, this area was integrated until the 1900s.

### Weaknesses

- Neighborhood has been historically at odds with the housing projects and has created rifts within the community.
- Transitional housing residents are only temporary, hence they don't identify with the community
- Neighborhood churches' membership reside with people who commute to the area, creating a disconnect from the actual communities.

### Threats

- Older homeowner's transition out of neighborhood, leaving rental or vacancies that are not kept up in the same manner the homeowner would.
- Crime: Prostitution, drug dealers, purse snatchers, petty theft, and carjacking, specifically on Vance (Prostitution).
- Due to relocation of previous community members, there may not be enough residents with interest to support this plan and make it happen.

### Personal Neighborhood Visions:

Attendees at this focus group envisioned commercial development along Vance from Danny Thomas to East. They would focus on quality grocery services as a high priority, neighborhood oriented retail along with basic daily services. Staff members would like to see Community Schools to provide resources to everyone. Booker T. Washington is seen as a prime location for a Community School due to its size, impact on the community and location within the neighborhood. Participants also want attractive housing stock that remains in context with current housing styles. They want to see the area as a walkable, mixed use development. They also would like to capitalize on the history of Clayborn Temple and develop it as an economic opportunity.

### Top Three Community Goals:

1. Successful Commercial Development on Vance
2. Create Community Schools that provide neighborhood services
3. Create attractive, long standing housing stock in context with current structures.

### Focus Group III- Mustard Seed

Conceptual Map:

Participants identified the area between Foote and Cleaborn Homes as being nicknamed "Iraq" due to all the violence and shootings.

#### Strengths

- Community activists: Streets ministries, Advanced Memphis, St. John, Mustard Seed, Library
- Great history, area could be redeveloped to encourage tourism and to bring in other cultures.
- The southern roots could be enhanced by providing a farmers market.
- People in this neighborhood are used to walking long distances and will walk to a local grocer.
- New construction jobs will result from the redevelopment, an education center should be established where these basic skills are taught to residents.
- MANY organizations are trying to make a difference and are active in the community.
- Vacant parcels to be redeveloped

#### Opportunities

- The two small grocers in the store do not provide adequate nutrition and resources and could possibly combine to share resources and provide more adequate services,
- The strip mall at Danny Thomas is now vacant and could be a location for a grocery and pharmacy.
- Bringing a retailer like Family Dollar as an alternative for basic goods beside grocery stores.

#### Weakness

- Violence, particularly gang violence.
- An entire population of uneducated persons. They are not taught in school, they only come there to get their "attendance pass" and then leave as soon as it is legal to do so. Children are having babies and cannot teach the new generation because they are not educated themselves
- Substance abuse: there are no facilities for substance abuse in the neighborhood.
- Lack of transportation and resources within a close proximity.
- Atmosphere of desperation that comes from the deteriorated economic state of the area.
- Perception that residents of the study area cannot be entrepreneurs.
- Other neighborhoods are making money from those in [Vance] having to travel to surrounding areas for goods and supplies (grocery, clothing, etc)

- Ghetto tax: stores target poor people. They raise the costs of goods within the neighborhood because they know these people cannot travel far for goods. They take advantage of their immobility and profit from it.
- The lack of resources in the neighborhood
- Many people in the neighborhood have illnesses that require frequent medications. They do not have access to a local pharmacy so they go without medicine. Now illnesses that are simple and have a cure are destroying their health and their future.
- There are no jobs in the neighborhood

#### Threats

- Resident relocation due to HOPE IV and not being able to return.
- Relocation of elderly without resources or a place to go.
- Displaced residents not qualifying for the new housing vouchers.
- There is no pride or investment in public housing

#### Top Three Community Goals:

1. Create a recycling center that will create jobs, clean the neighborhood, green the area, and provide money for projects.
2. Vocational Training: teaching people to help themselves so they can have the basics in life. It starts with an education; people must be literate
3. Female youth outreach: Young girls are having children too early, they should be educated so they will realize this is a poor choice
4. Create one organization that links all the various existing organizations. Streets would be an excellent leader for this. If there was one organization everyone would be linked and the residents would know exactly where to go for what resource.
5. Create a program like the Cornerstone Project where projects become owned by residents and the residents are in charge of maintenance