GROWING TINBRIDGE HILL

A SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN FOR TINBRIDGE HILL

Prepared For The Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood and the City Of Lynchburg

January 8, 2014

Table of Contents

1. Introduction 5

About this Project 5

About this Plan 7

2. History of the Neighborhood 8

Historical Roots 8

Recent History 8

3. Current Conditions and Initiatives 10

Overview 10

Existing Conditions and Issues 10

Current and Recent Initiatives 23

Links to Other Plans 24

4. Community Partners and Resources 28

Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council 28

Friends of Tinbridge Hill 28

Neighborhood Residents 28

Lynchburg City Staff 28

Partnerships 29

5. Sustainable Neighborhood Vision & Goals 31

Vision for Tinbridge Hill 31

6. Framework for Growing Tinbridge Hill 32

Sustainable Lynchburg Framework 32

Tinbridge Hill Goals 33

7. Priorities for Implementation **40**

Leadership 40

Priority Improvements and Activities 41

Next Steps 42

Appendices **43**

1. Introduction

About this Project - - *GROWING TINBRIDGE HILL*

In 2013, the City of Lynchburg launched a new initiative to prepare a Sustainable Neighborhood Plan for the area of Tinbridge Hill, in order to engage neighborhood residents and community leaders in a dialogue about the future of this historic area. The goal of a sustainable community in Lynchburg means a community with social, cultural, economic, and environmental vitality, now and for future generations.

To complete the project, the City hired a consultant team, led by Clarion Associates from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, to gather information, identify neighborhood assets and needs, and develop a set of recommendations and priorities for action to help achieve community goals for the Tinbridge Hill area. The overall context for this initiative is the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan, which offers a framework for decision-making and action, including specific strategies for the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood.

Tinbridge Hill includes the Old City Cemetery and the area surrounding it at Taylor and Fourth Streets. The neighborhood extends to Fifth Street, Federal Street, and Hollins Mill Road. The area is primarily residential and is also home to churches, parks, community gardens, the City Cemetery, the Yoder Center, the Legacy Museum, and commercial establishments.

OBJECTIVE OF PROJECT

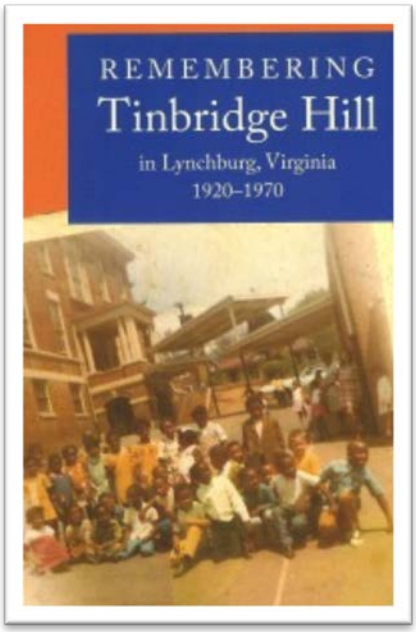
The objective of this planning effort was to prepare a plan that reflects the character and aspirations of the community, that sets realistic and achievable goals for community improvement, and that establishes a specific action plan for tasks to be pursued to help achieve the goals.

This initiative has been community-driven, with support from staff and consultant resources. The *Friends of Tinbridge Hill,* a group of residents and stakeholders, has provided project guidance and direction. An interdepartmental staff team has worked closely with the consultant to gather and analyze information, conduct interviews, and plan neighborhood meetings and events. A particular point of focus has been supporting youth and encouraging the participation of young adults, to help achieve a leadership structure that is sustainable over time. Highlighting the importance of a focus on youth and young adults, and with the neighborhood's successful community garden as an inspiration, the theme for this initiative has become ***Growing Tinbridge Hill.***

THE MAKING OF "GROWING TINBRIDGE HILL'

Community meetings, data gathering and analysis, reaching out to community partners, and a celebration of neighborhood life have all been part of this initiative. Following are some recent quotes from neighborhood residents and City leaders:

- *Members of this community are invested in their neighborhood and its success.*
- *We can get out and do more in the neighborhood.*
- *We can create a better neighborhood with less drug activity and more involvement in the community.*
- *We can build a strong network of outside resources and neighborhood support.*
- *We are excited about working more closely with the Lynchburg Police Department.*
- *We can clean up the neighborhood.*
- *We can watch out for each other.*



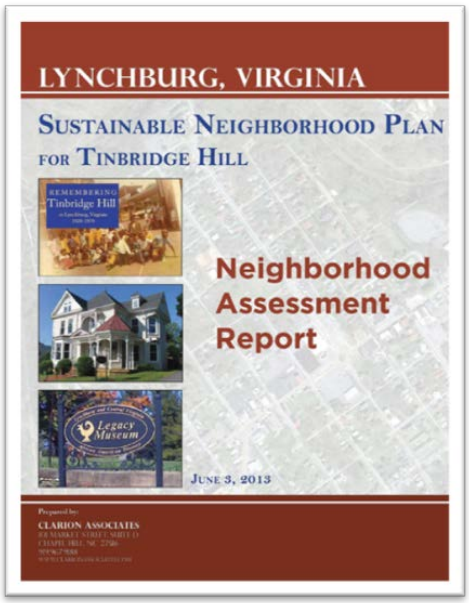
This initiative builds upon a rich history and a decades-long commitment of work by residents and stakeholders to preserve and enhance the culture of this important community. Partnerships involving neighborhood leaders, non-profit groups, Lynchburg's college communities, faith-based organizations, and the City of Lynchburg have been formed to coordinate resources and advance neighborhood goals. This ***Growing Tinbridge Hill*** plan is the latest chapter in a story of building success from the ground up.

Appendix A to this report contains a listing of resources, documents, and links that help draw the full picture of how this neighborhood has been an important component of community life in Lynchburg. Included in this library of resources is an hour-long oral history video that helps describe the array of individuals and organizations that have come together to accomplish a successful rebuilding of the quality and character of Tinbridge Hill.

About this Plan

The preparation of this Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan has been a collaborative venture, drawing upon the resources and participation of City departments, a consultant team, area organizations, local college and university interests, and the work and energy of neighborhood residents. There is a rich history and culture in Tinbridge Hill. There have also been serious problems. The community has been creative in seeking ways to address issues of substandard housing, crime, employment opportunities, recreation needs, and infrastructure needs. There has been active leadership bringing residents and interested parties together to work on solutions. This plan represents an important milestone in this ongoing process.

A Neighborhood Assessment was prepared. Drawing on community interviews, review of available data and statistics, and a visual survey of all properties, the report examined the neighborhood on a number of different aspects: people and housing, employment, physical environment, land use and zoning, property values, rehabilitation, and violations. It also included an assessment of the condition of properties and structures in the neighborhood. The report highlighted key ideas to include in the neighborhood plan. The Neighborhood Assessment Report is available as Appendix C to this report.



Partnerships with organizations and agencies are in place and expanding. Faith communities, nonprofit organizations, and college resources are participating in the work: helping to improve the housing stock, mentoring young people, identifying employment and job training opportunities, and contributing spirit and energy.

The Friends of Tinbridge Hill, along with community partners, has worked with the City to renovate the community's Yoder Center and the City regularly sponsors programs for young people and adults. Neighborhood revitalization is firmly underway.

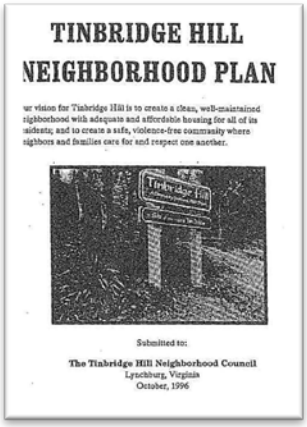
Financial resources in support of neighborhood initiatives are growing increasingly scarce. Key objectives of this plan are to identify opportunities for community-based efforts and partnerships that can keep the progress going, encourage new and emerging leadership, and achieve the goals that have been expressed. This plan provides important information about neighborhood conditions and possibilities, and includes specific recommended strategies as an action plan, focusing on housing, safety, infrastructure, family support, and leadership.

2. History of the Neighborhood

Historical Roots

Tinbridge Hill is an important, historic Lynchburg neighborhood. It has evolved over the years, starting from its roots as a family-oriented working class neighborhood, moving through a difficult period of decline, and now regaining its sustainable community character. A City document was prepared in 1996 and described the area as follows:

> ***Tinbridge Hill consists of the Old City Cemetery and area surrounding it at Taylor and Fourth Streets. The neighborhood extends to Fifth, Federal, and Hollins Streets. The area is primarily residential, with three churches and several commercial establishments. The majority of community activities occur at the Yoder Community Center. Established in the early 1900's, the neighborhood was comprised primarily of low income, working families who owned their homes. Residents shared common religious and moral beliefs. The community was one where neighbors cared for and respected one another. It was a safe place for families to raise their children.***
>
> ***Over the years the environment began to change. More houses became rental property and fewer houses were owner occupied. By the late 1980's, the area was plagued with substandard housing, drugs, and violence. The streets were no longer safe, and the traditional neighborhood atmosphere was a thing of the past.***


TINBRIDGE HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

ur vision for Tinbridge Hill is to create a clean, well-maintained
eighborhood with adequate and affordable housing for all of its
sidents; and to create a safe, violence-free community where
eighbors and families care for and respect one another.

Submitted to:
The Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council
Lynchburg, Virginia
October, 1996

The mid-1990's became a time of action for Tinbridge Hill, with a dedication of public and private resources to reclaim the original character of the neighborhood. Key to the efforts was the ***Legacy Project***, created to provide educational exhibits and programs on the history and culture of African Americans in the area. In 1997 the Legacy Project acquired a dilapidated but once beautiful house at 403 Monroe Street, and transformed the 100-year-old house into a modern museum, the ***Legacy Museum***. A key piece of symbolism is the logo for the museum, a depiction of the African symbol of the sankofa bird. This symbol means, "return and take from the past that which may have been forgotten but which will be of use today and in the future."

Much of the history of the neighborhood can be found and studied at the Legacy Museum, and also has been captured in several publications - - most notably ***Remembering Tinbridge Hill***, a publication funded by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities. Links to these documents and institutions are included in Appendix A to this report.

Recent History

Over the last 20 years, energy and resources have been marshaled to help the neighborhood rebuild. Community partners have worked together to address needs in Tinbridge Hill. Key examples follow.

The ***Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council*** is a private 501(c)(3) organization established in 1991 to "create a clean, well-maintained neighborhood with adequate and affordable housing for all of its residents, and to create a safe, violence-free community where neighbors and families care for and respect one another." It is made up of residents of Tinbridge Hill and participates and helps fund community initiatives. The Neighborhood Council has undertaken a wide array of initiatives to facilitate neighborhood growth, and has worked to organize resources and community groups to come together in pursuit of neighborhood goals. A current example of work includes participation in the Neighborhood Watch program for the area.

The ***Friends of Tinbridge Hill*** is an informal association of residents and a growing collective of churches and nonprofits, which have joined forces to help revitalize the neighborhood. The group has been working together over the last five years to tackle a range of issues, such as home repair, healthy eating, public infrastructure and neighborhood beautification. While some organizations, such as St. John's, have long-established relationships in Tinbridge Hill, the creation of the Friends marked the first time that a large number of agencies came together in a coordinated manner to address the neighborhood's needs. Members include St. John's, the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council, Old City Cemetery, Rebuilding Together Lynchburg, the Family Alliance and the Lynchburg Neighborhood Development Foundation. Several city departments, such as Parks & Recreation, Community Development and Public Works, also are heavily involved.

Area colleges have been active in providing volunteers for community events and in assembling data and conducting research. A recent study focused on Tinbridge Hill and its economic progress resulting from research by Randolph College Economics Students. The studies have shown that LNDF's restoration and renovation projects helped boost the values of the neighboring homes in the area. A recent survey was conducted to gauge the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of people in the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood, indicating growing levels of satisfaction.

Aubrey Barbour, a community leader, reported that the survey provides a real benefit to Tinbridge Hill residents. It shows what progress has been made through neighborhood revitalization efforts, and it could encourage future improvements as more homes become owner occupied.

Liberty University, Lynchburg College, Randolph College, and Virginia University of Lynchburg have all been active in helping to promote Tinbridge Hill initiatives.

Liberty University Lynchburg College Randolph College

VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY OF LYNCHBURG

3. Current Conditions and Initiatives

Overview

A key part of this Growing Tinbridge Hill initiative – Growing Tinbridge Hill and the new 2014 Tinbridge Hill Plan - was to identify current conditions and neighborhood issues and document them, and update the 1996 Tinbridge Hill Plan. Information for the neighborhood assessment came from two sources, a technical neighborhood conditions assessment and community input provided at a Neighborhood Summit hosted on July 20, 2013. Reports were prepared for both of these assessments, and excerpts from the reports are summarized here. Full reports are available as separate appendices to this plan.

Existing Conditions and Issues

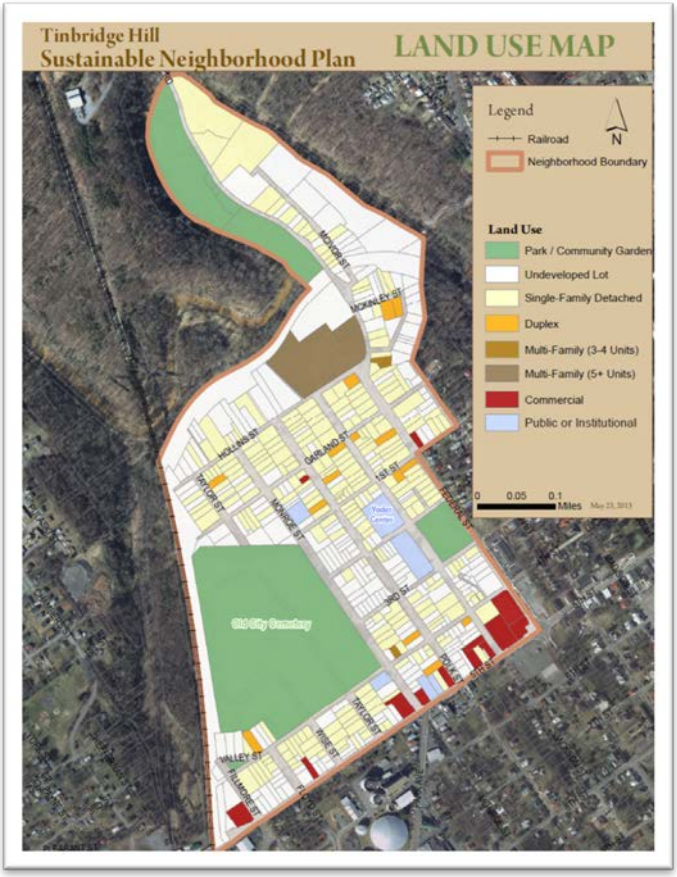
PEOPLE AND HOUSING

There are approximately 260 housing units in the neighborhood, with a vacancy rate of approximately 10%. The percentage of housing units that are owner-occupied is 48%, compared to a citywide percentage of 55%. The 2010 Census showed a population of approximately 535 people.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING

Tinbridge Hill lies within a dramatic physical context. The neighborhood is bordered along the north and west by Blackwater Creek, a tributary of the James River. Parts of the neighborhood are quite steep, with elevations ranging from 470 feet to 840 feet. Significant portions of the neighborhood contain slopes that are 25% or greater, greatly reducing the potential for development in these areas.

Of the total land area in Tinbridge Hill, 32% is in residential use. Approximately 3% of the land is in commercial use, 2% is public/institutional, and 27% of the acreage is devoted to a park or community garden, including the Old City Cemetery. That leaves 36% of the total land area of Tinbridge Hill as undeveloped lots.



A May, 2013 windshield survey of the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood found that housing conditions within the neighborhood, while varied, tend to be good, or fair (79%), with approximately 50 properties rated in poor condition or noted as boarded or condemned. New structures comprise very little of the neighborhood's housing stock.

Windshield Survey Rating – Structure Conditions					
New	Good	Fair	Poor	Condemned	TOTAL
7	94	119	32	15	267
3%	35%	44%	12%	5%	100%

There are no clear geographic patterns in the condition of housing in terms of more or less stable areas within the neighborhood. Areas where new structures have been built are surrounded and interspersed with properties in some state of disrepair. One area of note is the street segment on Polk, between 1st and 2nd streets. This segment does have a fair number of houses that are in poor condition and several, which, while not condemned, appear to be

vacant or underused. Tinbridge Hill is quite an old neighborhood, with an aging housing stock. Most of the structures in the neighborhood - 80% - were built before 1920.

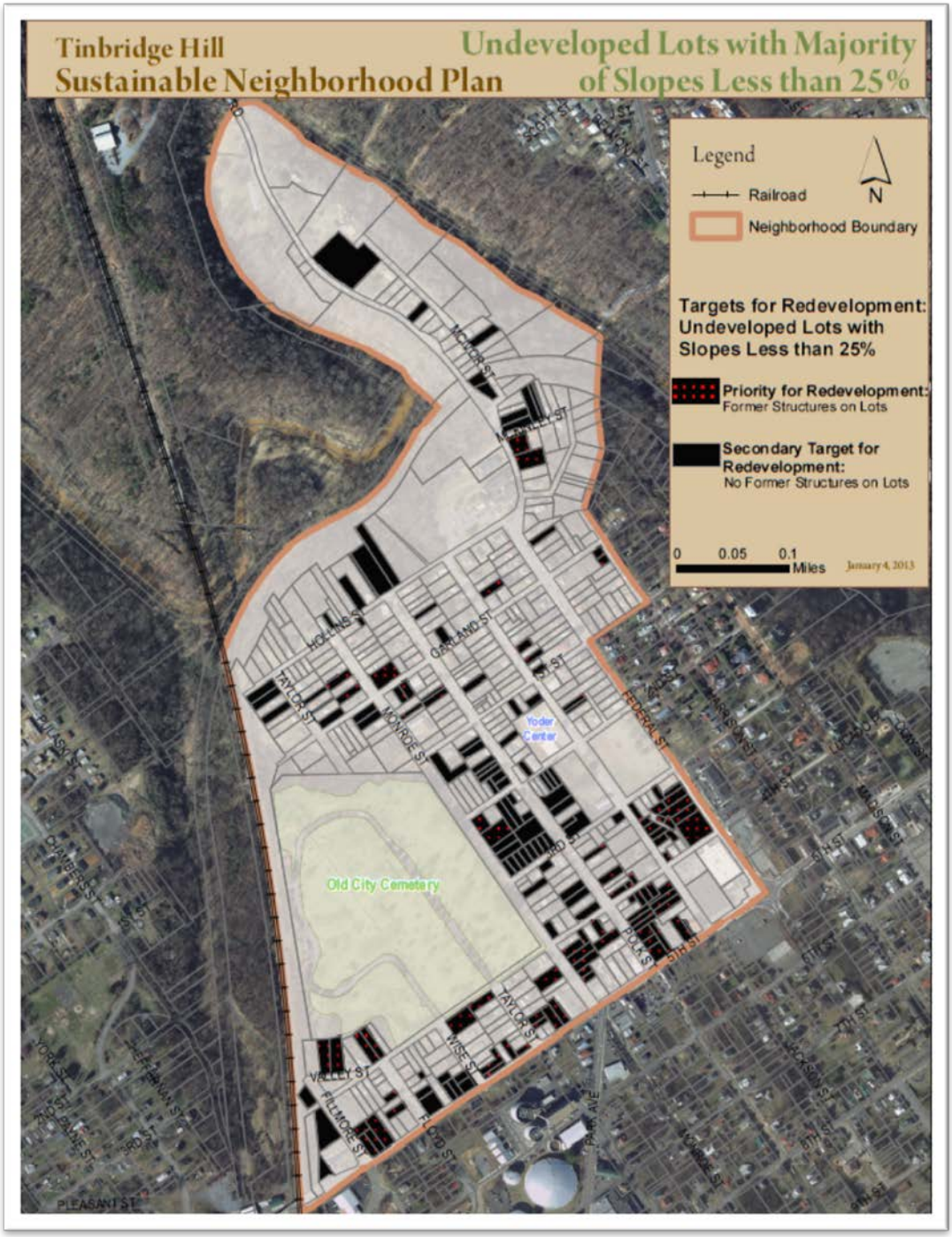
Key facts highlighted in the Neighborhood Assessment include:

- The population of Tinbridge Hill has an older profile than the City of Lynchburg overall, with higher-than-average percentages in the 45-64 age group.
- Homeownership rates are lower than for the City overall.
- Unemployment rates are higher than for the City overall.
- A high percentage of the residential land in Tinbridge Hill is vacant/undeveloped (36% of land area). There are a number of parcels, scattered throughout the neighborhood that could be developed.
- Most dwelling units in the neighborhood are in good or fair condition, but many are in need of maintenance and minor repairs.
- Most neighborhood residences were built before 1920.

A key issue that has been raised in multiple contexts is the large number of vacant lots within the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood. Vacant lots are seen as having a negative influence for several reasons: detracts from community character and appearance; lack of maintenance can lead to overgrown vegetation (multiple references in community meetings to proliferation of kudzu); can serve as haven for illegal activity; and can have a negative impact on property values. In addition, vacant lots represent an underused resource, and are opportunities for new development which would add value to the neighborhood, especially if made available for new housing construction.

As part of the City's continuing focus on neighborhoods and housing opportunity, another initiative is a separate study currently underway: Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. This analysis is currently under review and a link the study is listed in Appendix A.

A map of existing land uses within the neighborhood illustrates the number of vacant lots. Many of these lots would be difficult to build on because of steep slopes; accordingly, an analysis was put together identifying vacant lots that are not impacted by steep slope conditions - - the lots most suitable for new construction. A second analysis was done, relying upon historical information and maps to indicate which of the currently vacant lots formerly had structures that have since been removed - - lots where rebuilding would serve to restore some of the community's lost character. Combining these two analyses results in a map that shows currently vacant lots in Tinbridge Hill that are not impacted by severe slopes, and which formerly had structures. As work moves forward to develop additional housing and other uses within the neighborhood, these lots should be prime candidates for consideration of new development. The map shown to the right identifies those "priority for reconstruction" lots.



INFRASTRUCTURE

Another key issue that has been much discussed is mobility. There are multiple reasons why pedestrian, bicycle, and transit options are important to this neighborhood: not all residents own cars; employment opportunities lie, for the most part, outside the boundaries of the neighborhood; and because of the steep topography, sidewalks to recreation facilities and bus routes are essential. The map on the following page illustrates the main pedestrian corridors within the neighborhood that are most critical, and most need to be maintained/upgraded, to provide accessibility to major destination points within the neighborhood (e.g., Yoder Center and bus stops).

Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood: Walking Corridors

In order to promote mobility along these key pedestrian corridors, and enhance access to key facilities, to bus stops, to the revitalizing 5th Street businesses, and to the new access point for the Blackwater Creek trail, construction of several missing sidewalk links is needed. In discussions with neighborhood residents, the key walking corridors were identified, and compared to existing conditions (where sidewalks are and are not present, where maintenance is needed, where the addition of sidewalks would be prohibitively expensive due to lack of right-of-way, building placement, and/or topography). Following are two photographs illustrating prototypes of these kinds of conditions: the first showing an existing but incomplete sidewalk pattern where improvements could be efficiently added, and the second showing condition where it would be difficult and costly to try to retrofit sidewalks. Another set of priority considerations regarding sidewalks focuses on needs for repair and maintenance. There are many locations within Tinbridge Hill where an existing sidewalk has become unusable because of overgrown vegetation, being covered up, or because of cracks, holes and lack of accessibility for disabled persons. An example follows of vegetation encroaching on a sidewalk, and another example of a sidewalk covered up over time.

Possible to add missing sidewalk segment

Vegetation moving into sidewalk area

Significant obstacles to sidewalk construction

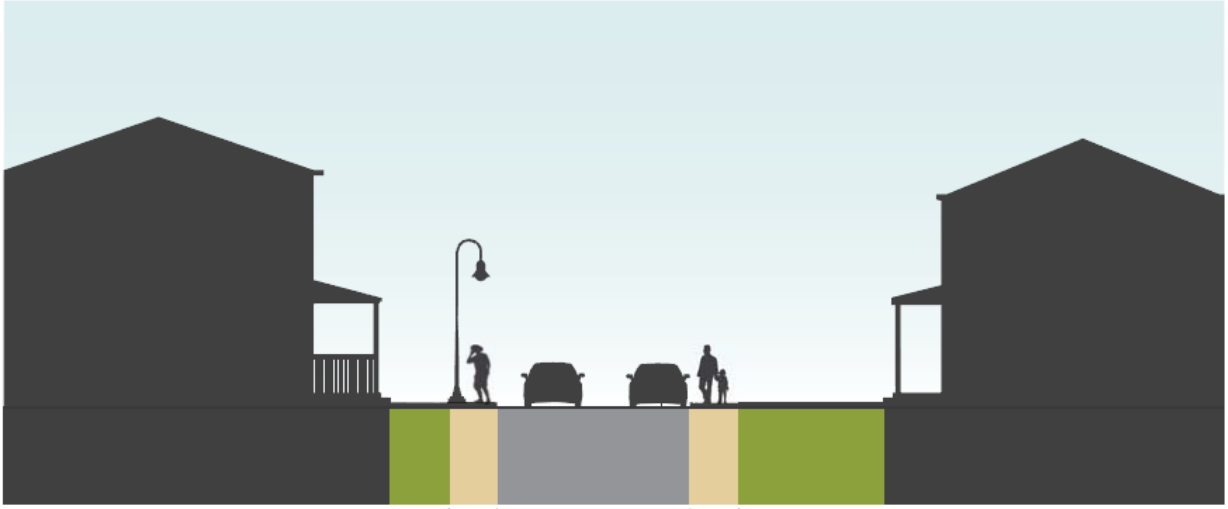
Sidewalk covered up over time

Comparing the key pedestrian mobility corridors with on-the-ground assessment of feasibility of construction for missing segments, the following map identifies a recommendation for what should be considered highest priority sidewalk construction projects.

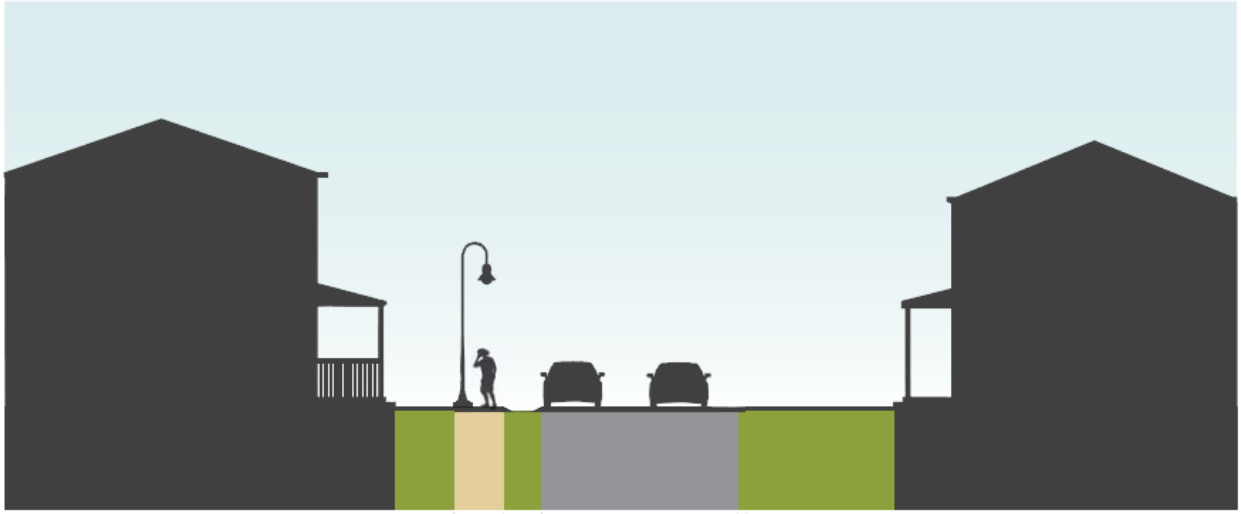
Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood: Priority Proposed Sidewalk Improvements

This map illustrates priority segments for new sidewalk construction. Mainenance needs for existing sidewalks along primary and secondary corridors should also be explored.

Following are cross-sections that illustrate the range of possible improvements that can be considered for streets and sidewalks, which will vary depending on individual street right-of-way widths. Option A is possible within a 30 foot right-of-way with no topography challenges. (Topography challenges might limit sidewalks to one side of the street). Option B shows a planting strip between the sidewalk and the street, if conditions were to allow.



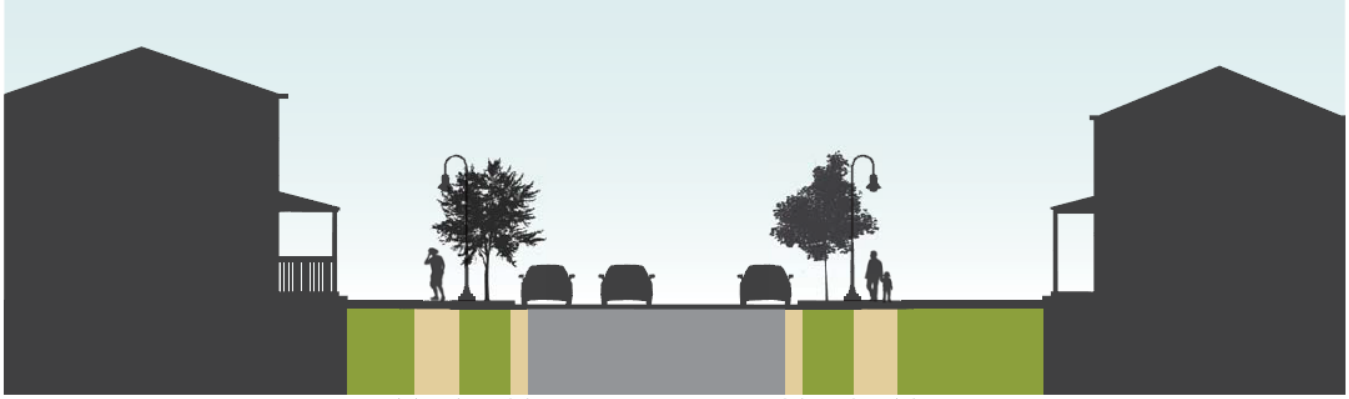
A2
30' ROW
NO TOPOGRAPHY CHALLENGES
SIDEWALK 3-5'



B1
30' ROW
ONE SIDE OF STREET, ABLE TO ADJUST PAVEMENT
SIDEWALK 3-5'

Options C through E show possibilities within a 6o foot right-of-way. Option C assumes adjacent topography challenges. Option D assumes drainage challenge, and includes curb and gutter sections. Option E shows how a stormwater buffer can be accommodated, if there are no topography challenges. These cross-section examples will help inform discussions about possibilities for individual block sections.

C2
60' ROW
ADJACENT TOPOGRAPHY CHALLENGES
FACEDOWN SIDEALK 3-5'



D2
60' ROW
ADJACENT DRAINAGE CHALLENGES
CURB & GUTTER, BUFFER, SIDEWALK 3-5'

E2
60' ROW
NO TOPOGRAPHY CHALLENGES
STORMWATER BUFFER, SIDEWALK 3-5'

Following is a table of information that has been prepared showing right-of-way and corridor types for the main pedestrian corridors in Tinbridge Hill highlighted on the maps above. The table also offers suggestions for what type of cross-section might be most feasible for each of these segments, and suggests a Phase 1 or Phase 2 priority that might be assigned to each segment. This information will be useful in subsequent discussions exploring funding and construction options.

Tinbridge Hill Pedestrian Improvements
Planning Level Cost Estimates (2013 dollars, does not include design or ROW phases)

															TOTALS
Street	**Corridor Type**	**block side**	**# of blks**	**Length**	**ROW**	**Section type**	**Price-5ft**	**Notes**	**Phase**	**# of crossings**	**Price**		**# ramps**	**Price**	
Monroe	Primary	long	4.5	1507.5	60'	D1 or E1	$90,450	one side of street, north, no C&G	1	6	$3,000		9	$9,000	$102,450
Hollins	Primary	short	1	290	30'	A1	$17,400	one side of street, north, repair if needed, facedown sidewalk	?	0	$0		2	$2,000	$19,400
2nd	Primary	short	3	870	30'	A1	$52,200	one side of street, north, grade issue, repair if needed, retaining wall may be necessary (not budgeted)	1	2	$1,000		4	$4,000	$57,200
McIvor	Primary	-	0.5	112		E1	$6,720	installation only on north east side		2	$1,000		2	$2,000	$9,720
Jackson	Secondary	long	4.5	1507.5	60'	D2 OR E2	$90,450	both sides, no C&G	1	12	$6,000		20	$20,000	$116,450
	Secondary	long	1	335	36'	A2	$20,100	one side	1	0	$0		0	$0	$20,100
Garland	Secondary	short	1.5	435	30'	A1	$26,100	one side, south		2	$1,000		5	$5,000	$32,100
	Tertiary	short	1	290	30'	green alley		no standard pricing	2						
4th	Secondary	short	2.5	725	30'	A1	$43,500	one side, north	1	2	$1,000		5	$5,000	$49,500
	Tertiary	short	2	580	30'	green alley		no standard pricing	2						
Floyd	Secondary	long	1	335	60'	D2 OR E2	$20,100	both sides	1	0	$0		4	$4,000	$24,100
Totals							**$367,020**				**$13,000**			**$51,000**	**$431,020**

A final mobility issue focuses on bus routes and bus stop amenities. Currently a bus runs regularly on Federal Street, between 5th Street and Hollins Street as part of its route. Bus shelters would help promote accessibility in using bus transportation, and installation of shelters within Tinbridge Hill is being considered. Other interests focus on routing patterns, and the possibilities of adjusting the bus route to better serve the Jackson Street corridor, and potentially to extend further north down Hollins Mill Road to Bedford Avenue, providing access to employment opportunities. Discussions are underway about the feasibility adjusting Bus Route 1B to provide service on Jackson Street, and running Bus Route 1A or 1B down Hollins Mill Road, which would be desirable since construction of sidewalks along Hollins Mill Road would be difficult.

Additional tables, charts, maps, and illustrations can be found in the June 3, 2013 Neighborhood Assessment Report, provided as Appendix C.

WATER / SEWER / STORMWATER

A final set of infrastructure issues focuses on the status of utility lines: water, sewer, and stormwater lines serving the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood.

Like many neighborhoods throughout the Lynchburg, Tinbridge Hill has aging underground pipe systems that provide water and sewer service to the residents, as well as manage stormwater runoff from the streets, houses and area commercial buildings. Although these systems continue to serve their core purpose, like all infrastructure these pipes are in need of ongoing maintenance, repair and replacement. To make the most efficient use of the limited resources, many of these infrastructure improvements have been addressed as part of the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Long Term Control Plan (LTCP). The current LTCP has been focused on

the separation of storm flows from the sanitary sewers and has also allowed for some limited water line replacement and neighborhood improvements. In the past, the significant scope and scale of these projects has caused tremendous disruption to neighborhoods and commercial areas throughout the City.

Water Resources staff has been working to develop a new strategy that would provide significant water quality improvements while balancing affordability to ratepayers. As a result City has recently recommended changes to the State's Department of Environmental Quality that would end the separation of the sewers and instead focus on maximizing wet weather flow capture and treatment at the wastewater treatment plant. This new strategy would significantly reduce the discharge of untreated combined sewage into the river and streams and could save the City as much as $200,000,000 over the cost of the original LTCP. The change would also greatly reduce the ongoing CSO work taking place in the City's neighborhoods.

Just as this new CSO strategy highlights the City's ongoing efforts to balance infrastructure needs, the natural environment and fiscal responsibility, so must sustainable neighborhood efforts maximize opportunities to partner with other infrastructure improvements, as well as larger master planning efforts. The Growing Tinbridge Hill neighborhood plan has identified some infrastructure priorities to improve connectivity through sidewalks, trail connections and transit. And although the varied topography and aged infrastructure of Tinbridge Hill presents challenges to implementing alternative stormwater solutions, these challenges may produce limited opportunities to install innovative management practices that not only help address runoff, but further neighborhood priorities such as transportation and public safety. In addition, continuing improvements along the 5th Street Corridor, a future water line project on Federal Street and other infrastructure replacement initiatives may provide other occasions to further neighborhood priorities. Improvements that meet multiple goals should be considered as other infrastructure projects take shape, particularly those along pedestrian corridors, for better overall neighborhood sustainability.

NEIGHBORHOOD INPUT

On July 20, 2013, the City of Lynchburg in collaboration with neighborhood leaders hosted a public kickoff event for the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Planning Initiative. This Summit offered residents of Tinbridge Hill with multiple ways to provide input to help shape the neighborhood plan. Excerpts from the report detailing the outcomes of this Summit are provided here. The full report is provided as Appendix B to this Plan.

A keypad polling technology was used to seek ideas and opinions from Summit participants on a range of key topics. The technology offered a system for anonymous responses, with instant compilation of results. 25 questions were asked of the group (including several warm-up questions). The questions and compilation of responses follow.

How long have you lived in Tinbridge Hill?

The first question to the group was, "How long have you lived in Tinbridge Hill?" The results showed the diversity in the room, which included 44% of participants living in the neighborhood for more than 10 years, and almost a third of participants being from other parts of the Lynchburg community but wanting to be a part of the Tinbridge Hill revitalization. Nearly all of those currently living in Tinbridge Hill indicated a desire to remain. 60% of participants were 40 years old or older.

What is the most important step to improve the neighborhood?

For those with considerable longevity in Tinbridge Hill, the most important step is improving housing conditions. For those newer residents (five-10 years), the response was that the most important steps are reducing crime and providing new neighborhood services, activities, and commerce. For the newest residents, the answer is job training and job opportunities. Satisfaction with the Yoder Center appears high among all groups.

What is the biggest need for improving housing?

Responses were mixed here. For newer residents (five-10 years), assistance with exterior house maintenance is the biggest need. Overall, the biggest need is more specific: better maintenance of rental properties.

What is the biggest issue for improving public spaces?

The clear consensus here, among all groups, is that improving gateways to the neighborhood is the biggest issue. Improvements to the Yoder Center and James River Heritage Trail were also listed.

What is the biggest issue for improving private spaces?

Clear consensus here as well: the biggest issue regarding private spaces is attention to overgrown yards on private properties.

What is the biggest need for improving infrastructure?

Adding sidewalks was the clear answer to this question, garnering an especially strong response from new residents to Tinbridge Hill. Older residents focused more on needs for street improvements and stormwater drainage.

What is the biggest issue for addressing crime?

Given that concerns about crime are at or near the top of the issue list for a number of residents, this question about what might be the best approaches to crime prevention takes on particular importance. The dominant answer, "Need more police patrol," led to subsequent discussions during the day, and expressions of appreciation that a police officer was in attendance at these discussions and stayed the whole day. The second highest topic, "Overgrown/vacant properties," was another theme heard throughout the day.

What is the biggest issue in encouraging leadership?

There was a wide set of opinions on this question. The highest vote-getter, and the one answer picked by all five-10 year residents, was the statement: "Lack of youth interested in being a neighborhood leader." Respondents also noted difficulty in getting adults interested in leadership roles. There was also interest expressed in seeking more support from organizations to encourage leadership.

How best to help residents get jobs?

Eighty percent of respondents focused on job-training and getting more information about job opportunities. Sixteen percent listed transportation to job centers as an issue needed attention.

What new local establishments are most needed?

Almost two-thirds of respondents called for a grocery store. Given the recent closure of a local store, this is clearly a neighborhood need. Twenty percent called for more entertainment options.

What new services are most needed?

Recreational programs for youth and activities for seniors were the top responses. There was also interest expressed in the need for additional childcare options.

What is most needed for youth?

The most common answer: The neighborhood's youth need job training and internships. Other ideas were expressed regarding education, information, and recreation, but the biggest issue focused on jobs.

What is most needed for families?

Two topics were most mentioned in response to this question. The top response (with nearly 40% of respondents picking it) was support for single parents. The second-highest response was for assistance with home improvements (29% of respondents).

What is most needed for seniors?

Two topics garnered the most responses here: "Assistance with home improvements and errands" was the choice of 41% of respondents, and 31% responded "Reliable transportation." Among the neighborhoods older population, most responded that assistance with home improvements/errands is most needed.

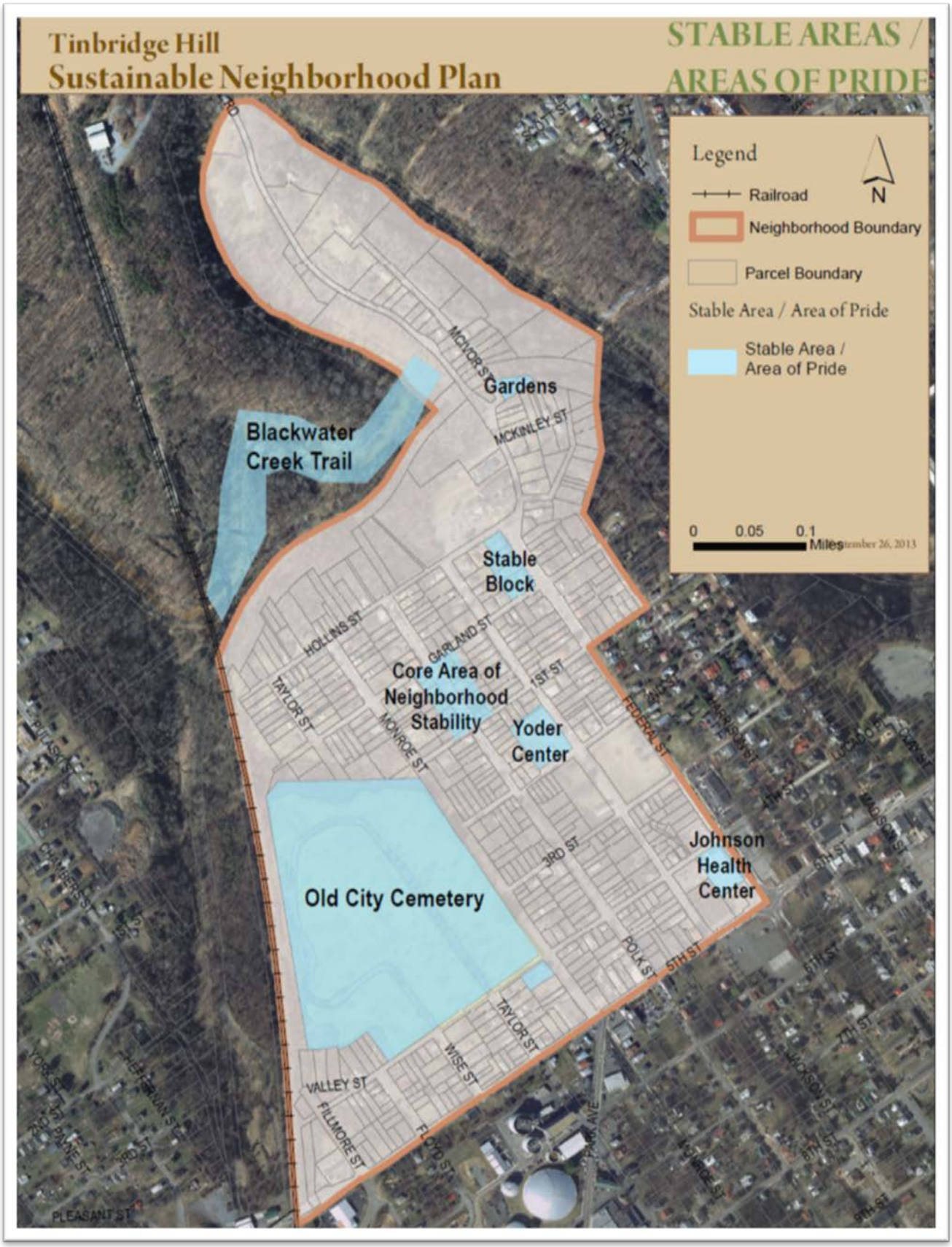
These responses were instantly available to Summit participants, and accordingly were able to help set the stage for discussions to follow. A final question was, "Are you willing to participate in future events?" 79% answered "Yes."

This activity offered participants an opportunity to identify places in the neighborhood that they would like to see changed, or would like to see stay the same. Facilitators asked the following questions, and participants marked areas on a neighborhood map to address the following:

1. What areas of the neighborhood are stable (cleans, safe, that you are proud of). Indicate those with blue marks on the map.
2. What areas of the neighborhood are opportunities for change (blighted, unsafe, attractors for crime, would like to see change). Indicate those with red marks on the map.
3. What types of development would you like to see along 5th Street and along entrances to the neighborhood? Indicate those with black marks on the map.
4. Would you like to see other new development or parks in the neighborhood? Indicate those in green marks on the map.

Areas identified as needing attention or change included a need for trimming vegetation along the north side of Hollins Street between Monroe and Jackson Streets, need for re-use of vacant structures, attention to properties on the east side of Federal Street between Garland and Holland Streets, and improvements to increase non-automobile mobility along key pedestrian corridors. These concerns are addressed with recommended implementation actions, described in Section 5, "Framework for Growing Tinbridge Hill."

Portions of Tinbridge Hill identified as stable areas and areas of pride included the Yoder Center, multiple core areas of neighborhood stability, the Old City Cemetery, the Johnson Health Center, gardens, and the Blackwater Creek Trail. A map on the following page highlights these areas of pride within Tinbridge Hill.


Tinbridge Hill
Sustainable Neighborhood Plan
STABLE AREAS / AREAS OF PRIDE
Legend
Railroad
N
Neighborhood Boundary
Parcel Boundary
Stable Area / Area of Pride
Stable Area / Area of Pride
0 0.05 0.1
Miles
Blackwater Creek Trail
Gardens
Stable Block
Core Area of Neighborhood Stability
Yoder Center
Johnson Health Center
Old City Cemetery
MCKINLEY ST
HOLLINS ST
GARLAND ST
TAYLOR ST
MONROE ST
1ST ST
3RD ST
FEDERAL ST
POLK ST
5TH ST
WISE ST
VALLEY ST
FILLMORE ST
FLOYD ST
PLEASANT ST

Current and Recent Initiatives

Progress and improvement are increasingly apparent in the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood, due to energy and resources focused on neighborhood initiatives. The Legacy Museum is a vibrant center documenting the history and culture of this place. Habitat for Humanity is helping people build and own homes. The Tinbridge Neighborhood Council supports community projects and is a key part of the Community Watch program that has helped reduce crime incidents. Churches in and near Tinbridge Hill actively sponsor events. The Community Garden is thriving. And the Yoder Center serves as the main activity center for the neighborhood with classes, sports and recreation activities, after-school care, summer programs, neighborhood meetings, and special projects. City staff members run the programs, maintain facilities, and serve a key role in promoting connections among neighbors. The Friends of Tinbridge Hill group continues to meet monthly to bring ideas and resources to the neighborhood and help to sponsor activities. A full list of community partners appears in a following section of this plan.

Two examples of the energy being brought to Tinbridge Hill are highlighted here: First is the "Picture My World" project run by the Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with Lynchburg College; and a community landscaping project sponsored by neighborhood supporters.

Looking to the future, with the certainty of more limited public resources available to fund projects, the commitments of residents, stakeholders, and friends will be increasingly important to maintain the robust levels of activity and community improvement that have brought Tinbridge Hill to this point.

Picture My World

Last summer, 30 children from the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood were outfitted with disposable cameras and asked to give people a glimpse of their community. The project, sponsored by the Yoder Center and Lynchburg College, let the kids take control and decide what they wanted to document about their lives.

The children were asked to photograph the highs and the lows — what they loved about their community and what they didn't. The hundreds of photos they took tell the story of summer afternoons spent at the playground, rainy-day board games and time with family.

Gary Takacs, senior recreation specialist at the Yoder Center, said the photo project was started as a way to get the youngsters thinking about what happens in their neighborhood. "It's about their involvement in their community and their neighborhood," he said. "To teach them that they have a say in what happens and it counts."

The project, suggested by Lynchburg College, a member of the Friends of Tinbridge Hill coalition, is part of a larger string of projects the center has been doing to promote civic engagement among the kids enrolled in its summer programs.

Example of What Can Be Done!

Neighborhood supporters organized the weekend's events, including a community cookout. The group also raised donations to help refurbish the Yoder Center. Saturday's project was part of a larger renovation that included installing a pavilion, barbecue and stone patio area.

On Saturday, it was all hands on deck at the Yoder Center in Tinbridge Hill, where a bevy of volunteers gathered to plant more than 1,000 flowers, shrubs and trees.

The landscaping blitz, part of a larger cluster of events organized around Tinbridge Hill that day, slowly transformed the exterior of the neighborhood center into a verdant parkland.

"It looks awesome," gasped Marisela Goode, who came out to enjoy the sunny weather with her three children at the center's playground. "It's so nice."

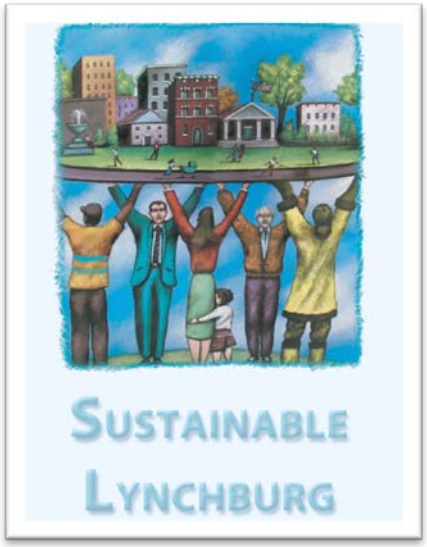
"The vision just keeps getting bigger and bigger and bigger," said Jane White, director emeritus of Old City Cemetery located in Tinbridge Hill, and member of St. John's Episcopal Church, which has been working in the neighborhood for more than 15 years.

"I think the sky is the limit as far as what can be done," White said. "We've got all the right people at the table."

Links to Other Plans

There is an array of plans and policies already in place in Lynchburg that are directly relevant to the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood and to this planning initiative (and to neighborhood planning throughout the City). Links to the plans and documents appear in Appendix A, and descriptions of the most directly related plans follow.

SUSTAINABLE LYNCHBURG



The Sustainable Lynchburg Plan is a policy guidance document for the City of Lynchburg that provides a framework for using the principles of sustainability to develop future policies that affect day-to-day activities.

A vision and set of guiding principles for the plan address fiscal responsibility, economic development, racial and social equity, social capital, protection of the natural environment, sustainable infrastructure, and a process for ongoing monitoring of the plan. The vision statement and specific elements of sustainability identified in the plan are included in the sidebar to the right.

The plan outlines operating principles, goals, strategies underway, and future initiatives for each of the elements of sustainability. Tinbridge Hill is identified in several actions in the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan, including improving the neighborhood through greenway connections, continuing the successful neighborhood garden program, assisting with workforce development, neighborhood walk-throughs to ensure properties are adequately maintained, and supporting youth leadership through the Parks and Recreation Young Leaders Program.

Tinbridge Hill is one vital neighborhood that makes up the larger City of Lynchburg. As such, this Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan is designed to achieve the goals of the neighborhood in a manner that reinforces the City's overarching vision for sustainability.

In this plan, implementation actions are linked to the Sustainable Lynchburg Vision to reiterate how this plan reinforces the community's goals for the future. Icons for Sustainable Lynchburg topics are included to note where the Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood plan is reinforcing the principles set out in the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan.

Sustainable Lynchburg Vision

Lynchburg is a diverse community working together to promote a healthy and sustainable City with social, cultural, economic, and environmental vitality, now and for future generations.

Sustainable Lynchburg Topics

- **Arts and Culture**
- **Citizen Engagement**
- **Economic Development**
- **Healthy Living**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Land Use**
- **Lifelong Learning**
- **Natural & Environmental Resources**
- **Neighborhoods**
- **Safe Community**
- **Social Equity**
- **Transportation**

The following table illustrates how ideas that have been developed in this Tinbridge Hill Plan are directly related to the Sustainable Lynchburg objectives.

Element	Assets	Opportunities
Arts & Culture	• Special Places - Legacy Museum, Old City Cemetery, etc. • Partnerships with 5th Street CDC, local colleges and universities, etc. • Yoder Community Center programming	• Host community events • Connections to 5th Street Arts & Cultural District
Citizen Engagement	• Neighborhood connections - Friends of Tinbridge Hill, Neighborhood Watch, etc. • Yoder Center newsletter	• Connect with homeowners and newcomers to the neighborhood • Create/partner and distribute a Neighborhood brochure
Economic Development	• 5th Street Corridor revitalization • Yoder Community Center resources (computers, etc.)	• Annual Career Development fair • Career Development Clearinghouse • Local Business Support • Connectivity (transit, pedestrian)
Healthy & Active Living	• Established garden • Yoder Community Center programming (physical activity, nutrition, cooking, etc.) • Johnson Health Center • Aubrey Barbour Playground and Biggers Park	• Community Garden partnerships • Trail connection • Expanded recreational opportunities for children
Infrastructure	• Established sidewalk network	• Select sidewalk connections • Necessary infrastructure (water, sewer, etc.) improvements with other construction projects
Land Use	• Housing Partners • 5th Street Master Plan and "Growing Tinbridge Hill" Plan • Gateway Signs	• Repurpose vacant lots and homes • Foster housing and homeownership opportunities • Greenway and infrastructure connections

Element	Assets	Opportunities
Lifelong Learning	• Remembering Tinbridge Hill book • Educational programming - Yoder Community Center, WordWorks, etc.	• Expanded educational opportunities for children • Create a formal mentor program and train neighborhood leaders • Career Development center • Create a formal mentor program
Natural & Environmental Resources	• Near James River Heritage Trail System and Blackwater Creek Trail	• Potential stormwater improvements as part of street improvements • New Trailhead
Neighborhoods	• Established neighborhood leadership structure • Neighborhood connections - Friends of Tinbridge Hill, housing partners, volunteer networks, etc.	• Create recognition programs • Develop volunteer corps • Establish Yard Clean up days • Promote home maintenance assistance efforts
Safe Community	• Established partnerships - Neighborhood Watch, Community Code Compliance Team, etc. • Core areas of strong neighborhood stability • National Night Out Event	• Increased frequency of neighborhood patrols • Neighborhood initiated code compliance for private properties • CPTED (crime prevention) training for neighborhood • Expand neighborhood watch membership • Repurpose vacant homes
Social Equity	• Housing Partners • Public Spaces – Yoder Community Center, Old City Cemetery, Blackwater Creek Trail, etc. • Johnson Health Center	• Resources for child care assistance • Programming for seniors (social services, health services, code compliance, home maintenance, etc.) • Recruit Youth Neighborhood Leadership • Create a formal mentor program • Foster housing and homeownership opportunities • Career Development center
Transportation	• Greater Lynchburg Transit Company service • Established sidewalk network	• Connectivity (transit, pedestrian) • Trail connection

Lynchburg Comprehensive Plan

Lynchburg is preparing to adopt an update to the existing 2002 Comprehensive Plan for the larger community. A key component of the Vision in the existing Comprehensive Plan is an **emphasis on neighborhoods**:

> ***The City's reputation as a good place to live and work will grow from the quality of its many neighborhoods. With their distinctive character, history, and natural setting, City neighborhoods will provide residents with a safe, healthy environment and a strong sense of identity and ownership.***

The Lynchburg Comprehensive Plan also calls for **attention to commercial corridors**:

> ***The accessibility and design quality of the City's commercial corridors and districts will improve through a combination of public and private action. Quality of design, connectivity and accessibility – for vehicles as well as pedestrians and cyclists – will become the central focus in planning for the City's commercial areas.***

This emphasis in the 2002 plan on commercial corridors was followed by a 5th Street Master Plan for revitalization, with infrastructure improvements now being implemented. The priorities coming forward out of this Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan will be identified in the City's new Comprehensive Plan, and this neighborhood planning process can serve as a model for other Lynchburg neighborhoods in the future.

4. Community Partners and Resources

As the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Plan is being implemented, attention will focus on roles and responsibilities for achieving the actions included in the plan. The following sets out roles for how the multiple groups and interests can be coordinated to achieve effective implementation. It is going to take a team effort to turn these ideas into reality.

The key leader in this effort will be the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council, and a committee it will establish to oversee implementation: a Neighborhood Plan Action Committee. This committee will coordinate with partners and help organize efforts to make the plan's actions a reality.

A summary of the partners and resources to be brought together follows.

TINBRIDGE HILL NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

The Neighborhood Council prepared the original Tinbridge Hill Plan in 1996, and has continued to serve a critical role in promoting community improvement. A current focus of the group is on crime prevention and implementation of programs such as "Community Watch." The Council is positioned to continue serving in a leadership role, and to represent the neighborhood in pursuing implementation of this revised Neighborhood Plan. A key next step is assembling a committee for coordinating implementation actions. This Committee should regularly receive and circulate reports on progress, coordinate schedules and resources with neighborhood partners, and periodically prepare updates on implementation for distribution to the neighborhood and full community.

FRIENDS OF TINBRIDGE HILL

The Friends of Tinbridge Hill is an open membership organization, a diverse group of residents, organizational representatives, and interested citizens. The Friends group has provided broad-based leadership, ideas, and direction as work on this new Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Plan has gone forward. It is anticipated that the Friends group will continue its active role, serving as a clearinghouse for ideas and work on individual projects and helping to identify resources to bring to the neighborhood. The Friends group is in the process of drafting a Charter to clarify its role and purpose as advocating for activities and needs of the neighborhood, and activating the agencies in the larger community to meet those needs - - identifying resources to accomplish the goals and objectives identified by the residents of Tinbridge Hill to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood.

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS

Residents of Tinbridge Hill are the reason for all initiatives, and the core source of energy and resources. Residents will continue to be actively encouraged to volunteer time and effort to the multiple community initiatives that are included in the Plan, and to participate in community groups and discussions.

LYNCHBURG CITY STAFF

Lynchburg City Departments provide a wide array of services to all neighborhoods, including Tinbridge Hill, and staff members are involved with the Tinbridge Hill Community on a variety of initiatives. An example is the set of programs and services offered at the Yoder Center. As work to implement this Tinbridge Hill Plan goes forward, staff will play an important support role at the request of the neighborhood, providing space and venues for meetings and distributing materials, and serving in an advisory capacity.

The City can provide technical support to the neighborhood on specific topics: infrastructure planning, addressing distressed properties, revitalization tax credits, resources of the Workforce Development Center, daycare services assistance (social services), enhancing police presence and protection in the neighborhood, and parks and recreation programming.

PARTNERSHIPS

Many non-profit organizations, foundations, churches, and university-related functions have brought resources and volunteers to the neighborhood to assist in community initiatives. The following partners have helped improve the neighborhood, and serve as potential future sources of assistance and support.

Organizations Located in Tinbridge Hill	
Yoder Center and After School Program	*Description: Tinbridge Hill community center, recreation facilities, playground, youth and adult programs and after-school care, owned and operated by the City of Lynchburg* http://www.lynchburgva.gov/yoder-center
Legacy Museum	*Description: Museum that celebrates African American heritage, located in Tinbridge Hill neighborhood* http://legacymuseum.org/home
Old City Cemetery/Southern Memorial Association	*Description: Oldest public cemetery in Virginia, located in Tinbridge Hill* http://www.gravegarden.org/
Johnson Health Center	*Description: Provides quality healthcare to all in a Patient-Centered Medical Home* *www.jhcvirginia.org*
Area Colleges and Universities	
Randolph College	*Description: Small liberal arts college located in Lynchburg, has assisted Tinbridge Hill in past with community surveys* http://www.randolphcollege.edu/
Liberty University	*Description: Nation's largest Christian-based liberal arts college located in Lynchburg, has assisted Tinbridge Hill in past with student (athlete) volunteer efforts* http://www.liberty.edu/
Virginia University of Lynchburg	*Description: Historically black, Christian-based university located in Lynchburg, serves local residents and on-line students* http://www.vul.edu/
Central Virginia Community College	*Description: Two-year community college located in Lynchburg and serving Lynchburg and Bedford and the counties of Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, and Campbell. CVCC's Culinary School has been an important asset.* http://cvcc.vccs.edu/index.asp
Lynchburg College	*Description: A private, independent, residential college that offers distinctive undergraduate and graduate programs that reflect its commitment to teaching and learning, scholarship, and service to the broader community* *http://www.lynchburg.edu*

Faith-Based Organizations	
Saint John's Episcopal Church	*Description: Episcopal church located in Lynchburg, has assisted neighborhood in past with volunteer efforts and charitable funds for neighborhood initiatives* http://www.stjohnslynchburg.org/
First Church of Jesus	*Description: Small Christian church located in the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood* http://www.yellowpages.com/lynchburg-va/mip/first-church-of-jesus-6386616
Housing and Community Development	
Greater Lynchburg Habitat for Humanity	*Description: Non-profit, affordable housing provider that assists new homeowners to build and finance their homes* http://lynchburghabitat.org/
Lynchburg Neighborhood Development Foundation	*Description: Non-profit organization that works to increase home ownership by providing financing, home-buyer counseling, and assistance to qualified applicants.* http://www.lndf.org/
Lynchburg Community Action Group	*Description: Non-profit organization that assists low-to moderate-income individuals and families by providing a wide array of community services (housing, childcare, job training, transportation)* http://www.lyncag.org/
Lynchburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority	*Description: Housing assistance program that focuses on urban renewal and housing rehabilitation in specific neighborhoods* http://www.lynchburgva.gov/redevelopment-housing-authority
Rebuilding Together	*Description: Non-profit organization that rehabilitates the houses of low-income homeowners, particularly for elderly or disabled homeowners* http://www.rebuildinglynchburg.org/
Education and Business Development	
Lynchburg City Schools	*Description: Public school district for City of Lynchburg* http://www.lcsedu.net/
Lynchburg Business Development Center	*Description: Provides business development services to aspiring entrepreneurs in the Region 2000 economic area, services include a business incubator, business counseling, financing, and training and events, located in Lynchburg* http://lbdc.com/
Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce	*Description: Provides programs and services that strengthen member businesses and stimulate regional prosperity.*
Support for Minority Populations	
NAACP Lynchburg	*Description: Works to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.* http://www.naacp.org/pages/find-your-local-unit/

5. Sustainable Neighborhood Vision & Goals

Vision for Tinbridge Hill

The Tinbridge Hill neighborhood has a long history and solid roots from which to grow in the future. The future of the neighborhood lies in the hands of its residents and the partners that support and cherish the neighborhood. There are many opportunities to take the Tinbridge Hill of today and improve its physical appearance and quality of life. To do this, there needs to be a strong leadership foundation that will support and sustain the community into the future. The following vision statement describes the neighborhood's vision for Tinbridge Hill of the future.

OUR VISION – GROWING TINBRIDGE HILL

We envision our neighborhood to be a strong and diverse community of families. Our neighborhood will celebrate its history by sustaining the places and stories that capture the unique spirit of Tinbridge Hill. Neighborhood residents are the heart of this community, and neighborhood leaders and volunteers will work together to improve the quality of the neighborhood, and to sustain a true sense of community between neighbors. Our beautiful, hilly neighborhood will provide good homes for hard-working families, a safe place for children to learn and play, special places for residents to gather and have fellowship, and a community network that fosters connections to resources for residents to improve their lives. From what took root long ago, we will continue to love and grow our Tinbridge Hill.

To achieve the neighborhood vision, this Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan sets out five main goals:

GOAL #1: GROW OUR NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

GOAL #2: IMPROVE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

GOAL #3: MAKE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE

GOAL #4: SUPPORT OUR FAMILIES

GOAL #5: FOSTER CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTS

6. Framework for Growing Tinbridge Hill

The approach for achieving these goals needs to be built on a resident leadership structure that can work to coordinate resources and responsibilities. The Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council will be the lead organization. The first step in implementing the plan is for the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council to recruit additional members, and establish a Plan Action Committee made up of residents, agency representatives, and members of the Friends of Tinbridge Hill group.

The following framework outlines the five key goals for the Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan and the strategies the community can undertake to achieve these goals, priorities that have emerged from the series of neighborhood discussions over the summer and fall of 2013. This list forms the initial scope of work for the Plan Action Committee.

Sustainable Lynchburg Framework

It is critical to put in place a framework for implementing and monitoring progress on the recommendations of this Tinbridge Hill Plan. Continued aggressive attention and advocacy, with champions, is needed to achieve action recommendations.

The core group for pursuing implementation of these recommendations needs to be the Tinbridge Neighborhood Council. This group is a legally established non-profit organization, made up of neighborhood residents, with a history of work and agreements with the City of Lynchburg. The Neighborhood Council's work at present is mostly focused on the Neighborhood Watch program, but it has successfully undertaken other neighborhood initiatives and is well positioned to take charge of implementation of this Plan, with appropriate support. A key ingredient to bringing this implementation framework to life will be to enlist new neighborhood residents to step into leadership roles with the Neighborhood Council.

Regarding support, there are two main sources to assist the Neighborhood Council in starting and pursuing this work. The first is the Friends of Tinbridge Hill group. The Friends group is currently in the process of formalizing its mission and membership, which will clarify the role of the group and its members. The Friends organization is well positioned to help link resources with the Neighborhood Council. Discussions are underway to establish a ***Plan Action Committee*** under the umbrella of the Neighborhood Council organization, with members of the Plan Action Committee to be drawn from the Neighborhood Council Board of Directors and the Friends membership. A formal charge for this new Committee is being drafted, which will include expectations for frequency of meetings, regular reporting to the City Council on implementation progress, and monitoring work to identify any needs for change or calibration in the action priorities.

The second source of support to the Neighborhood Council will be City staff. Parts of the ongoing responsibilities of City Departments include provision of services to all citizens of Lynchburg, including Tinbridge Hill. Parks and Recreation staff will continue to work with neighborhood residents at the Yoder Center, Public Works will continue to be responsible for maintenance of streets and facilities, and the Police Department will continue to be involved with residents on issues related to safety and crime prevention.

Beginning immediately after City Council adoption of this ***Growing Tinbridge Hill*** plan, the Plan Action Committee should begin meeting to lay the groundwork for implementation and monitoring. The list of Goals and actions to be pursued follows, along with indications of how those goals and actions align with the goals of the ***Sustainable Lynchburg*** plan.

Goal #1: Grow Our Neighborhood Leaders for the Future

Tinbridge Hill is fortunate to have many current leaders of the community that represent partner organizations. Groups, like the Friends of Tinbridge Hill and the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council have been successful at past efforts to improve the community. It is critical that the community continues to grow its leaders, both adults and youth, to advocate for needs and to take action to meet goals.

The Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan Action Committee can do this by encouraging neighbors to engage in community efforts, recruit new community leaders, and establish plan ownership actions to implement the plan.

Neighborhood Council Leadership Community Engagement Efforts

1. **Host Community Events** – The Neighborhood Council will grow community connections and relationships by hosting community events throughout the year, such as neighborhood dinners, neighborhood clean-up days, community gardening work days, neighborhood holiday decorating, and sporting events. A community calendar that notes important neighborhood events could be created and passed around to neighbors to encourage their community engagement.
2. **Connect with New Habitat Homeowners in the Neighborhood** –The Plan Action Committee will connect with new Habitat for Humanity homeowners by attending homeownership classes for new members to the neighborhood, welcoming these newcomers to the neighborhood, educating them about neighborhood activities and engagement/volunteer opportunities, and encouraging them to get involved in implementation of the neighborhood plan.
3. **Create a Formal Mentor Program** – The Neighborhood Council will encourage partners, such as the Yoder Center, to collaborate and develop a formal leadership mentor program in the neighborhood. Current Friends of Tinbridge Hill members, and other community leaders, could volunteer to spend several hours a month mentoring youth on the skills needed to be community leaders.
4. **Connect with Newcomers to the Neighborhood** – The Neighobrhood Council will host a newcomers meeting on a regular schedule at the Yoder Center or another suitable community location. The objective for the meeting could be to welcome new residents to the neighborhood, educate them about neighborhood resources, and encourage them to volunteer in the neighborhood. This is an opportunity for new neighborhood leaders to practice leadership skills by hosting these events.
5. **Generate Community Awareness by Creating and Distributing a Neighborhood Brochure** – The Neighborhood Council will work with partners to develop a simple neighborhood brochure that provides residents with basic information about the neighborhood, the Friends of Tinbridge Hill, the new neighborhood plan, and ways to engage through volunteerism and community events. Posters of this information could be made and placed at the Yoder Center, and local churches and businesses.

Neighborhood Council Leadership Recruitment Actions

As part of leadership recruitment actions, the Neighborhood Council and Plan Action Committee will pursue the following initiatives:

1. **Hold Contest to Recruit Youth Leaders** – Consider encouraging development of youth leaders in the neighborhood through a "Be a Neighborhood Friend" youth contest to be administered through the Yoder Center afterschool program. Contests could be for art, oratorical presentation, volunteer effort, or some other leadership activity. The Neighborhood Council could encourage the city to pass a resolution

acknowledging the "Be a Neighborhood Friend" contest winner to acknowledge and encourage youth leadership activities.

2. **Train Neighborhood Leaders** - It will be important to provide training opportunities to neighborhood leaders. Collaborations with neighborhood partners and drawing upon community resources will be important steps in training neighborhood leaders. One example is the City of Lynchburg's Parks and Recreation Young Leadership Program. The Neighborhood Council could work with partners to establish capacity building and leadership training opportunities for newly identified neighborhood leaders.
3. **Neighborhood Leader of the Year Program –** Consider encouraging neighborhood volunteerism and leadership by establishing a neighborhood leader of the year program to acknowledge notable actions taken by neighborhood leaders.

Tinbridge Hill Sustainable Neighborhood Plan Ownership Actions

1. **Set Neighborhood Plan Implementation as Priority** – The Neighborhood Council will set the implementation of this plan as a high priority for future work.
2. **Develop Neighborhood Volunteer Corps –** To achieve the goals of this plan, the Neighborhood Council will identify a group of committed neighborhood residents and community partners that are willing and interested in supporting the implementation of this plan. An active contact list could be maintained and could identify specific skills that volunteers can provide to the community.
3. **Arrange for Leadership of Community Garden** – The Plan Action Committee will dedicate a member or neighborhood volunteer to take responsibility for the long-term management of the community garden. Assistance can be provided by neighborhood partners, with the Plan Action Committee serving as the main coordinating body for community gardening activities.

Reinforcing the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan

Goal #1: Grow Our Neighborhood Leaders for the Future, supports the implementation of the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan by addressing the following sustainable topics:

Goal #2: Improve Our Neighborhood Character

A large focus of the vision for Tinbridge Hill is on improving the neighborhood character and the physical environment that families live in. The Plan Action Committee Neighborhood Council will work with neighborhood residents and community partners to improve and enhance the unique character of Tinbridge Hill.

Improving Existing Housing and Lots

1. **Proactive Code Compliance –** The Neighborhood Council will partner with the City, as it has done in the past, to hold neighborhood walks with City enforcement officials to identify properties that are not complying with city ordinances. The City could then provide advice and assistance and take action to have these properties improved.
2. **Establish Neighborhood Yard Clean Up Days –** The Plan Action Committee will develop a program to improve overgrown properties that are a blight on the neighborhood, and potential havens for illegal activity and unsafe conditions. Individual volunteer clean up days could be organized to clean up priority blighted and overgrown lots, particularly lots along the north side of Hollins Street. Area university volunteer programs could partner to assist in these efforts.
3. **Assist with Home Maintenance** – The Plan Action Committee will establish a program for homeowners that are interested in receiving assistance for home maintenance, such as painting, minor home repairs, tree removal, installation of new doors and windows, landscaping, and similar projects. The program could draw upon neighborhood partners and resources to connect interested residents with funding assistance and volunteer or for-profit groups that can provide these services. There is an opportunity here to develop employment opportunities for residents interested in doing this type of work for their fellow neighbors. (See Goal #4-Improve Housing Status #2, and Goal #5-Foster Local Business Development #1.)

Enhancing Parks, Greenways, and Community Gardens

1. **Support City Efforts to Create Greenway Connections to Neighborhood** – The Neighborhood Council will work with community partners, primarily the City of Lynchburg, to support the development of trail connections that would provide formal linkages within the neighborhood to the Blackwater Creek Bikeway.
2. **Repurpose Vacant Lots** – A large portion of the neighborhood includes vacant lots with no homes. The Plan Action Committee will develop a program to actively work with vacant lot owners to identify ways that lots can be used to enhance the community, such as small play areas for children, new community garden lots, and small areas for picnicking.

Encouraging New Development and Infrastructure Improvements

1. **Improve Gateways to Neighborhood** - The Neighborhood Council will consider ideas to enhance the neighborhoods gateways, particularly on entrances from 5th Street. Ideas include community art installations and infrastructure improvements. The design and development of these gateway improvements could be made by neighborhood residents. The Plan Action Committee could work with partners to identify funding sources and other assistance to create these gateway improvements.
2. **Encourage Development of Vacant Lots –** While some lots in the community are not suitable for development because of steep slopes and other environmental conditions, many lots are suitable. Development of vacant lots could help improve the character of the neighborhood and the security of residents. The Plan Action Committee will work to identify property owners that are interested in developing their lots or potentially selling their lots to a developer, such as Habitat for Humanity. A starting point for this endeavor should be exploration of development on the priority vacant lots that are identified

on a map shown on page 12 in this Plan. Included in the list of resources in Appendix A are links to experiences and ideas for developing vacant lots that come from New Orleans and Philadelphia.

3. **Identify Infrastructure Improvements** – While public infrastructure (sidewalks, streets, stormwater drainage, and street lighting) in Tinbridge Hill is generally in good condition, over time there will be need to maintain and improve these systems. The Neighborhood Council will work with the City to identify infrastructure improvement needs. Priority improvements are sidewalk construction and maintenance. Emphasis will be placed on coordinating infrastructure replacement and maintenance efforts to maximize benefits and minimize disruption to the residents. Suggested priorities for sidewalk projects are shown on page 15 in this Plan.
4. **Repurpose Vacant Homes** – Vacant lots in the neighborhood can turn into unsafe locations that affect the security and experience of the neighborhood. The Neighborhood Council will work with City partners to identify owners of vacant homes and explore options for selling/renting or repurposing vacant homes and commercial structures.

Reinforcing the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan

Goal #2: Improve Our Neighborhood Character, supports the implementation of the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan by addressing the following sustainable topics:

Goal #3: Make Our Neighborhood Safe

One of the primary reasons that the neighborhood began planning efforts back in the early 1990s was to make Tinbridge Hill a safe community for families by tackling the challenges of crime and drug activity in the neighborhood. This still holds true today. Through new partnerships with the City of Lynchburg's Police Department, the Neighborhood Council can continue to foster a safe environment for our residents.

Expand Public Safety Partnerships

1. **Continue to Strengthen the Working Partnership with Lynchburg Police** – At the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Summit held on July 20, 2013, it was identified that a strong police presence in the neighborhood both deters criminal activity and fosters a better relationship between residents and law enforcement officials. The City of Lynchburg's police officers are viewed as a resource to the community. This aligns with the Police Department's Strategic Plan FY 2014-16 which contains the following goal to foster community involvement. Specifically, Goal 2 in that Strategic Plan calls for the department to "maintain, communicate with, educate, demonstrate responsiveness to and collaborate with all community members throughout the spectrum of day-to-day policing activities as well as through involvement in other community activities. The members of the Lynchburg police Department recognize that we can only be

successful in accomplishing our public service mission if we foster and maintain strong community partnerships with our citizens built on trust."

2. **Offer CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) Training to Neighborhood** – The Neighborhood Council will work with the Lynchburg City Police to offer a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) training to Tinbridge Hill residents. Through this program, the City's police officers could educate neighborhood residents about ways to improve their yards and homes to deter crime in the neighborhood.
3. **Expand Neighborhood Watch Membership** –The Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council, t will work to expand membership of the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Watch group, to encourage involvement from all members of the community. Expanding membership can have the many benefits, including increasing security in the neighborhood, addressing crime activity at the neighborhood level and not putting the burden on individuals, and providing another way for residents to connect.

Reinforcing the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan

Goal #3: Make Our Neighborhood Safe, supports the implementation of the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan by addressing the following sustainable topics:

Goal #4: Support Our Families

This neighborhood is more than the sum of individual families; it is also the sense of community, relationships among neighbors, and collective ownership of Tinbridge Hill. The more that can be done to support and foster a better quality of life for residents, the better the entire neighborhood will be. The Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council can work with partner organizations to improve access to resources available to neighborhood residents and to provide additional programs for Tinbridge Hill families to create a stronger community and a better future for our children.

Improve Housing Status

1. **Encourage Homeownership** – In communities across the nation, homeownership has a strong relationship with neighborhood stability and civic volunteerism. People feel a sense of ownership to their neighborhood and community when they own their own home. The Neighborhood Council will consider establishing a program to help interested residents connect to neighborhood partners and resources that can assist with home buying. Habitat for Humanity could be a critical partner in this effort.
2. **Assist with Home Maintenance** – The Plan Action Committee will consider establishing a program for homeowners that are interested in receiving assistance for home maintenance, such as painting, minor

repairs, tree removal, installation of new doors and windows, landscaping, and similar projects. The program could draw upon neighborhood partners and resources to connect interested residents with funding assistance and volunteer or for-profit groups that can provide these services. There is an opportunity here to develop employment opportunities for residents interested in doing this type of work for their fellow neighbors.

Support Neighborhood Youth

1. **Expand Recreational and Educational Opportunities for Children** – Development of the Yoder Neighborhood Center is an outstanding example of how community leaders can work to expand recreation and educational opportunities for children in our neighborhood. The Plan Action Committee will explore ways to create additional recreational and educational opportunities for neighborhood youth. The Lynchburg City School System, area museums, and the Yoder Center are important partner organizations. Also important is engaging youth to identify interesting and creative programs, such as the "Picture My World" project.
2. **Assist with Finding Childcare Resources** – Many families in the neighborhood are headed by two working parents or single mothers. Finding appropriate childcare is an important consideration for parents who need affordable childcare that will foster the growth of their children and be affordable to working families. It is also important for the neighborhood – care given to children outside of the home is an important consideration when thinking about building the next generation of neighborhood leaders. The Plan Action Committee will work with neighborhood partners, such as the City's Daycare Services Assistance Program, to connect families in need of childcare with funding and childcare provider identification assistance.

Connect Seniors to Community Programs and Resources

1. **Programs for Seniors** – Many of the neighborhood's residents are aging seniors that have different needs than younger families. The Plan Action Committee will explore opportunities for educating aging residents in Tinbridge Hill about the community resources available to them: the Greater Lynchburg Transit Service's paratransit service, social services, health services, and the Templeton Senior Center. Seniors could also be educated about neighborhood programs, such as property and yard maintenance programs that may assist aging residents with property maintenance tasks that may be difficult for them to do alone. (See Goal #4 Support Our Families, Improving Housing Status #2.)

Reinforcing the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan

Goal #4: Support Our Families, supports the implementation of the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan by addressing the following sustainable topics:

Goal #5: Foster Career Development of Residents

The quality of life of neighborhood residents is in large part determined by their employment. Opportunities for residents to develop additional skills and training, and learn about steps to advance their careers can be offered through collaborations with partners.

Connect Residents with Training Opportunities and Employment Resources

1. **Establish an Annual Career Development Fair** - The Neighborhood Council will partner with neighborhood organizations to develop opportunities to connect residents with job training resources. Partners include area universities, Lynchburg Economic Development, and the Central Virginia Community College's Workforce Solutions and Community Education Program. An annual career development fair could be hosted at the Yoder Center or another appropriate location to bring career development resources directly to residents of Tinbridge Hill and surrounding neighborhoods.
2. **Provide Clearinghouse for Career Development** – Beyond a career development fair, the Plan Action Committee will work with neighborhood partners, like the Yoder Center, to establish a small clearinghouse for career development resources available to residents year-round, and to actively educate residents about the clearinghouse. A small kiosk could be developed at an existing neighborhood facility where this information could be made available to residents. This can assist residents seeking to further their career development that don't have easy access to the internet or transportation.

There are a multitude of workforce development programs with free employment and training services located in the Lynchburg area. These include, but are not limited to, the Region 2000 Workforce Center, the Virginia Employment Commission, Lyn-CAG, Central Virginia Community College and Adult and Continuing Education of Central Virginia. Most of these entities also have direct partnerships with employers and employer organizations such as Chambers of Commerce and City of Lynchburg Office of Economic Development, so that they can serve as conduits between job openings and job seekers. The Neighborhood Council can partner with the Region 2000 Workforce Center, where many of these services can be accessed directly or through referral, as the "clearinghouse" for enhancing connections to these opportunities for Tinbridge Hill residents. (There may also be opportunities to establish transportation assistance for residents who may need assistance).

Additional activities or initiatives that could be explored through this partnership include:

1. On site regular or annual career development fairs and events at the Yoder Center or another appropriate location.
2. Establishment of a remote "Informational Workforce Center" at the Yoder Center or other suitable location, where residents could have computer access for job readiness and job search resources and other career development information readily available in a convenient location.

Foster Local Business Development

1. **Foster Local Business to Support Neighborhood Improvement** – With the services needed by Tinbridge Hill residents, there are many opportunities for local business development. The idea is that residents could provide for-profit services to their neighbors, such as housing and yard maintenance, transportation/errand running for seniors, and childcare. The Plan Action Committee will look for opportunities to encourage business development by neighborhood entrepreneurs. The Lynchburg Business Development Center could be an important partner in fostering these efforts, and provide business counseling and business incubator services to start-ups.

Reinforcing the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan

Goal #5: Foster Career Development of Residents, supports the implementation of the Sustainable Lynchburg Plan by addressing the following sustainable topics:

7. Priorities for Implementation

Leadership

This plan includes more than 30 specific actions to achieve the vision and goals set out for the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood, developed over a six-month period involving discussions among residents, property owners, city staff, and community organizations. This community dialogue has identified needs, designed strategies to achieve goals, and highlighted priority areas for action.

The most critical part of achieving these goals, and the first step, is to confirm the leadership structure for implementing the ideas. An organizational strategy is needed that is based on leadership from neighborhood residents, with active involvement of community resources.

The ***Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council*** is a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, with a board made up of Tinbridge Hill residents. Created in 1991 to promote neighborhood improvement, its mission is to "create a clean, well-maintained neighborhood with adequate and affordable housing for all of its residents, and to create a safe, violence-free community where neighbors and families care for and respect one another." The Neighborhood Council has undertaken a wide array of initiatives to facilitate neighborhood growth, and has worked to organize resources and community groups to come together in pursuit of neighborhood goals. Historically, the Neighborhood Council has focused on safety and crime prevention and the City's Neighborhood Watch program. The Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council will be the lead entity for coordinating efforts to implement this Plan.

As noted above, the Neighborhood Council's history, organizational structure, and mission are directly aligned with the need for leadership moving forward, and the Council should serve well as the entity for promoting implementation of this Neighborhood Plan and monitoring implementation. There has been attrition in Board membership, and one of the first implementation actions of this Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Plan is to recruit additional participation and board membership commitments from neighborhood residents. The Neighborhood Council will continue to work with City representatives to coordinate activities.

Another initial step should be for the Neighborhood Council to form a ***Plan Action Committee***, to meet regularly to coordinate resources and monitor the progress made on the action strategies set out in this Plan. This committee would be also include representatives from the Neighborhood Council and the ***Friends of Tinbridge Hill.*** This Committee will be charged with responsibility to promote implementation of specific actions, as outlined in this plan.

It will be important to capitalize on the momentum generated during this planning process, and set out a manageable set of tasks to work on as immediate priorities. The first steps are organizational: (1) Recruit additional neighborhood residents to join the Board of Directors of the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council; (2) Have the Neighborhood Council form a Plan Action Committee; and (3) Work with the Friends of Tinbridge Hill to establish a membership for this committee to follow-up on implementation recommendations, and set out an achievable set of tasks to work on as immediate priorities. The Plan Action Committee should regularly prepare status reports on implementation activity to share with the community and City officials.

Priority Improvements and Activities

The following list outlines the most compelling priorities for neighborhood plan implementation that have been identified in community discussions, and it is recommended that the Plan Action Committee initially focus on these priorities:

GOAL #1: GROW OUR NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS FOR THE FUTURE

1. **Set Plan Implementation as a Priority**
2. **Develop Neighborhood Volunteer Corps**
3. **Active Recruitment to the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council**
4. **Establish Ongoing Leadership Responsibilities for the Community Garden**

GOAL #2: IMPROVE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

1. **Promote Proactive Code Compliance for Private Properties**
2. **Continue to Strengthen Neighborhood Yard Clean-Up Days**
3. **Identify Opportunities to Repurpose Vacant Lots, with Initial Attention to Identified Priority Lots**
4. **Work with City Staff to Plan for Priority Sidewalk Improvements**
5. **Work with City Staff to Place a Gateway Sign at the Key 5th Street Entrance to Tinbridge Hill**

GOAL #3: MAKE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE

1. **Establish Working Partnership with Lynchburg Police to Increase Police Presence**
2. **Offer CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) Training to Neighborhood**

GOAL #4: SUPPORT OUR FAMILIES

1. **Encourage Homeownership**
2. **Expand Recreational and Educational Opportunities for Children**

GOAL #5: FOSTER CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTS

1. **Establish a Career Development Fair**

An initial task of the Neighborhood Plan Action Committee, once formed, will be to construct a timeline and set of responsibilities for parties and entities involved in the Tinbridge Hill area, a blueprint for action.

Next Steps

The first step in implementing the plan is for the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council to recruit additional members, and establish a Plan Action Committee made up of residents, agency representatives, and members of the Friends of Tinbridge Hill group. A Memorandum of Understanding will be executed between the Neighborhood Council and the Friends group, outlining expectations for support and collaboration. A City representative will be identified to serve as a liaison between the Plan Action Committee and City Departments, to assist with coordinating the exchange of information and identification of resources.

The next step will be for the Plan Action Committee to take the list of priority actions highlighted in this Plan, and work with Friends of Tinbridge Hill representatives to identify resources, develop a work plan and timeline for tackling these actions and connecting with neighborhood partners to "get the ball rolling" on these initiatives. It will be important to build on the community support for the plan generated by neighborhood residents, to provide the community with updates on the actions being undertaken, and provide additional opportunities for residents and community organizations to get involved in plan implementation.

The Plan Action Committee will meet on a regular monthly basis to review progress on priority activities, plan for new initiatives, and prepare quarterly updates to transmit to the City and the neighborhood.

Plan Appendices

The following documents serve as supporting documents to the Growing Tinbridge Hill plan. Appendices C and D are provided under separate cover and available from the City of Lynchburg's Department of Community Development.

A. RESOURCE MATERIAL AND LINKS

B. REPLICABILITY FOR OTHER LYNCHBURG NEIGHBORHOODS

C. FULL NEIGHBORHOOD ASSESSMENT REPORT (JUNE 2013)

D. NEIGHBORHOOD SUMMIT REPORT (AUGUST 2013)

Appendix A: Links to Resources

The following resources serve as supporting documents to the Growing Tinbridge Hill plan. These are links to Lynchburg information and also links to resources from other places that are referred to in the plan.

Cemetery: http://www.southerngardenhistory.org/bookreviews/Cemetery_story.html

Article on Revitalization: http://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/article_df1a8a74-021b-11e3-b9f8-001a4bcf6878.html

Legacy Museum: http://legacymuseum.org/home

Remembering Tinbridge Hill: http://virginiahumanities.org/2012/03/remembering-tinbridge-hill/

Video about Tinbridge Hill: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MB01X4nL5yI

Randolph College Initiative: http://www.randolphcollege.edu/magazine_2011_2_3_economics_in_action.xml

5th Street Master Plan: http://fifthstreetcdc.org/about-fifth-street/master-plan

Planting Article: http://www.wsls.com/story/20821481/tinbridge-hill-volunteers-plant-flowers-shrubs-trees-at-center

Neighborhood Services: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/neighborhood-services

Parks and Recreation: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/parks-and-recreation

Comprehensive Plan 2030 Update: http://lynchburg2030.org/

Yoder Center: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/yoder-center

Picture My World: http://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/article_53cd5c60-0209-11e3-b728-001a4bcf6878.html

Inspections: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/inspections

Police Department: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/police-department

Code Enforcement Division: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/community-code-compliance-team-0

Lynchburg Neighborhood Development Foundation: http://www.lndf.org/

Lynchburg Fair Housing Analysis: http://www.lynchburgva.gov/grants

New Orleans Initiative: http://www.nola.com/politics/index.ssf/2011/06/anti-blight_program_lot_next_d.html

Philadelphia Initiative: http://fixitphilly.org/land-peercities/

Appendix B: Replicable Approaches

Project Background

In 2008, the City adopted a Sustainable Lynchburg initiative with a vision of Lynchburg as a "diverse community working together to promote a healthy and sustainable City with social, cultural, economic and environmental vitality, now and for future generation." Various elements have been identified that are key to achieving this vision, including Arts and Culture; Citizen Engagement & Social Capital; Economic Development; Healthy & Active Living; Infrastructure; Land Use; Natural Resources; Neighborhoods; Safe Community; Social Equity; and Transportation. In March of 2013, the City contracted with Clarion Associates to develop a neighborhood plan for Tinbridge Hill using the Sustainable Lynchburg framework with the understanding that the residents and stakeholders of Tinbridge Hill get to define what will make *their* neighborhood sustainable within the context of the Sustainable City elements.

Overview

The "Growing Tinbridge Hill" initiative has been a successful, collaborative enterprise designed to support the livability and well-being of the Tinbridge Hill neighborhood. Using the elements of Sustainable Lynchburg as a basis for discussion, the organization of people and resources effectively helped identify neighborhood assets, aspirations and needs, and helped craft strategies to address neighborhood goals.

There are approaches that were used in this initiative that are replicable. Lynchburg is made up of a series of distinct residential neighborhoods, and the Tinbridge Hill success represents a model that may be useful for application in other neighborhoods. The following is a description of approaches that were successful in Tinbridge Hill, and which can be considered as future neighborhood initiatives are planned.

Components of Success in Tinbridge Hill

<u>Engagement Strategy: Residents</u>. It is essential that a neighborhood plan be owned by the neighborhood's residents. Outside resources are valuable in the construction and execution of a plan, but the fundamental core of the project needs to be resident-based. Accordingly, engagement of neighborhood residents needs to be planned and built into the process at all stages. Approaches to the Tinbridge Hill planning process that are candidates for consideration in future neighborhood projects:

- In-neighborhood venue: In Tinbridge Hill the Yoder Center was the gathering place. Some events can and need to be scheduled at City Hall, but the more the substantive discussions and interactions can take place at a location within the neighborhood, the better.

- Recognizable leaders: Willingness of neighborhood residents to participate in and trust the process is greatly enhanced when individuals are involved who are known and have a history of leadership in that neighborhood.

- Timing of events to coordinate with neighborhood life: Some events can be planned and successfully executed during regular working hours; events where wide participation is desired most likely need to be scheduled for evenings and weekends. Coordination with recognized neighborhood events is effective. In the Tinbridge Hill plan, the most participation occurred when briefings and discussions were part of monthly neighborhood dinners.

- Communication: Existing communication methods are the most useful - - neighborhood newsletters and flyers, email lists, and postings in the neighborhood help spread the word. Community center staff also accompanied many of the children who participate in the after school programs to do door-to-door invitations to neighborhood residents.

- Recognizing the history: Every neighborhood has its own history and identity. Recognizing, documenting, and building on that history is important, and an effective way to engage residents in the work of the project. One good technique is taping discussions to create a library of oral history.

Engagement Strategy: Supporting Organizations. The help and support of private and nonprofit organizations, including faith communities and local college communities, is invaluable. There is a spirit of help and cooperation in Lynchburg, and coordinating resources to focus on neighborhood needs is highly effective. In the case of Tinbridge Hill, an asset was the existence of an informal, already functioning collection of organization representatives referred to as the Friends of Tinbridge Hill. These representatives met on a regular basis in a setting that invited and included the participation of neighborhood residents, and was critical to the success of the Growing Tinbridge Hill initiative. For subsequent neighborhood projects in Lynchburg, this model is highly recommended; if such a gathering of resource representatives focusing on needs of that particular neighborhood is not currently in place, formation of such a group at the outset of a project is a recommended strategy.

Branding the Initiative. Coming up with a phrase or logo that resonates with residents and communicates a key theme can help distinguish a particular neighborhood planning initiative from other ongoing work, and avoid confusion. In this case, the phrase "Growing Tinbridge Hill" was coined to help communicate that the focus is on ongoing work (not a one-time project), youth in the community, building leadership, and to draw a connection to a recognized and valued asset, the community garden.

Effective Use of City Resources. The availability of public funds is limited. Grant sources from federal, state, and private organizations should always be explored, but are increasingly difficult to secure. Accordingly, purposeful thought to the most effective use of City resources is highly desirable. Ongoing programs within established services often can be adjusted to better address particular identified neighborhood needs. Examples in Tinbridge Hill include using the Yoder Center for community events, working with the Police Department through the Community Watch program, cooperative, targeted Code Enforcement work, adjustment of bus routes, and identification of the most important infrastructure improvement projects.

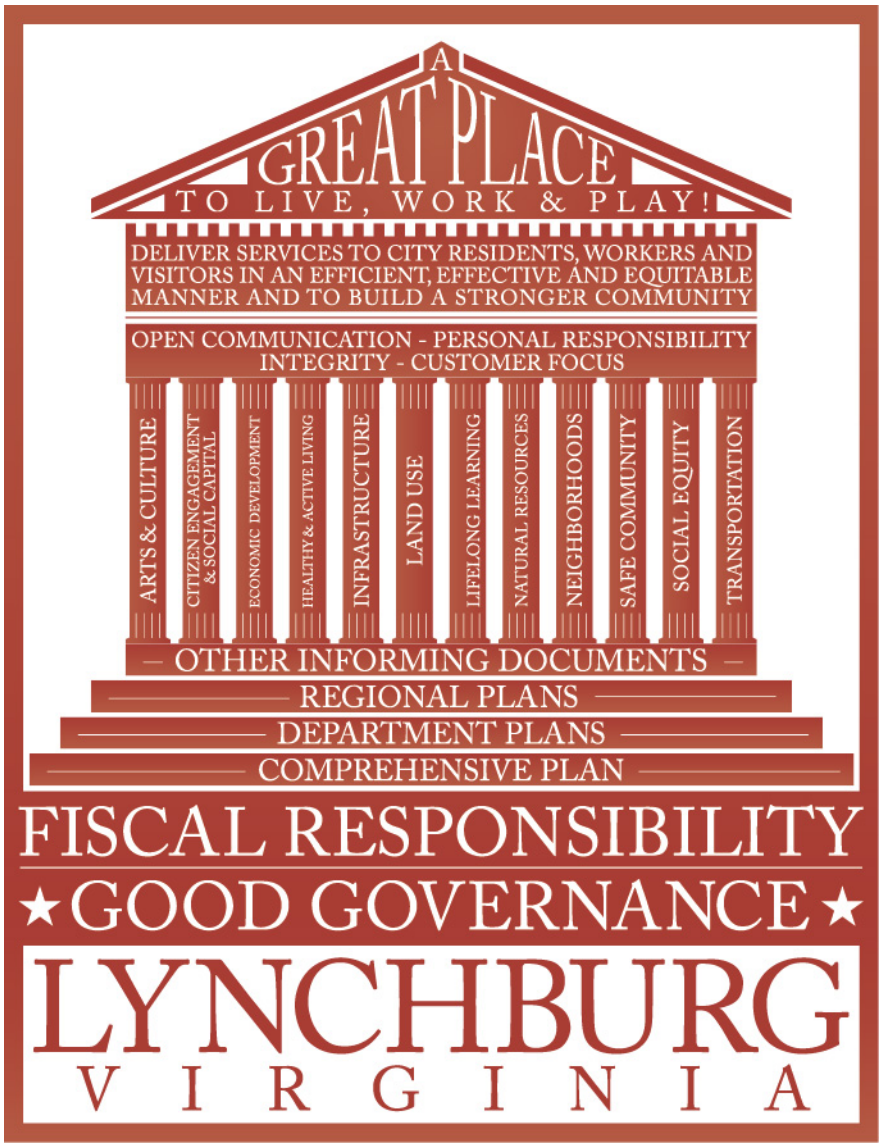
Neighborhood Assessment. Documenting existing conditions, including physical conditions of structures and infrastructure, demographic trends, and connections to City services and programs is an important foundational piece of every neighborhood project.

Identification of Needs and Goals. Critically important to a neighborhood planning process is the authentic engagement of residents to identify needs and goals. In the Tinbridge Hill project this was accomplished in several ways, including (1) sponsoring small group discussions among residents with maps to draw on to indicate specific neighborhood needs and list goals; (2) large events seeking to develop priorities among the various needs and goals identified, accomplished in the Tinbridge Hill project with a keypad polling technology; and (3) sponsoring a Neighborhood Summit to present the ideas that had been developed, to confirm and/or calibrate the strategies.

Strategy for Implementation. It was clear in the Tinbridge Hill context, as it will be in every neighborhood plan, that a specific and achievable action plan is critical to keep momentum going and to increase the likelihood of recommended actions being achieved. The plan, and responsibility for implementing the plan, need to be owned by residents, and the group responsible for follow-up needs to be a resident group. Specifics are needed regarding who is responsible for monitoring implementation of the plan's recommendations, what resources need to be coordinated to achieve the objectives, what City support is expected, and how regular reporting can be arranged so that the City and the full community can be kept informed of and help to celebrate continued progress. In the case of Tinbridge Hill, a Plan Action Committee is being formed, with a specific charge, under the umbrella of the existing Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Council (a 501(c)(3) corporation with resident leadership). The Plan Action Committee will be made up of Neighborhood Council and Friends of Tinbridge Hill representatives.

Summary

During the early stages of this plan, it was unclear how or if the elements of Sustainable Lynchburg could be applied at a neighborhood scale. At the core of this effort was the frequent engagement of the Tinbridge Hill residents and partners in a meaningful dialogue about the neighborhood assets and needs required to become a sustainable neighborhood. The relationship of the neighborhood's priorities to the Sustainable Lynchburg elements is identified in both a summary at the end of each goal in Chapter 5, and a matrix that cross-references these assets and opportunities to the elements. As Tinbridge Hill focuses on its priorities of leadership, neighborhood character, safety, support for families and career development, these successes and new opportunities can be related back to the core elements that "promote a healthy and sustainable City with social, cultural, economic and environmental vitality, now and for future generations."



As the Tinbridge Hill plan has developed, so has the Sustainable Lynchburg initiative become the foundation for the City's Strategic Planning process. The original sustainability elements serve as pillars that support Council's vision for the City – "A great place to live, work and play." Following Council's adoption, of the Tinbridge Hill Neighborhood Plan, it will become part of the Comprehensive Plan 2013-2020. Going forward, the pillars of the City Council vision should serve as a framework for future neighborhood plans.

Every neighborhood is unique, with its own circumstances, its own history, and its own array of individuals and organizations to serve in leadership roles. The "Growing Tinbridge Hill" neighborhood plan has been a recognized success, and can serve as a model approach to draw from as future neighborhood initiatives are considered in the City.