

Executive Summary

“Re-vitalize: to impart new life or vigor; to restore to a vigorous active state.”

Over the course of the past eighteen months, the development of a neighborhood revitalization plan for the Martin Luther King, Jr. neighborhood has been the subject of hours of hard work by community members, Redevelopment and City of Redding staff, and neighborhood residents. The Plan presents a vision for the future for this portion of the community as a safe, pleasant, family-oriented, multi-cultural residential neighborhood. Those participating in the development of the plan expressed a strong desire that the future be fashioned to include and celebrate, where possible, the history of the neighborhood. Central elements in the neighborhood, such as the MLK, Jr. Community Center and Memorial Park, act as valuable neighborhood resources, providing an identity for this community. These resources provide a stabilizing anchor for an area with an extraordinarily high level of renter households (over 70%), many of whom are short-term residents.

Primary concerns expressed by those participating in the development of the plan revolved around two main areas: quality of life issues and the physical condition of the neighborhood’s infrastructure, both private and public. Identified quality of life problem areas include transient activities in the neighborhood, petty crime/nuisance behavior, illegal trash dumping, unkempt properties, and noise pollution. The physical condition of the neighborhood’s housing stock was of equal concern. Many properties exhibit outward signs of property neglect and long-term deferral of maintenance responsibilities. The condition of the public infrastructure in the neighborhood, that is, the streets, the sidewalks, curbs, gutters, parks, lighting, etc., was also an area of concern. The neighborhood lacks many of the basic public amenities that are found in more modern residential areas.

The neighborhood revitalization objectives and action steps identified in the Plan have been developed to address the expressed deficiencies and problem areas and have been grouped into six (6) distinct categories: Land-Use and Neighborhood Appearance; Housing; Transportation and Circulation; Public Infrastructure and Services; Public Safety and Crime Prevention; and Open Space and Recreation. Action steps under each topic area are generally considered to be realistic and achievable, assuming neighborhood involvement in the revitalization process continues, adequate public and private funding is identified and secured, and neighborhood revitalization remains a high priority.

While clearly complete revitalization of the neighborhood is a multi-year undertaking, it is believed that positive change can immediately begin to occur following the adoption of the Plan as staff and the neighborhood undertake implementation. The Implementation Section of the Plan contains a summary of all implementation actions/programs, however a two-year focused Action Plan will also be developed in order to focus initial efforts on those areas expected to make the most immediate positive effect and for which funding is available. It is the belief of the Advisory Committee, the neighborhood, and staff that the future vision for the neighborhood is worth working towards and that with hard work, personal commitment, and funding availability, the dream can be made reality.

Introduction and Purpose

The purpose of a neighborhood revitalization plan is to identify issues that are of concern to the residents and property owners of the neighborhood, and to devise strategies for addressing these concerns. In conjunction with broader policies and objectives contained within the community's General Plan and various redevelopment plans, the neighborhood planning process is intended to protect and enhance the livability within specific neighborhoods, as well as to help fulfill the overall community redevelopment vision and to create a more livable city. More specifically, neighborhood revitalization plans are intended to:

- Educate both city government and neighborhood residents about each other's concerns and visions for the future.
- Promote collaboration between the city and the neighborhood in order to achieve mutual goals and a shared sense of responsibility.
- Create a “sense of place” within the community by identifying and developing the assets within each neighborhood.
- Initiate change, rather than just reacting to it, by addressing specific issues and opportunities.
- Achieve sensible and coordinated project and program planning within each neighborhood and between all the City's “target” neighborhoods.
- Strengthen neighborhoods.

Two common elements of most neighborhood plans are both a factual statement of the neighborhood as it exists today and, more importantly, a vision statement describing the neighborhood in the future following successful implementation of the revitalization plan. The vision statement provides a framework for implementation and should touch on the issues, goals, objectives, and action items described in the plan.

As a community-driven effort, a neighborhood plan's success lies to a large extent within the continued involvement of the residents of the neighborhood in the implementation phase of the plan. To that end, the citizen's involvement in the planning committee established at the time of initiation of the planning process must evolve into involvement, typically through a neighborhood association or resident's committee, in the carrying out of the plan's objectives. Sustained neighborhood involvement is elemental to the transformation of the existing neighborhood into the vision of the future.