



The West Side Comprehensive Plan Summary and Activity Booklet



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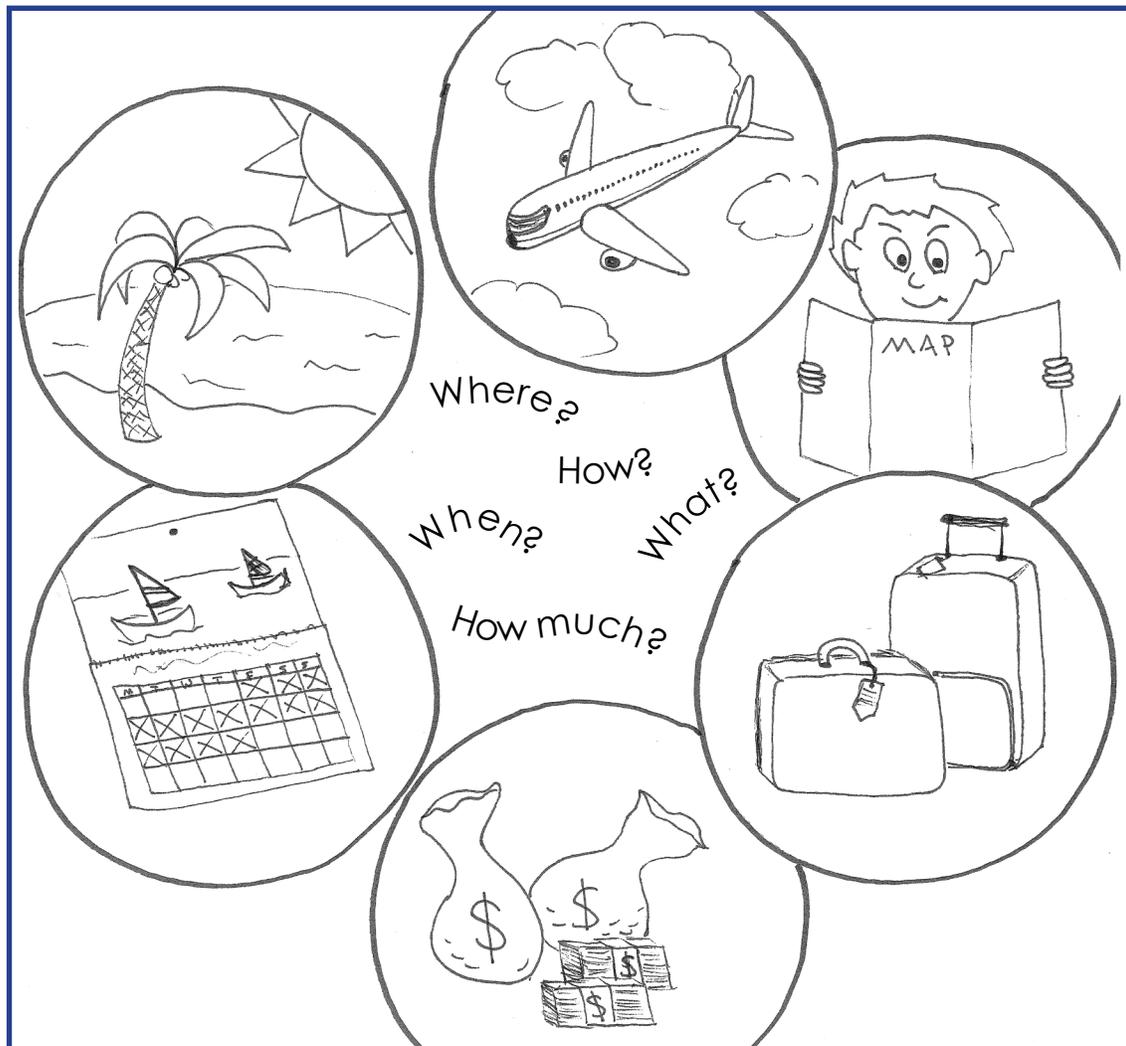
What is a plan?

Anytime we want to go from one place to another, it is helpful to make a plan. Let's imagine that you're going to go on a vacation to someplace far away. You need to decide how you're going to get there. Will you fly or drive? How many days will you spend, where will you stay, and how much money you have to spend on fun things while you're away from home are all questions that you will need to answer before you go on your vacation.

Just like planning a vacation, cities and communities also make plans. A plan for a city starts with deciding on goals for the future and has to answer questions just like a vacation plan does; what does the city need to look like, how can it get there, how much

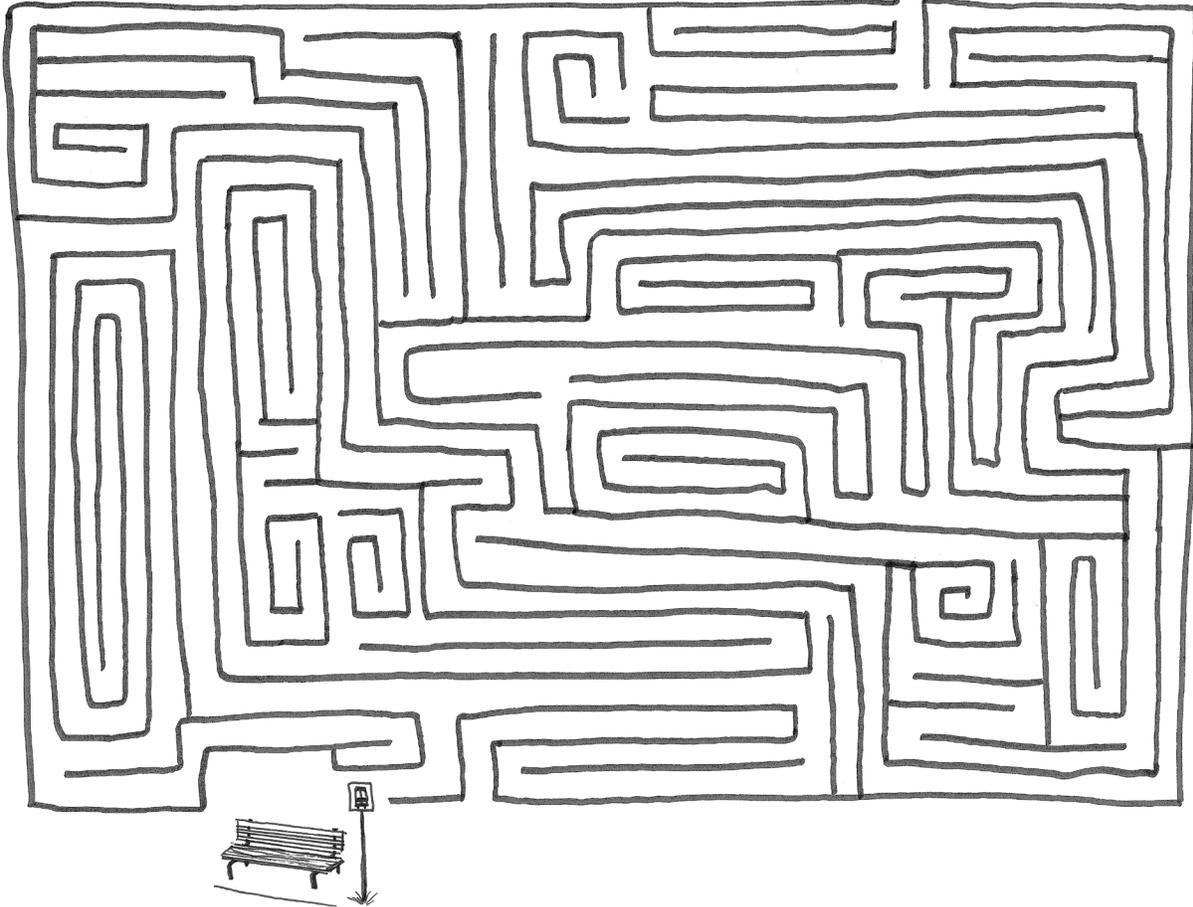
will it cost to implement the changes needed to make the city of today into the city of tomorrow? A team of planners will work with the residents, business owners, and other stakeholders in an area to create a vision for what they would like their area to look like in the future, and then develop a plan with suggestions on how to make their vision happen.

Plans are like roadmaps. They help define the routes that can be taken to get from one place to another, but they are flexible and can be changed. Just because something is in a plan doesn't mean that it will happen, but it can help us to define a shared vision for the future and give cities and people a tool to help them reach their goals.



Making a plan for a vacation starts with the same questions as a neighborhood plan.

Transportation routes and systems are an important part of any large plan. Help the rabbit ride his bicycle through the maze to the bus stop.



Every plan is different. A plan can be for a very small area like a single yard or a city block. Plans can also be for very large areas like a neighborhood or a city. Each plan has to be specific for the place that is being planned and the people that live, work, or spend time in that place. When the area that is being planned is very small, such as a yard, it is easy for planners to be very specific. Small plans often include detailed drawings and suggestions such as which tree species should be planted in a certain spot. When the area that is being planned is large, such as a neighborhood, city, or region, plans often become more general, suggesting areas for improvement and development and providing lists of ideas and suggestions rather than specific details for specific places.

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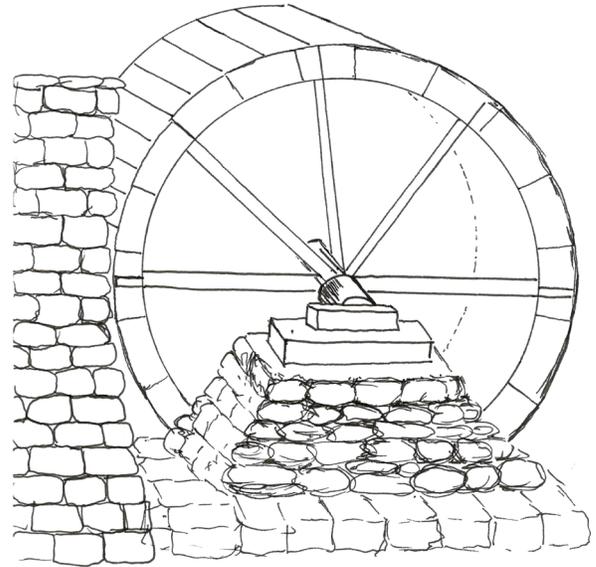
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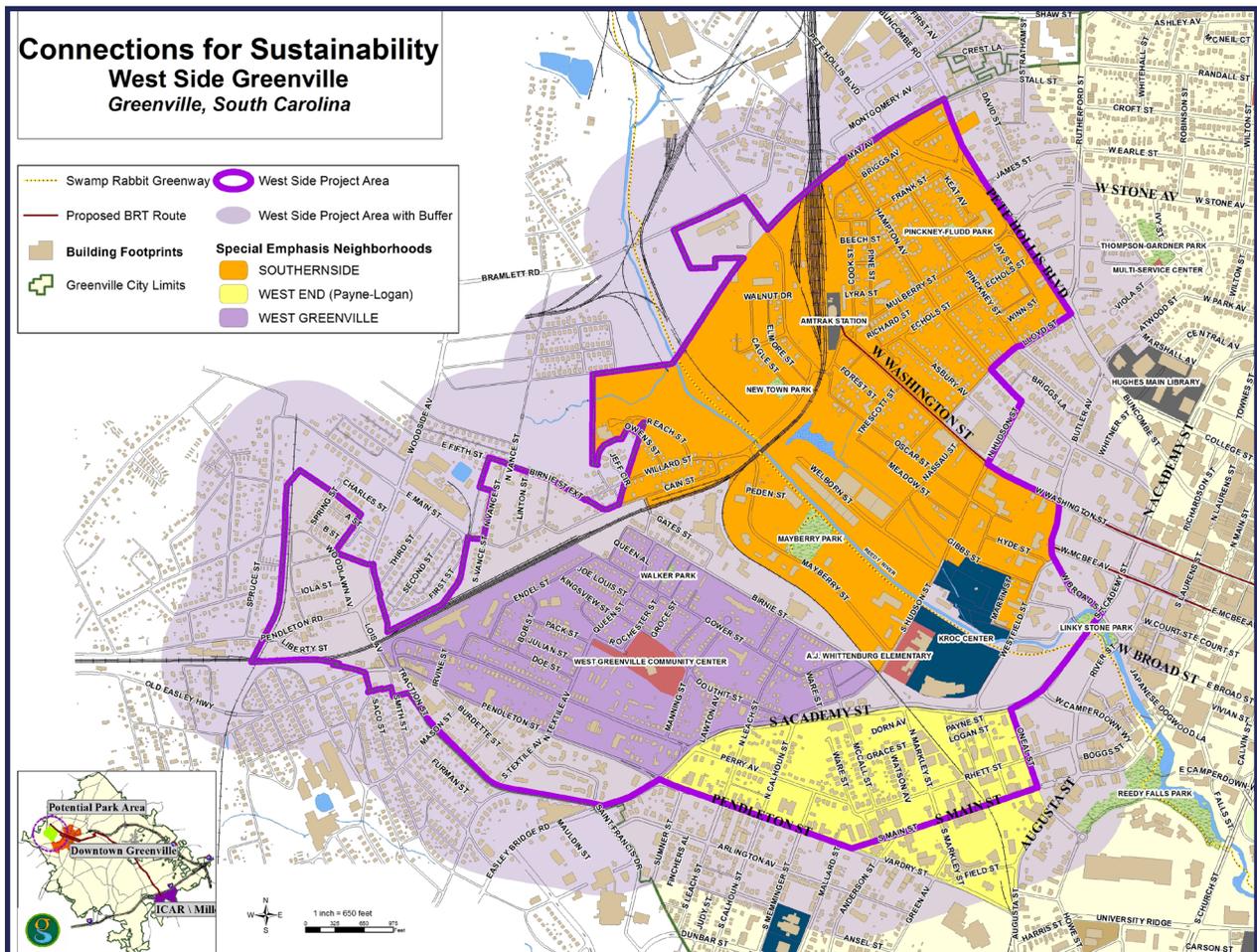
This plan for a potential park in the west side, was completed in 2013 as part of the Connections for Sustainability project. This plan is very detailed, because it is for a relatively small area.

Where is the west side?

The west side of Greenville is a large area of the City of Greenville that includes three neighborhoods; Southernside, West Greenville, and West End and a growing arts district, the Village of West Greenville. A long time ago, this area was part of the "Textile Crescent," where textile mills and the mill villages where the mill workers lived, were concentrated. The patterns of development that were part of the mills can still be seen today, but the mill buildings are empty or torn down. There are many vacant, abandoned and underutilized properties in the west side, and though the west side is close to downtown, the area has not seen a lot of investment in recent years.



Textile mills using the power of the Reedy River once gave Greenville the nickname "Textile Capital of the South."



This map shows the west side project area, the focus of the plan, outlined in purple.

Why does the west side need a plan?

The west side was once a vibrant set of communities, but the area has fallen on hard times. A comprehensive plan is a vision plan that can help provide a road map to making a community a better place. The purpose of the West Side Comprehensive Plan was to create goals for what the west side communities want to look like in the future and provide some suggestions for ways to make these goals a reality.



W. Washington and Hudson Street intersection today



Graphic showing the proposed BRT system and mixed use development at the same intersection

Top: A house in the west side
Bottom: Artist's drawing of what the house could look like after rehabilitation

Word Search

Find these words that relate to planning:

D E T C E N N O C B A G S T
 L I F A O T R U O S V R O W
 T R A N S P O R T A T I O N
 R H O U A F E G R F W R A Y
 A S E R C W H C A E K G L H
 I F K O Q P E B I A N R P O
 M A A B E U A W L Y P Q A U
 Q Y E M A W L O S P A R T S
 U C O N I N T D E L M C O I
 A N L N P L H T W A L L A N
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 Y G R O W S A N O C Y K A L

- Art
- Community
- Connected
- Family
- Grow
- Healthy
- Housing
- Live
- Park
- Plan
- Play
- Quality
- Safe
- Trails
- Transportation
- Work

About the planning process

In order to create a successful plan for the future, it is essential for planners to know what the people who live and work in a place want that place to be like. Since the west side is a large and diverse area, the planners needed to hear from a lot of people. Hundreds of people came to meetings, met with the consultants, answered questions, participated in group discussions, and worked to help make sure that this plan was based on a shared vision for the future of Greenville's west side.



Public meetings gave residents a chance to interact with planners and answer questions about their goals, likes, dislikes, and hopes for the future.

Let's Plan!

In order to create a useful plan, planners needed to know a lot about the people who spend time in the west side. At meetings, the planners put up posters that looked like the boxes below and asked residents to fill in the blanks.

Write or draw your own answers in the space below.

I want _____ in my neighborhood.

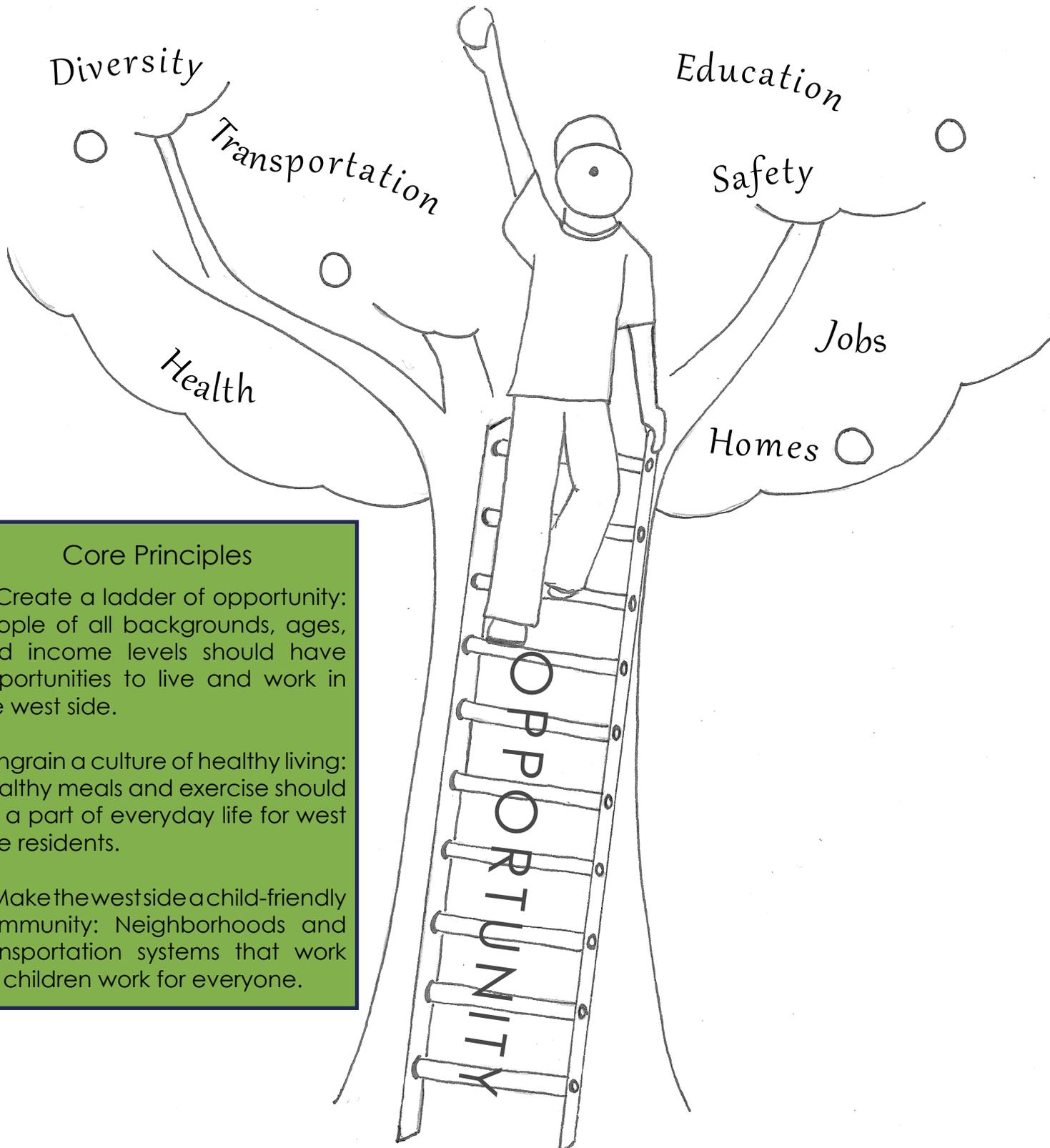
I don't want _____ in my neighborhood.

In 20 years, I want my neighborhood to be like.....

To make a difference in my neighborhood, I can.....

The Core Principles

After many meetings and discussions with people from the west side, the consultant team came up with a set of 3 core principles for the west side comprehensive plan. These principles are the baseline that the strategies and recommendations suggested in the rest of the plan all relate back to and support.



Core Principles

1. Create a ladder of opportunity: People of all backgrounds, ages, and income levels should have opportunities to live and work in the west side.
2. Ingrain a culture of healthy living: Healthy meals and exercise should be a part of everyday life for west side residents.
3. Make the west side a child-friendly community: Neighborhoods and transportation systems that work for children work for everyone.

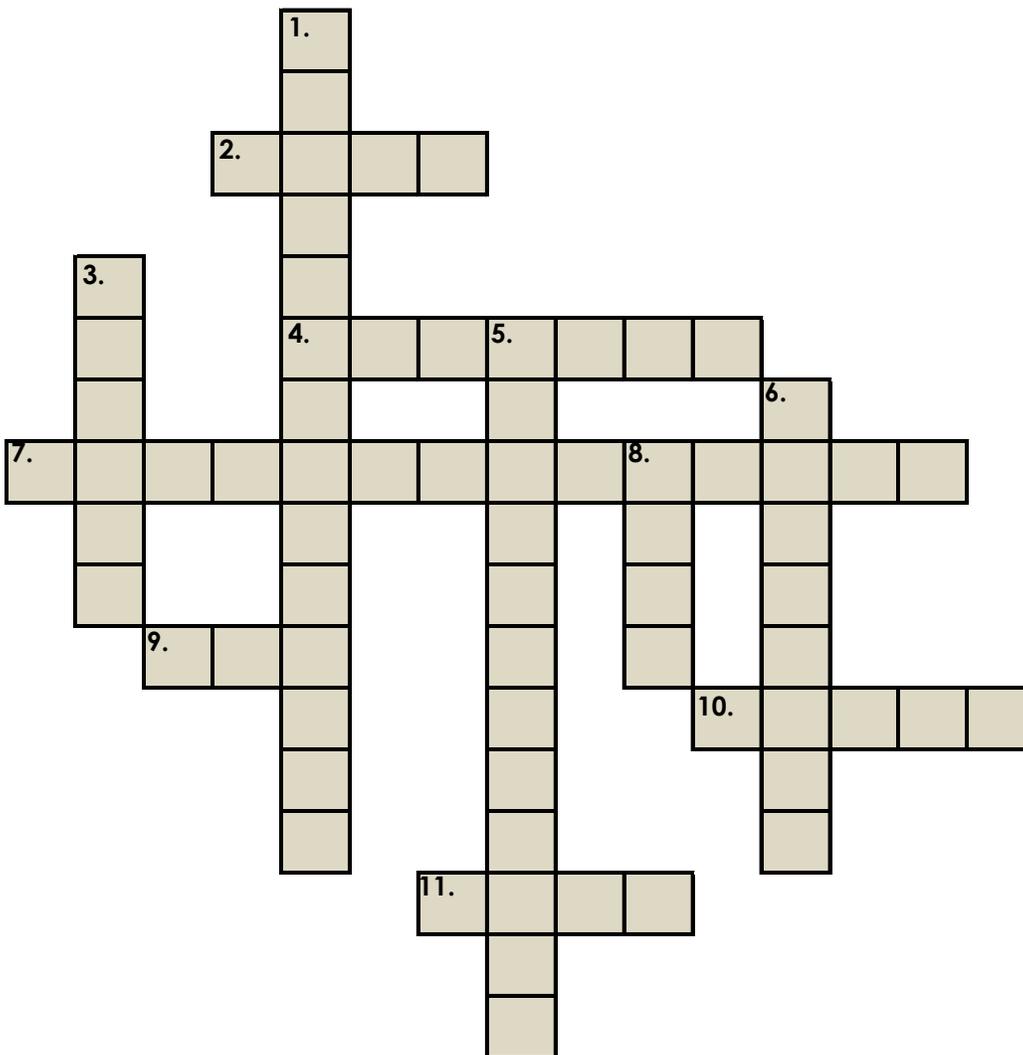
The West Side Comprehensive Plan

The West Side Comprehensive Plan is a vision plan. Instead of detailed drawings of what every street, park, and future building would look like, this plan is mainly focused on providing suggestions to help the west side neighborhoods become a healthier, vibrant community based on the three core principles.

The rest of this booklet will summarize the chapters from the West Side Comprehensive Plan that contain the plan's recommendations, starting with Chapter 4. If you would like to learn more, or read the full details, the complete plan is available for you to download from the connections website.



Fill in the crossword puzzle below with important words from the West Side Comprehensive Plan. You may have to read the summary first before you are able to complete the puzzle.



Across:

- 2. A way to travel actively
- 4. A person whose job is to develop plans for the future
- 7. Something that can happen when positive changes in an area make the place unaffordable for people who already live there
- 9. The three letter acronym for a transportation system proposed for Washington Street
- 10. The Swamp Rabbit _____ is an important way to get around the west side
- 11. The plan proposes educational programs to help people get and keep good paying _____

Down:

- 1. A way to get from one place to another
- 3. The USDA classifies the west side as a food _____ based on low access to healthy food
- 5. A half mile radius is considered a walkable _____ unit in the plan
- 6. It is important to preserve this type of neighborhood character and housing
- 8. The Village of West Greenville is an up and coming district with a focus on this

Chapter 4

Organizing to Empower the Community

This chapter highlights a few different ways to encourage people that live in the west side to become more involved with the future of the area. The plan suggests creating a community collaborative, which would be a group of involved community members that would work together to make sure that all of the different projects occurring in the area succeed.

There are many different organizations that currently work in the City of Greenville and the west side neighborhoods to provide help and support to residents. Chapter 4 highlights many of these organizations including Greenville Dreams, Community Works Carolina, the local neighborhood associations, and more. The plan suggests that current service organizations and other local groups can work together to encourage community involvement through small neighborhood projects that benefit everyone. Box 2 highlights possible community projects suggested.

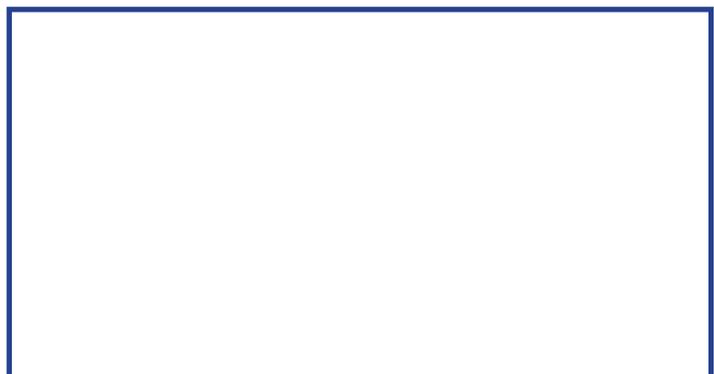
The last section in this chapter discusses gentrification and displacement. Sometimes when new houses and businesses are built in an area, the poorer people that live there are pushed out by rising taxes and property values. This is known as gentrification. Making sure that the current residents are not displaced as the neighborhoods grow and change is a very important part of the plan, as reflected in the first core principle, creating a ladder of opportunity. The last section in chapter four discusses gentrification and highlights a series of strategies, programs, and suggestions for preventing displacement and making sure that the west side becomes a place where there are opportunities for all people.



The West Side Comprehensive Plan reflects the vision of west side residents. These people will play important roles in the future of the west side, and the plan suggests multiple strategies to help empower community members to be a part of positive change.



This word cloud shows things that residents said they could do to make a difference in their community. The larger the word, the more important it is to residents. Make your own word cloud below.



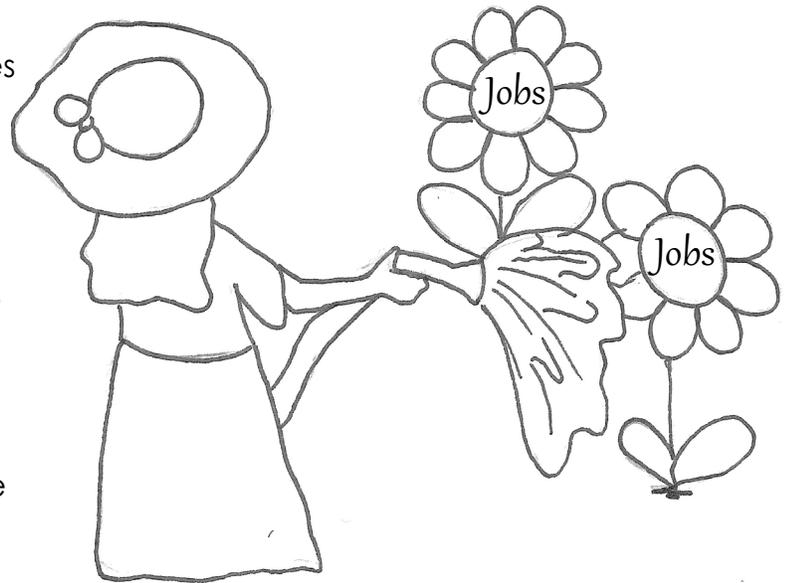
Chapter 5

Homegrown Jobs

A very important part of creating opportunities for people to succeed in life is making sure that there are jobs available for residents and that the residents are able to get and keep jobs that pay them well. A study of the characteristics of residents in the west side showed that 69% of adults in the west side have only a high school education or less. Most well-paying jobs require at least a high school education. Providing educational opportunities and job training for residents and addressing other challenges associated with finding and keeping a good job is the focus of chapter 5.

The plan suggests that local businesses and service organizations work together to help connect residents with job training programs and job openings. In order to help residents of all ages, the plan also suggests increasing the access and visibility of local area schools for children and utilizing school and community center buildings as places where continuing education and job skills training for adults could occur during out-of-school time.

The final series of recommendations in this chapter were specific to increasing the number of jobs available in the west side through recruitment of new businesses, partnerships with current businesses, and the creation of a tech incubator in the west side.



Unscramble the words below and arrange the circled letters to find another word for "a job"

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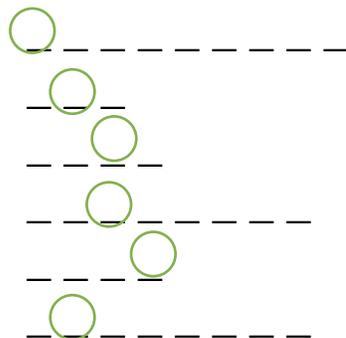
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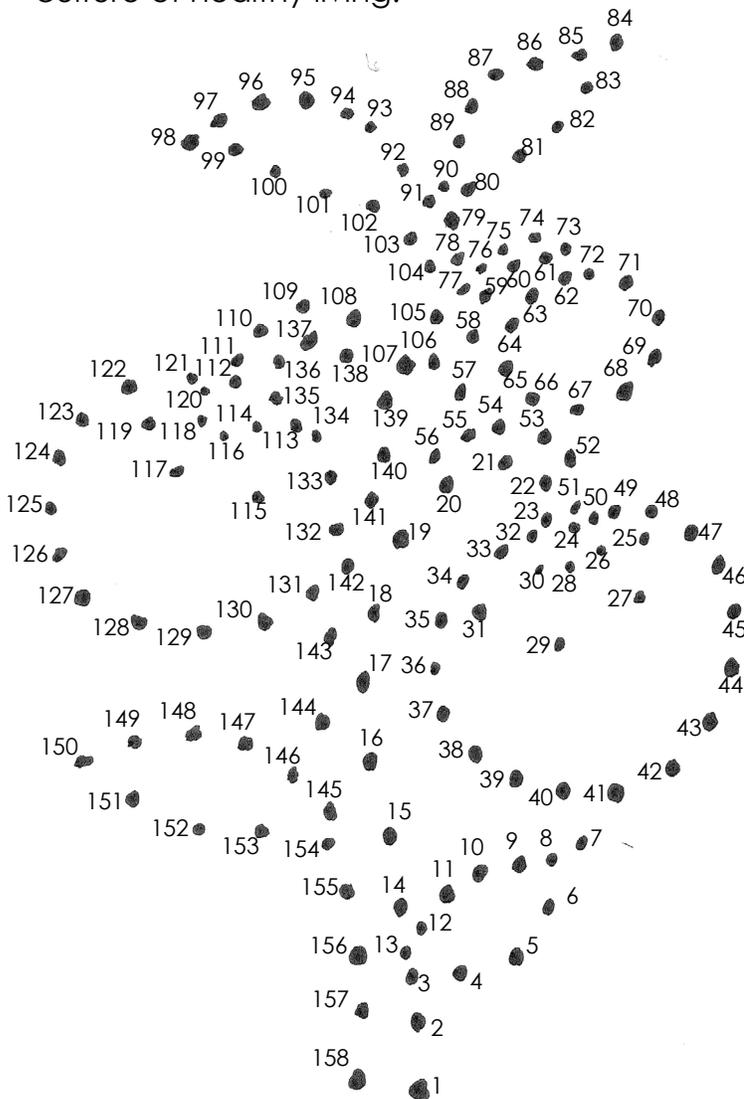
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Chapter 6

Growing a Healthy Community

Much of the west side is a food desert, an area that lacks access to affordable healthy food, as determined by the U S Department of Agriculture (USDA). Chapter six focuses on strategies to provide healthy, affordable food to residents of the west side. The plan suggests actively working to attract a grocery store to the west side, increasing and expanding the mobile farmers markets occurring in the area, and strengthening and expanding the community garden network to include an urban farm and education classes that would help teach people how to grow and cook their own produce. All of the recommendations in Chapter 6 relate back to the second core principle, ingraining a culture of healthy living.



6 fun facts about healthy eating

Ever wonder where the saying “cool as a cucumber” comes from? The inside of a cucumber is 20 degrees colder than its outside.

Carrots are a root vegetable that originated in Afghanistan. They are full of beta-carotene, which is great for eyesight and for fighting infections.

The ancient Romans believed strawberries could help fight bad breath and relieve sadness. While that may not actually be true, strawberries are the only fruit with seeds on the outside of their skin!

Apples are 25% air, which is why they float in water.

The largest squash ever grown weighed 962 pounds, the size of a baby elephant!

Kiwi was named after the Kiwi bird because both have fuzzy brown skin. It is also the national fruit of China.

Chapter 7

Transportation

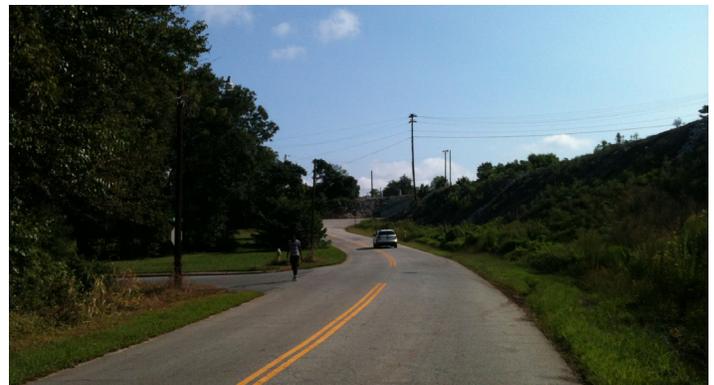
There are many different ways to travel from point A to point B in a neighborhood. People rely on many different modes of transportation such as cars, buses, bicycles, and walking. The goal of the transportation chapter of the plan is to make it easier and safer for people to travel about in their neighborhood. Transportation improvement can promote economic growth, reduce traffic, improve air quality, and make it easier for people to get to jobs and entertainment destinations. Focusing on the third principle, creating a community where children feel safe navigating their community independently, safely, and affordably, helped planners determine the transportation recommendations.

One important area of transportation improvement is improving the quality of streets, including the creation of complete streets. Complete streets are streets that accommodate different types of transportation including buses, bicycles, cars, and people. These streets have bicycle lanes, planted buffers in between streets and sidewalks to keep pedestrians safe, and special bus lanes. Added speed bumps and speed tables will help slow traffic at intersections along streets of higher traffic. Some streets the plan focuses on include Pete Hollis Boulevard, Academy Street, and Pendleton Street. Another key area of focus is to improve street infrastructure where streets go under or over the railway.

Active transportation is the ability to get around a neighborhood using the body's energy to fuel transportation. Promoting active transportation in neighborhoods means that it will be easier for people to travel in their neighborhood without the use of cars or buses. The plan outlines a bike route network that would provide alternative routes running parallel to major streets in the West Side. A bike share program in the

West Side would allow riders to rent a bike in one part of a neighborhood and return it at another location, close to their destination. The plan emphasizes multiple ways to encourage active transportation in the West Side.

Another major area this chapter addresses is the bus system. The plan proposes a West Side trolley that would travel through the West Side and connect destinations such as the Kroc Center, the West Greenville Community Center, and St. Francis Hospital. The West Side transit recommendation also seeks to expand public transportation by improving bus routes and frequency, introducing a bus rapid transit, or BRT, system along Washington Street, where buses will have their own designated lanes with fewer stops in order to help people travel longer distances at a faster rate.



Above: Willard Street now

Below: A drawing of Willard Street improvements



Chapter 8

Public Spaces and Infrastructure

This chapter focuses on parks and other green spaces as important areas for recreation, relaxation, and managing stormwater runoff. The first recommendation focuses on enhancing the appeal, usefulness, and safety of parks that already exist in the west side through the addition of new playgrounds, lights, and other features.

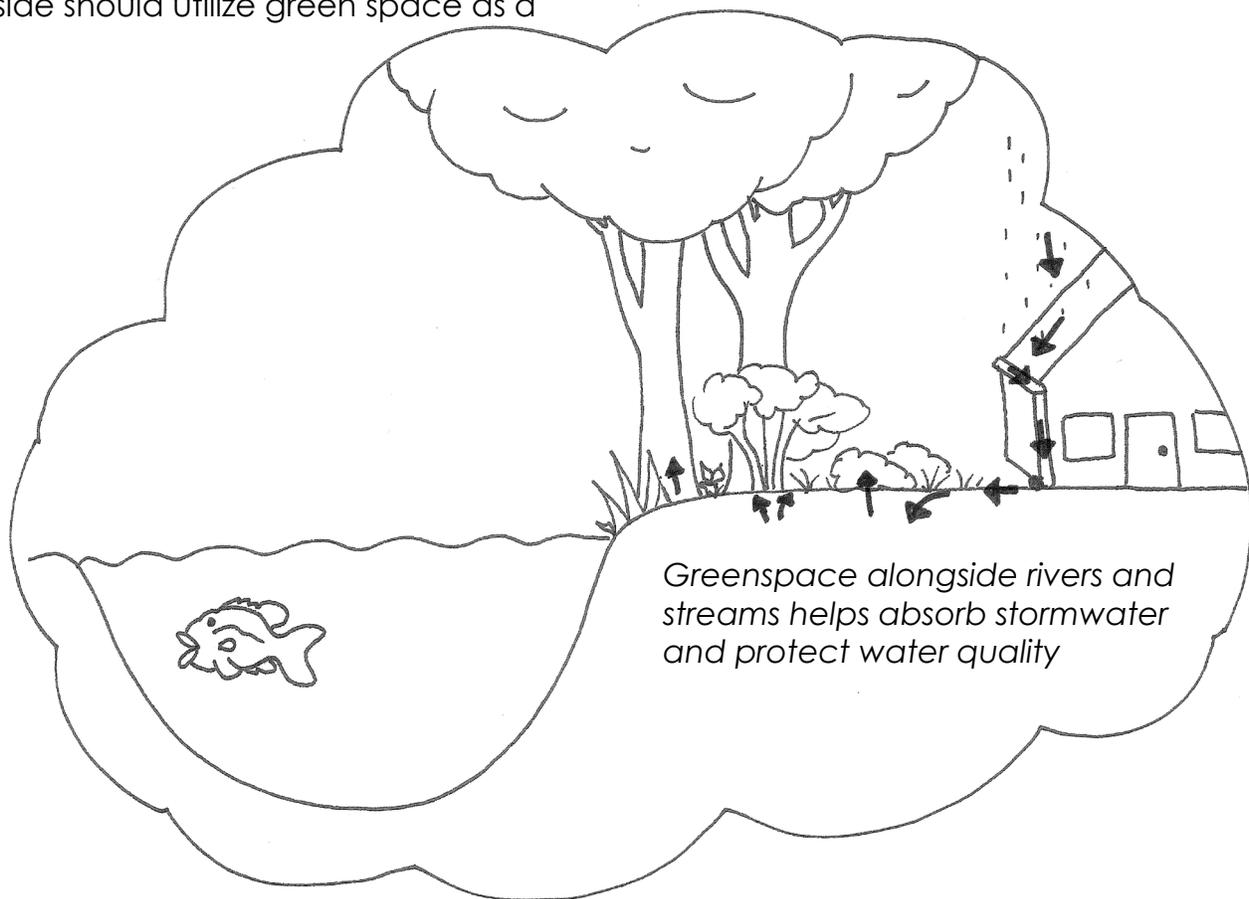
This chapter also suggests restoring the baseball field in Woodside Village, expanding access to the swamp rabbit trail by adding spur trails to connect to different areas of the neighborhoods, and adding outdoor seating and public art alongside the swamp rabbit in various locations. The west side could also add new parks and outdoor spaces including small “pocket parks” that could transform vacant lots into useful public spaces.

Finally, Chapter 8 includes a series of recommendations that development in the west side should utilize green space as a



Artists' design of a possible pocket park with public art and benches along the swamp rabbit trail

stormwater management tool. Rain gardens, bioswales, natural wetlands, and other green spaces help to absorb rain water, acting as filters to reduce water pollution and help control flooding. In addition to passive stormwater management, the plan suggests analyzing and upgrading the area's sewer system prior to new development.



Greenspace alongside rivers and streams helps absorb stormwater and protect water quality

Chapter 9

Housing for Everyone

The recommendations in this chapter almost all relate directly to the first principle, creating a ladder of opportunity, by focusing on a variety of ways that the west side can provide many different types of housing at affordable prices while still allowing current residents to be able to afford to stay in their homes.

Many of the strategies suggested in chapter nine focus on protecting the current renters and residents from gentrification through education programs and tax caps. Other strategies include developing mixed-income housing in styles that fit with the character of the neighborhood and stabilizing the current neighborhood through programs focused on repairing and renovating homes in disrepair.

The plan suggests that the City partner with non-profit organizations working to develop affordable housing options on the west side. Finally, the plan suggests providing for the homeless through the Housing First model. Housing First programs focus on providing stable long term housing for the homeless and then providing other services like job training and other types of help.



Examples of existing houses in the West Side



Houses come in all shapes and sizes. Some houses you might see in Greenville include single family homes, duplexes, mixed use complexes, townhomes, apartments, and more.

Color in the picture of single family homes on the left, and use the space below to draw a picture of your dream house or ideal neighborhood.

Chapter 10

Development Strategies

Since the west side is such a large area, the planners chose to focus on specific areas to suggest opportunities for development. They focused on existing neighborhood centers, important roads, and vacant or underutilized properties to determine where in the west side new developments could go. This chapter is where many of the recommendations from previous chapters are brought together into designs of possible new developments.

A major focus of many of the strategies suggested in Chapter 10 is to create walkable neighborhood units. In order to do this, the planners analyzed the existing buildings and streets in the west side and identified important intersections or buildings where people gather. They then drew circles around these “neighborhood centers” to show an area with a one-mile or 5-minute-walk radius around the neighborhood center. These circles represent neighborhood units. Within neighborhood units, a variety of slightly more specific development ideas were suggested, that followed the recommendations in previous chapters; these include mixed use developments, spaces for businesses and retail, green space, parks and space for urban agriculture, and many different types of housing.

The final recommendations in the plan are regulatory suggestions to help pave the way for the types of redevelopment that the plan envisions.



Above: Two possible strategies highlighted in the plan for future redevelopment in West Greenville

Left: Artist's depiction of possible development looking down Cagle Street towards Mountain View Baptist Church



This activity book was developed by the Connections Project's Livability Educator as a summary of the West Side Comprehensive Plan designed for families, educators, and students. This summary outlines the main principles of the plan and some of the major recommendations and strategies that the plan proposes for the west side while providing a general overview of the planning process along with fun and thought provoking activities for students. The full plan is available online at connections.greenvillesc.gov for anyone who is interested in learning more.

