



A PUBLICATION OF THE PLANNING DIVISION, CITY OF COLUMBUS, OHIO

South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan

Strategies for healthy neighborhoods and quality growth

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of the Planning Area

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South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan



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The following individuals generously contributed knowledge and time to the South Alum Creek planning committee. The Planning Division extends its sincere gratitude to each of them for the value they added through their participation.

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From the Mayor

Dear Friends,

As we work to build safer, stronger neighborhoods right here in America's 21st Century City, I am committed to working with residents of our South Side to ensure the community's successful growth and vitality. Many parts of Columbus' South Side are today experiencing significant new investment from the City and from individual homeowners, while other areas are still in need for development. It is my goal to help plan for the future in partnership with local residents and businesses.



In an effort to better guide these future development activities, the South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan is being created to serve as a guide for the way future investments and improvements are implemented. This plan will give residents, developers and civic leaders a realistic and viable tool to get results and build the neighborhood for the future.

The city of Columbus is proud of the partnership we've received from area leaders and residents from south Columbus. It takes pioneers and visionaries to create a practical plan, that identifies a community's assets and the right kind of capital improvements to increase the area's quality of life.

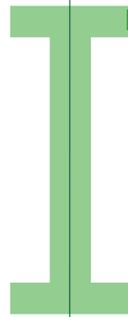
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michael B. Coleman". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Michael B. Coleman

Mayor

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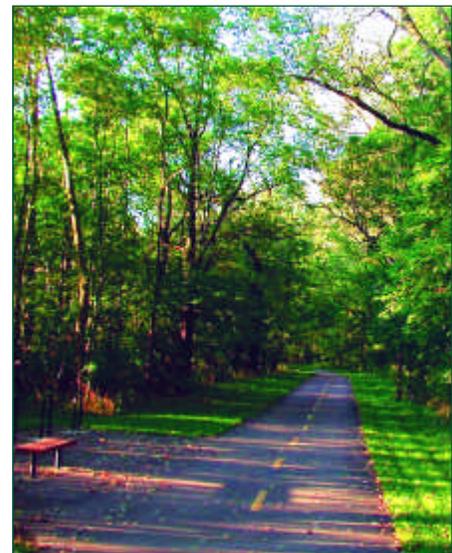
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Three Creeks Park

Purpose of the Plan

The South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan was developed to establish long-range policies for growth and redevelopment. In the coming months and years, it will be used by area residents, south side civic associations, developers, and city officials to aid in decision-making. The Plan's recommendations will help to guide private

investment, build strong neighborhoods, preserve the community's assets, and identify capital improvement priorities. The plan will also assist the Columbus Development Commission and City Council in regulating land use, as applications for variances and zoning changes are received and reviewed.

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

- ◀ The Columbus Comprehensive Plan, prepared by the City of Columbus
- ◀ The Columbus Thoroughfare Plan, prepared by the City of Columbus Transportation Division
- ◀ The Alum Creek Drive Corridor Study, prepared by the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
- ◀ Lower Alum Creek Watershed Action Plan, prepared by the Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries



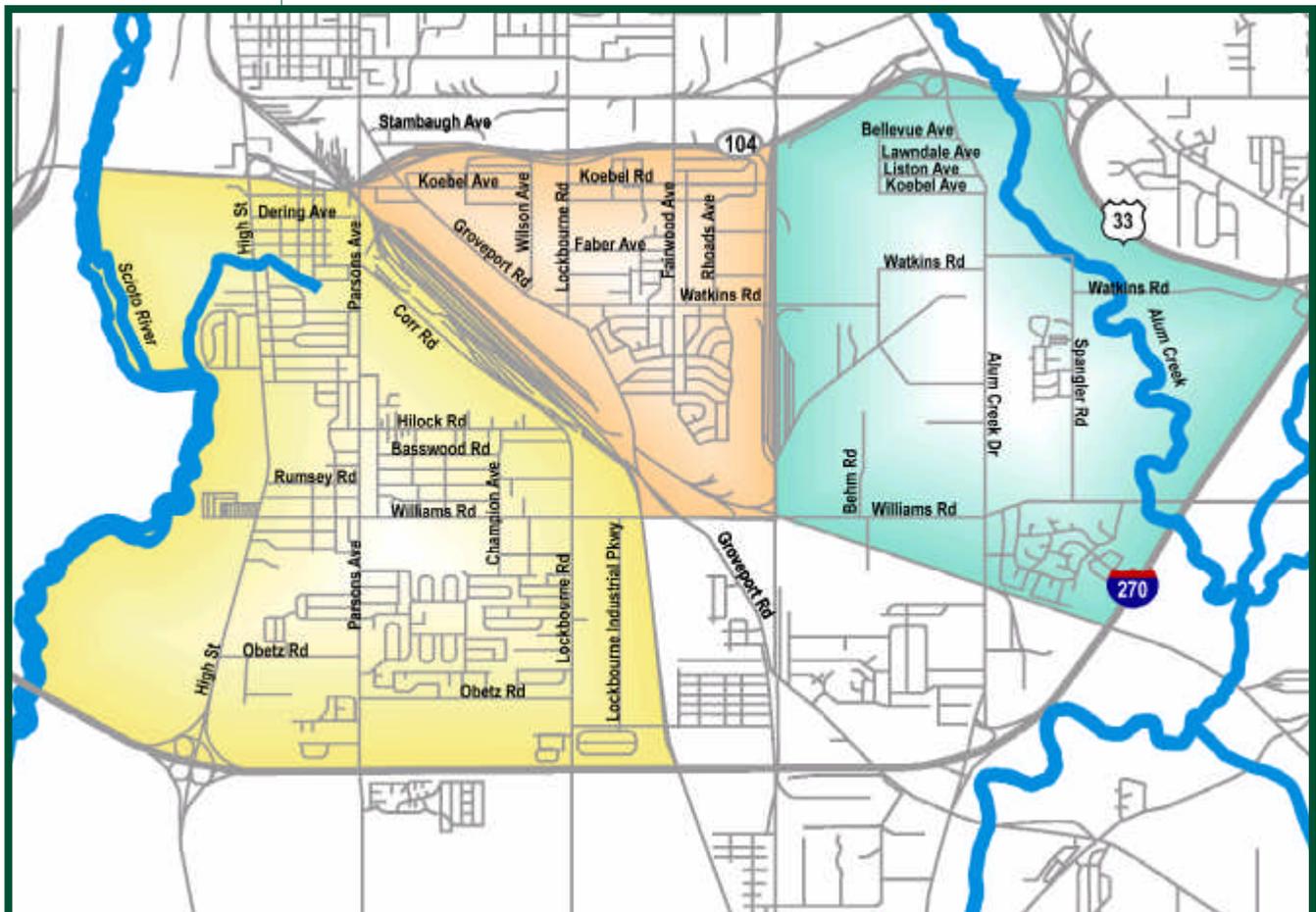
Development of Alum Creek Village began in 2004.

Scope of the Plan

The South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan is the second in a series of three south side plans that, collectively, will cover the area generally bounded by State Route 104 to the north, U.S. 33 to the east, Interstate 270 to the south, and the Scioto River to the west. The planning process for the first initiative, the TriSouth Neighborhood Plan, commenced in August of 2002. The plan was

completed the following May and adopted by Columbus City Council four months later, in September of 2003.

This plan, the South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan, was adopted in November of 2004. The planning process for the third plan will soon begin and most likely conclude in 2006.



- 1. TriSouth Neighborhood Plan
- 2. South Alum Creek Neighborhood Plan
- 3. Far South Side Plan (2006)

Planning Process

TimeLine		
<p>SEPTEMBER 2003</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Established a working committee consisting of area business representatives, property owners, civic association members, city staff, and community leaders. ◀ Defined the planning area boundaries and set broad goals for the process. 	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Focused discussions on land use issues. Analyzed current development patterns and identified redevelopment priorities. ◀ Reviewed the current plans for improvements to Alum Creek Drive. 	<p>JANUARY 2004</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Discussed issues pertaining to streets and sidewalks, stormwater drainage, and traffic circulation. Developed a prioritized list of recommended infrastructure improvements. ◀ Generated a map of planned and proposed public improvements.
<p>OCTOBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Gathered background information and generated maps of the planning area. ◀ Discussed issues of mutual concern. Identified community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. 	<p>DECEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Concluded discussion of land use issues. Developed growth policies for the planning area and a recommended land use plan. ◀ Generated preliminary recommendations for development standards. 	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Discussed strategies to increase communication between neighborhood residents and area businesses. Reviewed the steps necessary to establish a community advisory panel (CAP).

The planning process began on September 17, 2003. A working committee comprised of area residents, community leaders, city staff, and local business representatives convened at the Marion-Franklin Community Center to set broad goals for the process, define the planning area boundaries, and discuss issues of mutual interest. During the subsequent fall and winter months, the committee explored a wide variety

of community concerns and began to formalize a series of recommendations. In March and April of 2004, the Planning Division compiled the committee's work into a draft plan document. The committee convened again in May to review the draft, make revisions, and select a date for presentation to the public. Copies were then distributed internally to city staff for review and comment. The final draft, approved by the

<p>MARCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Deliberated the need for a south side area commission. Discussed possible boundaries and reviewed the procedural requirements. ◀ Reviewed the long-term plans for Three Creeks Park. <p>APRIL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Compiled the committee's work into a draft document. Prepared the plan text, graphics, and photos. 	<p>MAY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Convened the working committee to review and revise the draft plan. ◀ Distributed the document to city departments and other key stakeholders for comment. 	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Hosted a public open house to obtain feedback from neighborhood residents and area business representatives. ◀ Presented the plan to the Alum Crest Acres Civic Association and the Council of South Side Organizations. ◀ Submitted the plan to the Development Commission for review and approval. <p>NOVEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Adopted by City Council on November 8, 2004.

working committee, was presented to area residents, neighborhood groups, and the Council of South Side Organizations in September. The plan was subsequently forwarded to the Development Commission for review and in November it was adopted by City Council.

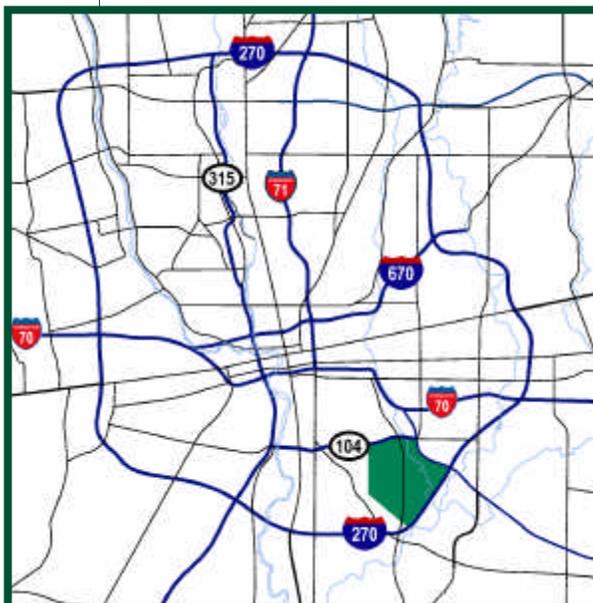
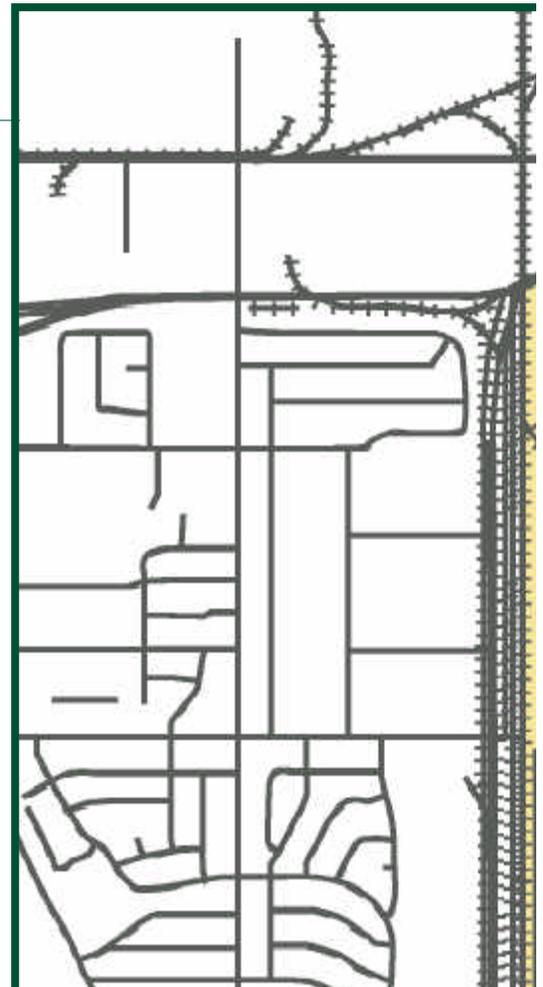
*Photo on the Right:
Alum Crest Park on Cassady Avenue.*



The South Alum Creek Planning Area

Located approximately 3.5 miles southeast of downtown Columbus, the South Alum Creek planning area is bounded by State Road 104 to the north, U.S. 33 and Interstate 270 to the east, the CSX railroad tracks south of Williams Road to the south, and the Norfolk and Southern railroad tracks east of Fairwood Avenue to the west. Primary thoroughfares within the planning area include Alum Creek Drive, Williams Road, Watkins Road, Spangler Road, and Performance Drive.

Roughly half of the planning area has been developed with industrial and manufacturing uses. The area also contains three large neighborhoods (Alum Crest Acres, Madison Mills, Williams Creek) and Three Creeks Park (the city's largest metro park), which accounts for almost one-third of the planning area's 2700 acres.

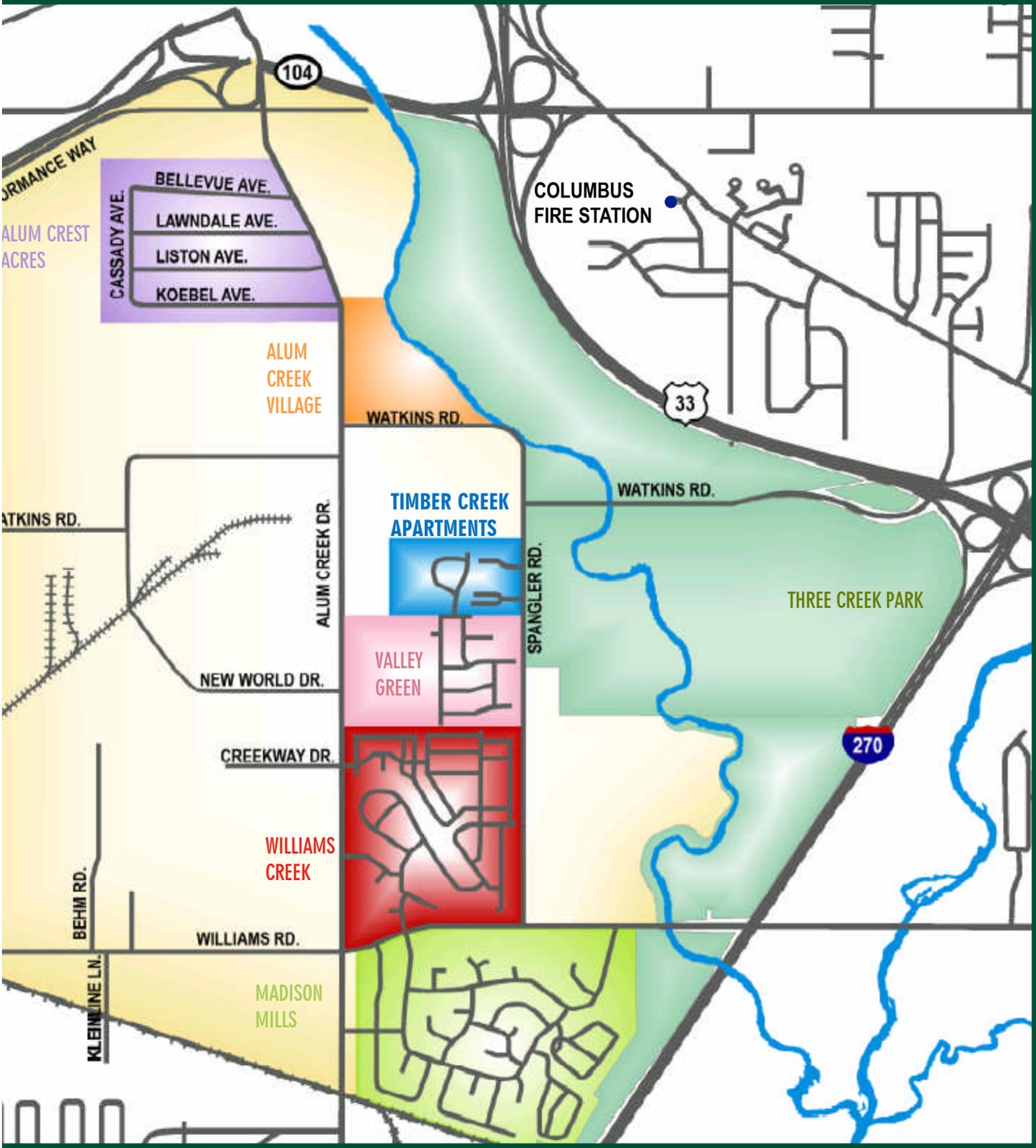


QUICK FACTS

Police Precinct: 13

Cruiser Districts:
135 West of Alum Creek Drive
134 East of Alum Creek Drive

Nearest Fire Station:
Columbus Fire Station 4
3030 Winchester Pike



Current Conditions

As identified by the members of the South Alum Creek Planning Committee

STRENGTHS

- ◀ Three Creeks Park is a significant asset and currently underutilized
- ◀ Residential neighborhoods are generally stable and in good condition
- ◀ Churches and civic organizations are active in the community
- ◀ Area employers have retained jobs and are supporting the city's tax base
- ◀ In most area neighborhoods, there is a relatively low level of crime
- ◀ There is a supply of vacant land with development potential
- ◀ Close proximity to downtown Columbus, Eastland Mall, Great Southern Shopping Center
- ◀ Convenient access to Interstate 270 and State Road 104
- ◀ The Rickenbacker Airport supports area industries and is attracting business growth
- ◀ The area is significant from both an environmental and historical perspective
- ◀ Rural character of the Spangler Road corridor is appealing

OPPORTUNITIES

- ◀ Many of the vacant properties are suitable for redevelopment. Uses could include:
 - Retail Commercial / Restaurants*
 - Residential*
 - Grocery Store*
 - Warehouse / Freight*
 - Industrial*
 - Agriculture*
- ◀ New development can "raise the bar" in buffering and landscaping
- ◀ Consolidated Freight property could be redeveloped in a way that is appropriate
- ◀ Growth in area businesses would provide new job opportunities
- ◀ A community garden could provide residents with opportunities to interact with each other
- ◀ Encourage residents to protect the Alum Creek watershed through educational programs and volunteer opportunities.

RECENT TRENDS

Good

- ◀ More people are using and enjoying Three Creeks Park
- ◀ Residents are becoming more involved in community issues
- ◀ Vacant land is attracting interest from developers
- ◀ Local businesses are engaging in dialogue with residents
- ◀ Business growth at Rickenbacker is enhancing the area's image

Bad

- ◀ Residential development densities are increasing
- ◀ Landscaping / buffering in new developments is inadequate
- ◀ Traffic volumes are increasing (causing congestion at intersections)
- ◀ Criminal activity is occurring at Alum Creek Drive and Williams Road
- ◀ Property values are still depressed relative to other areas

WEAKNESSES

- ◀ Insufficient separation of industrial/manufacturing and residential uses
- ◀ Insufficient mix of land uses (mostly industrial/manufacturing and residential)
- ◀ Inadequate and inconsistent development standards
- ◀ Some zoning districts are not consistent with desired land uses
- ◀ High-density residential development along Spangler Road is inappropriate
- ◀ Best development practices are not being utilized during construction
- ◀ Information about proposed development projects is difficult to obtain
- ◀ Neighborhoods do not have adequate access to Three Creeks Park
- ◀ Alum Creek is not sufficiently buffered from adjacent development
- ◀ Civic associations function independently and lack influence
- ◀ Infrastructure improvements are not keeping pace with new development
- ◀ Properties along Spangler / Watkins do not have access to water or sewer lines
- ◀ Large impervious surfaces (buildings, parking lots) contribute to storm water runoff
- ◀ Performance Parkway, Spangler Road and Watkins Road are prone to flooding
- ◀ The traffic volume along Alum Creek Drive is continuing to increase
- ◀ Spangler Road is used as a shortcut by drivers who want to avoid Alum Creek Drive
- ◀ Drivers are ignoring the speed limit on Spangler Road
- ◀ No access to public transportation (COTA) south of 104
- ◀ There are no sidewalks along Alum Creek Drive, Williams Road and Spangler Road
- ◀ Pedestrians have no means to safely cross Alum Creek Drive
- ◀ Heavy trucks travel the residential portion of Watkins Road
- ◀ Shared driveways along Williams Rd. / Alum Creek Drive are creating access problems
- ◀ Vacant lots and the local roadsides are strewn with litter
- ◀ Codes are not being enforced with diligence or consistency

THREATS

- ◀ New multi-family developments limit opportunities for home ownership
- ◀ Inadequate development standards will perpetuate land use conflicts
- ◀ Poor land use planning and insufficient infrastructure may discourage business growth
- ◀ Development may lead to increased runoff and pollution (and threaten Alum Creek)
- ◀ Piecemeal approach to storm water management will not solve the flooding problems
- ◀ Growth in traffic volume may outpace infrastructure, causing accidents/congestion
- ◀ Local school capacity may be insufficient to accommodate increased population

South Alum Creek

Current Zoning Classifications

LEGEND

- Railroads 
- Road 
- Water 

ZONING CATEGORIES

Single-Family Residential

- SR 
- RRR 
- R2F 
- R2 
- R1 
- R 
- PUD8 
- PUD6 
- LR2F 
- LR 

Manufacturing

- M2 
- M1 
- M 
- LM2 
- LM1 
- LM 

Commercial

- CPD 
- C4 
- C3 
- C2 
- LC2 

Multi-family Residential

- LARLD 
- LAR12 
- ARLD 
- AR12 

Demographic Information

from the 2000 Census

POPULATION STATISTICS

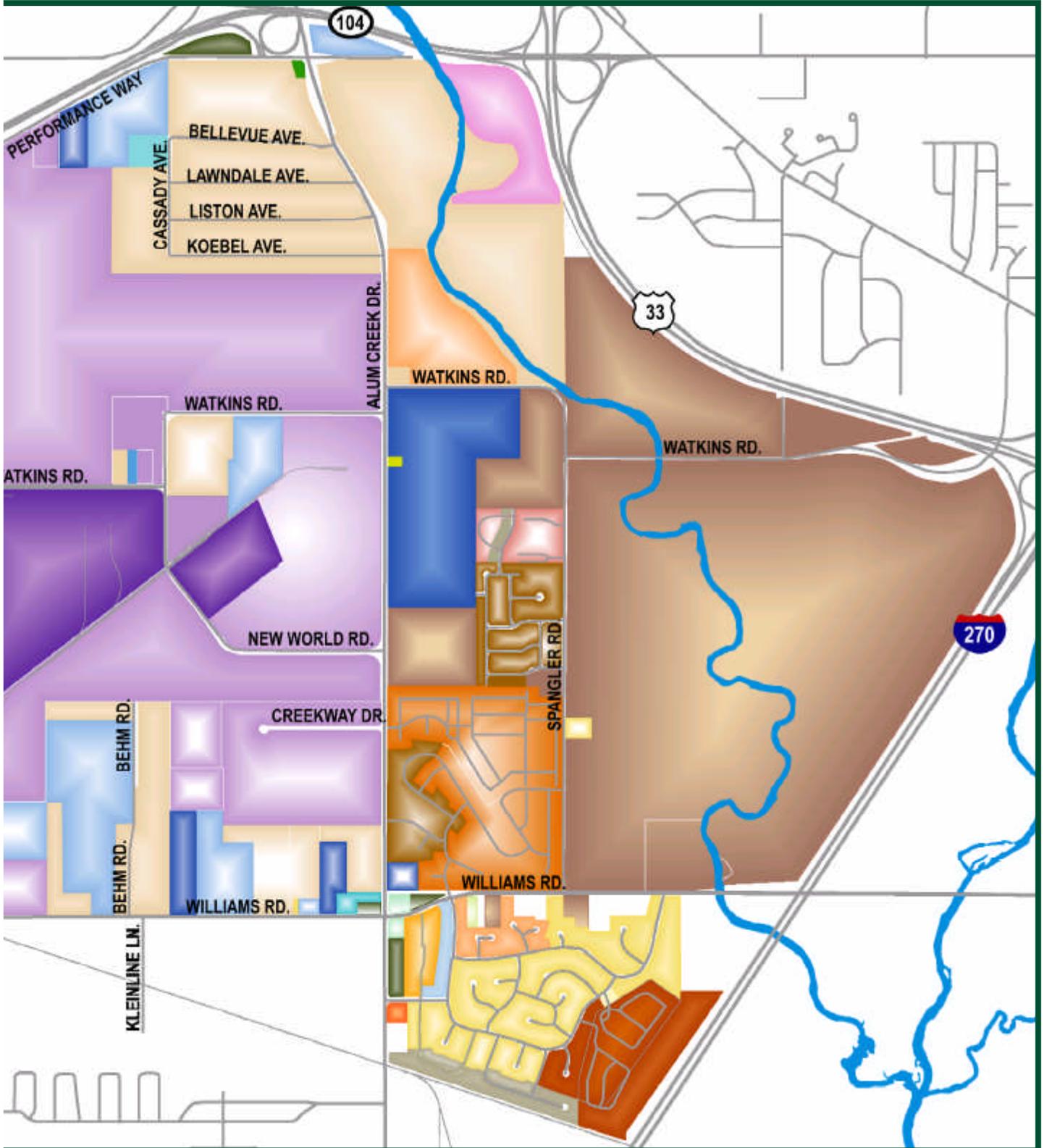
Total Population	3900
Under Age 40	70%
Over Age 65	5%
White	73%
Black	22%
Asian	2%
Hispanic	2%
All Others	1%

HOUSEHOLD STATISTICS

Total Households	1430
1 Person Households	21%
2 Person Households	31%
3 Person Households	18%
4 or More...	30%
Owner-Occupied	59%
Renter-Occupied	34%
Vacant	7%
Average Household Size	2.7



Rural residential housing in Alum Crest Acres.



Recommended Land Use



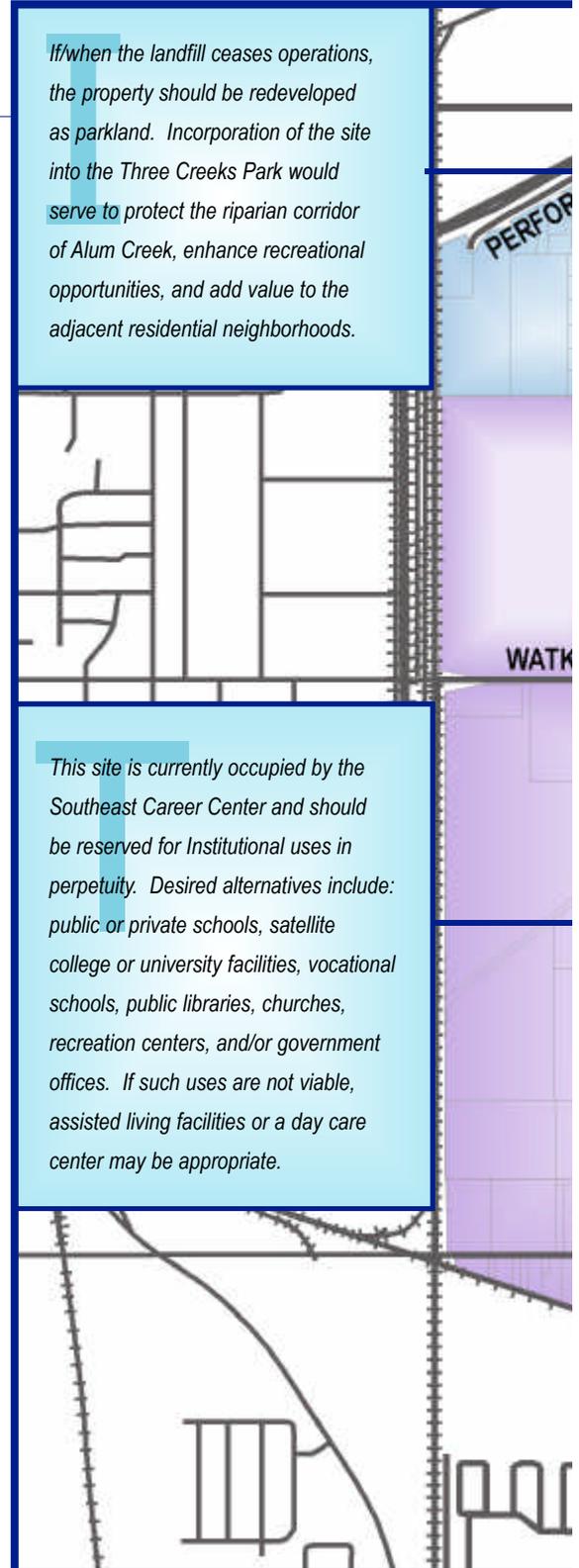
The vacant Consolidated Freight site at Alum Creek Drive and Watkins Road is a redevelopment priority.

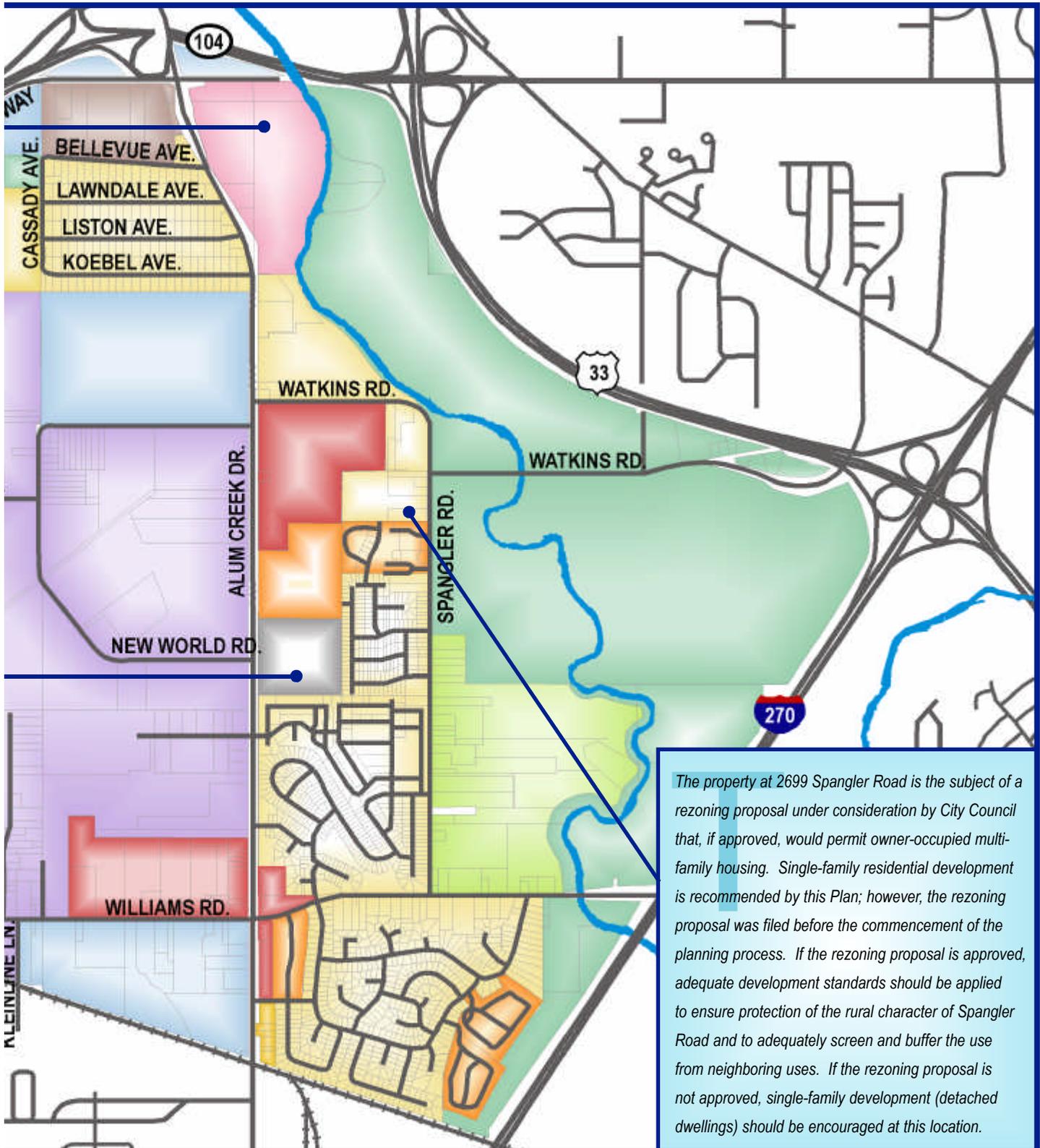
LEGEND

-  Railroads
-  Road
-  Water
-  Cemetery
-  Landfill
-  Metropark
-  Rural Residential
-  Single Family Residential
-  Multi-Family Residential
-  Office and Retail Commercial
-  Institutional, Office, and Warehouse
-  Manufacturing and Industrial
-  Institutional

If/when the landfill ceases operations, the property should be redeveloped as parkland. Incorporation of the site into the Three Creeks Park would serve to protect the riparian corridor of Alum Creek, enhance recreational opportunities, and add value to the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

This site is currently occupied by the Southeast Career Center and should be reserved for Institutional uses in perpetuity. Desired alternatives include: public or private schools, satellite college or university facilities, vocational schools, public libraries, churches, recreation centers, and/or government offices. If such uses are not viable, assisted living facilities or a day care center may be appropriate.





The property at 2699 Spangler Road is the subject of a rezoning proposal under consideration by City Council that, if approved, would permit owner-occupied multi-family housing. Single-family residential development is recommended by this Plan; however, the rezoning proposal was filed before the commencement of the planning process. If the rezoning proposal is approved, adequate development standards should be applied to ensure protection of the rural character of Spangler Road and to adequately screen and buffer the use from neighboring uses. If the rezoning proposal is not approved, single-family development (detached dwellings) should be encouraged at this location.

Growth Policies and Development Standards



New market-rate housing in Alum Creek Village.

From a broad economic perspective, industrial and residential uses are usually complementary. Manufacturing facilities provide jobs for workers and homes provide housing. Both are necessary for an urban population to grow, produce, and prosper. Within the planning area, however, these two forms of development have shared an uncomfortable coexistence for many years. There simply isn't enough separation between them. Along some of the major thoroughfares, they are next-door neighbors. Industrial uses occupy the largest tracts of land and residential neighborhoods fill the spaces in between. The conflicts that result are unfortunate - not just for

the residents but for the business owners as well. In an effort to encourage better land use planning and sensible development patterns, the working committee created a Recommended Land Use Map (p. 10) and a series of policies. Six categories of land uses are addressed, including: Manufacturing and Industrial; Institutional, Office and Warehouse; Office and Retail Commercial; Multi-family Residential; Single-family Residential; and Rural Residential. The policies recommend separation between incompatible uses, require landscaping/screening for new development, and articulate a clear vision for future growth.

Manufacturing and Industrial

Zoning and Land Use Policies

- S**
1. Support rezoning or council variance applications that would implement the Recommended Land Use Map, further the purpose and goals of this document, pose no threat to the public health or safety, satisfy the setback requirements and development standards set forth in the zoning code, and provide full-time employment opportunities.
 2. Retain, support, and protect the residential character that exists east of Alum Creek Drive. Confine the establishment or expansion of manufacturing zoning districts to areas west of Alum Creek Drive, as indicated on the Recommended Land Use Map.
 3. Rezone the residential properties on Behm Road and Watkins Road west of Alum Creek Drive, collectively, to an "LM" (Limited Manufacturing) classification. Proceed only if and when all of the properties can be included in the rezoning.
 4. Do not support any rezoning or council variance application that would permit the establishment of a new use that would involve, as a primary function, the processing, production, transportation, storage, or emission of an environmentally hazardous substance.
 5. Do not support any rezoning or council variance application that would permit the establishment of a power plant, junk yard, land-fill/dump, refinery, hazardous waste disposal facility, slaughterhouse, adult bookstore, or an adult entertainment establishment.
 6. Support and establish the following uses:
 - ◀ construction and trade-related businesses
 - ◀ research and development facilities
 - ◀ warehousing and distribution uses
 - ◀ technology-based businesses
 - ◀ parts and equipment suppliers
 - ◀ furniture and woodworking operations



Construction site at New World Drive and Alum Creek Drive.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Sources of exterior lighting should consist of cut-off type fixtures, be directed downward, and be placed to prevent glare/spillover on adjoining properties. Fixtures should be limited to a maximum height of 18 feet above grade.
2. Height limitations, minimum setbacks, landscaping requirements, design standards, and use restrictions prescribed by the zoning code should be applied unless a clear and compelling demonstration of hardship is presented.
3. For any new development, one 2.5" caliper deciduous shade tree should be planted for every 5,000 sq. ft. of total floor area.
4. Maintain and ensure the survival of trees, shrubs, and other plants. Required landscape materials should be maintained in healthy condition (or replaced if dead) for a minimum period of two years after installation.
5. Dumpsters visible from adjoining properties should be fully enclosed by an opaque fence.

Institutional, Office, and Warehouse

Zoning and Land Use Policies

- S**
1. Support rezoning or council variance applications that would implement the Recommended Land Use Map, further the purpose and goals of this document, pose no threat to the public health or safety, satisfy the setback requirements and development standards set forth in the zoning code, and provide full-time employment opportunities.
 2. Retain, support, and protect the residential character that exists east of Alum Creek Drive. Confine the establishment or expansion of manufacturing zoning districts to areas west of Alum Creek Drive, as indicated on the Recommended Land Use Map.
 3. Do not support any rezoning or council variance application that would permit the establishment of a new use that would involve, as a primary function, the processing, production, transportation, storage, or emission of an environmentally hazardous substance.
 4. Do not support any rezoning or council variance application that would permit the establishment of a power plant, junk yard, landfill/dump, refinery, hazardous waste disposal facility, slaughterhouse, adult bookstore, or an adult entertainment establishment.
 5. Support and seek to establish the following uses:
 - ◀ office parks and corporate campuses
 - ◀ churches, schools, and government facilities
 - ◀ warehousing and distribution uses



Warehouse development along Creekway Drive.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. For development that is contiguous to property designated as residential by the Recommended Land Use Map ("residential property"), the following standards should apply:
 - ◀ Parking lots, primary buildings, and accessory structures should be set back from the residential property a minimum of 50 ft.;
 - ◀ Structures located within 100 ft. of the residential property should not exceed 35 ft. in height;
 - ◀ Sources of exterior lighting should consist of cut-off type fixtures, be directed downward, and be placed to prevent glare/spillover on adjoining properties. Fixtures should be limited to a maximum height of 18 feet above grade.
 - ◀ Outdoor areas used for the temporary or permanent storage of vehicles, equipment, supplies, or materials should be set back from the residential property a minimum distance of 100 ft.;
 - ◀ Outdoor storage areas should be screened from the residential property with an 8 ft. high opaque wooden fence and 6 ft. high evergreen trees planted at intervals of no more than 15 ft.;
 - ◀ Where a treeline exists along a property line contiguous to a residential property, the existing vegetation should be preserved and left undisturbed within a 50 ft. wide conservation easement;
 - ◀ Where a treeline does not exist along a property line contiguous to a residential property, a 20 ft. wide landscaped berm with a double staggered row of 6 ft. high evergreen trees - planted at intervals of no more than 15 ft. - should be established to create a continuous vegetative screen.
2. Height limitations, minimum setbacks, landscaping requirements, design standards, and use restrictions prescribed by the zoning code should be applied unless a clear and compelling demonstration of hardship is presented.
3. For any new development, one 2.5" caliper deciduous shade tree should be planted for every 5,000 sq. ft. of total floor area.
4. Maintain and ensure the survival of trees, shrubs, and other plants. Required landscape materials should be maintained in healthy condition (or replaced if dead) for a minimum period of two years after installation.
5. Dumpsters visible from adjoining properties should be fully enclosed by an opaque fence.



Land use incompatibility -- adjacent residential and industrial uses along Watkins Road.

Office and Retail Commercial

Zoning and Land Use Polices

- S**
1. Support rezoning or council variance applications that would implement the Recommended Land Use Plan, further the purpose and goals of this document, pose no threat to the public health or safety, satisfy the setback requirements and development standards set forth in the zoning code, and provide full-time employment opportunities.
 2. Support the establishment and expansion of "C1", "C2", "C3", and "C4" (Commercial) zoning districts north of Williams Road and east of Alum Creek Drive, as illustrated by the Recommended Land Use Map.
 3. Do not support any rezoning or council variance application that would permit the establishment of a new use that would involve, as a primary function, the processing, production, transportation, storage, or emission of an environmentally hazardous substance.
 4. Do not support any rezoning or council variance application that would permit the establishment of a power plant, junk yard, landfill/dump, refinery, hazardous waste disposal facility, slaughterhouse, adult bookstore, or an adult entertainment establishment.
 5. Support and seek to establish the following uses:
 - ◀ dry cleaning uses
 - ◀ grocery stores
 - ◀ restaurants
 - ◀ video rental stores
 - ◀ financial institutions
 - ◀ professional offices
 - ◀ printing services
 - ◀ bakeries
 - ◀ discount stores
 - ◀ book stores
 - ◀ business services
 - ◀ urgent care facilities



New retail store at Williams Road and Alum Creek Drive.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. For nonresidential development that is contiguous to property designated as residential by the Recommended Land Use map, the following standards should apply:

- ◀ Parking lots, primary buildings, and accessory structures should be set back from residential property a minimum of 50 ft.
- ◀ Structures located within 50 ft. of the residential property should not exceed 35 ft. in height;
- ◀ Sources of exterior lighting should consist of cut-off type fixtures, be directed downward, and be placed to prevent glare/spillover on adjoining properties. Fixtures should be limited to a maximum height of 18 feet above grade.
- ◀ Outdoor areas used for the temporary or permanent storage of vehicles, equipment, supplies or materials should be set back from the residential property a minimum distance of 20 ft.,
- ◀ Outdoor storage areas should be screened from adjoining properties with an 8 ft. high opaque wooden fence or 6' high evergreen trees planted at intervals of no more than 15 ft;
- ◀ Where a treeline exists along a property line contiguous to a residential

property, the existing vegetation should be preserved and left undisturbed within a 20 ft. wide conservation easement;

- ◀ Where a treeline does not exist along a property line contiguous to a residential property, a 20 ft. wide landscaped berm with a double staggered row of 6 ft. high evergreen trees - planted at intervals of no more than 15 ft. - should be established to create a continuous vegetative screen.
2. Height limitations, minimum setbacks, landscaping requirements, design standards, and use restrictions prescribed by the zoning code should be applied unless a clear and compelling demonstration of hardship is presented.
 3. For any new development, one 2.5" caliper deciduous shade tree should be planted for every 5,000 sq. ft. of total floor area.
 4. Maintain and ensure the survival of trees, shrubs, and other plants. Required landscape materials should be maintained in healthy condition (or replaced if dead) for a minimum period of two years after installation.
 5. Dumpsters visible from adjoining properties should be fully enclosed by an opaque fence.



Convenience store south of Williams Road.

Multi-Family Residential

Zoning and Land Use Polices

- S**
1. Support rezoning or council variance applications that would implement the Recommended Land Use Map, further the purpose and goals of this document, pose no threat to the public health or safety, and satisfy the setback requirements and development standards set forth in the zoning code.
 2. Confine new apartment residential development to the existing AR12, ARLD, and LARLD zoning districts and the property east of Alum Creek Drive (at the terminus of New World Drive).
 3. Support and encourage owner-occupied forms of housing and institutional uses with a residential component, such as assisted-living facilities and nursing homes.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. For new residential development consisting of 8 or more lots/dwelling units on property contiguous to a commercial or manufacturing zoning district, the following standards should apply:
 - ◀ Primary buildings should be set back from the commercial or manufacturing zoning district a minimum of 50 ft.;
 - ◀ Where a treeline exists along a property line contiguous to a commercial or manufacturing zoning district, the existing vegetation should be preserved and left undisturbed within a 20 ft. wide conservation easement; and
 - ◀ Where a treeline does not exist along a property line contiguous to a commercial or manufacturing zoning district, a 20 ft. wide landscaped berm with a double staggered row of 6 ft. high evergreen trees - planted at intervals of no more than 15 ft. - should be established to create a continuous vegetative screen.
2. An undisturbed natural buffer should be maintained along Alum Creek consisting of the floodway or all property within 150 ft. of the edge of the waterway, whichever is greater, to protect the riparian corridor and mitigate the impacts associated with storm water runoff.
3. Maintain and ensure the survival of trees, shrubs, and other plants. Required landscape materials should be maintained in healthy condition (or replaced if dead) for a minimum period of two years after installation.
4. Dumpsters visible from adjoining properties should be fully enclosed by an opaque fence.



Apartments west of Spangler Road.

Single-Family Residential

Zoning and Land Use Polices

- S**
1. Support rezoning or council variance applications that would implement the Recommended Land Use Plan, further the purpose and goals of this document, pose no threat to the public health or safety, and satisfy the setback requirements and development standards set forth in the zoning code.
 2. Confine the expansion and/or establishment of residential zoning to the areas east of Alum Creek Drive, in accordance with the Recommended Land Use Map. Apply zoning classifications that are consistent with existing land use patterns, including RR, SR, R-1, R-2, and PUD.
 3. Support and encourage affordable, owner-occupied residential development at moderate densities (approximately 4-8 units per acre). For properties contiguous to Alum Creek, permit clustered development at higher net densities in exchange for conservation easements and deep setbacks along the stream corridor.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. For new residential development consisting of 8 or more lots/dwelling units on property contiguous to a commercial or manufacturing zoning district, the following standards should apply:
 - ◀ Primary buildings should be set back from the commercial or manufacturing zoning district a minimum of 50 ft.;
 - ◀ Where a treeline exists along a property line contiguous to a commercial or manufacturing zoning district, the existing vegetation should be preserved and left undisturbed within a 20 ft. wide conservation easement;
 - ◀ Where a treeline does not exist along a property line contiguous to a commercial or manufacturing zoning district, a 20 ft. wide landscaped berm with a double staggered row of 6 ft. high evergreen trees - planted at intervals of no more than 15 ft. - should be established to create a continuous vegetative screen.
2. Height limitations, minimum setbacks, landscaping requirements, design standards, and use restrictions prescribed by the zoning code should be applied unless a clear and compelling demonstration of hardship is presented.
3. For residential development on property contiguous to Alum Creek, the following standards should apply:
 - ◀ An undisturbed natural buffer should be maintained along Alum Creek consisting of the floodway or all property within 150 ft. of the edge of the waterway, whichever is greater, to protect the riparian corridor and mitigate the impacts associated with storm water runoff.
 - ◀ Applicants for any rezoning, variance, special permit, or appeal should contact the Franklin County Metro Parks and Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries (F.A.C.T.) and inform them of the request.

Rural Residential

Zoning and Land Use Polices

- S**
1. Support rezoning or council variance applications that would implement the Recommended Land Use Plan, further the purpose and goals of this document, pose no threat to the public health or safety, and satisfy the setback requirements and development standards set forth in the zoning code.
 2. Confine the expansion and/or establishment of low-density residential zoning to the areas east of Spangler Road, in accordance with the Recommended Land Use Map.

Apply zoning classifications that are consistent with existing landuse patterns, including R-Rural, LRR, and RRR.

3. Support and encourage the establishment of agricultural uses and low-density residential development. For properties contiguous to Alum Creek, permit clustered development at higher net densities (2-4 units per acre) in exchange for conservation easements and deep setbacks along the stream corridor.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

1. Height limitations, minimum setbacks, landscaping requirements, design standards, and use restrictions prescribed by the zoning code should be applied unless a clear and compelling demonstration of hardship is presented.

2. An undisturbed natural buffer should be maintained along Alum Creek consisting of the floodway or all property within 150 ft. of the edge of the waterway, whichever is greater, to protect the riparian corridor and mitigate the impacts associated with storm water runoff.
3. Applicants for any rezoning, variance, special permit, or appeal should contact the Franklin County Metro Parks and Friends of Alum Creek and Tributaries (F.A.C.T.) and inform them of the request.



Low density development along Spangler Road.

Public Improvements



Alum Creek Drive, south of Williams Road.

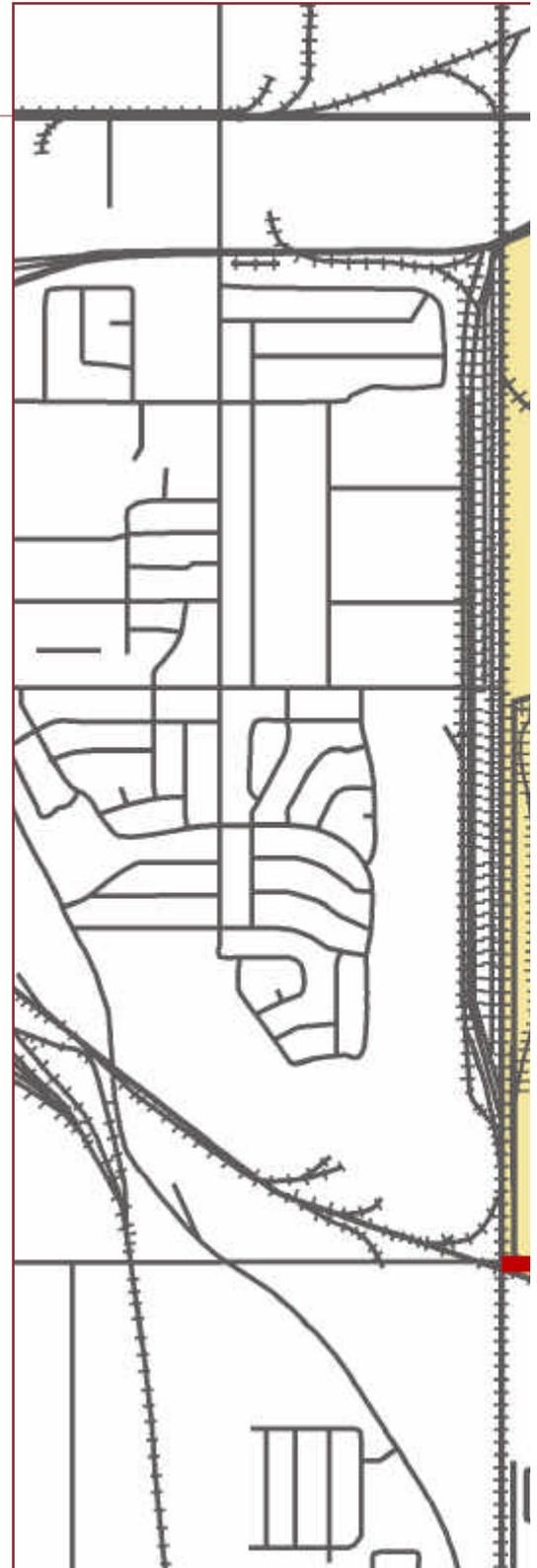
Infrastructure systems are vital and valuable resources. They not only sustain the public health, safety, and welfare, they are necessary to support continued development and population growth. The expansion and proper maintenance of these systems is a principal function of local government and usually an ongoing challenge, particularly when funding is limited. Within the city of Columbus, the Transportation Division and the Department of Public Utilities bear most of the responsibility. These agencies repair the various forms of public infrastructure when problems arise and develop programs for upgrades when additional capacity is needed.

Most of the highways and streets within the planning area are in good condition, and upon completion of the Alum Creek Drive widening project, the network of thoroughfares should function relatively well. Williams Road has not yet been improved to arterial standards, however, and some improvements will be necessary to improve safety and flow. Other forms of infrastructure are deficient along secondary roadways such as Watkins Road, Spangler Road, and Performance Drive. Additional sidewalks, drainage improvements, and signage have been recommended (see page 24 for details).

Infrastructure Priorities



New sidewalks, streetlights and utilities in Alum Creek Village.



PLANNED AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS	
PLANNED	Alum Creek Drive roadway improvements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phase 1 Phase 2 Phase 3
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watkins Road/New World Drive intersection improvements Spangler Road improvements Williams Road improvements Performance Way, Watkins Road, and Williams Road drainage improvements
PROPOSED	

Planned

Proposed

ALUM CREEK DRIVE

Alum Creek Drive will eventually be widened to five lanes between Frebis Avenue and Interstate 270. The project will be completed in three phases, with the first phase of construction (Williams Road to I-270) commencing in 2004. The proposed improvements for each phase include: 1) a widened cross-section with two travel lanes on each side and a center turn lane; 2) curbs and gutters; and 3) concrete sidewalks along both sides of the roadway between Williams Road and Interstate 270. Between Frebis Avenue and Williams Road, an 8-foot wide asphalt path will be substituted for the concrete sidewalks. The path will function as a multi-use trail for walking, jogging and biking.

Phase 1: Williams Road to Interstate 270

Status: The design and engineering work is complete. Construction may begin in 2005.

Phase 2: State Road 104 to Williams Road

Status: The design and engineering work is currently in progress. Construction will begin in January 2008 at the earliest. (Funding for this phase will not be available until that time.)

Phase 3: Frebis Avenue to State Road 104

Status: The design work has not yet begun and no timetable has been set for construction.



Alum Creek Drive at New World Drive.

SPANGLER ROAD

Although many of the neighborhoods along Spangler Road are within walking distance of Three Creeks Park, there are no sidewalks or paths along the roadway to accommodate pedestrian or bicycle traffic.



No sidewalks along Spangler Road.

The installation of an 8' wide, paved, multi-purpose trail along the east side of Spangler Road would help to encourage use of the park, the area's biggest asset, and also serve to connect adjoining subdivisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ◀ Coordinate installation of the trail with the public improvements planned for Alum Creek Drive. Consider the project a priority initiative and include the construction costs in capital improvements programming.
- ◀ Apply for Urban Infrastructure Recovery Fund (UIRF) grants through local civic associations to assist with construction funding.
- ◀ Add pedestrian crosswalks to Spangler Road at roadway intersections, where sight distance is adequate, to permit access to the trail.
- ◀ Connect the proposed trail to the bikeway within Three Creeks Park, at the park entrance.

Proposed

WILLIAMS ROAD

Williams Road, between Alum Creek Drive and the railroad tracks along the planning area's western boundary, is narrow and in poor condition. The Columbus Thoroughfare Plan classifies the roadway as a type "4-2" arterial, but the current cross section is substandard by most measures. The pavement width is insufficient for the heavy truck traffic generated by adjoining land uses and there are no provisions for pedestrian traffic or stormwater drainage.



Williams Road west of Alum Creek Drive.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ◀ Consistent with the Columbus Thoroughfare Plan, widen Williams Road to four lanes with a minimum right-of-way width of 100 feet. Include the project in capital improvements programming.
- ◀ Improve one or both sides of Williams Road with curbs, gutters and storm sewers or drainage ditches, swales and/or culverts to improve drainage. Include the project in capital improvements programming.



Watkins Road north of New World Drive.

WATKINS ROAD / NEW WORLD DRIVE

Heavy truck traffic is prohibited along Watkins Road between New World Drive and Alum Creek Drive, but the

existing signage has not sufficiently deterred drivers. Moreover, the pavement at the Watkins Road/New World Drive intersection is too narrow for the trucks to navigate turns safely. Because the adjoining properties are industrial and will continue to generate heavy truck traffic, roadway and signage improvements should be undertaken to improve circulation and safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ◀ Widen and resurface the intersection at Watkins Road and New World Drive to permit a larger turning radius.
- ◀ Install additional "Through Trucks Prohibited" signage along Watkins Road between New World Drive and Alum Creek Drive to deter truck traffic.

PERFORMANCE WAY

Although the roadway is in relatively good condition, the pavement is flat and tends to flood during storm events. Roadway resurfacing and/or drainage improvements will be necessary to alleviate the problem.

RECOMMENDATION:

- ◀ Improve one or both sides of Performance Way with drainage ditches, swales, culverts, and/or storm sewers to eliminate flooding. Include the project in capital improvements programming.

Community Involvement

Although the civic associations within the planning area are perpetually engaged in neighborhood issues, many residents have expressed a desire to communicate more frequently with local businesses. At the present time, there is no forum for ongoing dialogue to take place. Information is occasionally shared at civic association events or the Council of South Side Organizations' monthly meetings, but it is typically the byproduct of a formal zoning or variance application. Conversations rarely address broader community concerns or issues of mutual interest.

OPTION: *Strengthen the communication and cooperation between area civic associations and the Council of South Side Organizations. Appoint one person from each civic association to obtain, on a monthly basis, zoning and variance application information from the Zoning Chair of the Council of South Side Organizations. Distribute the information to civic association members and neighborhood groups.*

IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE: Zoning Chair, Council of South Side Organizations

OPTION: *Consider establishing a Community Advisory Panel (CAP).*

The primary role of a Community Advisory Panel is to facilitate communication. A CAP can provide a forum for dialogue and help to build rapport between area residents and local businesses. Meetings, typically informal, can be conducted on a regular basis or as often as needed. A CAP is not bound by any regulations

or subject to oversight and thus has the freedom to discuss any topic of interest to its members. However, to be effective in its role, the CAP should include a representative mix of stakeholders and always seek to encourage the open exchange of ideas, concerns, and information.

IMPLEMENTATION RESOURCE:

Columbus Health Department

OPTION: *Consider establishing an area commission.*

Area commissions afford citizens an opportunity to participate in decision-making. As advisory bodies, they give guidance to the city's Development Commission and City Council and help to facilitate communication and cooperation between residents, neighborhood groups, city officials, and developers. An area commission can also create plans and policies to guide the future development of a commission area.

Currently, there are 12 area commissions operating within the city of Columbus. To establish a new area commission, persons residing, working, or owning property in the proposed commission area must create a task force and follow the procedures outlined in Chapter 3109 of the Columbus City Codes. Generally, the process consists of:

- I. **Determine the area commission boundaries. To qualify as a commission area, the area must:**

- ◀ Consist of a compact, homogeneous area that is manageable in size, being large enough for recognition and small enough for effective representation
- ◀ Maintain neighborhood identity and cohesiveness
- ◀ Whenever feasible, coincide with a designated city planning area
- ◀ Be compatible with boundaries of existing commission areas
- ◀ Be described by the centerline of natural or artificial boundaries with the fewest changes in course practical, together with an indication of the number of acres and dwelling units contained therein

2. Organize the area commission task force.

The group should consist of 5 to 7 persons who reside, work, or own property within the proposed commission area.

Responsibilities of the group will include:

- ◀ Gathering 500 signatures for the petition
- ◀ Preparing the bylaws
- ◀ Filing the petition and documents
- ◀ Making revisions to the documents prior to approval
- ◀ Giving notice to the area residents
- ◀ Instituting selection procedures for nominations to the commission
- ◀ Certification of the nomination results to the mayor and to the city clerk

During the interim between council's approval and the organization of the area commission, the task force may serve the commission area by performing any necessary functions. As soon as the appointed members organize the area commission, the task force - having completed its purpose - will disband.

3. Draft the bylaws

4. Prepare the petition (which shall contain):

- ◀ A concise description of the proposed commission area
- ◀ A brief description of those residents who agree to serve as a task force for the commission area from the time it is established by council until the area commission is organized
- ◀ A designation of one (1) member of the task force as agent to receive notices
- ◀ A statement that the proposed by-laws, rules, and selection procedures for the area commission to be created are attached to the petition and will be filed with the city clerk

5. Obtain signatures from 500 residents and property owners of the proposed commission area

6. Submit signatures and the complete petition application to the city clerk.

Implementation Resource: Division of Neighborhood Services, City of Columbus

Three Creeks Farm

The Perfect Place to Grow

by Nancy Kangas

This is a newcomer's story. Even though I've spent most of my life in Columbus (Clintonville and Victorian Village), I'd never visited this area until one summer evening in 1997. I came to see my son do his part in a variety show -- part of the week-long Parks & Recreation Department summer camp, Great Art Getaway -- and to make sure he was okay about the big sleep-over that night.



View of Three Creeks Farm, looking west.

So I was standing at the top of the hill behind one of Farmer Smith's barns, trying to figure out which of the children running wild with glee was mine, when the sun dropped behind the line of trees along Alum Creek. The sky turned pink, the cornfield below turned gold, and I realized I was in an amazingly beautiful place. In Columbus. (If you've lived most of your life here, as opposed to say, San Francisco or Portland, or any place not flattened by a glacier, you learn to accept a certain lack of physical beauty. You train yourself to appreciate the many other fine and important things we have.)



Three years later, Duncan and I spent the summer driving around Columbus looking for a small acreage on which to start an organic farm. By the end of that year, we finally found one -- as it turns out, just a half mile due west of that hill behind Farmer Smith's barn.

We are very slowly developing our farm. So far all the beds have been double-dug by hand (oof). Even so, we've been able to provide bedding plants every spring, and organic vegetables and flowers at both North Market and the Clintonville Farmer's Market, in addition to the Clintonville Community Market and Dragonfly Restaurant. We tend a few chickens for free range eggs, some bee hives, and two boys.

Because of our involvement both in this planning process and in organizing the opposition to rezoning the ten acres adjacent to ours, we have been able to meet many of our neighbors -- including the grandson of the man who built our house (a Sear's kit) in 1928.

Many longtime residents remember this area as farmland, and talk fondly of the times they spent playing in the woods and creeks. It sounds very "country"; and at least in spirit, far from the city.

I am still amazed and fascinated by this area, in part because of the weird mix of what we are. I leave the farm and drive 12 minutes (not 13, not 11) to my job as a librarian at the Main Library downtown. On my days off, I drive three minutes to one of the city's best thrift stores (on Alum Creek Dr.). In the summer, during soccer season, I weed my flowers beds accompanied by the whoops and cheering from Sycamore Field.

I'm looking forward to being an "old comer" here. When the bike path is finished, I hope

to go back to cycling to work. I want to keep running "my route" in Three Creeks Park, up through Ox Bow loop and past all the deer. I want to get better and better at farming, and be part of the community of local organic growers.

And I look forward to being a part of a neighborhood group here, to be able to take care of what we've got and grow in the smartest, most creative ways.



WHAT'S GROWING

Three Creeks Farm specializes in organic bouquets and garden produce:

- annuals
- perennials
- apples
- peaches
- peas
- beans
- strawberries
- broccoli
- potatoes
- squash
- garlic



Commitment at Georgia Pacific Environmental Stewardship

by David Mason Jr., Plant Manager, Georgia-Pacific Resins, Inc.

In all of the communities in which we operate, Georgia-Pacific employees believe that we are obligated to run our operations in an environmentally responsible manner - we have chosen to be environmental stewards. No one owns the environment or the resources that Mother Earth provides. However, we are all caretakers of these resources, and it is our responsibility to use those resources so that they are available for the use and enjoyment of others. Here at the Columbus facility, we believe the same.

healthy environment is essential to have healthy communities and a thriving society. For us, being a part of the work of the South Alum Creek Planning Committee is a chance to live these beliefs. The residents of Columbus south side deserve this kind of commitment.

Each year, our company invests in organizations that foster and promote environmentally responsible acts. We also provide instruction to our employees on environmental policies and management methods. Here at the Columbus facility, the plant operates with state of the art air pollution control devices. In addition, employees participate in annual emergency response drills with the local fire department, they receive extensive training on Spill Prevention Control, Counter measure, and Stormwater Pollution Prevention, and they engage in other environmental activities including those that promote source reduction, recycling, reuse, and clean communities.

✦ ✦ ✦ ✦

We are proud to be a part of the South Alum Creek Planning Committee. The group is a great forum. It has laid differences aside and is dedicated to tackling far-reaching issues affecting the development of the south side.

For us, being an environmental leader means using natural resources wisely and operating with the high environmental standards that we set for ourselves. It also means promoting environmental stewardship and awareness throughout the community. We believe a

We are proud to be a part of the South Alum Creek Planning Committee. The group is a great forum. It has laid differences aside and is dedicated to tackling far-reaching issues affecting the development of the south side. In the past, land use in this area has not received enough attention. This forum allowed everyone - citizens and businesses alike - to work together.



Community Involvement

by Milton Steinberg, Regional Manufacturing Manager, Georgia-Pacific Resins, Inc.

Our plant has been a part of this community since 1969. Over the years, there have been many changes. What was initially a rural, primarily industrial community has become an increasingly residential community along with a variety of light industrial operations.

Our facility employs 50 people, many of them residents of south Columbus. We manufacture thermosetting resins that are used by our customers to make their products - from Scott's turf and lawn fertilizers, to Owens-Corning fiberglass home insulation, to the Formica countertops found in many homes and businesses.

I became responsible for the management of this facility in June of 2000, not long after our plant had suffered a terrible and tragic accident that frightened this community and resulted in the death of an employee. The events on that day changed many people in the neighborhood and in the company. One thing that has not changed is our commitment to this community. After the accident, Georgia-Pacific invested millions of dollars rebuilding the Columbus plant into a state-of-the-art facility. Our plant is becoming a model in our industry for safety and environmentally responsible operation. The south side community has been key in helping us to achieve this outcome. Through the determination and efforts of many dedicated residents, we have improved our facility in many ways that address the concerns of our neighbors.



Well before my arrival in Columbus, the plant personnel had a history of reaching out to area residents. From the Georgia-Pacific Math and Science scholarships at Marion-Franklin High School, to the G-P Greenhouse and Land Lab, the plant had worked to support the youth in the community. Two of our goals are to build long-lasting relationships with our neighbors and to support the introduction of youth into the various fields of science.

From employees working with the FirstRobotics national competition team from Marion Franklin High School to the Career Academy and Job Shadowing activities, we have worked to support the youth in our community. This year our employees will also be working on the remodeling of a neighborhood home through Rebuilding Together - Columbus.

Our operation is a lot closer to non-industrial development than many of our sister facilities. Because of this, we believe that it is critical that we are involved in any issue that could affect this community - whether it is land use and zoning, or traffic and congestion. Being a part of the South Alum Creek Planning Committee is just another way we can help grow and protect this area. As an area employer and neighbor, we believe that this is just one of many obligations we have to the community.

We have a plan... so what comes next?

by Larry Wilson

I have been a south side resident for 18 years. I moved to the south side after marrying a lovely minister's daughter who grew up in the Marion Franklin area. Initially, we were both excited about building a life and raising a family in what seemed to be a perfect environment. The area was mostly rural and residential and traffic congestion was tolerable. After 2 years and a new baby, we decided to build a new home in the Alum Crest Acres subdivision to meet the future needs of our expanding family. Like most newly married couples, we were upbeat about our life in what seemed to be a quality community.

But it was not long after we moved in our new home that we learned things were not as rosy as they once seemed. We heard about chemical spills and air pollution from a nearby plant. A large steel manufacturing company announced plans to build a chemical galvanizing plant within a half mile of our subdivision. We were notified that an adjacent landowner of a 27-acre plot was asking the City for a rezoning from residential to industrial. Several months later, the City announced a trucking firm was going to construct a 210-bay diesel terminal adjacent to our neighborhood. We also had to fight a rezoning that would have allowed a Paper recycling company and a propane manufacturing company to locate on Watkins Road adjacent to the Coca-Cola plant. There is an unsightly landfill operating near the banks of Alum Creek. There are potential code violations at an auto-shredding company that need still need to be addressed.

Out of concern for my family's welfare (and that of my community), I became active in the Alum

Crest Acres Civic Association. I served as President for 3 terms and Vice-President for two terms. Our efforts resulted in some limited success stories: (1) donation of 4 ¼ acres by a contractor for a park to serve as a buffer, and (2) City Council approval of "The South Side Industrial Development Policies". The latter was a feeble reaction by the City to growing criticism that it favored commercial interests over neighborhood values.

The neighborhood has endured through the years (but with some big wounds). It pretty much survived a resin plant explosion in 1997. The 210-bay diesel terminal has closed because of bankruptcy. The old Smith's Farm has become part of the new Three Creeks Metro Park. Two new residential housing developments are under construction. The City plans to widen Alum Creek Drive from 2 to 5 lanes. Despite these improvements, truck and auto congestion is a growing concern. We still have strong pollution concerns. There are very high levels of asthma and respiratory problems in the area. Many residents complain of skin rashes and itching and burning eyes. (My daughter and spouse have Asthma).

And finally, the city of Columbus is developing a plan for the far south side. Since this is our opportunity to hopefully make an impact on future development, I submit the following suggestions for the plan: (1) protect the family by keeping commercial trucks, illegal drugs, and criminals out of residential areas; (2) work with Federal and State regulatory agencies to freeze pollution levels at (or below) current authorized

levels through Environmental Justice principals; (3) strengthen local civil associations and explore the possibility of an area commission; (4) minimize the negative effects on existing neighborhoods when Alum Creek Drive is widened (i.e.; noise, traffic congestion, access,

declining property values); (5) find ways to improve access to Three Creeks Park for neighborhoods isolated by Alum Creek Drive; (6) improve relationships between industry and the community; and (7) be more aggressive in investigating code violations.

Planning for Quality of Life

by Barbara Logan, Secretary and Education & Outreach Committee Chair, Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries

At the first planning committee meeting, city planner David Hall asked each of us to voice positive and negative perceptions of the neighborhood. As the committee members spoke, it became obvious that they value Three Creeks Park and consider it to be an asset to the community. Any neighborhood would be fortunate to have such a park. The park boasts 1300 acres, three creeks, a multi-purpose trail, a pond, wetlands, athletic fields, a playground and more. It has something for everyone. It is a place to indulge in nature and forget about the stresses of every day life; a place to enjoy a peaceful walk, run or bike ride; a place to take children to learn about nature and enjoy the outdoors.

As a representative of Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries (FACT), I strongly encourage people to consider the impact that urban land use planning and neighborhood planning have on the environment and, consequently, on the quality of our lives. It is essential that we consider the value of our waterways, natural areas, and parks when developing plans for our neighborhoods. Alum Creek, Blacklick Creek, and Big Walnut Creek, all in Three Creeks Park, have a lot to offer the community in terms of

recreation, education, and natural beauty - particularly Alum Creek, as it runs through this neighborhood planning area. We can all work together to protect this natural resource by preserving green space along the creek, encouraging developers to design developments that minimize urban runoff pollution, and monitoring construction sites to ensure that loose soil is held in place and not washing into the creek.

Integrating these environmental concerns with other issues identified by the committee, such as traffic, incompatible land use, economic development and inadequate community representation in city government, will help us all work together towards a more livable and prosperous neighborhood. I am honored to have been invited to be a part of the South Alum Creek Planning Committee. I thank the City of Columbus for providing the opportunity for community residents, leaders and businesses to voice their concerns and provide input for this plan. And thank you very much to Mr. David Hall and the city of Columbus' Department of Development for leading the meetings, addressing our concerns and preparing the plan.

The Legacy of Smith's Farm

by Duncan Campbell

Almost one-third of the South Alum Creek planning area is Smith Farms parkland, and it exists because of Lot and Bettie Jane Smith. The farming Lot Smith did when he was alive made him famous. His decision to deed his land to the city for the park makes the whole neighborhood famous.

Lot and Bettie Jane Smith moved to their farm at 3285 Watkins Road in 1950, continuing a long history of family farming that began with Lot's father's farm at the corner of Alum Creek and Livingston roads back in the 1910's. The farm consisted of 330 acres of floodplain between Alum and Big Walnut creeks, and during the early decades of the 20th century, it felt far removed from the hubbub of the city. Asparagus, strawberries, sweet corn, and turnips were just some of the many crops that were grown and sold to markets as far away as Chicago, Detroit, and even Atlanta.

Eventually, Route 33 cut into the farm's northeast corner, then I-270 cut through the farm's southeast corner -- the city was moving out and around the farm, and citizens began flocking to it. Over the years, "Smith's Famous Farm" became well known to the residents of Columbus as a place to bring the family for a day of hayrides, picnicking, and U-picked fresh produce, pumpkins, and Indian corn.

In 1994, the Smiths agreed to sell the farm to the city's Department of Recreation and Parks and the acreage became incorporated into the 1,100 acre Three Creeks MetroPark (the largest area of parkland in Franklin County). Today, the Smith

Farms section of the park includes ponds for fishing, athletic fields for soccer, softball, and rugby, and hiking/biking trails running along the banks of Alum Creek that will eventually connect with trails stretching from Westerville to Pickerington. The former farm's outbuildings are now the hub of special events such as the "Harvest Jamboree" and "Great Art Get-Away." Future plans call for demonstration gardens, a petting farm, and facilities for nature and agricultural education. The parkland south of the Smith Farms acreage is occupied by the Three Creeks park, and it encompasses the confluence of Alum, Blacklick, and Big Walnut creeks. It exists primarily as a nature and wildlife refuge.

Upon deeding his farm to the city for parkland, Lot Smith was quoted as saying: "I want it to remain a green place forever. I enjoyed this spot in the world. I want others to enjoy it, too." Lot passed away in 2002. Bettie Jane still lives in the original farmhouse on Watkins Road.

I had the privilege to visit with Lot in the last years before he died. Besides possessing a wealth of knowledge and experience on the subjects of farming and the history of the local area, he had quite a reputation as a practical joker and always seemed to have a smile on his face... or up his sleeve. Now I'm reading his autobiography. I'm glad he wrote it -- he strikes me as a true Columbus original.

I expect all of us are pleased to have this park in our neighborhood and are grateful to the Smiths for making it so. I hope that we, in turn, will do all we can to help preserve it for future generations.



The History of Marion Township & Edwards Station

written by Mike Wiles, researched by Kevin Himmelberger

Marion Township

The South Alum Creek planning area is only a small part of what at one time was the biggest township in Franklin County – Marion Township. Marion Township was originally bordered to the north by Clinton and Mifflin, to the east by Truro, to the south by Hamilton Township, and to the west by the Scioto River. It was first settled by David Nelson in 1799.

Some say Marion Township was named in memory of General Francis Marion known as the "Swamp Angel," or "Swamp Fox" (depending on which history book you read) to the British and was a thorn in their sides during the Revolutionary War's Southern Campaigns.

William Merion (not Related to General Marion) and William Palmer came to Marion Township in 1807 and both founded families and large estates. The Merion family (for which Merion Road is named) owned about 1800 acres of land in this township. Of course there is another claim by William Merion Jr. that the family name was given to the township but was misspelled as "Marion". It is not beyond belief that as good politicians, they told the prominent Mr. Merion one story while telling the fans of Francis Marion another. Regardless, on January 21, 1957, Marion Township was annexed into Columbus and became an interesting piece of local history.

Edwards Station

In the 1820's, most of the South Alum Creek planning area around Williams and Alum Creek was owned and occupied by a Pennsylvania settler named John J. Edwards, his wife Martha, daughters Hattie and Junsis, and sons John, Charlie, Frank, and Robert. The 1820 Census shows that the Edwards Family was very wealthy for the times, amassing a net worth of \$50,000 (about \$2.7 million in today's dollars).

John G. Edwards was quite the entrepreneur in his time. He worked for years to establish a Post Office at what he named "Edwards Station". In 1883 it happened and "Edwards Station" was officially and literally put on the map of Franklin County. Soon after that date, the Hocking Valley Railroad also opened a station. John G. served as Postmaster, was later succeeded by his son

John W., and finally by Levi S. Johnson. It would have appeared that "Edwards Station" was well on its way. John G. built houses he hoped to sell to people wanting to move and set up businesses at the new railroad line that linked Columbus, Groveport, and the canals of Winchester. By 1895, however, the Post Office closed and I'm sure the train station followed.

Not much happened to "Edwards Station" after that except farming and dreams of what might have been and "what if's". Maybe if "Edwards Station" had taken off I would be writing this about the unknown Groveport, Canal Winchester, Obetz, or even Columbus. It was still shown on maps occasionally until 1975. The Groveport School District built a school building in the 1920's that still stands today.

Resources and Contact Information

City of Columbus

SERVICE	PHONE		
Animals (Strays)	462-3400	Police Complaints and Praise	645-2677
Block Watch Information	645-4610	Police (Crime Prevention)	645-4610
Bulk Refuse Pick-up	645-8774	Pothole Repair	645-5660
Building and Development Services	645-7433	Sewers and Drains (Repair)	645-7102
Code Enforcement	645-8139	Sidewalk Complaints and Permits	645-7497
Crime Stoppers Anonymous	645-8477	Snow and Ice Complaints	645-5660
Electricity (Repair)	645-7627	South Side Pride	645-8097
Garbage Collection	645-8774	Street Light Repair	645-7627
Housing Inspection	645-8139	Street Repair	645-5660
Junk Cars on Private Property	645-8139	Traffic Lights and Signs	645-7393
Junk Cars on Public Property	645-2277	Volunteer Corps	645-6404
Mayor's Action Center	645-2489	Water (Repair)	645-7788
Neighborhood Liaison	645-5220	Weed and Environmental Complaints	645-8191
		Zoning Information	645-7314

CITY OF COLUMBUS WEBSITES

City of Columbus	www.cityofcolumbus.org
City of Columbus Planning Division	www.columbusinfobase.org
Department of Development	td.ci.columbus.oh.us
Public Utilities Department	utilities.ci.columbus.oh.us
Public Safety Department	pubserv.ci.columbus.oh.us
Public Service Department	www.publicsafety.ci.columbus.oh.us
Recreation and Parks Department	www.columbusrecparks.com

OTHER WEBSITES

Central Ohio Transit Authority	www.cota.com
Columbus Foundation	www.columbusfoundation.org
Columbus Public Schools	www.columbus.k12.oh.us
Private Industry Council	www.ipicsolutions.com
Urban League of Greater Columbus	www.columbusurbanleague





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