

# ***Holtzman-Main Neighborhood Plan***

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# Holtzman-Main Neighborhood Plan

City of Columbus  
Department of Trade and Development  
Economic Development and Planning Services  
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Columbus, Ohio 43215



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## From the Mayor

Dear Citizens:

I am pleased to present the Holtzman-Main Neighborhood Plan that was developed through the collaborative efforts of your city staff, elected officials, neighborhood business owners, property owners, and members of the Holtzman-Main Business Association. The Plan represents an important step forward in our efforts to implement the goals of the Neighborhood Employment Districts Initiative (NEDS) and bring growth and prosperity to Columbus.

The Holtzman-Main neighborhood has been officially designated as one of five Neighborhood Employment Districts. These districts were established through the *Neighborhood Employment District Initiative* to stimulate economic development within the Columbus central city. To help achieve that mission, this plan includes a number of key goals to increase commercial and industrial investment, enhance the image of the neighborhood as a place to do business, enhance the area's existing job base and to make the heart of our city a better place to live and work.

In my first State of the City Address, I said that, "a great city tends to its neighborhoods," and as we move forward, initiatives like this will be great tools in our mission. I thank you for your interest in this effort, and urge you to be actively involved in building your neighborhoods quality of life and economic vitality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. B. H.", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Mich.  
Mayor

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*Holtzman Avenue, view east*

*Academy Park*

## Introduction

The Holtzman-Main Neighborhood Plan is a guide for decision-making; a policy document for property owners, city staff, elected officials and the local business community. Developed through the combined efforts of the Holtzman-Main Business Association and the city of Columbus, the plan addresses issues defined by the residents and employees that live and work within the neighborhood. Its purpose is to preserve and enhance the viability of the Holtzman-Main area as a vibrant, safe, and productive Neighborhood Employment District (NED).



The Holtzman-Main neighborhood is one of five Neighborhood Employment Districts (NEDS) within the city of Columbus. These districts were established through the Neighborhood Employment District Initiative, a comprehensive and collaborative strategy designed to stimulate economic development within the city's central core. The City's Department of Trade and Development, the Columbus City Council, the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce and the Columbus Urban Growth Corporation, working together as partners in the NEDS effort, developed a broad vision and eleven key goals for the program in March of 1999:

*Columbus urban core neighborhood employment districts will be thriving business environments, conducive to private investment, employment growth and job opportunities for local residents.*

- *Increase commercial and industrial investment*
- *Increase number of jobs, thereby reversing the long term trend of job outmigration*
- *Increase labor participation rate*
- *Improve networking with existing business base*
- *Enhance physical environment*
- *Reduce the amount of vacant, underutilized and/or brownfield industrial and commercial sites*
- *Enhance the image of the core central city as a place to do business*
- *Retain existing job base*
- *Build wealth and population*

- Facilitate cooperative planning between residential and business neighbors
- Encourage employment of local residents

## The Planning Process

To implement the NEDS initiatives within the Holtzman-Main neighborhood, a planning process was initiated in the Spring of 2000. A working committee comprised of local business and property owners, city staff, appointed and elected officials, and members of the Holtzman-Main Business Association met monthly to address land use issues, infrastructure concerns, and other problems and challenges that are affecting the planning area. Through its discussions, the group set priorities and identified key actions that will be necessary for positive change to occur. The specific recommendations contained in this plan have been organized into five general, or “subject” categories: Identity and Character; Zoning and Land Use; Streets and Traffic Circulation; Stormwater Drainage; Crime and Vandalism.

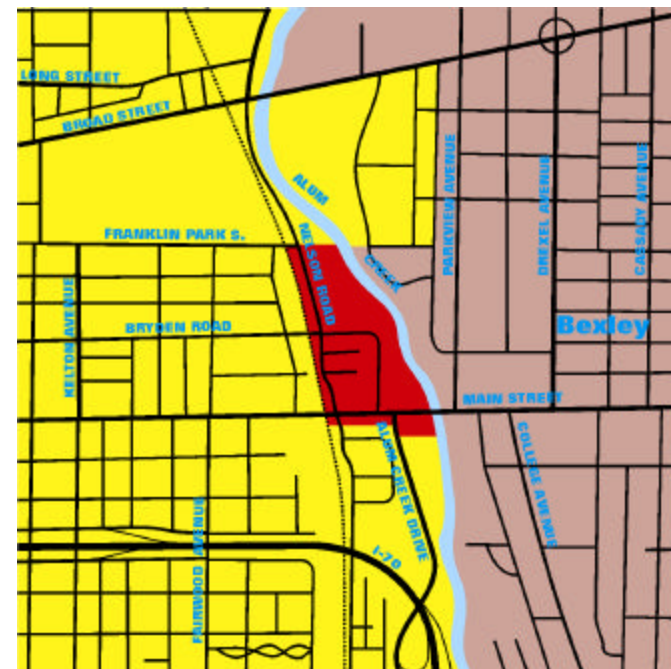
## Holtzman-Main Neighborhood Profile

Located approximately 2 miles east of downtown Columbus, the Holtzman-Main neighborhood is a thriving commercial district with a broad mix of light industrial, office, manufacturing, retail commercial and automotive uses. Businesses include: The Alvis House, D & E Electrical Contractors, GGC Wholesale Carpets, Goldenrod Auto Service, House of Tires, KFC, Kise Transmission, Kroger Company, Mr. Details, Positive Human Development, Pymmer Plastering, Schmidt Enterprises, Services Galore, Volkswagen

Repair, Weisenbach Specialty Printing, Wright's Tree Service, and X Design. Approximately half of these companies have been in operation at their present location for at least 10 years.

## The Planning Area

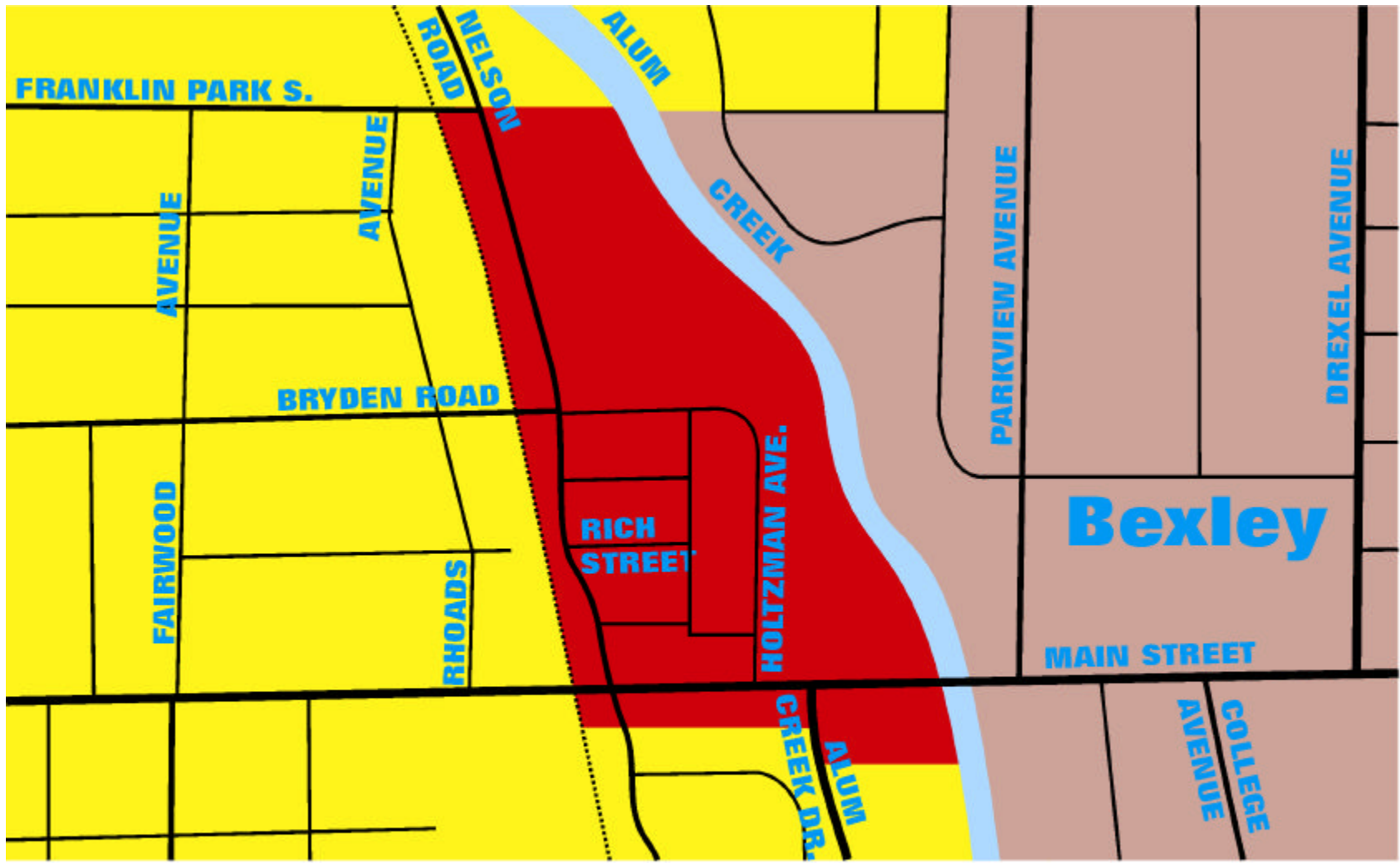
The Holtzman-Main Neighborhood Plan incorporates the area bounded by Alum Creek to the east, Franklin Park Road to the north, the Conrail tracks to the west, and Main Street to the South (including those properties with frontage along the south side of Main Street). Primary thoroughfares within the planning area include Nelson Road, Holtzman Avenue, Main Street, Rich Street and Bryden Road.



Holtzman Main Neighborhood Plan

	Planning Area		City of Columbus		Bexley
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# Holtzman-Main Planning Area

Planning Area

City of Columbus

Bexley



## Identity and Character

The Holtzman-Main planning area exudes a character that is typical of many older industrial districts. Streets and alleys are narrow, buildings are generally plain, the parking lots are devoid of landscaping, and the electric and telephone lines are still above-grade. Unlike some other central-city neighborhoods, however, the Holtzman-Main planning area is still a vibrant and productive employment district. Because it adjoins major transportation routes and a thriving residential community, it is also uniquely positioned to serve as a “gateway” – to Bexley from the west, and into Columbus from the east.

The Holtzman-Main Business Association is an integral component of the neighborhood’s identity and has successfully cultivated a positive business climate. Through the ongoing promotion of local businesses and by actively recruiting new business development, the association has established an employment-centered neighborhood identity that has attracted a healthy mix of light manufacturing, industrial, institutional, retail and office commercial uses.

Aesthetic improvements such as landscaping, distinctive signage and ornamental light fixtures can assist in the enhancement of the neighborhood’s identity and should be incorporated into new infrastructure projects or development efforts as they are planned. The neighborhood’s existing streetscapes are not unattractive, but they generally lack amenities and could be significantly improved at moderate cost.

Decorative signage, for example, near the Holtzman Avenue and Nelson Road intersections at Main Street would significantly improve public recognition of the neighborhood. Sign text could identify the neighborhood as an employment district, or promote the business association.



*Holtzman Avenue, view west*

## Recommendations

- Target capital improvements funds for projects that enhance the function and appearance of Holtzman Avenue and Bryden Road.
- Increase the visibility of the Holtzman-Main Business Association through the Chamber of Commerce and the city’s Business Development Office.
- Strengthen the neighborhood by encouraging redevelopment of vacant property, recruit new businesses that will project a positive image.

## Land Use and Zoning

The planning area contains approximately 40 acres of land. Much of that property has been developed, although a small portion of the Alum Creek floodplain has been left untouched. Excluding the parcels occupied by Academy Park, lot sizes within the neighborhood generally range from .08 acres to 1.5 acres. Most of these properties have been developed with light industrial, retail commercial, office, manufacturing, and automotive uses. The businesses render the planning area with a distinct non-residential character, although a few homes and a small apartment complex have endured the neighborhood's evolution into an employment district. These residential properties should eventually be converted to other light industrial and commercial uses that are consistent with the function and role of the neighborhood.

In general, the neighborhood's properties and buildings are in active use and in good condition. There are two vacant lots along Nelson Road; the parcel at the corner of Nelson Road and Main Street was formerly occupied by a car wash and is currently for sale. A few small homes along Bryden Road and Nelson Road have been neglected, perhaps beyond repair, and may eventually be demolished to accommodate an off-street parking and picnic area for Academy Park. The city's Recreation and Parks Department has already expressed some interest in the land.

Zoning classifications within the planning area have not been significantly altered in the past forty years, but they are still generally consistent with existing land use patterns. Academy Park, north of Bryden Road, has been zoned Residential (R3 and R4). Almost all of the properties south of Bryden Road have been zoned Manufacturing (M), including the Kroger site

at Holtzman Avenue and Main Street. Exceptions include two small Commercial (C4 and C5) districts, one at Nelson Road and Main Street and one along the south side of Bryden Road, and two small Parking (P1) districts, also located along the south side of Bryden Road.

The neighborhood's off-street parking lots, in general, are too small to accommodate the existing demand. As a result, cars are often parked in road right-of-ways and in alleys. Several local businesses (automotive uses) have attempted to compensate for inadequate on-site facilities by storing vehicles in vacant lots and along the Alum Creek stream bank. Code enforcement and the city's Police Department are constantly working to address these violations, but they have not yet achieved full compliance. Because automotive uses need outdoor storage areas and sufficient room to park vehicles, they should be encouraged to relocate to more appropriate neighborhoods over time.

The Alum Creek corridor is somewhat isolated from the neighborhood due to existing development patterns and natural topography, but it may offer the neighborhood employees and residents some future recreational opportunities. The city's Recreation and Parks Department and the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) have recently developed a Greenway Plan for the Alum Creek corridor that would link Academy Park with Main Street. The greenway, approximately fifty feet wide, would feature a paved multi-use trail and some pedestrian seating areas. The project would also incorporate a clean-up effort and restoration plantings. Property acquisition and the preliminary construction planning are already in progress; the groundbreaking has been scheduled for 2002.

### **Recommendations**

- Eliminate junk cars and monitor properties for compliance with off-street parking requirements. Enforce the existing zoning codes with diligence; coordinate efforts with the Police Department's community liaison officer.
- Implement consistent and reasonable design standards for new development. Encourage tree and shrub planting and brick or stone front building facades to enhance the aesthetic character of the neighborhood.
- Clean up the Alum Creek stream corridor. Inspect properties for dumping and outdoor storage violations; work cooperatively with owners to eliminate problems. Request soil testing through the EPA to check for contamination.
- Implement the Greenway Plan along the Alum Creek corridor as recommended by the Recreation and Parks Department.
- Support a gradual transition from the Manufacturing (M) zoning classification to commercial and/or industrial classifications that prohibit automotive uses and residential dwellings. Establish appropriate standards through the use of limited zoning districts.
- Promote redevelopment of the vacant lot at the intersection of Nelson Road and Main Street. If necessary, support a rezoning to Manufacturing (M) with reasonable limitations to accommodate an attractive and compatible use.
- Acquire residential properties along Nelson Road, north of Bryden Road, and redevelop the parcels into a parking lot.

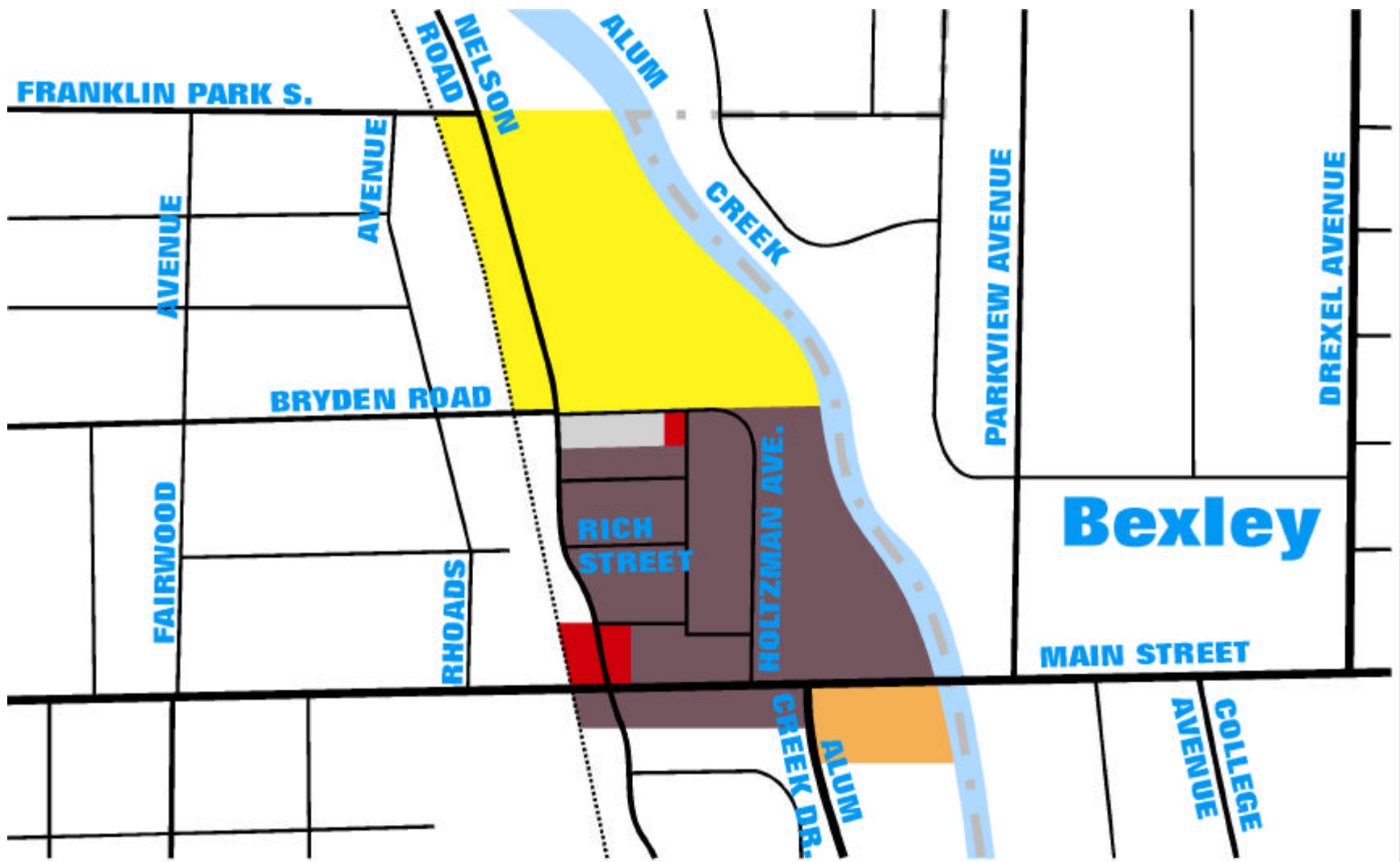
*Mr. Details, Walnut Street*



*Alum Creek*



*Nelson Road, south of Bryden Road*



Holtzman-Main  
Zoning Map



## Streets and Traffic Circulation

The Holtzman-Main neighborhood, despite its compact size and a network of narrow streets and alleys, is relatively well-connected to the larger metropolitan area. Main Street, an east-west arterial roadway located in the southern portion of the neighborhood, provides the planning area with a direct connection to downtown Columbus and a link to Interstate 70 via Alum Creek Drive. It also offers neighborhood residents and employees access to several COTA bus routes. Nelson Road ties into Broad Street, another east-west arterial, and Interstate 670 via Fifth Avenue.

Circulation within the planning area is generally good, although Holtzman Avenue and Bryden Road can be difficult to navigate. They are often constricted by parked cars, which tends to impede flow during rush hours. The intersection at Nelson Road and Main Street is occasionally congested but the signals appear to be appropriately timed.

The neighborhood alleys are used principally for parking. To reduce congestion and improve neighborhood appearance, some vacation of right-of-way may be appropriate. A few alleys provide direct access to property and must be retained. However, most do not function as intended and should be transferred to the adjoining owners.

All of the neighborhood roads, except for Main Street, lack curbs and sidewalks. Because the neighborhood does not generate a significant amount of pedestrian traffic, the absence of sidewalks has not been problematic. However, without curbs or striping to define street edges, the parking lots along Holtzman Avenue and Bryden Road appear to be extensions of the roadway pavement. The cars that have been parked in

these poorly defined areas are not always sufficiently set back from the roadway lanes, which can significantly impair traffic flow. A few auto shops have exacerbated the problem by storing customer vehicles in alleys, vacant lots and along the streets. Code enforcement has been working to alleviate these violations, but roadway improvements, changes in land use and a prohibition of on-street parking may be necessary to remedy the root cause of the problem.



*Holtzman Avenue, view north*



*Main Street, view west*



*Alley west of Holtzman Avenue, view north*

## **Recommendations**

- Confine future roadway improvements to existing road right-of-ways; avoid the taking of additional property.
- Improve the appearance of Holtzman Avenue, Bryden Road and Rich Street by striping the roadway lanes.
- Reduce roadway congestion by prohibiting on-street parking along the north side of Bryden Road and the east side of Holtzman Avenue. Install “No Parking” signs and seek enforcement assistance through the city Police Department.
- Install landscaped islands, planters, and curb lawns in the off-street parking lots along Holtzman Avenue and Bryden Road to separate the parking areas from the road right-of-way and enhance the appearance of properties.
- Remove abandoned and junk vehicles from road right-of-ways. Coordinate patrols and enforcement efforts with the city’s code enforcement staff and the Police Department’s Community Liaison Officer.
- Vacate the following public alleys: 1) the east-west alley south of Bryden Road and east of Nelson Road, 2) the east-west alley north of Main Street, between Nelson Road and Holtzman Avenue, 3) the east-west alley east of Holtzman Avenue, south of Academy Park. Transfer the ownership of these alley right-of-ways to the adjoining property owners.
- Impose a five (5) foot minimum setback requirement for new off-street parking lots. Require driveways to be

defined with concrete curb, painted lines, or landscaped islands.

## **Stormwater Drainage**

In most portions of the neighborhood, the existing storm sewer system functions effectively. However, the northern half of Holtzman Avenue routinely floods during moderate storms; the drain inlets are not always maintained and the pipes may be undersized. Runoff from the adjoining parking lots and alleys may also be contributing to the problem. A detailed and comprehensive study of the area south of Bryden, west of Holtzman, north of Main and east of Nelson is recommended to determine the most appropriate course of action.

## **Recommendations**

- Alleviate the stormwater drainage problems along Holtzman Avenue. Increase the capacity and function of the existing storm sewers with additional inlets and pipe.
- Monitor areas prone to flooding. Encourage property owners to complete *Stormwater Questionnaires* and submit them to the city's Division of Sewerage and Drainage.
- Anticipate future growth and expansion within the planning area; coordinate storm sewer improvements with new road construction and/or widening.
- Implement strategies to reduce runoff from parking lots and alleys (i.e. grass filter strips and landscaping).

- Preserve the Alum Creek floodplain in its natural state; retain existing vegetation along the stream banks.

## **Crime and Vandalism**

Recent enforcement efforts have significantly reduced crime. However, the neighborhood's inadequate street lighting and junk vehicles create an environment that invites property damage and theft, and until these problems are remedied, additional progress may be difficult to achieve. The establishment of a private security force has been proposed; with broad participation, the personnel costs would be relatively modest. Pooling resources and undertaking a cooperative strategy would allow the local business owners to save both time and manpower. In addition, such an effort would improve communication among the local businesses and facilitate a stronger relationship with the city's Police Department.

## **Recommendations**

- Hire a private security force for the neighborhood and implement daily patrols to deter criminal activity. Share the personnel costs among local business and property owners and coordinate the effort with the city's Division of Police.
- Monitor buildings and outdoor storage areas that are vulnerable through video surveillance, install motion/sound detection equipment to assist security personnel.
- Install additional streetlights along Holtzman Avenue, Bryden Road, Nelson Road and Rich Street.



- Encourage property owners to keep materials and equipment indoors and screen outside storage areas with opaque fencing.

## **A p p e n d i x**

## Holtzman-Main Employers

Alvis House

D & E Electrical Contractors

GGC Wholesale Carpets

Goldenrod Auto Service

House of Tires

Kentucky Fried Chicken

Kise Transmission

Kroger Company

Positive Human Development

Pymer Plastering

Schmidt Enterprises

Services Galore

Volkswagen Repair

Weisenbach Specialty Printing

Wright's Tree Service

X Design