



Bay Neighborhood Investment Plan 2023-2033

City of Springfield and the Bay Area Neighborhood Council, Residents, local Businesses, Organizations, and other Stakeholders

Goal *To enhance and inform the delivery of municipal services and the investment of municipal, state, federal and private funding, and other resources in the Bay neighborhood through collaborative planning and implementation between residents, including resident businesses and organizations, and other stakeholders and city departments.*



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ARPA funding language

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Neighborhood Description and Priorities

The Bay neighborhood is located about two miles east of downtown Springfield, along the State Street and Bay Street corridors in the northeastern corner of the Mason Square district. The neighborhood is predominantly residential, but it also has a high percentage of open space and recreation land compared to most other city neighborhoods. It is almost 0.9 square miles in area, making it one of the smaller neighborhoods in the city geographically, and it is home to 4,269 residents, or about 3% of the city's total population.

Neighborhood History

The Bay neighborhood is named for Bay Street, which passes through the northern portion of the neighborhood. This was the overland path that was used by 17th century Springfield colonists to travel to Boston and other points to the east, and it had likely been used by local indigenous people for many centuries prior to that.

The Bay Path took a somewhat winding route through Springfield, because it tended to follow the topography of the land. Over time, however, the present-day State Street was established as a more direct alternative. It became the preferred route, and the old Bay Path fell out of use.

The area that would become the Bay neighborhood remained largely undeveloped for many years, aside from scattered houses along State Street. Just to the west of the neighborhood, in what would later become the McKnight neighborhood, was a small African American community known as “Hayti.” Its residents included businessman and real estate investor Primus Mason, who later became the namesake of Mason Square. However, the Bay neighborhood did not begin to see widespread development until the late 19th century. By this point, Springfield was experiencing rapid population growth, and there was increased demand for new houses in the “City of Homes.” Electric trolley lines also made it easier for people to live further from the city center and commute to work, and the Bay neighborhood was served by a trolley line on State Street.



Figure 1: The Bay neighborhood in the 1910 city atlas. Boston Public Library, Norman B. Leventhal Map Center.



Figure 2: Businesses on State Street in the Bay neighborhood in the late 1930s. Springfield Preservation Trust.

The streets in the southwestern part of the Bay neighborhood were laid out in the late 19th century, and most of the houses in this area were built by the 1920s. Later in the 20th century, there was additional residential development in subdivisions further to the northeast, adjacent to what would become Blunt Park. Overall, the neighborhood remained primarily residential, although State Street emerged as a mix of houses and small local businesses.

Aside from this residential development, the Bay neighborhood also became the site of Oak Grove Cemetery. It was established in 1882, and it became the final resting place for many of the city’s prominent residents, including Primus Mason.

As the city continued to grow in the early 20th century, city leaders recognized a need for new parks in this part of Springfield. Among them was Colonel Stanhope E. Blunt, the former commanding officer of the Springfield Armory. He served as the city’s parks commissioner from 1914 to 1925, and during this time he worked to expand the park system, including doubling the size of Forest Park and Van Horn Park. In addition to this, he spearheaded efforts to establish a “Hill Park” in the Bay neighborhood, emphasizing the need for the city to acquire land while it was still available at affordable prices. Blunt died in 1926, and a year later the city formally named the Hill Park in his honor, as Blunt Park.

Today, both Oak Grove Cemetery and Blunt Park comprise a large portion of the land in Bay. The neighborhood is also home to Central High School, which is adjacent to Blunt Park in the northeastern corner of the neighborhood, and a portion of the American International College (AIC) campus, which is located in the southeastern part of the neighborhood. The main campus of AIC is on the south side of State Street in the Upper Hill neighborhood, but the college also a significant amount of land in Bay, including several buildings on the north side of State Street and athletic fields along Cortland Street.

Neighborhood Boundaries, Zoning, and Land Use

The Bay neighborhood boundaries are defined by State Street to the south, Roosevelt Avenue to the east, the CSX railroad tracks to the north, and Saint James Avenue and the former Highland Branch railroad right-of-way to the west.

Most of the Bay neighborhood is zoned for medium-density Residence B, which allows for single-family and two-family dwellings (Figure 5). The existing housing stock in these Residence B districts generally

Summary of Bay Zoning Districts	
District	Description
Residence A	Low density residential, primarily single-family detached
Residence B	Medium density residential, primarily single-family and two-family
Residence C	Single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings and multi-family dwellings
Commercial A	Small scale retail and service convenience type commercial establishments.
Business A	Main Street and pedestrian oriented shopping districts with residential allowed.
Business B	Highway-oriented automotive and service business activities.
Industrial A	Full range of industrial and business uses compatible with a major urban center.

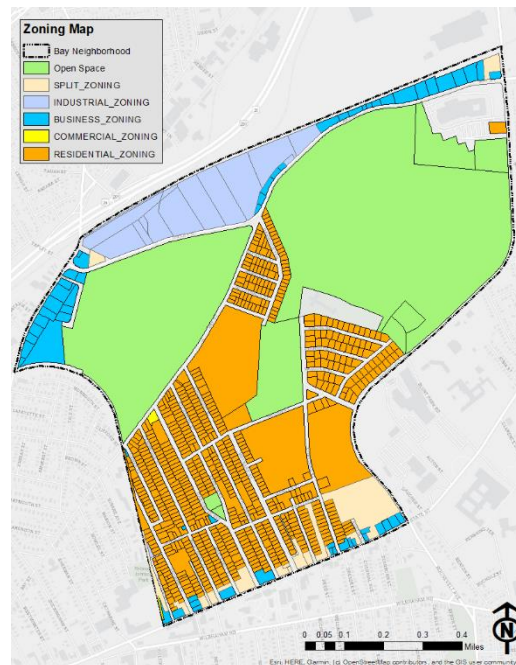


Figure 3: Zoning districts in Bay. See full-size map in Appendix A.



Figure 4: Residence A housing on Roosevelt Terrace



Figure 5: Residence B housing on Edgewood Street



Figure 6: Reed Village, a Residence C apartment complex on the south side of Bay Street



Figure 7: Neighborhood-oriented business development on Oak Grove Avenue



Figure 8: Business A zoning on State Street



Figure 9: Business B zoning on Bay Street

dates back to when the neighborhood was developed at the turn of the 20th century. Two subdivisions within the neighborhood are zoned for lower-density Residence A, in the vicinity of Oakwood Terrace and Roosevelt Terrace (Figure 4). These houses are generally newer, dating to the mid- to late-20th century. There are also several parcels of Residence C zoning, which allows for higher-density multi-family residences such as apartment complexes. The largest of these is Reed Village, a multi-building apartment complex that is operated by the Springfield Housing Authority (Figure 6).

The southern part of the neighborhood, along State Street, is zoned for Business A and Business B (Figure 8). The existing development here is generally auto oriented, including a number of surface parking lots on the north side of the street. This is an area for potential opportunity to focus on encouraging pedestrian-oriented business development with local businesses that will serve the needs of students at AIC as well as residents of the neighborhood.

There are several small parcels of business and commercial zoning within the residential core of the neighborhood (Figure 7), but otherwise the only non-residential zoning in Bay is along the northern edge of the neighborhood, along Saint James Avenue, Tapley Street, and Bay Street. This area is zoned for a mix of Business B and industrial use, and current uses include warehouses, auto repair shops, and light industry (Figure 9). In addition, this area is site of the Department of Public Works facility on Tapley Street, which also houses a variety of other city offices.

Overall, most of the land in Bay is zoned for residential use, but as discussed in the neighborhood history section much of this land is used for other purposes. This includes a portion of the AIC campus, Central High School, Oak Grove Cemetery, and Blunt Park.

Demographics

		Bay	Springfield	Pioneer Valley	Massachusetts
Children and youth	Babies born with low birth weight	17.2%	11.1%	9.1%	7.6%
	Child poverty	73.4%	36.2%	20.8%	12.2%
Education	Preschool enrollment	53.8%	60.1%	53.6%	58.0%
	Attainment of higher education	10.8%	19.0%	32.6%	44.5%
Health	Premature mortality (per 1,000)	6.1	4.0	3.3	2.7
Economic security	Median household income	\$29,327	\$41,571	\$61,569	\$84,385
	Income inequality (Gini index)	0.45	0.48	0.47	0.48
	Poverty	32.6%	19.9%	9.9%	6.6%
	Elderly poverty	50.8%	13.7%	10.1%	8.9%
	Unemployment	32.6%	10.5%	6.7%	5.7%
	Labor force participation	52.1%	57.6%	61.4%	67.2%
Housing	Housing cost burden	42.6%	45.4%	34.9%	34.5%
	Homeownership rates	32.8%	47.4%	63.2%	62.5%
Transportation	Low-carbon commuters	21.5%	17.6%	14.1%	22.4%
	Average commute time (minutes)	22.3	21.1	23.1	30.0

Much more information is available in the [Springfield Data Atlas](#)

As of the 2020 census, Bay had a population of 4,269, equivalent to about 3% of the citywide population. Of these residents, 37% identify as African American, 17% identify as white, and 46% identify as other races, including people of multiple races. The population is 53% Hispanic of any race. The age distribution of the population is 23% children under 18 years old, 70% people of working age, and 7% people of retirement age or older. Bay has one of the lowest proportions of seniors in Springfield and one of the highest working-age population.

Transportation

Major streets in the Bay neighborhood include State Street, which forms the southern edge of the neighborhood, and Bay Street, which passes through the northern part of it. On the east side of the neighborhood is Roosevelt Avenue, a busy four-lane crosstown road that passes north to south through the city. In the northwest corner of the neighborhood is Saint James Avenue and Tapley Street, which intersect near Interstate 291. These two streets are primarily commercial and industrial, and are largely isolated from the rest of the Bay neighborhood. This intersection is the subject of a current plan to replace a high-crash signalized intersection with a roundabout, which will also include safety improvements for bicyclists and pedestrians.

The Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA) services the region with public bus routes and paratransit services. The core of the Bay neighborhood is served by bus routes along Bay and State Streets, and the eastern edge of the neighborhood is also served by a bus route along Roosevelt Avenue. There are 27 individual bus stops in Bay, including two sheltered bus stops along State Street.

Most of the streets in the Bay neighborhood have sidewalks, but some of the main streets are lacking in crosswalks. For example, there are only two intersections with crosswalks along the 1.3-mile section of Roosevelt Avenue in the neighborhood. Similarly, there are only two crosswalks over the 1.5-miles of Bay Street in the neighborhood, including just one in the main residential area. Because both of these streets are served by public transportation, this can pose a challenge for residents who need to cross the street in order to access a bus stop.

The Bay neighborhood currently has limited bicycle infrastructure, but one existing proposal is the McKnight Community Trail, a multi-use trail that would be built along an abandoned railroad right-of-way on the border between the Bay and McKnight neighborhoods. It would start at the Rebecca Johnson School and have connections to the Bay neighborhood at Hayden Alley, Andrew Street, Bay Street, and Oak Grove Cemetery before curving west through McKnight and terminating at Armory Street. In the long term, the trail would also have the potential to be extended further south into other city neighborhoods, eventually connecting with the existing Redstone Rail Trail in East Longmeadow.

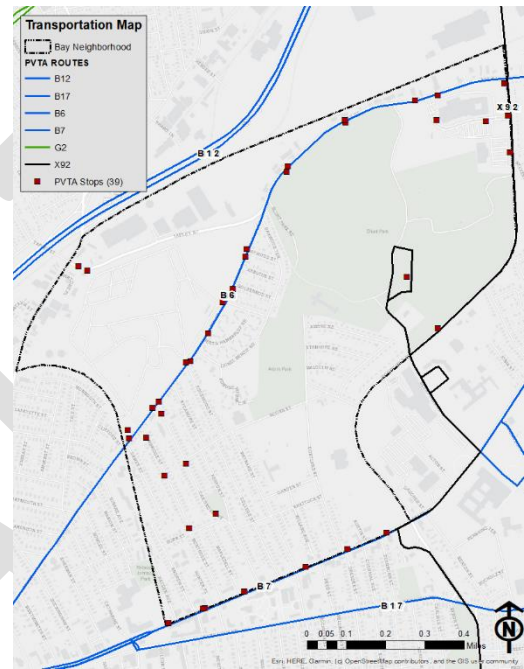


Figure 10: PVT A bus routes in Bay. See full-size map in Appendix A.

Housing and Income

The median household income in Bay is \$29,327, compared to the citywide median of \$41,571. Overall, 32.6% of Bay residents live in households with incomes below the federal poverty line, compared to the citywide rate of 19.9%. However, the poverty rates are much higher for more vulnerable age groups. Bay has the highest child poverty rates (73.4%), and the second highest elderly poverty rates (50.8%) of any neighborhood in Springfield. The homeownership rate is 32.8%, and there are an estimated 373 subsidized housing units in the neighborhood, representing about 24% of the total housing units in Bay.

Many Bay residents are considered to be burdened by housing costs, with 42.6% reporting that they pay more than 30% of their income towards either rent or homeownership. These housing costs include maintenance, which can be a considerable expense in older neighborhoods such as Bay, where most of the existing housing stock dates to the early 20th century. Such homes tend to require more upkeep than newer construction, and there are often added expenses related to health and safety hazards such as lead paint, asbestos, and outdated electrical systems.

Residents throughout the Mason Square area have indicated that housing is a high priority, in particular assistance for the maintenance of existing owner-occupied homes. There are currently a number of different housing programs and initiatives that are available to Springfield residents. However, because this has consistently been identified as an area of need, it may be helpful for the city to examine to what extent these programs are being utilized and which neighborhoods primarily benefit from them. Additionally, it may be helpful for the city to collaborate with neighborhood councils to develop strategies for raising awareness of these programs.



Figure 11: Homes on Aster Street

Among the existing programs is the Homeowner Emergency Repair Program, which provides funding for income-eligible owner-occupants for a single item emergency repair. Homeowners are eligible to apply if there is an immediate threat to the health and safety of the occupants, or to the structural integrity of the building. This can include emergency repairs to the roof, porch, electrical/mechanical systems, plumbing, and foundation, along with other urgent code-related issues. Applicants can be from any neighborhood in the city, and those who are selected for this program receive a 0% interest deferred-payment loan. This is forgiven over the course of five years, provided that the homeowner continues to reside at the property.

A similar program is the City of Springfield Exterior Home Repair Program, which is available to income-eligible homeowners in any city neighborhood. This program funds up to \$40,000 in exterior repairs, such as roofs, windows, porches, siding, and painting. As with the Emergency Repair Program, the city will provide recipients with a 0% interest deferred-payment loan that will be forgiven over five years.

A third program is the City of Springfield Healthy Homes Program, which provides funding for remediating health issues such as lead paint and asthma triggers. Eligibility is determined based on

income, and also based on census tract. All of the census tracts in Bay are designated as Qualified Census Tracts. As with the other two city programs, funding is provided in the form of a 0% interest deferred-payment loan that is forgiven after five years.

Other programs include repairs and replacement of home heating systems. The Heating Emergency Assistance Retrofit Tasks Weatherization Assistance Program (HEARTWAP) is coordinated by the Valley Opportunity Council (VOC) and the Office of Housing, and it provides emergency repairs and replacements of heating systems for income-eligible renters and homeowners in the city. VOC also provides heating assistance to income-eligible residents.

Most of these programs are only open to homeowners, but currently fewer than a third of Bay residents are homeowners. In an effort to expand homeownership rates citywide, there are several programs that are available to first-time homebuyers. Among these is the City of Springfield Down Payment Assistance Program. This is available to first-time homebuyers in Springfield who meet income eligibility and other program requirements, and it provides up to \$4,000 towards a down payment and closing costs. As with the city's other programs, homebuyers receive this as an interest-free loan, which is forgiven over the course of five years, provided that the house remains their primary residence. Another ongoing initiative is Buy Springfield Now, which is a collaboration between the city, nonprofits, and private sector partners. Participants in this program receive discounts from lenders, realtors, attorneys, and home inspectors as part of their homebuying process.

Aside from these city-managed programs, there are a number of community development corporations and community-based organizations that provide housing support and assistance in the Mason Square neighborhoods. These include [Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services](#), [Revitalize CDC](#), and [Way Finders](#).

In addition to the challenges of simply maintaining and rehabilitating the older homes in the Bay neighborhood, homeowners may also be challenged by the added cost of the need to transition away from fossil fuel-based energy sources. This is part of a broader effort to reduce Green House Gas emissions, as the city of Springfield and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are committed to net zero energy by 2050. The Massachusetts Clean Energy Center and the MA Department of Energy Resources, along with the federal government, recognize the importance of incentivizing homeowners to invest in energy-efficient upgrades and incorporate renewable energy sources to reduce carbon emissions. Collaboration among residents, local organizations, and city, state and federal resources will be important as the neighborhood implements comprehensive strategies that foster a greener, more resilient Bay community for generations to come.

[Parks and Open Space](#)

Although Bay is geographically small, it has the third-highest amount of open space out of any neighborhood in the city, with 186.73 acres. Blunt Park comprises the vast majority of this, and it features a variety of athletic fields (Figure 12), along with one of the city's largest undeveloped forested areas. This park is currently in the midst of rehabilitation work, including improvements to the athletic fields, tennis courts (Figure 13), trails, lighting, picnic tables, and the installation of a new splash pad.

Other open space and recreational facilities in the vicinity of Blunt Park include several playgrounds, a pool, a skating rink, and the athletic fields at Central High. In addition, Hennessey Park is located within

the core residential area of the neighborhood, in the triangular area between Kenyon Street and Oak Grove Avenue (Figure 15).



Figure 12: Athletic fields at Blunt Park



Figure 13: Tennis courts at Blunt Park, subject of an ongoing rehabilitation project.



Figure 14: Undeveloped woodlands in Blunt Park



Figure 15: Hennessey Park, in the central part of the Bay neighborhood

Based on the 2020 census, the Bay neighborhood is considered to be an environmental justice population, as defined by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA). The EEA defines an environmental justice population as a census block group that meets at least one of four criteria relating to median household income, minority population, and limited English proficiency. The EEA considers such groups to be most at risk of being unaware of or unable to participate in environmental decision-making, or to benefit from environmental resources. Of the two census block groups that are located entirely within the neighborhood, one meets the criteria based on both income and percentage of minority residents, and the other block group meets all of the criteria. Bay also has

poor health outcomes compared to other Springfield neighborhoods. Its premature death rate of 6.1 per 1,000 is substantially higher than any other part of the city, and such outcomes are often a result of past or ongoing environmental injustices.

Because the Bay neighborhood is an environmental justice population, it could benefit from federal programs through the new Justice40 Initiative, which seeks to support disadvantaged communities that have historically been marginalized and underserved. Under this initiative, environmental justice communities are eligible for federal funding to support investments in any of the following areas: climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical clean water and wastewater infrastructure. As this is a new initiative, it is important for both the Bay Area Neighborhood Council and the city to assess ways in which the neighborhood could benefit from such investments.

Economic Development Opportunities

As part of this neighborhood investment planning process, a number of potential economic development concerns, ideas, and opportunities in Bay emerged through resident surveys, community engagement events, meetings with stakeholders and city staff, and review of existing neighborhood plan recommendations. These ideas included potential economic development in and around the neighborhood. Such development would not only support existing businesses, but would also encourage further investment in the neighborhood by attracting new locally-owned businesses that would meet the needs of residents.

State Street between Reed Street and Colonial Avenue

Because State Street is the main commercial corridor through this part of the city, it provides the best opportunity to strengthen existing businesses while also encouraging additional growth. One particular area for potential economic development is on the south side of State Street, in the two blocks between Reed Street and Colonial Avenue (Figure 17). This site is located within the Upper Hill neighborhood, but because State Street forms the border between it and the Bay neighborhood to the north, it is in a position to serve residents of both neighborhoods. In addition, it is in close proximity to American International College, which is directly to the west of here, so the potential customer base here also includes students at the college.



Figure 16: Parks and open space in Bay, including the route of the proposed McKnight Community Trail. See full-size map in Appendix A.

The existing development on these two blocks includes a mix of different uses (Figure 18). At the corner of State and Reed Streets is a one-story commercial building. It was built around 1910, and it features five storefronts. It was actively used as a commercial property until 2016, when it was acquired by American International College and converted into space for its facilities and maintenance department. However, this use is not particularly conducive to creating a pedestrian-oriented business district along this corridor, so it would be beneficial to collaborate with the college in restoring this building to its original use and attracting quality local businesses that will meet the needs of residents as well as college students.



Figure 17: State Street between Reed Street and Colonial Avenue. Area of potential economic development outlined in yellow. Image source: MassGIS.

Directly to the east of this building is a gas station, which also includes a repair shop and a convenience store. Because of the car-centric use, combined with the setback from the street, this type of use is, like the adjacent maintenance facility, not ideal for promoting pedestrian-centered business development.

Further to the east, on the other side of Dresden Street, is a surface parking lot that may be a good candidate for appropriate infill development. Beyond this parking lot, the rest of the block is occupied by two adjacent one-story commercial buildings that were constructed in the 1920s. Collectively, these buildings have a total of six storefronts, all of which are currently occupied by commercial tenants. If this area was to be selected for redevelopment, it may be beneficial to collaborate with these property owners to rehabilitate storefront facades as needed, and also to ensure that future tenants are businesses that support the long-term goals for the neighborhood.



Figure 18: Facing east on State Street from near the corner of Reed Street.

Neighborhood Investment Process

Creating a strong link between the community and the everyday work done by the city's many departments is essential for successful neighborhood planning. This plan must be an integral part of the strategic management, budgeting, and daily operations of city departments interacting with the Bay neighborhood. The city Office of Planning and Economic Development (OPED) maintains outreach to other departments while overseeing neighborhood investment planning and implementation. As neighborhood investment plans are completed, OPED staff ensure discussion of recommendations with

relevant departments as they may be incorporated into their work plans. Ongoing communication and collaboration between Neighborhood Services, the Bay Area Neighborhood Council, and all residents in the neighborhood is necessary.

In 2022, as the city and the nation emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic, the city of Springfield allocated \$746,340 of American Rescue Plan Act funds to facilitate development of twelve Neighborhood Investment Plans in neighborhoods where residents experienced disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 infection, hospitalization, and death. The city engaged the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to both update the city's Neighborhood Data Atlas and facilitate development of these 12 plans. PVPC engaged Way Finders Community Building and Engagement via a competitive procurement process to lead engagement focusing on residents, local businesses, and community-based organizations.

Community Engagement

The community engagement process began by focusing on project kick-off and soliciting residents' thoughts on key issues for city investment, along with lifting up concerns, ideas, and issues. Phase Two shifted focus to prioritizing draft solutions identified out of Phase One input. In total, PVPC and Way Finders hosted five in-person meetings and five Zoom meetings, tabled at two community events, and administered three sets of on-line surveys, engaging an estimated 150 people in meetings with an additional 263 people completing surveys, for a total of approximately 400 people.

Phase One

The first phase of resident engagement began with two in-person Community Kick-Off Meetings in February 2023, the first at the Mason Square Library and the second at the Bay Area Neighborhood Council meeting space. The Community Kick-off events introduced residents to the Springfield Neighborhood Investment Plan project and engaged them to identify issues, concerns, and ideas for investment in their neighborhood.

On March 9, residents participated in an on-line Wiki-mapping workshop to share locations of issues and potential solutions and see their contributions mapped in real-time. Residents could also interface directly with the Wiki-mapping portal to share their thoughts independently.

In April, an in-person Community Mapping Workshop was held which further engaged residents to identify issues, concerns and ideas for investment in their neighborhood.

In May 2023, PVPC and Way Finders worked with the local organization Stone Soul to run an in-person Community Conversation and Networking Event which specifically focused on small business owners and community-based organization engagement.

Between March 16 and June 12, an online survey, which was offered in both Spanish and English, was available for residents to complete. In total, this survey had 160 respondents. In early June 2023, PVPC and Way Finders tabled at the Springfield Neighborhood Housing Services Annual Block Party at which many people completed the survey. Understanding that some residents did not have 15 minutes to complete the full survey, PVPC and Way Finders developed a micro-survey that engaged 103 residents to indicate priority resident recommendations.

Phase Two

The prioritization process for actions to include in the Mason Square and Maple High/Six Corners plans began in June 2023 with neighborhood meetings and another round of surveys. During this phase, we

hosted a series of four community meetings on zoom for residents to both prioritize top recommendations and build their capacity by learning from city department heads (or delegates) about how the city works and prioritizes action in their neighborhoods and throughout the city.

After each meeting the polls from these meetings were turned into on-line surveys and emailed to Neighborhood Councils and CBOs to engage more residents and community leaders in completing the prioritization process.

June 21 - Housing and Energy with Gerry McCafferty, Housing Director

June 28 - Parks and Recreation/Open Spaces with Pat Sullivan, Director of Parks, Recreation & Building Management

July 12 - Arts & Culture/Economic Development/Food Access with Tim Sheehan, Chief Development Officer

July 19 - Transportation with Chris Cignoli, DPW Director and Sandra Sheehan, PVTA Administrator

PVPC posted recordings of Zoom meetings and presentation slides to the Springfield Neighborhood Investment Plan webpage for residents who missed the meetings.

In late June, PVPC tabled at a Bay Area Neighborhood Council community event as an opportunity for residents to fill out polls about the topics at two of these neighborhood planning meetings.

Goals and Strategies

The Springfield Neighborhood Investment Planning process is built upon years of planning efforts across the city. Over the past decade, city-wide planning efforts have engaged residents and stakeholders in planning for a more resilient and equitable future, often in direct response to crises such as the 2011 tornado and COVID-19 global pandemic. Within these many plans, goals for neighborhood-specific projects and programs have been integrated with broader city goals.

Goal 1: Improve transparency, trust, and communication between the city and the Bay neighborhood.

One of the keys to fostering a strong neighborhood is to ensure that there is active and ongoing communication and collaboration between the neighborhood residents, the Neighborhood Council, and the city government. As such, it is vital to ensure that residents feel empowered to bring concerns and ideas to their local government, and also to participate in the decision-making process.

Strategies:

- City, Neighborhood Council, and residents collaborate to design, create, and implement an equitable and inclusive neighborhood planning process in Bay, ensuring consistency with city's values of climate resilience and sustainability.
- City communicates all aspects of the Targeted Neighborhood Investment Plan update process and implementation by posting all materials on the city website-or linked to it-and providing paper copies at City Hall, Neighborhood Council offices and other locations as determined by residents and NC representatives, and to people who request them, including calendar of meetings scheduled, plan template, access to the Data Atlas and expanded GIS maps website,

zoning regulations, related city plans, draft products, deliverables, notes from meetings and any other draft and final work products.

- Build the capacity of residents and the city staff to understand how each other ‘works’ and the forces limiting, constraining, and facilitating each group’s ability to act.

Goal 2: Identify, prioritize, and implement investments in the Bay neighborhood.

In creating this neighborhood plan, the goal is to not only involve residents in the process of identifying and prioritizing needs in the neighborhood, but also to ensure ongoing collaboration as the city works to implement this plan over the next ten years.

Strategies:

- City, Neighborhood Council, and residents identify long-term (8+ years), short-term (6 months to 3 years), and mid-term (4 to 8 years) priority projects for neighborhood stabilization, equity, sustainability, and resiliency.
- City and Neighborhood Council collaborates to conduct work on a neighborhood level that is reflective of larger city-wide planning practices, such as ReBuild Springfield, the Urban Renewal Plan, the Climate Action and Resilience Plan (CARP), the Complete Streets Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, the Economic Development Plan, the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the Hazard Mitigation Plan, and any other relevant plans.

Goal 3: Maintain the quality of the neighborhood’s housing stock.

On the Spring 2023 resident survey conducted as part of this neighborhood planning process, Mason Square-area residents overwhelmingly chose housing as a top priority out of seven major categories. In general, respondents tended to prefer efforts to support maintaining and rehabilitating existing homes, rather than construction of new homes.

Strategies:

- City and collaborators expand funding and/or programs to provide financial assistance for maintaining, rehabilitating, and renovating houses in the Bay neighborhood.
- Neighborhood Council identifies and prioritizes vacant and/or deteriorated properties for rehabilitation.
- City and Neighborhood Council collaborate to create a process for reporting and resolving code violations.
- City and Neighborhood Council collaborate to expand opportunities for first-time homebuyers in the Bay neighborhood.

Goal 4: Expand opportunities to walk, bike, and take public transportation.

The Bay neighborhood is well served by public transportation on the main roads, but it is important to ensure that residents can safely access these bus stops. On the resident survey, Mason Square respondents placed a high priority on both the walkability of the district, and also on improving the experience of taking the bus, including installing new shelters.

Strategies:

- Neighborhood Council works with city to identify and prioritize locations for new crosswalks and/or pedestrian crossing signals, especially at major intersections along Wilbraham Road.

- Neighborhood Council works with city to identify and prioritize sidewalks that are in need of replacement.
- Neighborhood Council works with PVRTA to prioritize locations for new bus shelters.

Goal 5: Build community and pride in neighborhood

On the spring 2023 survey, residents indicated a strong interest in more community celebrations such as festivals and block parties. Given the central location of Hennessey Park within the core of the residential part of the neighborhood, this would be an ideal setting for such events in Bay. One way to work toward achieving this goal would be to increase the capacity of the Bay Area Neighborhood Council, in order to plan and organize more of these types of events.

Strategies:

- Neighborhood Council develops strategies to increase membership of the council, recruit and train new leaders, and develop and implement resident engagement strategies.
- Neighborhood Council and residents collaborate to increase community activities, celebrations, and other events.

Goal 6: Strengthen economy of neighborhood

On the resident survey, Mason Square-area respondents indicated a preference for concentrated business development at Ben Swan Way, which is located just outside of the neighborhood boundaries at Mason Square. On another question regarding food access, residents chose to prioritize a full-line grocery store. Out of five food-related options, 43% of respondents chose this as their top priority.

Strategies:

- Neighborhood Council and city collaborate to develop strategies for supporting existing local businesses and encouraging other businesses to invest in Bay.
- Neighborhood Council and city examine existing zoning in Bay and identify areas where rezoning could help support appropriate business/commercial use, in particular along the State Street corridor.
- Neighborhood Council and city collaborate to bring a full-line grocery store to the Mason Square neighborhood.
- Neighborhood Council and American International College partner to encourage local business development that will meet the needs of students as well as residents.

Recommendations and Prioritization

Recommendations and priorities will be determined based on feedback from Neighborhood Council

Short-Term Projects (6 months–4 years)

Recommendations

Mid-Term Projects (4–8 years)

Recommendations

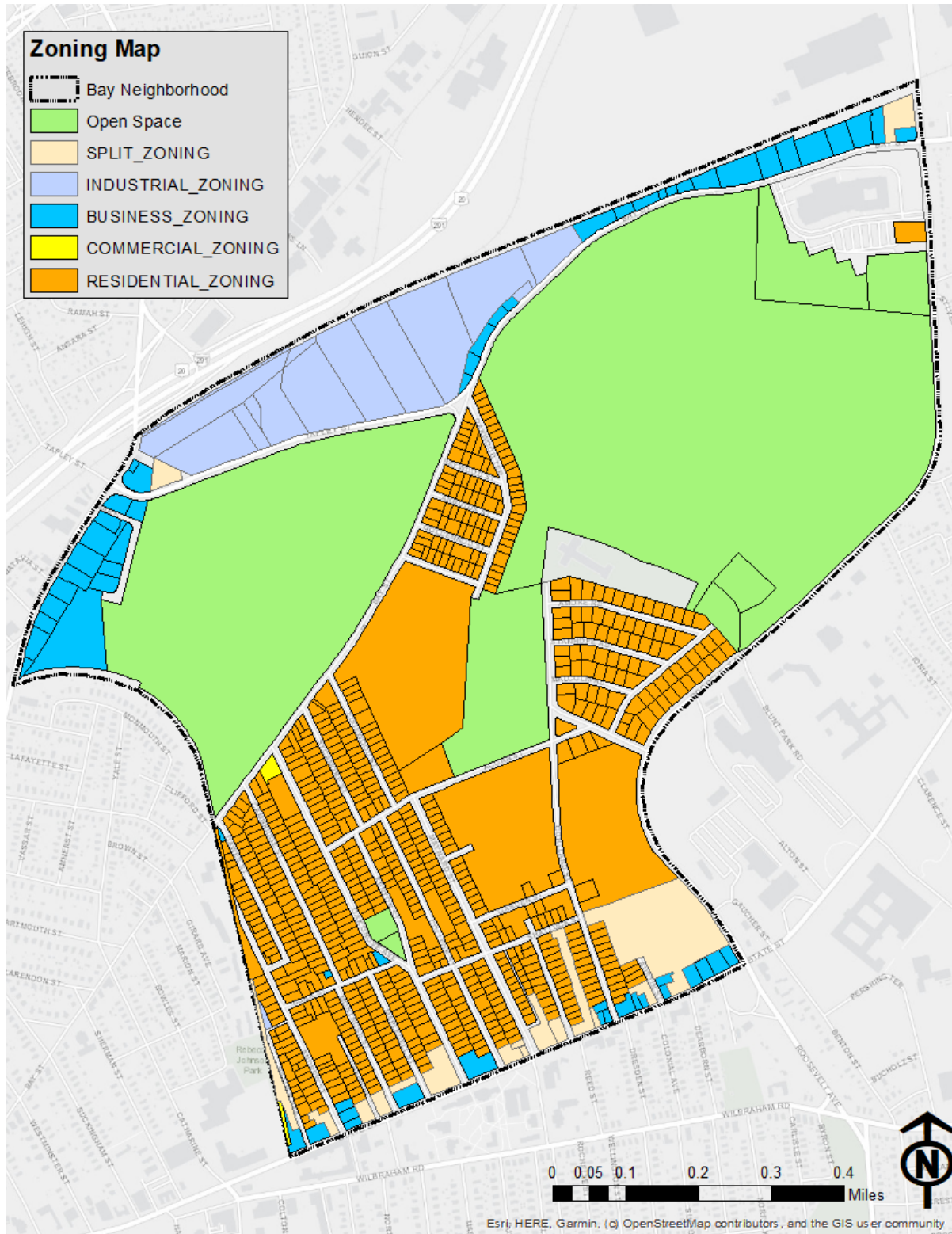
Long-Term Projects (8+ years)

Recommendations

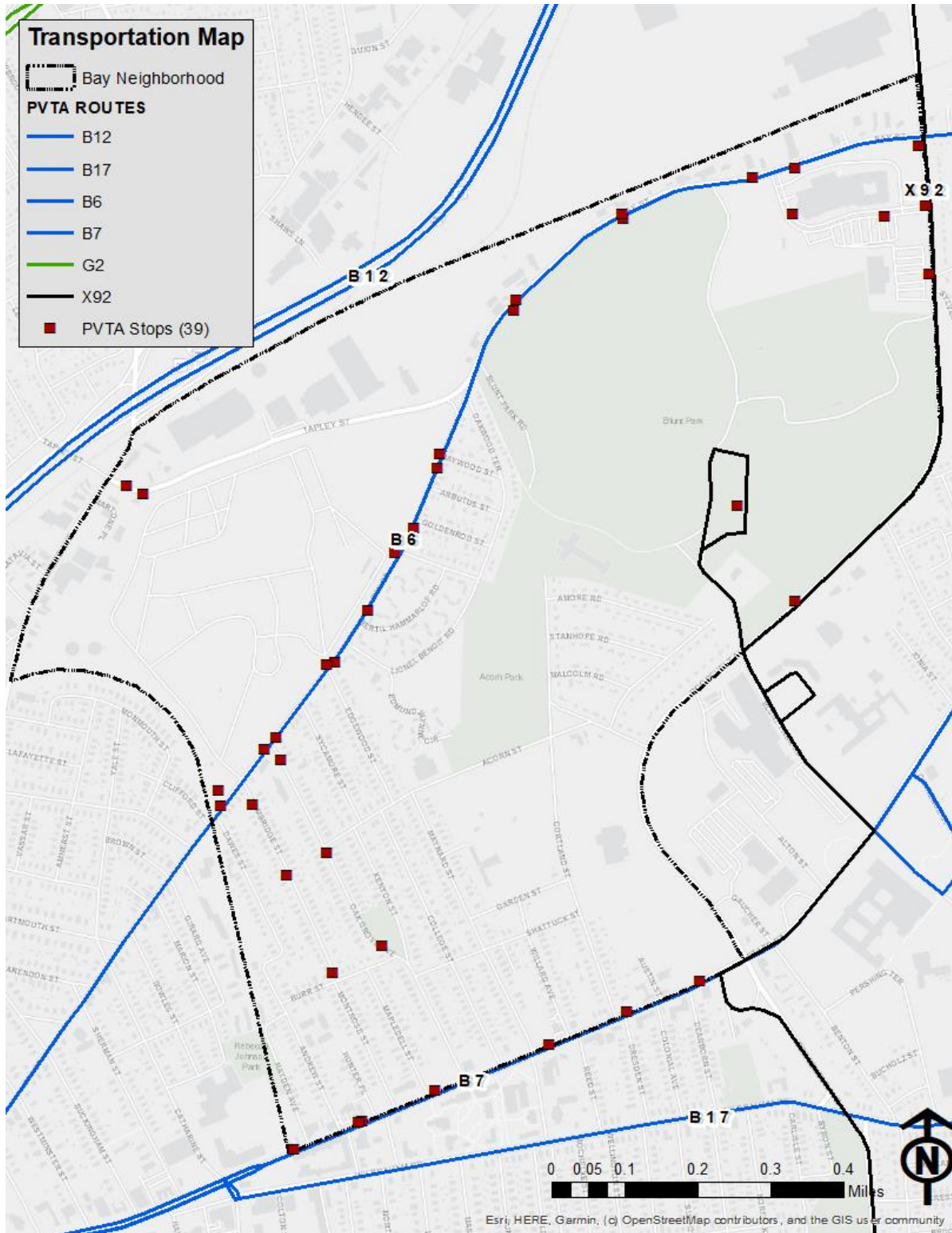
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Appendix A: Maps

Bay Neighborhood Zoning Map



PVTA Bus Stops and Routes in Bay



Parks and Open Space in Bay



Appendix B: Summaries of existing city plans

City-wide Planning Efforts

Prior to the Neighborhood Investment Planning process, the City of Springfield has included neighborhood-level planning objectives as a part of several city-wide plans, projects, and programs. Neighborhood-specific goals, recommendations, and strategies are highlighted in the “Summary of Existing Conditions” section of this report.

Rebuild Springfield (2012)

- The Rebuild Springfield initiative was created in response to the June 1, 2011 tornado that struck the City of Springfield and produced a four-part comprehensive planning response to the natural disaster. The Rebuild Springfield plan includes a city-wide overview and three district plans for neighborhoods directly impacted by the tornado. The Citywide planning process is organized according to the six Nexus Domains of a healthy and vibrant community. These domains include the physical, cultural, social, organizational, educational, and economic components of a community while listing twenty-one total recommendations. More neighborhood-specific recommendations and strategies are outlined in the district plans: District One (Metro Center and South End), District Two (Maple High-Six Corners, Upper Hill, Old Hill, and Forest Park), and District Three (Sixteen Acres and East Forest Park).

Local Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023)

- The City of Springfield’s latest hazard mitigation plan presents a thorough summary of community features and risks posed by natural hazards. The planning document identifies and prioritizes forty-four total mitigation actions for the City to implement. While many of the included strategies are city-wide in scope, several features are identified as priorities within specific neighborhoods.

Strong, Healthy, and Just: Climate Action and Resilience Plan (2017)

- Springfield’s first climate action and resilience plan in name, “Strong, Healthy, and Just: Climate Action and Resilience Plan” (SHJ) was developed in 2017 to provide a path for the City of Springfield to reduce overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and to enhance urban resilience. The SHJ plan builds upon over 15 years of climate action by the City and first recommends the City to conduct an analysis of the progress that had been made on previous plans and their climate-related strategies. A second priority recommendation presented is for the City to better communicate the ongoing and planned climate action and resilience work, especially in neighborhoods with high concentrations of chronically stressed residents. Additionally, the plan expands on ten recommended Action Categories with goals and strategies to reduce GHG emissions and enhance resilience.

Springfield Complete Streets Prioritization Plan – 2020 Update

- Expanding on the 2017 Springfield Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, the latest update provides an examination of more recent data and a list of projects developed through various engagement efforts. The updated plan identifies previous priority projects that have been completed both city-wide and within individual neighborhoods.

Local Rapid Recovery Plan (2021)

- Springfield’s Local Rapid Recovery Plan was the result of the Commonwealth’s Rapid Recovery Plan (RRP) Program intended to provide every municipality in Massachusetts the opportunity to develop actionable, project-based recovery plans tailored to the unique economic challenges and COVID-19 related impacts to downtowns, town centers, and commercial areas. The LRRP focuses on Springfield’s Main Street Convention Center District (MSCC) in the Metro Center

neighborhood. Through the LRRP process, fifteen projects were identified as priority opportunities for investing the city's initial American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

[Open Space and Recreation Plan \(2022\)](#)

- The Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) developed in 2022 outlines a comprehensive park and conservation land improvement program and establishes a framework for guiding city expenditures through Fiscal Year 2027. The plan establishes six broad goals that were developed through input from each City department involved in managing open space.

[Safety Action Plan \(2022\)](#)

- Collaborating with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, the City created the Safety Action Plan to provide information and direction on strategies and treatments most likely to improve roadway safety performance within the city. The plan addresses citywide crash patterns and trends and systemic treatments that can be used to address those trends. The content of the plan establishes a vision and goals specific to roadway safety performance and establishes a basis for informing roadway safety performance improvements over the next three to five years. Strategies for addressing roadway safety improvements are separated into "engineering" and "non-engineering" countermeasures. Specific countermeasure locations are identified for intersections, signalized and unsignalized, along with corridors throughout the city.

[Capital Improvement Plan, FY 2024-2028 \(2023\)](#)

- The City of Springfield's annual update of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) acts as a roadmap for the acquisition, renovation, or construction of new or existing facilities and infrastructure. As part of the City of Springfield's continuing efforts to develop robust long-term strategic planning initiatives, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Fiscal Years 2024-2028 lists all capital improvement needs throughout the City, and the estimated cost associated with those projects. The estimated cost for all 477 projects totals \$1.3 billion, with the highest priority projects totaling \$182 million. These 18 "Grade A" projects include investments in public safety, upgrades to schools and municipal buildings, road resurfacing, city-wide systemic safety interventions and numerous projects aimed at driving economic development, while improving the safety, mobility, and the quality of life of the residents of Springfield.