



## **BELLINGRATH-CLOVERLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

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**CITY OF MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA  
ADOPTED MARCH 13, 2008**

# BELLINGRATH-CLOVERLAND NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

ADOPTED BY THE CITY OF MONTGOMERY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MARCH 13, 2008

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**Land Use Planning Principles Guiding the Comprehensive and Neighborhood Plans**  
Prepared by the Department of Planning and Development  
City of Montgomery, Alabama  
March 2007



1. Ensure decisions do not create arbitrary development patterns (i.e. spot zoning);
2. Ensure an adequate and diverse supply of housing for all income levels within the community;
3. Minimize the negative impacts between incompatible land uses (i.e. residential bordering heavy industrial uses);
4. Recognize suitable areas for public uses such as hospitals and schools, that will minimize the impacts to residential areas;
5. Discourage intense commercial uses in or adjacent to residential areas;
6. Ensure neighborhood commercial uses are designed to minimize adverse effects to the neighborhood;
7. Minimize development in floodplains and/or environmentally sensitive areas and promote goals which provide environmental protection;
8. Consider regulations that address safety as it pertains to future development goals;
9. Ensure an adequate transition between adjacent land uses and development intensities;
10. Protect and promote historically and culturally significant areas;
11. Avoid creating undesirable land use precedents for similarly situated properties within the City;
12. Balance individual property rights with community interests;
13. Limit development in areas that could not be supported by the existing or proposed street and utility network;
14. Promote development that serves that needs of a diverse population;
15. Promote stabilization and expansion of the economic base to support job creation;



## INTRODUCTION

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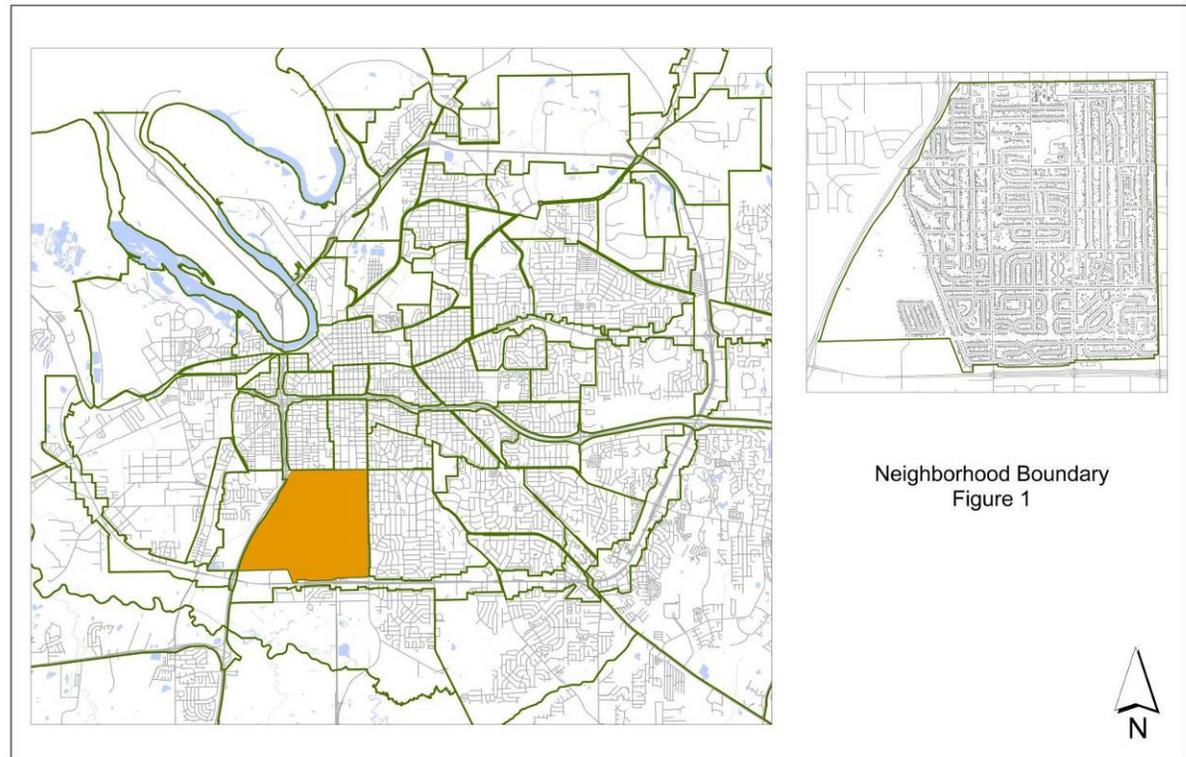
## Neighborhood Boundaries

The Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is located approximately 2.5 miles south of Downtown Montgomery between two commercial corridors, Fairview Avenue and South Boulevard. The western edge of the neighborhood borders Interstate 65 and the eastern edge follows Norman Bridge Road (Figure 1). This established neighborhood consists of over 3,900 parcels and covers approximately 269 acres. Major subdivisions within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood include: Cleveland, Cloverdale, Cloverhill, Cloverland, Courtland, Haardt Estates, Lynwood Estates, Mt. Vernon Estates, Oakland Estates, Ridgecrest, Southern Meadows, Southmont, Southwest, Truett Manor, Upchurch and Woodhaven.

The 2000 U.S. Census indicates that the population for the planning area is 11,629. Of these, 32.5% are under the age of 20 and 11.9% are age 65 and over.

## Purpose of the Plan

This plan examines and analyzes existing conditions, problems, assets, and development opportunities within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood. The document is designed to communicate to public officials and private developers the desire of area residents and business owners to improve the neighborhood. The ultimate goal of this plan is to outline a realistic approach to redevelop and strengthen the neighborhood by



involving neighborhood residents and potential investors in the planning process. Development of the plan entailed an interactive neighborhood process that engaged citizens, City Council members, City staff, business representatives and other stakeholders.

Chapter 2 of this document outlines the plan development process in greater detail. Examples of tools utilized during the planning process included: meeting with residents, conducting a structural analysis of housing stock, reviewing existing land use and zoning

classifications, assessing physical characteristics and constraints, and holding public participation sessions.

## Physical Characteristics

The terrain within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is relatively flat with a maximum slope of 5 percent in some areas. The elevation of the area decreases slightly as one moves from the northeast corner to the southwest corner of the neighborhood. Maximum elevation is approximately 244 feet above sea level and minimum elevation is

approximately 162 feet above sea level. Portions of Arlington Road, Wilmington Road and Norman Bridge Road are located in the upper elevation areas and sections of Berwick Drive, Colfax Drive, Gaston Avenue, Davenport Drive and Gateway Park are located in low elevation areas (Figure 2).

### Historical Background

As Figure 3 illustrates, over half the land within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood was annexed by the City of Montgomery in 1927 (Figure 3). This area makes up only a small portion of the entire 1927 annexation that extends north to the State Docks, east to the Morningview Neighborhood and west to Maxwell Airforce Base. Despite large-scale physical growth, development in this area was hindered by the Great Depression that impacted the city during the late 1920s.

Signs of residential development in the Bellingrath-Cloverland neighborhood date back to the late 1930s. Plat records indicate that lots were recorded in the vicinity of Edgemont Avenue and Wilmington Road in June 1939. Additionally, plat records show similar subdivisions along Perry Street, Southmont Avenue, Gilmer Avenue and Plymouth Street during the same year. The main reason for this growth was economic prosperity that followed the Depression years. New Deal program funds were pumped into the local economy and two of the city’s airfields, Maxwell Field and Gunter Air Force Base, were expanded which created jobs for many residents.

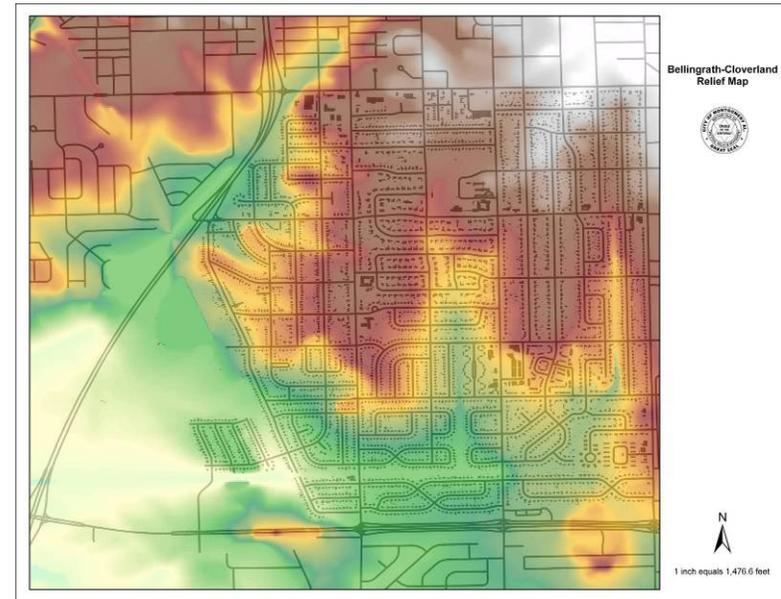


Figure 2 - Relief Map of Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood; White areas represent the highest elevations and light green areas represent the lowest elevations.

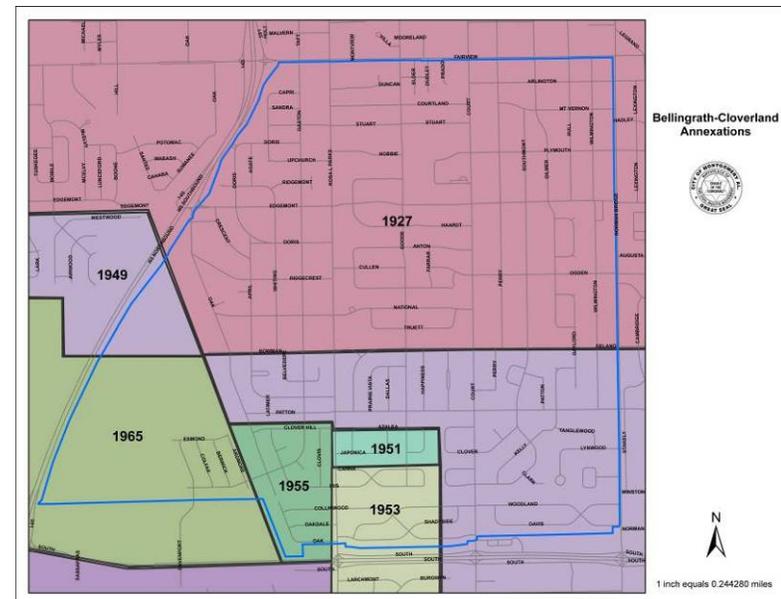
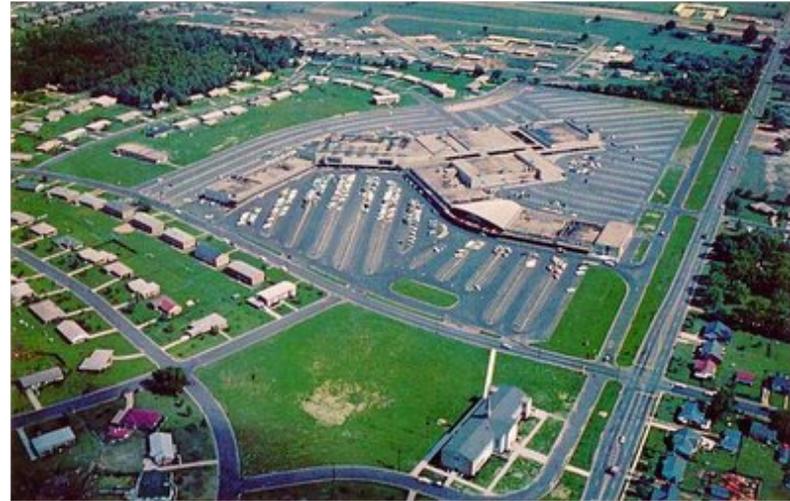


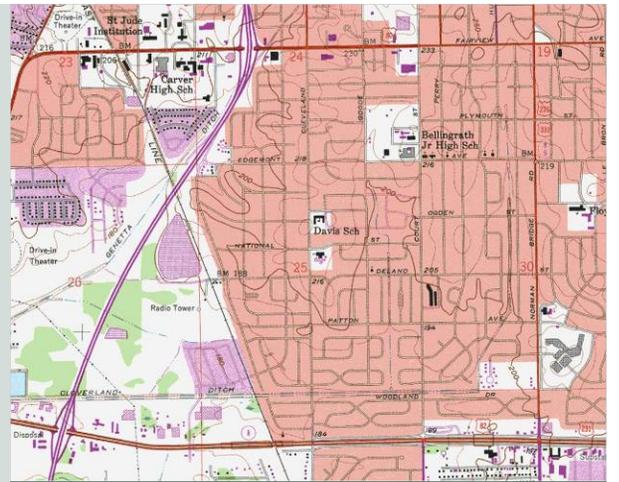
Figure 3 - Bellingrath-Cloverland Annexations, by year

Annexations also occurred in 1949, 1951, 1953, 1955 and 1965. After each annexation, growth spread further south to the Southern Boulevard. Several events helped to stimulate this growth including increases in consumer spending after World War II and the availability of FHA and VA loans. While these loans made homeownership possible for many families it incidentally created a “subdivision boom” between 1951 and 1954. In fact, sixty new subdivisions were created during this period in the City of Montgomery.

As residents moved further from the downtown area, businesses often followed. In the early 1950s Cloverland Mall and Normandale Mall were constructed as the first “shopping centers” in Montgomery. Churches and other commercial uses grew to meet the needs of upper-middle-income class residents in the area.



Normandale Mall (just outside the east border of the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood) opened in September 1954 as one of the first “shopping centers” in Montgomery.



## PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

## Neighborhood Planning Process

The City of Montgomery Planning and Development Department began working in the Bellingrath-Cloverland neighborhood in September 2006. The initial phase involved extensive field work where City planning staff surveyed the neighborhood to note: the condition of housing stock, existing land use, vacant parcels and the presence of sidewalks. Additionally, socioeconomic characteristics were collected to document changes in population, housing status, income and race (Chapter 3). Using the City's Geographic Information System, maps were created to illustrate select items. This first phase provided the foundation needed to hold a neighborhood participation session in early March 2006.

The neighborhood participation session was a critical part in formulating this plan. The meeting began with a brief discussion of existing conditions and was followed by presentations from Major H.C. Davis with the Montgomery Police Department and Eddie Hill, Jr. from the Inspections Department. Next, approximately 200 residents in attendance were divided into focus groups to identify positive and negative areas in the neighborhood. Each participant was given 10 red dots and 10 green dots to place on a map produced by the planning staff which detailed building footprints, streets, and the neighborhood boundary. Figure 4 shows the results of this exercise. Additionally, the participants provided detailed comments to explain the placements of their dots.



Figure 4- Combined results from the exercise conducted at the first neighborhood participation session.

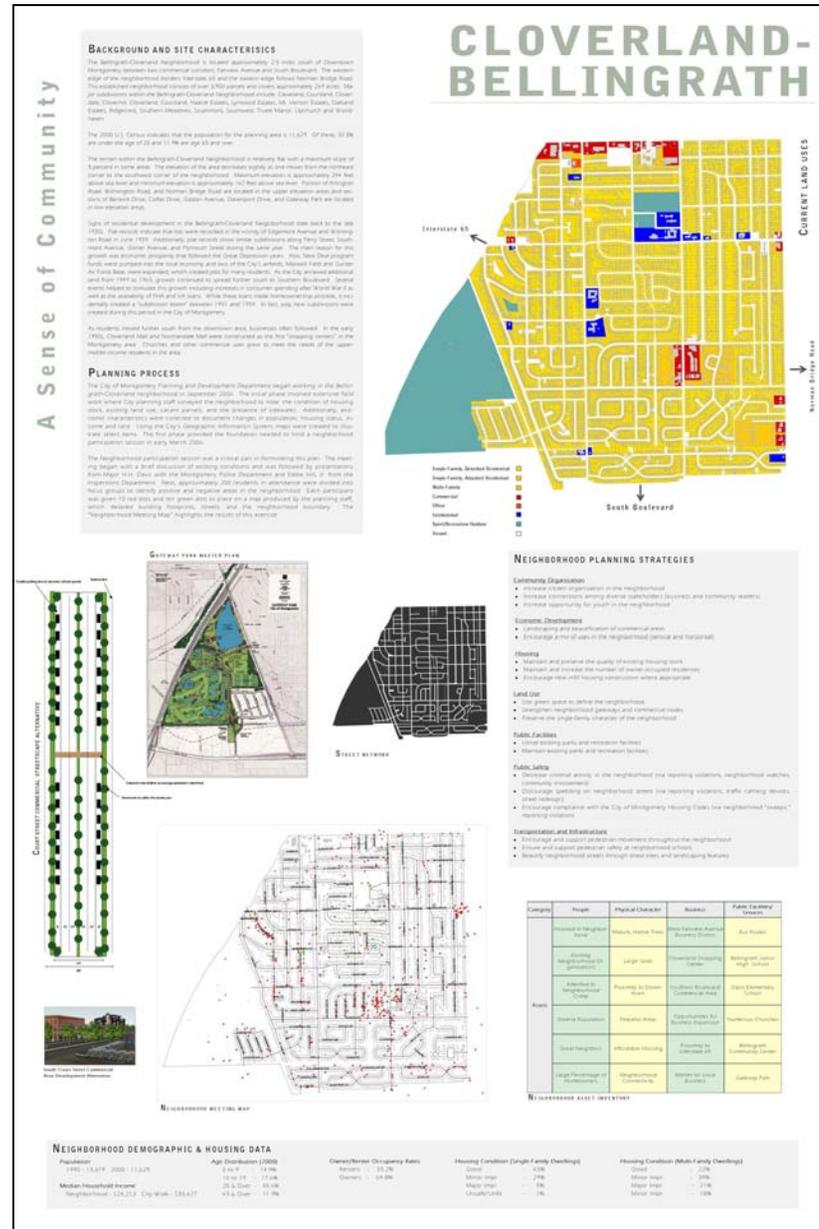
The comments received during this participation session are included in the Appendix of this document. The support and input from neighborhood residents facilitated the creation of this document and allowed city planning staff to understand neighborhood concerns on a more local level.

## Neighborhood Asset Inventory

| Category      | People                              | Physical Character        | Business                               | Public Facilities/Services     |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| <b>Assets</b> | Involved in Neighborhood            | Mature, Native Trees      | West Fairview Avenue Business District | Bus Routes                     |
|               | Existing Neighborhood Organizations | Large Yards               | Cloverland Shopping Center             | Bellingrath Junior High School |
|               | Attentive to Neighborhood Crime     | Proximity to Downtown     | Southern Boulevard Commercial Area     | Davis Elementary School        |
|               | Diverse Population                  | Peaceful Areas            | Opportunities for Business Expansion   | Numerous Churches              |
|               | Great Neighbors                     | Affordable Housing        | Proximity to Interstate 65             | Bellingrath Community Center   |
|               | Large Percentage of Homeowners      | Neighborhood Connectivity | Market for Local Business              | Gateway Park                   |

Following the neighborhood participation session, city planning staff notified residents and property owners by a postcard mailing that was sent to all property owners and residents in June 2007. The postcard noted that the plan could be viewed by several means. First, residents could go to Bellingrath Community Center (3488 South Court Street), the City of Montgomery Main Library Branch (245 High Street), or the City of Montgomery Planning and Development Department (27 Madison Avenue) to access a hard copy of the draft plan. Second, residents could view an electronic copy on the City of Montgomery's Planning and Development webpage (<http://montgomeryal.gov/depts/planning/long-range-planning.aspx>).

After a period for review, an "Open House" was held on February 4, 2008, to allow residents to view additional materials that discussed the future vision for the area. Also, hard copies of the draft plan were available for stakeholders to review. This "Open House" provided a final opportunity for planning staff to address questions and concerns regarding the content of the plan. Additionally, this meeting allowed attendees to comment on the recommendations for the planning area. The comments received during this session are located in the Appendix of this document.





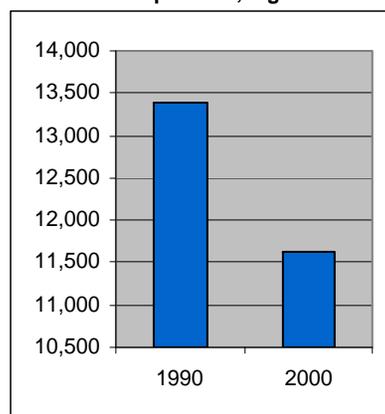
## EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

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## Population

Between 1990 and 2000, the population of the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood declined by approximately 13 percent. U.S. Census data indicates that the population of the planning area was 13,379 in 1990 and 11,629 in 2000. This is a total decrease of 1,750 persons. 45.1 percent of this total are male and 54.8 percent are female.

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Total Population, Figure 5**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

As Table 1 indicates, a large percentage of this population decline came from a decrease in children ages 0 - 9 years old. In contrast, the smallest decrease in population came from the 65 and over age category. 2000 U.S. Census data also indicates that the percentage of youth under the age of 20 in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood was approximately 32.5 percent.

This is comparable to the city-wide figure of 29.2 percent. Additionally, adults age 65 and over made up 11.9 percent of the population in 2000 compared to 11.8 percent for the City of Montgomery as a whole.

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Population by Age Group, 1990-2000 Table 1**

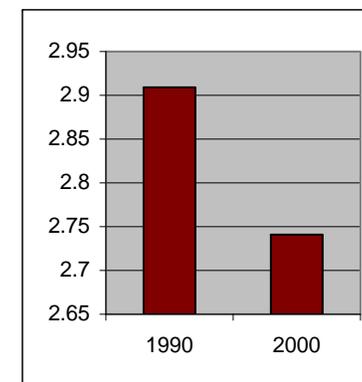
| Ages      | 1990  | 2000  | % Change |
|-----------|-------|-------|----------|
| 0 - 9     | 2,330 | 1,732 | -25.7%   |
| 10 - 19   | 2,440 | 2,050 | -16.0%   |
| 20 & Over | 7,196 | 6,462 | -10.2%   |
| 65 & Over | 1,413 | 1,385 | -2.0%    |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Household Size and Median Age

The average household size for the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood decreased from 2.91 in 1990 to 2.74 in 2000, or 5.8 percent. During the same period, the City of Montgomery's overall average household size dropped by 8.6 percent - from 2.67 to 2.44. The declines in the City of Montgomery and the neighborhood (Figure 6) average household size are attributed to a decrease in the number of school-aged children. In 2000, the median age of Bellingrath-Cloverland residents was 33.7, slightly greater than the City's median age of 32.9.

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Household Size, Figure 6**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Racial Composition

The racial composition of the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood has changed significantly from 1990 to 2000. In 1990, the percentage of white residents in the neighborhood was approximately 87.3 percent. By 2000, this figure decreased to 5.8 percent. Conversely, the percentage of black residents in 1990 was approximately 8.7 percent. By 2000, this figure increased to 93 percent (Table 2). The changes in racial composition are primarily due to out migration of white residents that has continued for a period of time. While the neighborhood has lost white residents, other minority have shown an increase from 1990 to 2000 including the Asian/Pacific Islander population and the Hispanic/Latino population.

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood  
Racial Composition, Table 2**

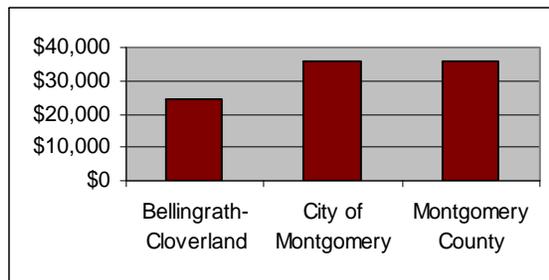
| Race                                 | 1990   | 2000   | %Change |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|
| White                                | 1,666  | 680    | -59.2%  |
| Black                                | 11,682 | 10,812 | -7.4%   |
| American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleutian | 9      | 12     | -       |
| Asian or Pacific Islander            | 7      | 33     | -       |
| Hispanic, Latino and Other           | 15     | 92     | -       |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

### Income/Employment

In 2000, the median household income for the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood was \$24,213. This is significantly less than the median household income for both the City of Montgomery and Montgomery County at \$35,627 and \$35,962, respectively (Figure 7).

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood  
Median Household Income, Figure 7**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

In 1990, approximately 24.3 percent of the population in the Bellingrath-Cloverland neighborhood lived below the poverty level. By 2000, this figure had increased to 70.7 percent. During the same time period, the number of individuals living below the poverty level in the City of Montgomery was 18.1 percent and 17.7 percent in 1990 and 2000, respectively. In 2000, nearly four times as many individuals in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood lived below the poverty level compared to the entire City of Montgomery.

Employment patterns for workers who reside in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood differ from those for the City of Montgomery population. U.S. Census data in 2000 indicates that approximately 22.2 percent of residents were employed in management, professional and related occupations; 24 percent were employed in service occupations; 25 percent were employed in sales and office occupations; 7 percent were employed in construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations; and 21.8 percent were employed in production, transportation, and material moving occupations. In contrast, U.S. Census data in 2000 indicates that the City of Montgomery had approximately 37 percent employed in management, professional and related occupations; 15.7 percent were employed in service occupations; 29.3 percent were employed in sales and office occupations; .1 percent were employed in farming, fishing and forestry occupations; 6.6 percent were employed in construction, extraction and maintenance occupations;

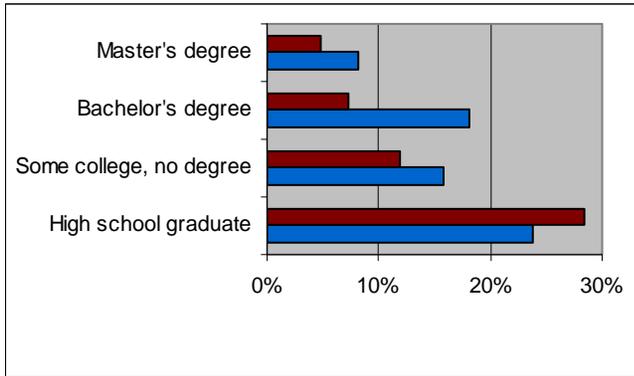
and 11.4 percent were employed in production, transportation and material moving occupations. In short, neighborhood residents held more service related and manufacturing related occupations in 2000 compared to the City's demographic.

Average travel time to work statistics from the U.S. Census in 2000 indicate that approximately 49 percent of neighborhood residents travel between 15 to 24 minutes to work. Additionally, over 8 percent travel 40 minutes or more to work. Approximately 95 percent made the commute by car, truck, or van, 2 percent used public transportation and 2 percent walked.

### Education

The Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood contains a significant number of school age children. 2000 U.S. Census data indicates that approximately 24.4 percent of the population age 3 and older are enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade. During the same time period, the City of Montgomery enrolled approximately 20.3 percent in the same grade levels. Additionally, 64.3 percent of residents in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood have obtained a high school diploma or equivalent. This is below the City figure of 80.7 percent. Also, the City exceeds the percentage who have some college, a bachelor's degree, or a master's degree compared to the neighborhood (Figure 8).

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Educational Attainment, Figure 8**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

\*Maroon - Bellingrath-Cloverland  
\*Blue - City of Montgomery

Assuming that the age distribution remains stable and out migration is minimized, the age 1 to 19 demographic will remain important within the neighborhood.

**Housing**

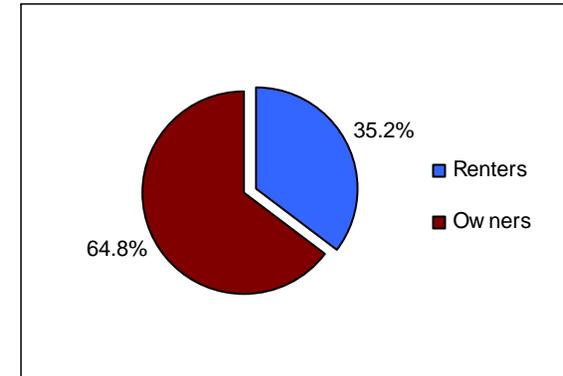
Data from the neighborhood housing survey conducted by the planning staff indicates that slightly over 92 percent of the housing stock within the Bellingrath-Cloverland neighborhood is dedicated to single-family detached dwellings. Additionally, duplex structures make up approximately 2 percent of the housing and 1 percent is used for multi-family housing.

As Figure 9 shows, 2006 housing survey data indicates that approximately 64.8 percent of the housing units within the neighborhood are owner-occupied and 35.2 percent are renter-occupied.

This owner-occupied percentage compares to the figure for the City of Montgomery at approximately 64 percent (2000 U.S. Census). The owner-occupied percentage for the neighborhood using U.S. Census data from 2000 shows that 61.8 percent of the housing units are owner-occupied. This generally reflects the findings from the housing survey. At the same time, U.S. Census data from 1990 indicates that 61.4 percent of the housing stock was owner-occupied. Over this ten-year period, there was only a slight decrease in the number of owner-occupied units within the neighborhood. This finding is encouraging and will help the neighborhood receive additional support during plan implementation

Table 3 shows the results of a housing condition survey conducted by planning staff in

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Owner/Renter Occupancy Rates in 2006, Figure 9**



Source: City of Montgomery Field Survey

2006. Approximately 65 percent of the single family units, 52 percent of the duplex units and 22 percent of the multi-family units were in good condition. The largest concentration of housing in good condition is located in the northern and central areas of the neighborhood. Furthermore, the multi-family housing, as a percentage of total

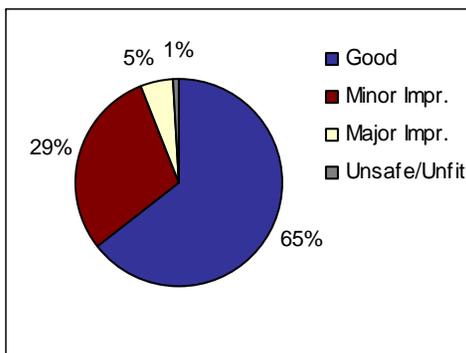
**Bellingrath-Cloverland Housing Survey, 2006**  
**Table 3**

| Housing Condition           | Single-Family |             | Duplex     |             | Multi-Family |             |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
|                             | #             | %           | #          | %           | #            | %           |
| Good                        | 3,904         | 65%         | 58         | 52%         | 81           | 22%         |
| Minor Improvements          | 1,778         | 29%         | 52         | 46%         | 144          | 39%         |
| Major Improvements          | 326           | 5%          | 2          | 2%          | 77           | 21%         |
| Unsafe/Unfit                | 49            | 1%          | -          | -           | 66           | 18%         |
| <b>Total Dwelling Units</b> | <b>6,056</b>  | <b>100%</b> | <b>112</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>368</b>   | <b>100%</b> |

housing units, are in the most deteriorated condition. Approximately 18 percent of these units are considered unsafe. The housing survey and citizen participation session indicated that housing code violations exist in many areas of the neighborhood. The most frequent problems involve litter, junk vehicles, weeds and noise. These nuisances greatly detract from the character of the area.

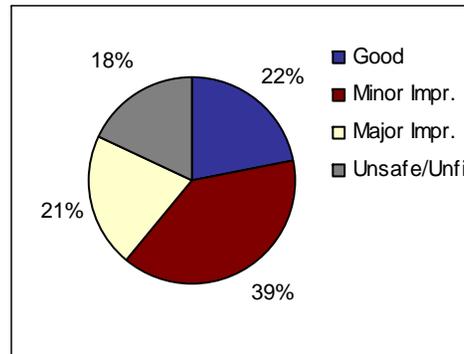
While the housing stock in the Bellingrath-Cloverland neighborhood has deteriorated, the vacancy rate has also increased. U.S. Census data from 1990 and 2000 indicates that the vacancy rate increased from 7.2 percent to 9.4 percent over the ten year period an overall increase of 33 percent. This 2000 figure is still below the vacancy rate in 2000 for the City of Montgomery and Montgomery County at 9.7 and 9.8, respectively (Figure 12).

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Structural Condition of Single-Family Dwellings, Figure 10**



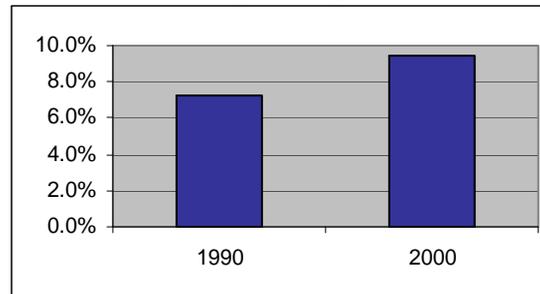
Source: City of Montgomery Field Survey

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Structural Condition of Multi-Family Dwellings, Figure 11**



Source: City of Montgomery Field Survey

**Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Vacancy Rate, Figure 12**



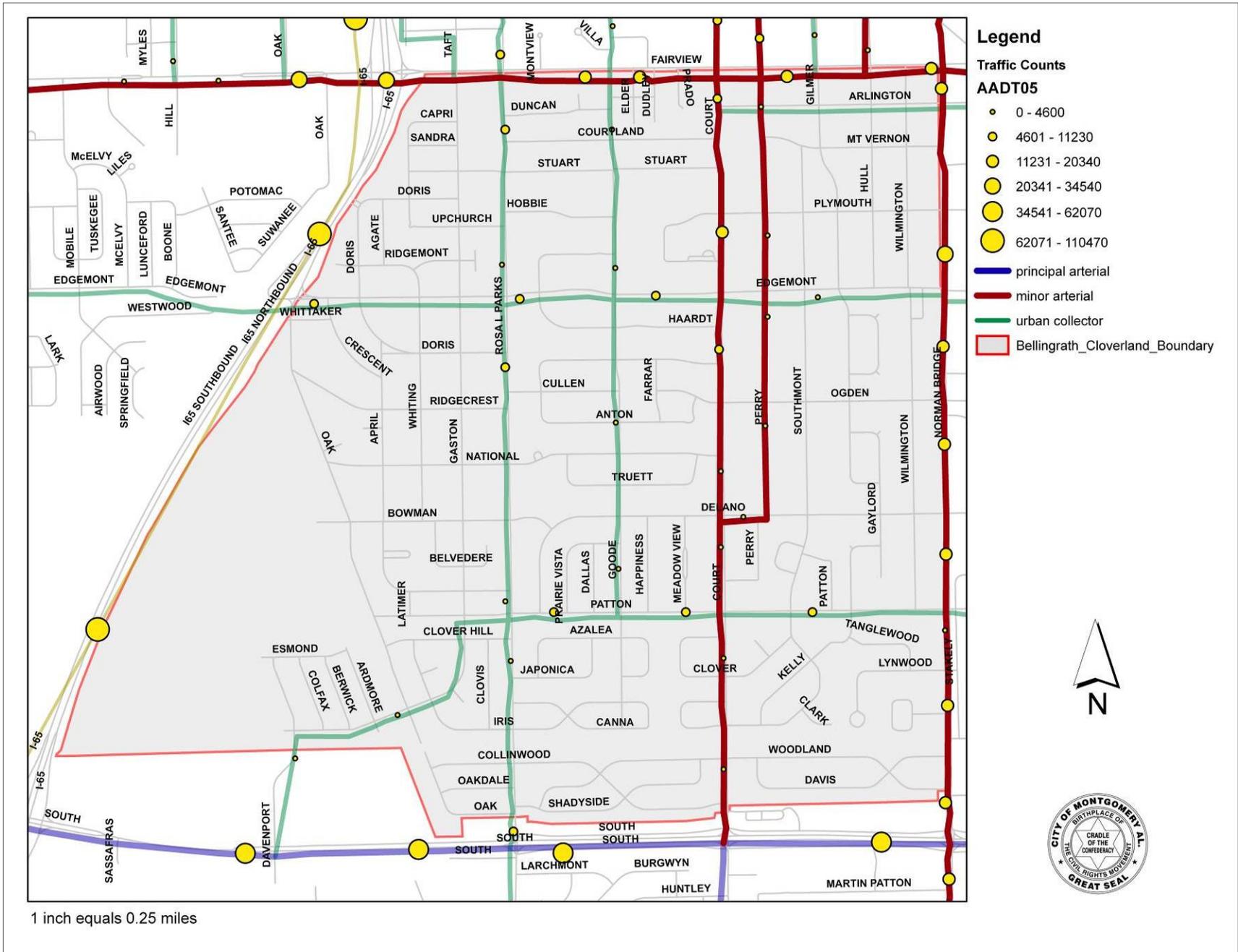
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Transportation

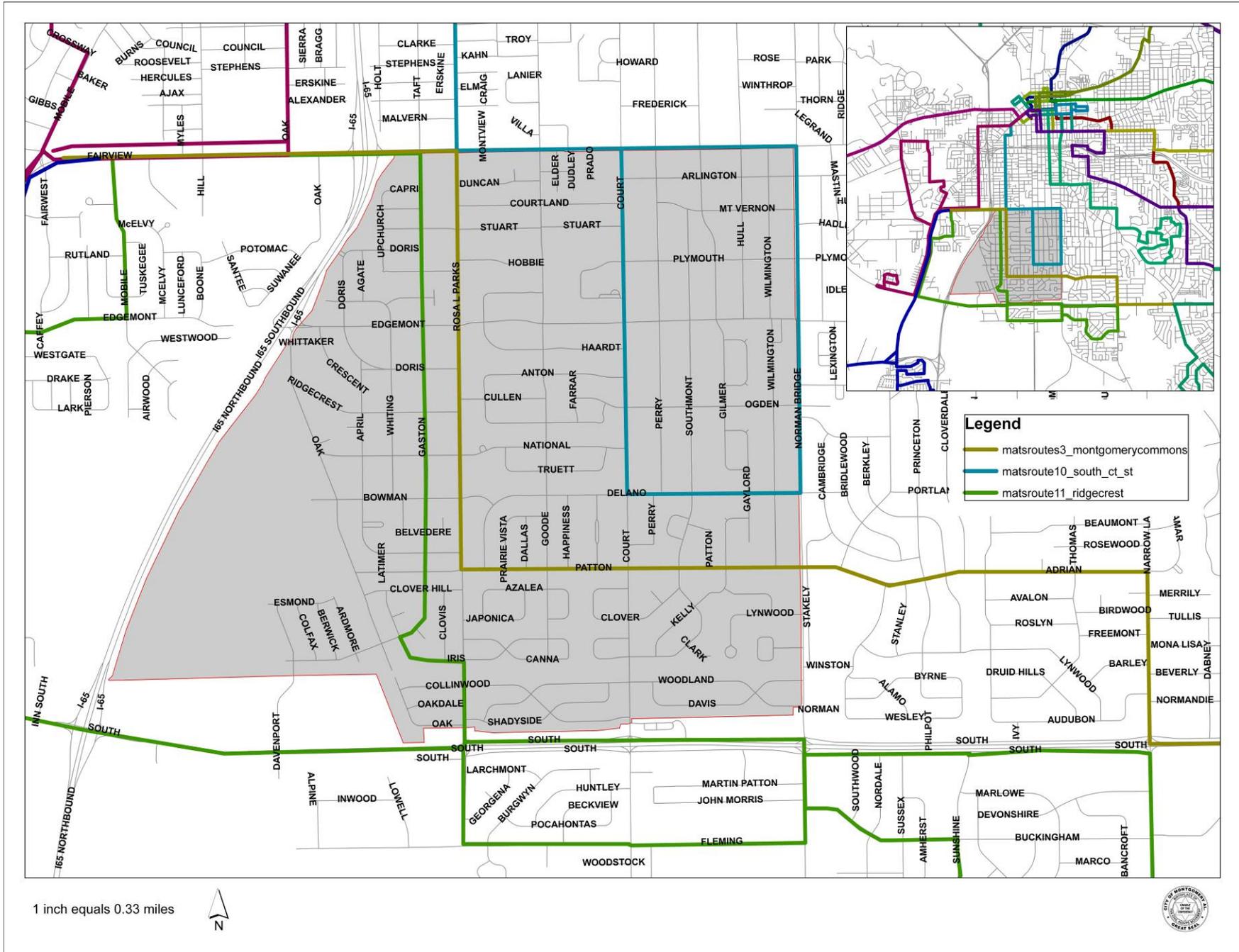
For planning and funding purposes, the U.S. Federal Highway Administration requires that streets be classified by the character and type of service they provide to an area. In general, the classification system consists of: arterial, collector, and local roads. The system is used to channel traffic within the road network in the most efficient and effective manner. Arterial roadways primarily exist to increase mobility with little consideration for land access. On the other hand, collector roadways try to balance both mobility and land access. Finally, local roads are used primarily to access land and are often found within neighborhoods. As a general rule, as one moves from the arterial classification to the local classification, allowable speed limits decrease.

Four streets within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood are classified as minor arterial roadways — Perry Street, South Court Street, Norman Bridge Road and Fairview Avenue. Fairview Avenue and Norman Bridge Road contain four lanes and Perry Street and South Court Street both contain two lanes. Fairview Avenue is a highly traveled street that connects several neighborhoods in the City to Interstate 65. Norman Bridge Road forms the eastern boundary of the neighborhood and joins Fairview Avenue to the Southern Bypass. Perry Street, although a minor arterial, carries less traffic compared to other roadways in the same road classification, ending at Delano

## Traffic Counts and Classified Roads

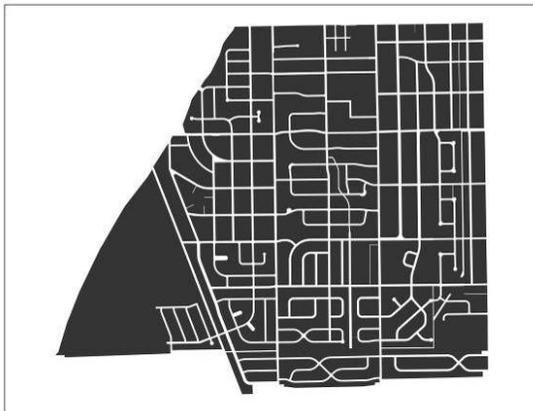


# Transit Routes



Avenue. One reason for decreased traffic on this street is that Perry Street is one-way along the northern boundary of the neighborhood, which keeps vehicles from traveling south at Fairview Avenue. South Court Street is one of the busiest streets within the neighborhood and allows for direct north-south access to South Boulevard. All other roadways in the Bellingrath Neighborhood are classified as local streets.

In general, traffic circulation in the neighborhood is adequate to meet the needs of neighborhood residents (Figure 13). Several streets form a traditional grid pattern which disperses traffic in these areas and can be found north of Delano Avenue and Bowman Street. South of this area, street design more closely resembles the type found in suburban developments. The result is a disconnected network where one street becomes the predominant travel route. Perfect examples include Oak Street, Patton Avenue and the southern portion of Rosa Parks Avenue.



Street Network Map, Figure 13

Speeding is often a result of poor street design. Possible solutions include increased police presence and traffic calming devices (i.e., textured pavement, median plantings) where traditional methods such as stop signs and stop lights are not feasible.

### Current Land Use

An analysis of current land uses in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood indicates that the predominant land use is single-family detached dwellings. Furthermore, there are several parcels occupied by duplex and multi-family structures. The duplex structures are found along Crescent Road, Edgemont Avenue and Ridgemont Avenue, and the multi-family units are scattered along Edgemont Avenue, Mount Vernon Drive, Patton Avenue and Norman Bridge Road.

With a few exceptions, the commercial areas are located along Fairview Avenue, Norman Bridge Road the south central portion of South Court Street and Southern Boulevard. Additionally, commercial properties are located on the west side of Edgemont Avenue, before the Interstate 65 Interchange. The Fairview Business District is quite viable and contains a variety of shops including drug stores, beauty supply shops, a farmer's market, restaurants, and grocery stores. The Cloverland Shopping District also contains numerous shops, including a grocery store.

There are three existing park and recreation areas in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood. The first is Bellingrath Field, found west of South Court Street behind

Bellingrath Junior High School. Also, Gateway Park is located along the eastern boundary of the neighborhood. Finally, Ridgcrest Park is located off of April Street in the western portion of the neighborhood.

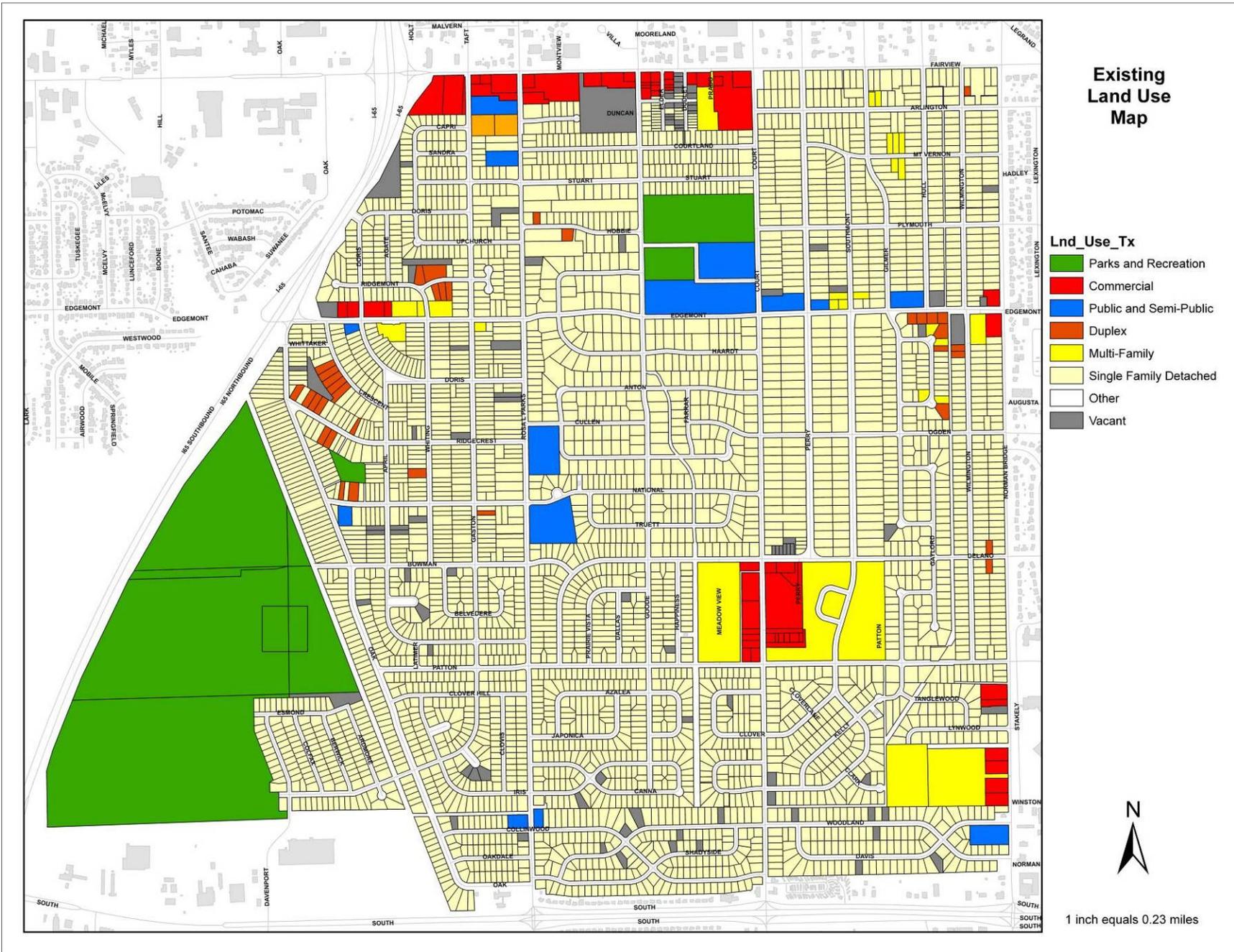
Another land use scattered throughout the neighborhood is public and semi-public facilities. At least ten churches are located within the planning boundary. Three of these religious institutions located along Edgemont Avenue and four are located along Rosa Parks Avenue. Additionally, the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is home to two public schools, Davis Elementary School and Bellingrath Junior High School. Davis Elementary is centrally located in the neighborhood off Rosa Parks Avenue and Bellingrath Junior High School is located in the north central portion of the neighborhood off South Court Street. Finally, the City of Montgomery's Fire Station No. 12 is located along the southernmost portion of Norman Bridge Road within the neighborhood boundary.

Vacant parcels exist throughout the neighborhood and are shown in grey on the current land use map (next page). Residential infill is ideal for these vacant parcels and provides immediate opportunities for redevelopment.

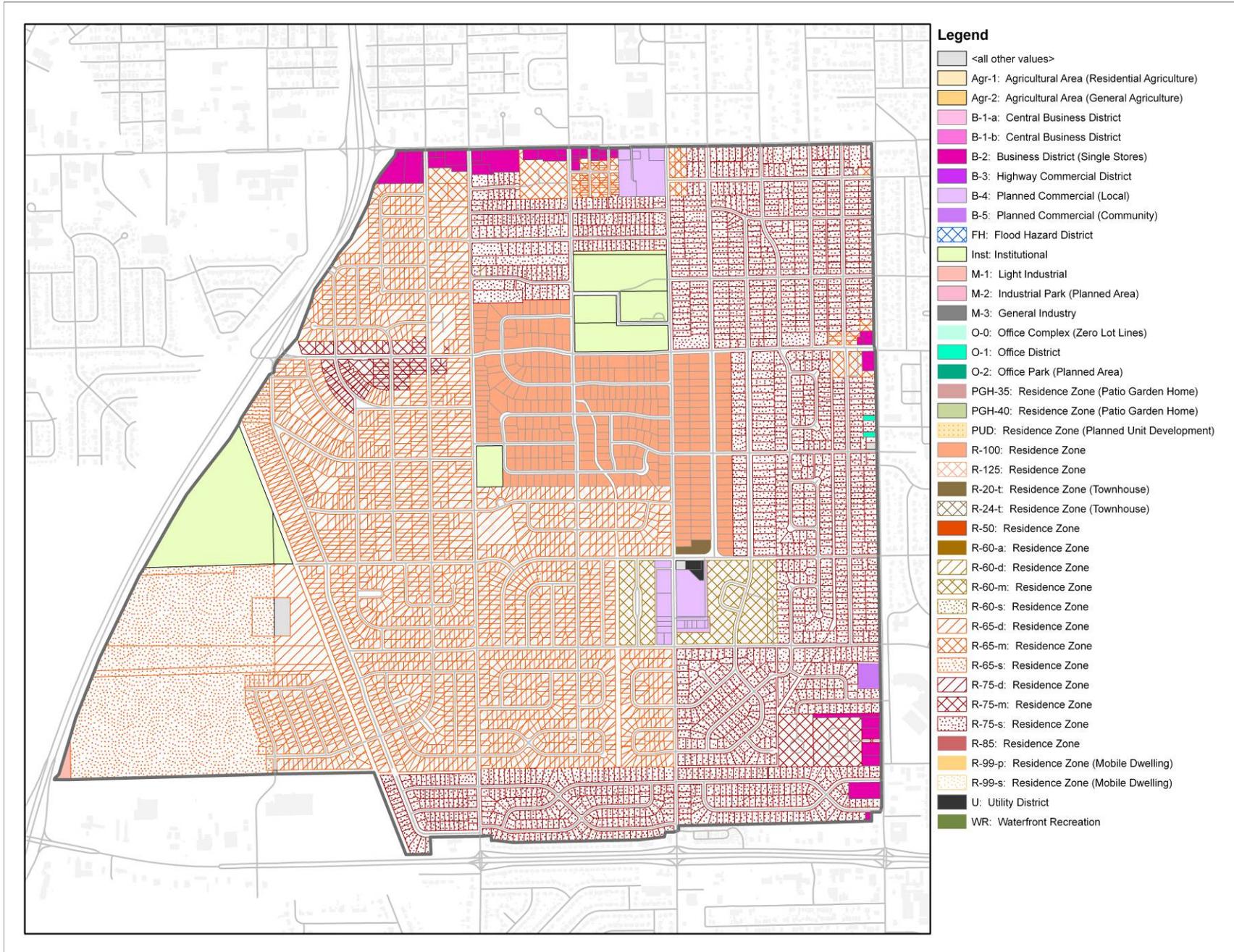
### Neighborhood Zoning

Over 97 percent of the parcels within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood are zoned for residential use. Of these parcels, approximately 52 percent allow duplex and multi-family structures.

# Bellingrath-Cloverland Current Land Use



## Bellingrath-Cloverland Zoning



However, most of the area maintains a single-family detached residential character.

Three areas in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood are zoned for commercial use. The area along Fairview Avenue allows B-2 (Individual Stores) and B-4 (Local Shopping) zoning, the commercial area off of South Court Street allows B-4 (Local Shopping) zoning, the east edge of Edgemont Avenue allows B-2 (Individual Stores) zoning, and the southern end of Norman Bridge Road allows B-2 (Individual Stores) and B-5 (Shopping Communtiy) zoning. While B-2 allows three story structures and an increase in maximum building area, B-4 and B-5 limit the allowable height to two stories and decrease the maximum building area.

Additionally, several parcels along Norman Bridge Road are zoned for office use, specifically O-1 (Office District). This zone allows a number of uses including: business/professional offices, hospitals, nursing homes, parking lots, coffee shops, and barber shops.

Institutional zones are also found within the neighborhood. Some of these include Bellingrath Junior High School, Bellingrath Field, and Davis Elementary School. A portion of Gateway Park is also zoned institutional.

### **Parks and Recreation Facilities**

Gateway Park is the largest recreation area located in the neighborhood, covering approximately 180 acres. The park features a nine-hole golf course and clubhouse. Furthermore, the clubhouse includes a Pro Shop and full service grill. Green fees start at twelve dollars for nine holes and increase to twenty dollars for eighteen holes on the weekend.

Ridgecrest Park is also located in the neighborhood on April Street. This four acre park contains picnic tables, a playground, and restrooms. The park can benefit from an increase in neighborhood activity. Currently, the only entrance to this park is off April Street. Increased awareness and use of this facility can help realize the potential of this asset.

Bellingrath Field and Bellingrath Community Center are also located in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood.



This community center and the connecting recreation fields cover approximately 20 acres containing two baseball fields, one softball field, and a football field. Bellingrath Community Center is a viable neighborhood asset and provides various activites for youth including basketball.

### **Educational Facilities**

Two schools are located in the neighborhood, Davis Elementary School and Bellingrath Junior High School. Davis Elementary School is located at 3605 Rosa Parks Avenue and enrolls approximtely 471 students. Additionally, Bellingrath Junior High School is located at 3488 South Court Street and enrolls approximately 541 students.

### **Public Safety Facilities**

Two fire stations serve the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood, Fire Station No. 12 located at 3950 Norman Bridge Road and Fire Station No. 10 located at 1931 Rosa Parks Avenue. The City of Montgomery Fire Department serves the City with 16 Class-A Pumps, 6 Ladder Trucks, 6 Paramedic Trucks, 2 Hazardous Materials Teams, and a Heavy Rescue Truck. Additionally, the City maintains a ISO Class 2 rating, which assists homeowners in obtaining low fire insurance rates.

The City of Montgomery Police Department provides several services both to the City at-large and the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood.

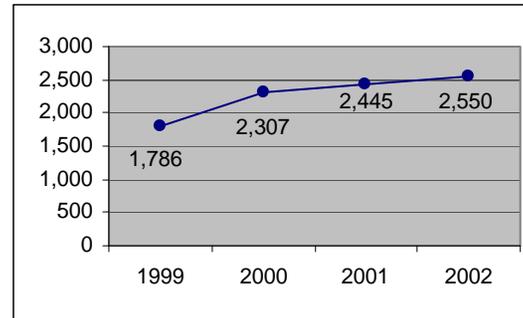
Eight divisions support these efforts and include: the Administrative Division, the Community-Oriented Policing Division, the Detective Division, the Juvenile Division, the Patrol Division, the Planning and Technology Division, the Special Operations Division, and the Training and Recruitment Division.

Furthermore, the Police Department sponsors two programs, the “Citizens Police Academy” and “Volunteers in Police Service” to build trust and respect between the department and citizens. The “Citizens’ Police Academy” consists of a series of classes held on Tuesdays for 10 weeks from 6 pm - 9 pm including topics such as: Criminal Investigations, Patrol Operations, Communication, Crime Prevention, and the function of Courts. After completion of the course, participants have working knowledge of the City of Montgomery Police Department’s personnel and policies. Another program to assist the City of Montgomery Police Department is called “Volunteers in Police Service” (VIPS). This program allows volunteers to work as partners with police personnel to free up officers for higher priority duties. These duties can include administrative work, neighborhood patrol, school patrol, and special events staffing. Each volunteer uses a distinctively marked patrol vehicle while fulfilling some of these duties.

One major concern in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is criminal activity. In fact, comments from the first public participation session indicated that crime this was a chief concern for residents in attendance.

While criminal concerns are often a matter of perception, data from the City of Montgomery Police Department indicates that citizen concerns are not unfounded.

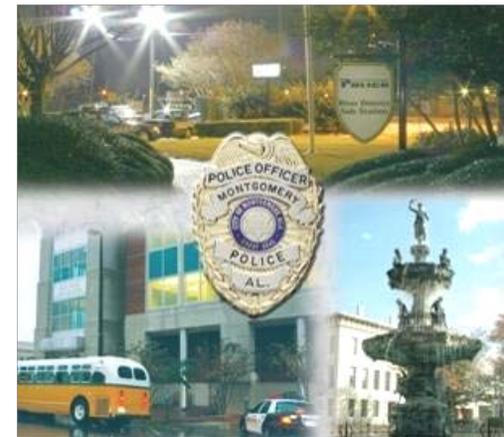
**Bellingrath-Cloverland Criminal Offense Statistics, Figure 14**



Source: City of Montgomery Police Department Annual Reports

For reporting and patrol purposes, the City of Montgomery is divided into 24 Police Districts. The Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is located entirely within the boundaries of Police District Ten. Figure 14 shows the number of criminal offenses reported in this district from 1999 to 2002. During this time period, the number of criminal offenses reported increased by over 42 percent.

Figures for 2003 and 2004 are unavailable from the MPD annual online reports, but in 2005, the number of reported criminal offenses decreased to 2,245. Although this is a noticeable decrease, the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood remained the second highest crime district for reported criminal offenses in the entire City.



### Sanitation/Recycling

Sanitation and recycling services are provided in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood by the City of Montgomery Sanitation Department. Garbage collection is provided twice per week and trash and recycling services are provided once per week.



THE  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
PLAN

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The Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood Plan addresses the concerns and desires of the citizens as expressed in community meetings and public participation sessions. To assist with plan implementation, these concerns and desires were translated into issues and recommendations to guide the planning process. These issues and recommendations are divided into seven key areas:

- ◆ Community Organization
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Land Use
- ◆ Public Facilities
- ◆ Public Safety
- ◆ Transportation and Infrastructure

### **Community Organization**

Community organization is an important form of social capital that binds a community together. A political scientist from Harvard University, named Robert Putnam, has authored several works on this topic. His most famous article, “Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital” discusses what he perceives as a decline in social capital in America. His thesis is that every civic, social, and fraternal organization has undergone a massive decline in membership since the 1960s. To reverse this trend, he advocates that societies should increase both bonding capital and bridging capital. Bonding capital increases when one interacts with those from similar backgrounds, including age, race, and religion.

In contrast, bridging capital is what occurs when one interacts with others who are different from one’s self. To increase social capital in neighborhoods, it is essential that residents interact and organize with everyone to achieve a common purpose.



With this discussion in mind, community organization and collective action are central to successful implementation of the strategies suggested in this plan. Currently, three neighborhood organizations exist in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Planning Area, including the Haardt Estates Residents’ Association, the South Hull District Association, and the Working in Neighborhoods Through Group Support (W.I.N.G.S) Association. While these groups are continually working to improve the neighborhood, residents of the planning area could benefit by increasing the number of associations within the planning area. Although all neighborhood groups should interact with each other to achieve a common purpose, associations covering a smaller geography can encourage participation by increasing the legitimacy of each organization.

The idea here is that residents are more likely to participate in the activities and meetings of a neighborhood association if they feel that the actions of the association personally affect them. Furthermore, currently not all streets in the neighborhood are covered by an existing neighborhood association. Efforts should be made to include everyone in the neighborhood into an organized association. Addressing these issues will help to build the social capital required to facilitate successful plan implementation.

In addition to the homeowners associations, the West Fairview Business Coalition represents various businesses located along Fairview Avenue. Just as the interaction between the individual neighborhood associations is essential, so is the interaction between business associations and the neighborhood associations. Support of local businesses will help strengthen the local economy.

In order for the neighborhood associations to maintain their impetus throughout the planning process, it is important that each organization work to recruit strong leaders to serve as board members of the organization. Continued success will require a dedicated president to organize meeting activities and encourage resident involvement. Furthermore, active participation will allow residents to assume leadership roles when association elections occur.

The issues and recommendations that follow were formulated from neighborhood meetings and the neighborhood participation sessions.

**Issue #1 – Increase citizen organization in the neighborhood.**

**Recommendations**

- Reach out to residents not covered by existing neighborhood organizations and include them in these organizations where feasible.
- For areas within the neighborhood where inclusion in an existing neighborhood organization is not feasible, efforts should be made to organize residents into new neighborhood associations. Resources are available through organizations such as B.O.N.D.S. (Building Our Neighborhoods for Development and Success), see Appendix for contact information.
- Organize regular events within the neighborhood through neighborhood associations to increase resident participation throughout the planning area. Activities can include neighborhood “cleanup days” and events to build social capital.
- Create a “Beautification Award of the Month” program through the neighborhood associations to encourage beautification of residences in the planning area.
- Create a packet of materials for new homeowners within the specific neighborhood associations to include items such as an application for membership, a newsletter of events and contact numbers.

**Issue #2 – Increase connections among diverse stakeholders.**

**Recommendations**

- Encourage exchange between business organizations and neighborhood associations. Positive relationships between local businesses and residents help to create an environment for local economic growth.
- Invite speakers to neighborhood association meetings that can assist the neighborhood with plan implementation.
- Hold neighborhood meetings on a bi-annual basis to include all neighborhood organizations and unrepresented residents within the planning area. Reassess the implementation of suggested recommendations addressed in the Neighborhood Plan.

**Issue #3 – Increase opportunity for youth in the neighborhood.**

**Recommendations**

- Use neighborhood associations meetings and newsletters as a way to advertise jobs/volunteer opportunities for youth in the neighborhood.
- Work with local churches, nonprofit organizations, and business leaders in the area to determine the feasibility of a neighborhood housing rehabilitation program where youth provide key support. As a part of the process, determine the

skill sets and funding needed to successfully operate the program.

- Work with existing recreational facilities to advertise opportunities for youth and discuss additional options to increase youth participation.



**Economic Development**

Economic development is an important tool for every geographic unit, including neighborhoods. While visible economic strategies revolve around business recruitment, it is well known that existing businesses account for over 85 percent of new job growth in an area. Additionally, 75 percent of this increase comes from small businesses. This section focuses on small businesses in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood and ways to encourage the growth and success of these enterprises.

As noted in the “Existing Conditions Assessment” section of this document, the primary commercial areas within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood are located along Fairview Avenue and the central portions of South Court Street. Some of these businesses include grocery stores, retail establishments, chain dining establishments, and gas stations. The strategies identified in this section attempt to identify ways to strengthen existing businesses within the neighborhood and increase the marketability of these key areas in the future.

Several strategies exist to help existing businesses within the neighborhood. The first approach uses available resources offered through organizations such as the Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Development Center at Alabama State University. The Montgomery Area Chamber of Commerce assists small businesses through their Small Business Resource Center. While the center caters to new and prospective businesses, the center also offers mentoring, financial planning, and marketing services to existing small businesses. Also, the Small Business Development Center offers provides technical and management assistance to small businesses and prospective business owners. Some of the programs offered by this center include: small business tax workshops, general business training workshops, and training in procurement. A list of resources is included in the Appendix of this plan.

An additional way to assist existing businesses within the neighborhood is to form neighborhood business associations. At current, the West Fairview Avenue Business Coalition is the only business organization in the area. Organizations such as this can unite business owners in an area to create strengthened commercial districts.

In addition to organization and education, business owners in an area can create special units known as Business Improvement Districts (BID) if participation in a business organization is strong enough to warrant this approach. It is important to note that a BID is most successful in viable commercial districts that are well established. In short, a BID is an organized group of property owners in a commercial district who tax themselves to raise money for neighborhood improvement. These improvements can include things such as security, curb and sidewalk maintenance, and landscaping. After a BID has been formed by petitioning the city, all members within the district boundary are required to pay an assessment. Once this assessment is obtained from the collection of taxes, the amount is distributed back to BID management. Despite unpopularity because of increases in taxation, BID’s are a powerful tool for dedicated business owners desiring improvement of their commercial areas.

Although communities can organize and educate themselves in effort to increase the success of local businesses, redevelopment is another option for increasing economic opportunity in a given area.

#### **Ten Principles of a Traditional Neighborhood Development**

- 1. Walkability**
- 2. Connectivity**
- 3. Mixed-use and Diversity**
- 4. Mixed Housing**
- 5. Quality Architecture and Urban Design**
- 6. Traditional Neighborhood Structure**
- 7. Increased Density**
- 8. Smart Transportation**
- 9. Sustainability**
- 10. Quality of Life**

As noted in the “Existing Conditions Assessment,” current land uses within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood are primarily dedicated to single-family dwellings. One notable exception is the shopping district along South Court Street. In order to take advantage of underutilized properties in this area, an effort should eventually be made to redevelop this area into a mixed-use “neighborhood center.”

Under the current zoning ordinance, there are two ways to encourage mixed-use neighborhood development. The first way is by using the B-1-a and B-1-b zones, which allow for mixed residential and retail uses. Additionally, the City of Montgomery passed the SmartCode in late 2006. This form-based code allows areas exceeding 40 acres in size to construct Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND’s). TND’s allow for a multitude of uses including office, residential (single and multi-family), and commercial.

Use of the SmartCode encourages walkable neighborhoods which can provide residents with many of their daily needs.

Currently, the commercial areas along South Court Street are less than the forty acres required to construct a TND project. However, two multi-family housing complexes (one to the east and one to the west) are in dilapidated condition and can benefit from redevelopment. If acquired, both of these properties would provide the additional land needed to construct a TND project under the SmartCode.



The illustration that follows is an example of a TND design by Duany Plater-Zyberg at “The Village at Hendrix College” located in Conway, Arkansas. As the master plan illustrates, civic space and mixed uses (residential and commercial) are an integral part of a TND development.



Again, the issues and recommendations that follow were formulated from neighborhood meetings and the neighborhood participation session.

### **Issue #1 – Landscaping and beautification of commercial areas**

#### **Recommendations**

- Use business and neighborhood association meetings as a medium for discussing the beautification of commercial areas.
- Organize “Cleanup Days” for commercial districts to improve the appearance of the area. Consider using youth as a possible labor source.
- Discuss the long-term prospect of landscaping commercial areas in the neighborhood. Research possible funding sources to assist with beautification efforts.

- Institute a “Business Beautification Award of the Month” program where neighborhood improvements are highlighted through signage and newsletters.

### **Issue #2 – Encourage mixed-use development in the neighborhood**

#### **Recommendations**

- Identify key areas in the neighborhood that can benefit from pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development.
- Distribute the Neighborhood Plan to developers expressing the desire of residents to include mixed-use development along key commercial corridors.



South Court Street Commercial District with the addition of mixed-use structures and an enhanced streetscape. Note the parking area masked by landscaping. The “pedestrian experience” is enhanced by street design and building form.

## Housing

As noted in the “Existing Conditions Assessment,” portion of this document, the predominant land use in the neighborhood is single-family housing. The table to the right shows the condition of all housing units in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood. While 62 percent of the housing units in the planning area are in “good” condition, 30



percent are in need of “minor improvements.” With this in mind, there is a need to assist homeowners in repairing these minor problems to enhance the area and avert any decrease in housing condition. Several resources are available, both through the City of Montgomery and other non-profit organizations to address these issues. Two of these programs include the “Montgomery Home Rehabilitation Program” administered through the Community Development Division of the Planning and Development Department and the Alabama State University Home Rehabilitation Program. Contact information for both of these resources can be found in the Appendix of this document.

While both of these programs offer assistance for home rehabilitation, it is important to remember that there are many qualifications to meet established program requirements. Some of these include: living in the dwelling for at least 12 months, meeting income guidelines established by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, providing proof of homeownership, and providing proof of income for all individuals living in the home.

Another option to address minor housing improvements needed within the neighborhood is to use existing community organizations/associations to sponsor “Repair Days” in the neighborhood. Using the knowledge and skills that exist in the neighborhood can help provide home rehabilitation services without significant cost and build the social capital needed for successful plan implementation.

Approximately 2 percent of the housing units within the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood are considered unfit or unsafe.

| Housing Condition           | Housing Units |             |
|-----------------------------|---------------|-------------|
|                             | #             | %           |
| Good                        | 4,042         | 62%         |
| Minor Improvements          | 1,974         | 30%         |
| Major Improvements          | 405           | 6%          |
| Unsafe/Unfit                | 115           | 2%          |
| <b>Total Dwelling Units</b> | <b>6,536</b>  | <b>100%</b> |

The earlier housing condition assessment noted that many of these structures are multi-family units and include two multi-family structures off South Court Street mentioned in the “Economic Development” section of this chapter. Given the condition of these structures, demolition should be pursued. Likewise, all unsafe properties that are unsafe/unfit should be reported to the City of Montgomery Property Maintenance Division within the Inspections Department.

Another concern mentioned by residents at the neighborhood planning session was an increase in rental housing in the neighborhood. However, parcel data analysis indicates that just over 35 percent of the housing units in the neighborhood are renter-occupied. This data closely corresponds to the figure reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000. Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau indicates that from 1990 to 2000, the number of rental units within the neighborhood has only slightly increased.



Infill housing can take many forms, but one should consider the local architecture and scale in a given area of the neighborhood.

These figures are encouraging and are an asset to the neighborhood. In areas that contain higher proportions of rental properties, efforts should be made to encourage their participation in neighborhood associations/organizations.

### **Issue #1 – Maintain and preserve the quality of existing housing stock**

#### **Recommendations**

- Distribute information to homeowners regarding housing rehabilitation programs to improve the existing housing stock.
- Determine the feasibility of a youth housing rehabilitation program to provide minor housing improvements (see also Community Organization, Issue #3).
- Encourage homeownership in the neighborhood through educational programs and training courses for first-time homebuyers.

### **Issue #2 – Maintain and increase the number of owner-occupied residences**

#### **Recommendations**

- Encourage homeownership in the neighborhood through educational programs and training courses for first-time homebuyers (see also Housing, Issue #3).
- Support infill development in residential areas of the neighborhood to decrease the number of vacant parcels throughout the planning area.

### **Issue #3 – Encourage new infill housing construction**

#### **Recommendations**

- Support neighborhood housing rehabilitation initiatives (see also Housing, Issue #1).
- Create a “Beautification Award of the Month” program through the neighborhood associations to encourage beautification of residences within the neighborhood (see also Community Organization, Issue #1).
- Maintain a database of vacant parcels within the neighborhood and update the information at least every three years.
- Support and encourage the demolition of unsafe properties that are not suitable for reuse or rehabilitation.



### **Land Use**

As mentioned in the “Existing Conditions Assessment” chapter of this document, the predominant land use in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is single-family detached dwellings. Nevertheless, commercial areas are located along Fairview Avenue and the central portion of South Court Street. With this in mind, an important element of this plan is to protect the single-family character of the neighborhood. To accomplish this task, it is recommended that mixed-use development be incorporated into existing commercial areas to provide a proper balance between single family housing units, multi-family housing units, and commercial uses suitable for the neighborhood.

Another issue raised by residents during the neighborhood participation session was a lack of green space in the neighborhood. With the exception of Ridgecrest Park, Gateway Park and Bellingrath Field, green space is confined to the northern and western portions of the planning area. To encourage more green space in the neighborhood, this plan recommends that residents identify specific areas that can serve this purpose within the planning area.

Gateways and commercial nodes are also important for neighborhood identity and revitalization. Gateways are best described as streets or paths that serve as mental markers to let travelers know they entering an area.

While gateways are often shaped by land use and street design, physical markers such as signs, lampposts, and plantings can help define these areas. Alternatively, nodes are centers of activity that travelers move both to and from. These centers are often defined by a condensation of uses or green space. Mixed-use development and centrally located green space can serve this function within the neighborhood. This plan recommends that neighborhood residents identify gateways and commercial nodes within the planning area and use these as a focus for revitalization.

**Issue #1 – Use green space to define the neighborhood**

**Recommendations**

- Identify areas within the neighborhood that can benefit from the addition of green space (see also Housing, Issue #3).
- Consider the creation of a land trust to allow dedications and conservation easements to be used for privately or publicly owned neighborhood parks. Income tax deductions may be available for eligible candidates.

**Issue #2 – Strengthen neighborhood gateways and commercial nodes**

**Recommendations**

- Identify key neighborhood gateways and commercial nodes and work to redevelop and beautify these areas.

- Research possible funding sources to be used for enhancing neighborhood gateways and commercial nodes.
- Distribute the Neighborhood Plan to developers and elected officials to encourage the redevelopment and beautification of neighborhood gateways and commercial nodes.

**Issue #3 – Preserve the single-family character of the neighborhood**

**Recommendations**

- Study neighborhood zoning to ensure that multi-family housing units are placed in appropriate locations within the neighborhood
- Encourage mixed-use development in key areas to meet multi-family housing needs while protecting the single-family character of areas unsuitable for such development.
- Distribute the Neighborhood Plan to developers, elected officials, and appointed officials to express the desire of neighborhood residents to preserve the single-family character of the neighborhood.



“Green space” in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood is limited to three areas.

**Public Facilities**

There are several public facilities located in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood including Bellingrath Community Center, Fire Station #12 (on Norman Bridge Road), Bellingrath Junior High School and Ridgecrest Park. The residents who attended the neighborhood participation session in March 2007 made several notes regarding the public facilities element. Three of the most frequently mentioned comments at this meeting dealt with Gateway Park, opportunities for youth in the neighborhood, and a desire to participate in the planning process for the new Bellingrath Junior High School. The recommendations contained in this plan element focus on using existing recreational facilities and parks in the neighborhood.

Also, as discussed in the “Land Use” portion of this plan, additional green space can benefit the neighborhood over the long-term. More short-term actions should include discussing opportunities for the revitalization of Ridgecrest Park.

Gateway Park was discussed as a source of concern by several residents at the neighborhood participation session. While the park borders the western portion of the neighborhood boundary, residents felt that the railroad physically divided the park from the rest of the neighborhood.



Gateway Park, Preliminary Master Plan, 2003

While this is currently the case, the Gateway Park Preliminary Master Plan shows a neighborhood entrance to the park from Bowman Street. Additionally, later phases of the Gateway Park Preliminary Master Plan show the inclusion of basketball courts, tennis courts, multi-purpose fields, a walking trail and ball fields. The neighborhood will benefit from this facility when construction on all phases is complete.

As noted, opportunities for youth are also a concern for neighborhood residents. Oftentimes, residents are not aware of the opportunities available to youth. Therefore, a short-term approach to increasing youth participation in local activities is to advertise these events through established neighborhood associations, churches, and community newsletters. Coordination among all public and semi-private organizations will be essential to increasing youth participation in local activities.

**Issue #1 – Utilize existing parks and recreation facilities**

**Recommendations**

- Work with existing recreational facilities to increase awareness of programs and activities available to neighborhood residents.
- Advertise park and recreation events at neighborhood association meetings and in neighborhood association newsletters.

**Issue #2 – Maintain existing parks and recreation facilities**

**Recommendations**

- Discuss opportunities for Ridgecrest Park to increase the desirability of this site.
- Work with City Staff to develop a conceptual plan for Ridgecrest Park.



Davis Elementary School on Rosa Parks Ave.

**Public Safety**

Issues related to public safety are a major concern for residents in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood. At the neighborhood public participation session, specific problems mentioned include: criminal activity, traffic violations and housing code violations. While efforts to alleviate crime and housing deterioration require the assistance of the City of Montgomery Police and Inspections Departments, all neighborhood residents must be committed to creating a safe environment in effort to implement the recommendations of this plan.

A thesis developed by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling illustrates the importance of community responsibility in reducing crime in an area. This thesis, called the “Broken Window Theory,” explains the signaling function of neighborhood characteristics, where a sequence of events typically occurs in a deteriorating neighborhood. The sequence is: 1) evidence of decay (accumulated trash, broken windows, deteriorated buildings) remains in the neighborhood for an extended period of time, 2) decay results in residents who feel vulnerable and begin to withdraw from the neighborhood, 3) residents become less willing to intervene to maintain public order or address physical deterioration, 4) criminal offenders intensify their illegal activities, 5) residents become more fearful and further withdraw from neighborhood activities and 6) offenders from outside the area perceive that the area is vulnerable to criminal activity. As the “Broken Window Theory” illustrates, crime prevention strategies and community involvement are at the heart of maintaining safe neighborhoods.

To assist neighborhood residents, the City of Montgomery Police Department sponsors two programs to encourage citizen involvement in community policing. The “Citizens Police Academy” and “Volunteers in Police Service” were created to build trust and respect between the Montgomery Police Department and citizens. More detailed information regarding these programs can be found in the “Existing Conditions Assessment”

- Neighborhood Strategies to Reduce or Deter Crime**
- Quick replacement of broken windows
  - Prompt removal of abandoned vehicles
  - Fast clean up of litter and garbage
  - Quick graffiti removal
  - Finding appropriate gathering places for youth
  - Fresh paint on buildings
  - Clean sidewalks and street gutters

section of this document. Moreover, the City of Montgomery Crime Prevention Bureau assists neighborhood and business groups in their effort to establish Neighborhood and Business Watch programs.

As noted earlier, housing code violations are also a major concern for neighborhood residents. The housing condition survey indicated that several structures in the planning area are in unsafe/unfit condition. While it is ideal to rehabilitate housing to prevent deterioration, demolition of unsafe structures should be pursued to provide a safe environment for residents and law enforcement officers. Additionally, neighborhood residents are encouraged to report housing code violations to the City of Montgomery Property Maintenance Division. Nuisances such as weeds and “junk cars” detract from the character of the neighborhood that this plan desires to restore.

**Issue #1 – Criminal activity in the neighborhood**

**Recommendations**

- Use community organization as a way to organize neighborhood watch programs for decreasing criminal activity in the area.
- Encourage neighborhood residents to report criminal activity to the Montgomery Police Department.
- Utilize the “Citizens Police Academy” and “Volunteers in Police Service” programs offered by the Montgomery Police Department to improve the relationship between law enforcement and residents in the neighborhood.
- Support and encourage the demolition of unsafe properties not suitable for reuse or rehabilitation to decrease environments conducive to criminal activity (see also Housing, Issue #3).
- Discuss the feasibility of increasing police patrol in the neighborhood with the Montgomery Police Department.

**Issue #2 – Speeding on neighborhood streets**

**Recommendations**

- Encourage neighborhood residents to report streets consistently burdened by traffic violations to the Montgomery Police Department.

- Determine the feasibility of traffic calming devices and traffic controlling measures to decrease speed on neighborhood streets.
- Discuss the long-term prospect of redesigning streets to encourage walk ability and to decrease speed in the neighborhood.

### **Issue #3 – Violation of Housing Codes**

#### **Recommendations**

- Encourage neighborhood residents to report Housing Code violations to the City of Montgomery Inspections Department.
- Work with the City of Montgomery Property Maintenance Division and request a neighborhood “sweep” to be conducted throughout the planning area.
- Support and encourage the demolition of unsafe properties that are not suitable for reuse or rehabilitation (see also Housing, Issue #3).

#### **Transportation and Infrastructure**

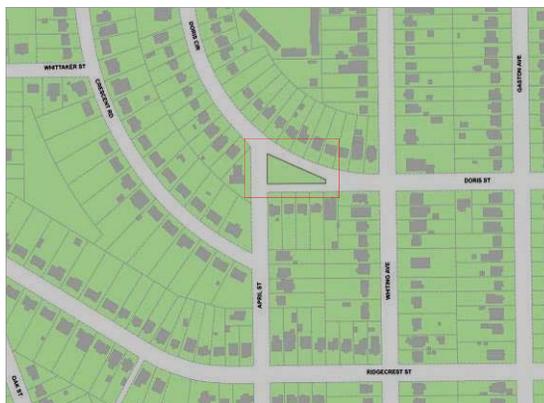
Transportation and infrastructure is an additional element included in the neighborhood plan and addresses items such as streets, sidewalks, stormwater management and street trees. At the neighborhood public participation session in March 2007, residents raised several concerns related to transportation and infrastructure. Most of these items focus on three distinct areas: pedestrian

accessibility, pedestrian safety at schools and beautification of neighborhood streets.

During the initial neighborhood survey, infrastructure data was collected including the location of all sidewalks in the planning area. In an effort to advance pedestrian accessibility, the Planning and Development Department will create a Geographic Information System (GIS) layer of neighborhood sidewalks. This data layer will assist decision makers when determining the feasibility of new sidewalks in the area.

While sidewalks are an asset to Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood, damaged sections can create hazards for pedestrians. Residents should report damaged sidewalks to the City of Montgomery Maintenance Division for repair. Contact information is available in the Appendix of this document.

An additional way to increase pedestrian accessibility in the neighborhood is to support



Doris Street Median in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood



Doris Street Median with the Addition of Street Trees

and encourage compact, mixed-use development. Not only can this type of development assist local businesses in attracting customers, but it can also anchor a neighborhood by increasing the “pedestrian experience.” Street trees, parallel parking and narrowed travel lanes can help to accomplish this task and encourage local residents to use such areas.

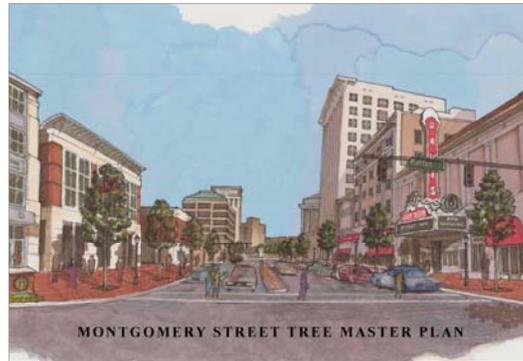
Although pedestrian safety throughout the neighborhood has been mentioned, pedestrian safety at neighborhood schools is of particular concern to residents in the Bellingrath-Cloverland Neighborhood. Several recommendations are made in order to increase pedestrian safety at these locations. First, measures should be taken to ensure that all crosswalks are clearly marked in school zone areas. Traffic calming devices have also been effective in various locations across the United States to protect pedestrians from vehicular traffic.

Despite their unpopularity with motorists, simple solutions such as textured pavement can delineate pedestrian crosswalks without major interference to vehicles. Additionally, since many students in the neighborhood walk to school each day, neighborhood residents should identify streets surrounding neighborhood schools that can benefit from the addition of sidewalks.



Textured brick and pavement, like the crosswalk shown above in Arlington, Virginia, can increase awareness of pedestrians.

Finally, the beautification of neighborhood streets was noted as an issue in the neighborhood. Common concerns were damaged fencing along drainage ditches, litter on streets, and landscaping through commercial corridors. To improve the appearance of public streets, this plan recommends several actions. First, Planning and Development Department staff can assist a neighborhood by applying for tree grants to improve public rights of way. However, the grant application requires that neighborhood residents and



The Montgomery Street Tree Master Plan was adopted on May 10, 2007 to address street trees in the City.

volunteers support both tree planting and maintenance. Therefore, residents should be directly involved in identifying areas where street trees can benefit the neighborhood. Consideration should be given to locations where right-of-way is large enough to support tree growth.

Furthermore, neighborhood residents should be proactive about reporting clogged or damaged drainage inlets to the City of Montgomery Maintenance Division. See the Appendix of this document for contact information.

In addition to addressing clogged and damaged drainage inlets, this plan suggests that neighborhood residents work with the City of Montgomery Maintenance Division to ensure that drainage ditch fencing is repaired throughout the neighborhood. Not only do these open sections create hazards for children, but they provide opportunities for increased crime in the neighborhood.

While a long-term solution to stormwater management in the neighborhood, it is suggested that alternatives to the concrete “flumes” be explored. Natural systems could offer residents protection from rising waters during heavy rainfall, decrease maintenance costs and help reduce nonpoint source pollution.



Concrete “flumes” can create hazards for neighborhood residents if not properly maintained.

## **Issue #1 – Pedestrian accessibility throughout the neighborhood**

### **Recommendations**

- Maintain a database of existing sidewalks within the neighborhood.
- Report sidewalks in need of repair to the City of Montgomery Maintenance Division.
- Identify neighborhood streets that can benefit from the addition of sidewalks and petition elected officials for support in implementation.

- Support mixed-use development opportunities as they arise in the neighborhood (see also Economic Development, Issue #2).

### **Issue #2 – Pedestrian safety at neighborhood schools**

#### **Recommendations**

- Ensure that pedestrian crosswalks are clearly marked to create a safe environment for youth walking to neighborhood schools.
- Identify streets within a ½ mile radius of the neighborhood schools that can benefit from the addition of sidewalks.
- Research possible funding sources to enhance pedestrian safety at neighborhood schools.



Street trees improve neighborhood streets by reducing stormwater runoff, decreasing energy costs, and encouraging use of sidewalks by pedestrians.

### **Issue #3 – Beautification of neighborhood streets**

#### **Recommendations**

- Identify areas within the neighborhood that can benefit from the addition of street trees. Consider areas where space currently exists to include street tree plantings.
- Report clogged or damaged drainage inlets to the City of Montgomery Maintenance Division.
- Work with the City of Montgomery Maintenance Division to ensure that drainage ditch fencing is repaired throughout the neighborhood.
- Discuss the long-term prospect of redesigning the storm water management system to include alternative systems in place of the existing concrete ditches.



Open space with shade encourages pedestrian activity in a neighborhood.





## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

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## APPENDIX

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## **Community Support Contacts**

The Montgomery Area has a myriad of services for our citizens that can be accessed by calling 211. Some of these services include adoption, emergency shelters, employment, legal help, drug treatment, medical care, and youth services.

The following contacts address specific services provided by the City of Montgomery, the Montgomery County School System, and community organizations.

**Alabama State University - Housing Rehabilitation Program** (334) 229-6974; This program offers resident of Council District Five opportunities to eradicate blight and repair homes before they become dilapidated. Other programs are also offered. Call for details.

**Animal Control** (334) 241-2970; Call to report stray animals. Also, the Humane Shelter, (334) 409-0622, for adopting or getting help with animals and a great place to offer your volunteer services is available on John Overton Drive across from Gunter Air Force Base. To report a dead animal for removal, call (334) 241-2515.

**BONDS** (Building Our Neighborhood for Development and Success) (334) 264-6223; Organization helps to organize, train and revitalize neighborhood community groups, which in turn brings neighbors together for the health of the neighborhood, to do programs, socials, and address individual neighborhood concerns.

**Chemical Addictions Program** (334) 265-4544; 1153 Air Base Blvd. 36108. Provides chemical dependence treatment for persons lacking insurance or other resources to obtain treatment through the private provider. This agency serves south-central Alabama.

**Clean City Commission** (334) 241-2175; Helps with organizing and sponsoring various clean-ups around town; runs the recycling programs, and a good source of information concerning these activities.

**Community Development Department** (334) 241-2997; This City Department administers HUD funds: HOME funds for low income housing and a First-Time Home Buyers Down Payment Assistance Program. Once a year, applications are accepted for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money – the applications must be specific as to the project and the project must be approved by HUD (Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development). There are information and training meetings given by the Community Development Department to help citizens understand this process.

**Community Policing** (334) 241-2700; This division of the Montgomery Police Department, located on Fairwest Drive, works in neighborhoods to help with specific neighborhood issues.

**Drainage Issues - City of Montgomery Maintenance** (334) 241-2880; The Maintenance Division repairs stormwater inlets and drains when clogged.

**Garbage Pick-Up and Recycling** (334) 241-2750; Montgomery provides twice weekly garbage pickups, once a week curbside trash (like tree limbs and yard debris), Saturday drop off at specific school locations, and once weekly recycling collection for \$12.00 a month, billed through the Montgomery Sewer and Water Board. Call to set up an account and get a garbage container delivered to your residence or call to request special pick-up.

### **Lunch Trolley Express**

([www.lunchtrolleyexpress.com](http://www.lunchtrolleyexpress.com))

The City provides trolley service downtown free during the hours of 11:00am – 2:00 pm. This helps connect downtown parking lots, offices and places of employment with the various restaurants in the downtown area. The trolleys run continuously and one should be along every 10-15 minutes.

**MATS** (Montgomery Area Transit System) (334) 241-2249; Call for regular bus scheduling, routes and times or check the web page at ([www.montgomerytransit.com](http://www.montgomerytransit.com)); if there is a specific need for door to door service due to a disability, the MAPS (Montgomery Area Paratransit) service is available for those who qualify, but medical records and a doctors request must be on file to access this service. Braille and audio instructions for the bus service is also available. For special services, please call (334) 240-4691.

**Neighborhood Traffic Problems** (334) 241-2670;

**Neighborhood Watch** (334) 240-4800; To get a Neighborhood Watch established in your area or call for information regarding an existing one.

### **Nuisance Reporting**

**Abandoned vehicles:**

(334) 241-2069, (334) 241-2086;

**Abandoned and Derelict House:**

(334) 241-2069, (334) 241-2086;

**Noise Complaints:**

(334) 241-2669;

**Vehicle Parked in Yard:**

(334) 241-2069, (334) 241-2086;

**Overgrown Weeds and Trash:**

(334) 241-2069, (334) 241-2086;

### **Parks and Recreation** (334) 241-2300;

The City of Montgomery has many parks and recreational facilities around the area. There are numerous activities and lessons (crafts, swimming, tennis, etc) available through this department for all ages. There are also summer jobs for youth, but these opening are filled quickly, so call early in the spring to get on their list.

**Small Business Resource Center** (334) 832-4790; 600 South Court Street. This organization offers assistance to prospective and existing small businesses to include: mentoring, financial planning, marketing, and growth strategies. Call for details about these services.

### **Sidewalk Repair** (334) 241-2880;

Report badly broken sidewalks in front of your house to the City Maintenance Department. The City now makes hexagonal pavers for use in historic districts that to preserve the character of the area.

### **Stop Signs and Street Lights** (334) 241-

2910; This number can answer your questions about how to have your area evaluated for additional stop signs or street lights. If street lights are burned out, please call Alabama Power: (800) 245-2244.

### **Meeting Comments from March 3, 2007**

#### **Issues:**

- Housing code violations
- Vacant parcels and houses/apartments
- Lack of neighborhood organization
- Crime – theft, traffic violations, murder
- Increase in rental housing
- Lack of shopping/grocery stores
- Dogs wandering
- Trash – in streets also
- Ditch fences uncovered
- Lack of sidewalks
- Street lighting
- Opportunities for youth
- Gateway Park segregated from the neighborhood
- Affordable housing for elderly
- Normandale Shopping Center redevelopment potential
- Not enough recreation centers and parks
- Too many pawn/money stores and beauty supply shops

#### **Assets:**

- Bus routes
- Elderly population
- Ridgecrest Park
- Trees – need more also
- Davis School
- Location
- Gateway Park
- Farmer’s Market
- Bellingrath Community Center

### **Meeting Comments from February 4, 2008**

- Investigate the reconnection of Edgemont Avenue to the area west of Interstate 65.
- Consider reconnecting Oak Street at Shadyside Lane.
- Would like to see Cloverland Shopping Center redeveloped as discussed in draft plan.
- Need a creative way to rehabilitate deteriorating housing (partnerships with non-profits).