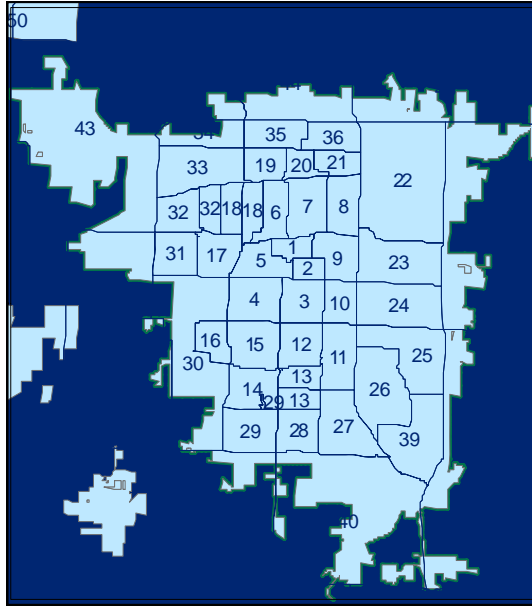


Springfield Missouri Block Grant Development Program



Neighborhood Revitalization Area

Central Springfield Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy

December 9, 2003

**Springfield, Missouri
Department of Planning and Development**

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INTRODUCTION

Community Profile

The Springfield Central City Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS) area consists of the urban neighborhood comprised of the West Central Neighborhood (primarily residential), downtown (commercial and mixed-use) and the proposed Jordan Valley Park. Jordan Valley Park was created by the community during the Vision 20/20 planning process to be the primary catalyst for the revitalization of Springfield's Center City, including downtown and West Central. The NRS area is defined primarily by census tracts one and five, located in the Center City. Two small areas of parcels in census tracts six and seven were added because they are tied to the area geographically and economically. These two small parcels contain Brownfield properties slated for redevelopment through a recently approved BEDI grant and a proposed Section 108 Loan Guarantee. The rest of the NRS area includes the downtown area and the West Central Neighborhood, one of the City's oldest residential areas. The downtown area, which once was the center of economic activity for the entire city, has experienced disinvestment and economic decline along with deterioration of the adjacent residential area. This effect, known as the "urban doughnut" is evident in Springfield where development continues to move to the suburban areas, particularly to the south and east, leaving behind a void in the central portion of the city.

Today the character of the NRS area can be seen through higher unemployment and poverty rates than the rest of the City, vacant building space, and substandard properties in need of maintenance and repair. The Central Springfield revitalization area has a variety of problems and issues resulting from the effects of deterioration due to economic disinvestment in this part of the city. These major concerns have been researched and documented in the various plans produced by the Springfield Planning and Development Department. The original portion of downtown Springfield, Park Central Square, suffers from building deterioration and obsolescence and no longer competes effectively in either the office or retail markets. The entire layout is not conducive to attracting the types of stores found at the contemporary suburban malls, as is the case in most of America's downtowns. Inconvenient parking and concerns about personal safety

add to the problem. The Park Central Square vicinity once held all the better shops in Springfield, but those days are long gone. It does not provide the convenient access and parking of the fringe malls and there are not sufficient workers and residents to provide a large enough walk-in market. Other portions of Greater Downtown show similar degrees of deterioration and economic obsolescence, especially the industrial areas in the Jordan Creek valley (*Center City Plan Element 1998*). Also, some portions of the Center City are weaker than others. The Center City Plan Element identifies the north and west sides of downtown as showing more building deterioration and containing more marginal business than the eastern and southern sides. The West Central Neighborhood is especially in need of redevelopment and revitalization.

In the past decade there have been increased efforts to revitalize the area by the City of Springfield and organizations such as the Urban Districts Alliance. Several investments such as housing rehabilitation, small business creation, new street lighting, colorful banners, advertising, regular festivals, and City programs have been accomplished. Since 1997 entrepreneurs have invested in some unique restaurants and nightclubs which have become successful businesses. Efforts to improve the housing and blighting conditions within the neighborhood areas have also become a top priority. The NRS will be an appendix to the consolidated plan and cover a five-year planning period.

Purpose

The purpose of the Central Springfield Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy is to build opportunities for jobs by stimulating investment and service in the area, improve housing, fill vacant building space with office and retail activity, and preserve the historical significance of one of Springfield's oldest neighborhoods. We aim to entice residents and small business owners to locate and remain in the area by creating a desirable environment for residents to live, work and visit through the provision of decent housing, job opportunities, and entertainment facilities. The strategy was accomplished through a collaborative approach of working with residents, social service providers, local community organizations, and businesses. The flexibility of Community Development Block Grant funds allowed by the HUD approval will enable this strategy to utilize the greatest strengths from the agencies and resources involved.

Neighborhood revitalization is important in this central city location to help develop and sustain the heart of the city for neighborhood residents as well as the larger community. Many aspects of the comprehensive plan, adopted by the City of Springfield, focus on revitalizing the neglected resources located in this area. Deteriorating housing stock, lack of owner occupied housing, poor economic conditions, underutilized programs, and vacant office and retail space are contributing factors to the stagnation of this area. The NRS is geared to use these potential opportunities to improve residential housing and the neighborhood, economically empower neighborhood residents, aid small businesses, and enhance the image and quality of life in the community.

Strategy Development

The NRS has been developed by following the framework set forth by several adopted planning documents that address the conditions and issues of blight in the neighborhood and outline opportunities for revitalization. These plans address community needs identified through public meetings, hearings, and research conducted by private consultants and planning department staff. The following is a list of documents which the strategy references, and other elements of support for revitalization in this area:

- The *West Central Neighborhood Plan* was adopted May 11, 1998. The plan recommends various methods of economic and physical improvements in the neighborhood and has been used as a guide for this strategy.
- City Council adopted the *Vision 20/20 Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan* which identifies, in the *Center City Plan Element*, these tracts as proposed neighborhood revitalization areas as part of the Center City Plan Element, and the Neighborhood Element.
- The *Consolidated Plan: Fiscal Years 2000-2004* recommends key housing improvements in this area, along with other action plans.
- The *Neighborhoods Plan Element* is a product of the Vision 20/20 Plan which incorporated goals and objectives for housing by consulting with residents and focus groups in this revitalization area. This element outlines objectives and actions that Springfield will pursue to stabilize or improve existing neighborhoods, including the revitalization area.
- The *Capital Improvements Program (CIP)* has identified the revitalization area as one in need of capital improvements in order to meet the needs of citizens in this area.

- The neighborhood revitalization area has been identified and mapped by the Springfield Planning & Development office as a “distressed community” as defined by the state of Missouri. Therefore the city has chosen to focus revitalization efforts in these tracts.
- The Housing Preservation Act (Senate Bill 20), passed in 1999, encourages housing rehabilitation in blighted areas by offering substantial tax credits for renovation cost. The neighborhood revitalization area meets the necessary criteria to qualify for these individual tax credits. The goal is to help strengthen the community and in turn strengthen business opportunities. Our plans for strengthening the neighborhoods in the revitalization area is in keeping with the objectives of the state of Missouri’s goals for neighborhoods such as these.

STRATEGY

The Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy is designed to foster economic advancement within the selected boundaries. This strategy incorporates the following required criteria outlined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development:

- × **Boundaries**
- × **Demographic Criteria**
- × **Community Consultation**
- × **Economic Empowerment, Assessment, Strategies, & Performance Measurements (Benchmarks)**

Boundaries

The proposed NRS, demonstrated by the attached boundary map, *Map Exhibit 1*, comprises all of census tracts one (Downtown) and five (West Central Neighborhood) and minor portions of census tract 6 block group 3, and census tract 7, block group 3. The portion included for census tract six consists of the vacant Universal Paint building, and the area in tract seven is occupied by the vacant MFA building. The neighborhood revitalization area includes the Springfield Downtown and the West Central Neighborhood. The site consists of 1.368 square miles which are defined in the attached area map. The boundaries include Kansas Expressway and Kansas Avenue to the west, Grand Street on the south, Jefferson Avenue and John Q. Hammons/Sherman Avenue on the east. The Burlington Northern Railroad & San Francisco Railroad generally comprise the northern boundary. As previously stated the Universal Paint and MFA buildings have also been included as appendages to the northern boundary. Please refer to the attached *Map Exhibit 1* located at the end of the document for an accurate illustration of these boundaries.

Demographic Criteria

Housing and Income

The following table contains selected demographic data for the Neighborhood Revitalization Area which describes economic needs of residents within the area. The table lists housing and income information collected from the 2000 US Census Bureau for the revitalization area and the city as a whole. By using the 2000 census geography of census tracts one and five we are able to create the most accurate demographic representation. Although a slight portion of the boundary extends into tract six and tract seven, these portions have no residential components. As stated in the boundary section, these northern appendages are occupied by the Universal Paint and MFA buildings, which will be economic engines for the revitalization of the neighborhood. As requested by the HUD office, we have included the block groups (block group three of tract six, and block group three of tract seven) for these two areas in our calculation for persons of low to moderate income. The remainder of the data consists of census tracts one and five, as these areas are the focus of the neighborhood revitalization. By comparing the city data to the neighborhood we find that the neighborhood revitalization area exhibits a critically low economic situation in comparison to the city of Springfield as a whole. The data reveals the following economic conditions of this area:

**2000 Census Demographics For Springfield and the
Neighborhood Revitalization Area**

	Springfield	Neighborhood Revitalization Area
Population Totals	151,580	7,244
Population Change 1990 - 2000	13.5%	-7.8%
White	138,987	6115
Percent White	91.7%	84.4%
Minority	12,593	1129

Percent Minority	8.3%	15.6%
Low/Mod Income (80% or more below median) ¹	27,295	5,956
Low/Mod Percent (80% or more below median) ⁱ	42%	72.5%
Median Household Income	\$29,563	\$14,066
# Persons Below Poverty	22,437	2,327
Percent Below Poverty	15.9%	35.0%
Number Employed	75,199	3,385
Number Unemployed	5,339	563
Percent Unemployed	4.3%	9.7%
Housing Units	69,877	4,078
Occupied	64,821	3,551
Owner Occupied	34,752	640
Renter Occupied	30,069	2,911
Percent Owner Occupied	53.6%	18.0%
Percent Renter Occupied	43.0%	81.0%
# Housing Units Built in 1939 or Earlier	9,638	1,369
% Housing Units Built in 1939 or Earlier	13.8%	33.6%
Median Year Built	1970	1954
Median Value Owner Occupied Housing	\$79,800	\$48,900
Median Rent	\$384.00	\$299.00

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000 Census data.

¹The percent of persons low/moderate income has been determined for residents within the following geographic areas: census tract 1 block groups 1 and 2; census tract 5 block groups 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; census tract 6 block group 3; and census tract 7 block group 3. All the other data categories have been determined using census tracts one and five because the areas located in tracts six and seven are unpopulated.

- As indicated in the above table, 72.5% of the residents within the neighborhood revitalization area fall into the category of low to moderate income. This percentage exceeds the minimum HUD requirement of 63.1%. The low/mod income criteria has been calculated using block group level information for all of census tracts one and five; and also block group three of tract six and block group three of tract seven.
- 35 percent of the residents in the NRS area are below the poverty level.
This is more than twice the poverty rate for the City of Springfield.
- The median yearly household income in the revitalization area is 47% of the city median income.
At an average of \$14,066 per year this is less than half the median income for the City of Springfield.
- The unemployment rate of 9.7% is more than twice the city-wide rate of 4.3%.
- Renter occupied housing units make up the overwhelming majority of residences in the revitalization area while owner occupied housing comprises the majority of city-wide housing.
- 33.6% of the housing units in the revitalization area were built in or before 1939.
This is more than twice the percentage for the city.
- The median value of owner occupied structures in the revitalization area is \$48,900 compared to \$79,800 city wide.
- Median monthly rent is \$299 in the revitalization neighborhood compared with \$384 city wide.

Employment

	Springfield	Revitalization Area
Total for whom determined	125,002	6,013
Total Number Unemployed	5,339	563
Unemployment Rate	4.3%	9.7%

U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2000 Census Data

Characteristic of many center city areas, the neighborhood revitalization area exhibits higher unemployment rates than the average for the City of Springfield. The revitalization area's unemployment rate is 9.7% with 563 unemployed potential workers. The unemployment rate for the revitalization area exceeds the HUD minimum requirement by more than doubling the unemployment rate for the City of Springfield as a whole. With a high percentage of persons unemployed, the Downtown Springfield neighborhood continues to stand out among the greater city for it's issues of economic hardship.

Business Inventory

Business Type	Number
Retail	33
Personal Service (beauty, pet grooming, etc.)	31
Professional Service (attorney, architect, surveying, insurance, printing, banking, computer)	68
Membership Organizations (country clubs, social services)	53
Other Services (maintenance, appliances, auto repair, other service companies)	63
Health care, counseling	27
Labor Unions	9
Institutional (schools, churches)	24
Eating & Drinking Establishments	15
Entertainment	22
Manufacturing	6
Convenience stores	3

Total Businesses In the Neighborhood Revitalization Area

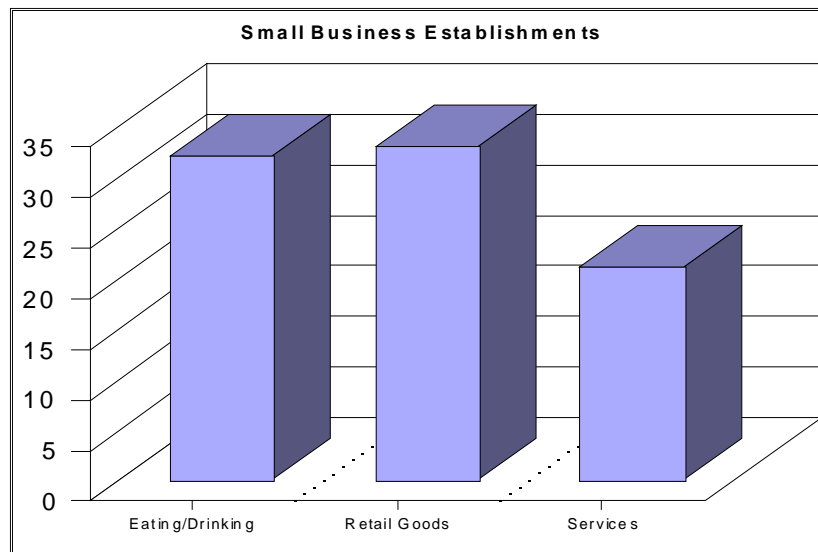
	Tract 1	Tract 5	Total
Total Number of Businesses	279	66	345

The Downtown and the West Central Neighborhood exhibit contrasting types of small business. Downtown consists of mostly commercial land use, while West Central is primarily residential with only sparse amounts of commercial land located on the outskirts of the neighborhood. While the two tracts are noticeably different it is fortunate that the West Central neighborhood is adjacent to the downtown since it provides opportunity for economic empowerment through jobs and business opportunity. As the business inventory indicates in the above table, the revitalization area is already an important business center, which includes retail establishments, restaurants, financial institutions and professional business services. The central location is well situated for business. The challenge is to continue creating an environment for small business development. The City provides a Small Business Development Loan Program through CDBG funds that has invested over \$7 million in direct loans to small business development and leveraged over \$11 million in private investment. This investment has created several hundred jobs for neighborhood residents and this NRS will facilitate continued investment and economic empowerment for residents. However, suburban competition threatens to erode this business base unless active improvements take place. Most of these older buildings require considerable maintenance, but there are many opportunities for renovation of upper floor space for office use and loft apartments to bring in a stable residential community and a small business and professional office niche. The business industry in the revitalization area is necessary to support service based industries, restaurants, and retail. This type of combination will help support a successful revitalization in the area. There are currently a substantial amount of small businesses that would benefit from this strategy, which are listed below. The businesses listed below represent small, locally owned establishments that hire local residents and provide needed services.

- Juke Joint - Eating/Drinking
- Mr. Furniture - Retail Goods
- Center of Miracles - Retail Goods
- Springfield Pottery - Retail Goods
- The Groove Hair Salon - Services
- Fleet Reserve Assoc. - Services
- Park Central West-Bar - Eating/Drinking
- Culley's - Eating/Drinking
- Har-Bell - Retail Goods
- Randy Baron Photography - Services

- Joan's Lounge - Eating/Drinking
- C&C Floor Covering - Retail Goods
- Abyss - Eating/Drinking
- Storefronts - Eating/Drinking
- Martha's Vineyard - Eating/Drinking
- The Book Rack - Retail Goods
- Sawyer Co. Printing - Services
- Dairy Queen - Eating/Drinking
- Millie's Turn of the Century - Eating/Drinking
- American Business Systems - Services
- Rasta Grill - Eating/Drinking
- Hoover Music - Retail Goods
- A&B Cycle - Retail Goods
- Thomas Brothers Office Furniture - Retail Goods
- Corner Printing - Services
- Bijan's Eating/Drinking
- Gallery Bistro - Eating/Drinking
- Stick It In Your Ear/Sushi Bar - Retail Goods
- Harpo's - Eating/Drinking
- Burgandy Room - Eating/Drinking
- Franks Uniforms - Services
- Deck Rental Prop. - Services
- Springfield Blue Print - Services
- Cave Engines and Parts - Services
- Wheeler's Warehouse - Retail Goods
- J. Parrino's Deli - Eating/Drinking
- Nonna's Bakery - Eating/Drinking
- Nonna's Restaurant - Eating/Drinking
- Fitzwilly's Antiques - Retail Goods
- Color Space/American Bus Machines - Services
- South Pier Antiques - Retail Goods
- The Boogie - Eating/Drinking
- Highlife/Outland Blue Zebra - Eating/Drinking
- Mudhouse - Eating/Drinking
- Bill's Camera Repair - Services
- The Studio/Antique Cowboy Barber - Retail Goods
- Maria's Mexican Restaurant - Eating/Drinking
- Wheeler's - Retail Goods
- Ozark Literacy Council - Services
- Reliable Rubber Stamp Services - Services
- Moseley Office Supplies - Retail Goods
- Sterlings Night Club - eating/Drinking
- Mardi Gras Costumes - Retail Goods
- Nathan P. Murphy's Night Club - Eating/Drinking
- Inferno Night Club - Eating/Drinking
- Parkie's Stained Glass - Retail Goods
- Churchill Coffee - Eating/Drinking
- Rebori Shoes - Retail Goods
- Stock Exchange - Retail Goods
- Book Store - Retail Goods

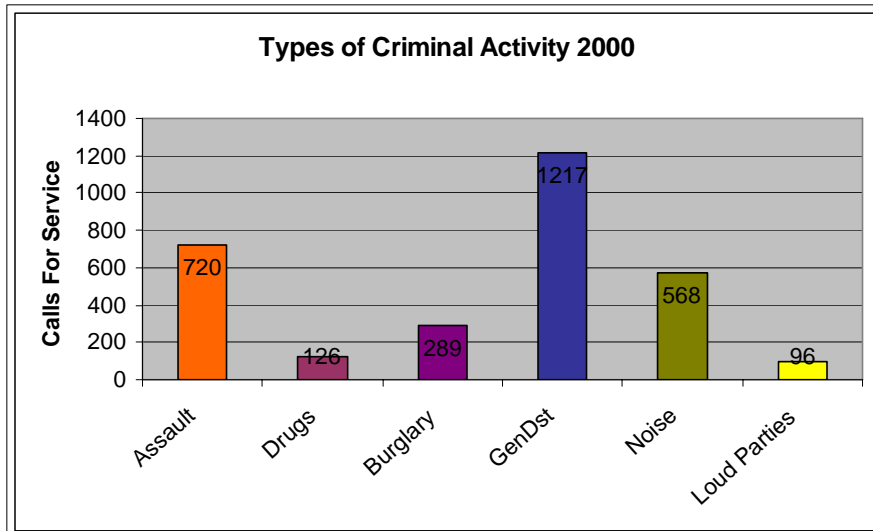
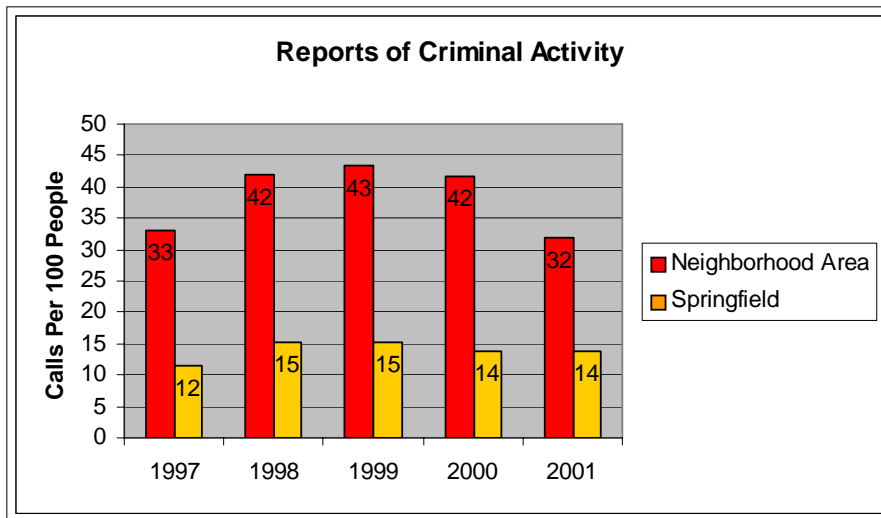
- The Riksha - Eating/Drinking
- Marilyn's Fine Jewelry - Retail goods
- Encore Gallery - Retail Goods
- Rosenbaum's Jewelry Store - Retail Goods
- Caroll's Pub - Eating/Drinking
- Adult Day Care - Services
- Little Tattoo - Services
- Plasma Center - Services
- Center City - Services
- Lux Bar - Eating/Drinking
- Binswanger Glass - Services
- Sherwin Williams - Retail Goods
- Springfield Billiards - Eating/Drinking
- Country Corner - Retail Goods
- All Light Supply/Raven Antiques - Retail Goods
- The Edge - eating/Drinking
- La Michoacana/Furniture Restoration - Retail Goods
- Fort No. 5 Military Collectibles - Retail Goods
- Centerfield Sports/Park Cen. Flea Mkt. - Retail Goods
- Downtown Flea Market - Retail Goods
- Jordan Creek - Retail Goods
- STD Flea Market - Retail Goods
- Auto Shop - Services
- Keyes Gallery/Spfd Tire Exchange – Services
- Springfield Brewing Company - Eating/Drinking
- Ballew Saw and Tool. Inc - Retail Goods



Out of the small businesses located in the revitalization area, 32 are eating and drinking establishments, 33 sell retail goods, and 21 provide services.

Reports of Criminal Activity

The chart below represents reports of criminal activity for every 100 people living in the area. The percentage of criminal reports is much higher for the neighborhood revitalization area than for the city of Springfield as a whole. The five-year trend from 1997 through 2001 mirrors that of the City, in that criminal activity increased after 1997, peaked in 1999, and has gradually decreased in following years.



The types of criminal activity collected include assault, drugs, residential burglary, general disturbance, noise, and loud parties. The chart below represents the distribution of these activities in the neighborhood revitalization area for the year 2000. The majority of reports were for general disturbances, followed by assault and noise disturbances.

Community Consultation Process

Springfield's City Council believes in on-going consultation with neighborhood residents. The Neighborhood Conservation Office within the Springfield Planning and Development Department was created to ensure that citizens have a say in all aspects of local government and improvement. So, much of the consultation for this Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy is a result of the continuing effort to work with the community. These efforts are summarized below followed by the specific consultation in conjunction with the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy.

The revitalization strategy was developed using the consultation results of area stakeholders. The consultation data was previously collected as a component of the *West Central Neighborhood Strategic Plan*, and the *Vision 20/20 Springfield-Greene County Comprehensive Plan*. This process was conducted in accordance with HUD Notice 9601 and included the following course of action:

- The consultation process for the Vision 20/20 Plan began in 1994. The city coordinated with the community in a visioning process to:
 - Address Existing Conditions
 - Identify Issues
 - Establish Goals
 - Determine Strategies
 - Take Action Steps
 - Develop A Plan
- A Citizen Network of **350 volunteers** formed Focus Groups that made up the largest portion of the Vision 20/20 Planning Committee. **12 Separate Focus Groups** were built to represent these categories:
 - Center City
 - Economic Development
 - Regional Perspective
 - Community Quality & Design
 - Finance
 - Environment

*Map Exhibit 1
Boundary Map*

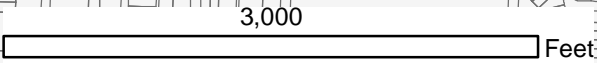
JORDAN VALLEY PARK

DOWNTOWN

*WEST CENTRAL
NEIGHBORHOOD*

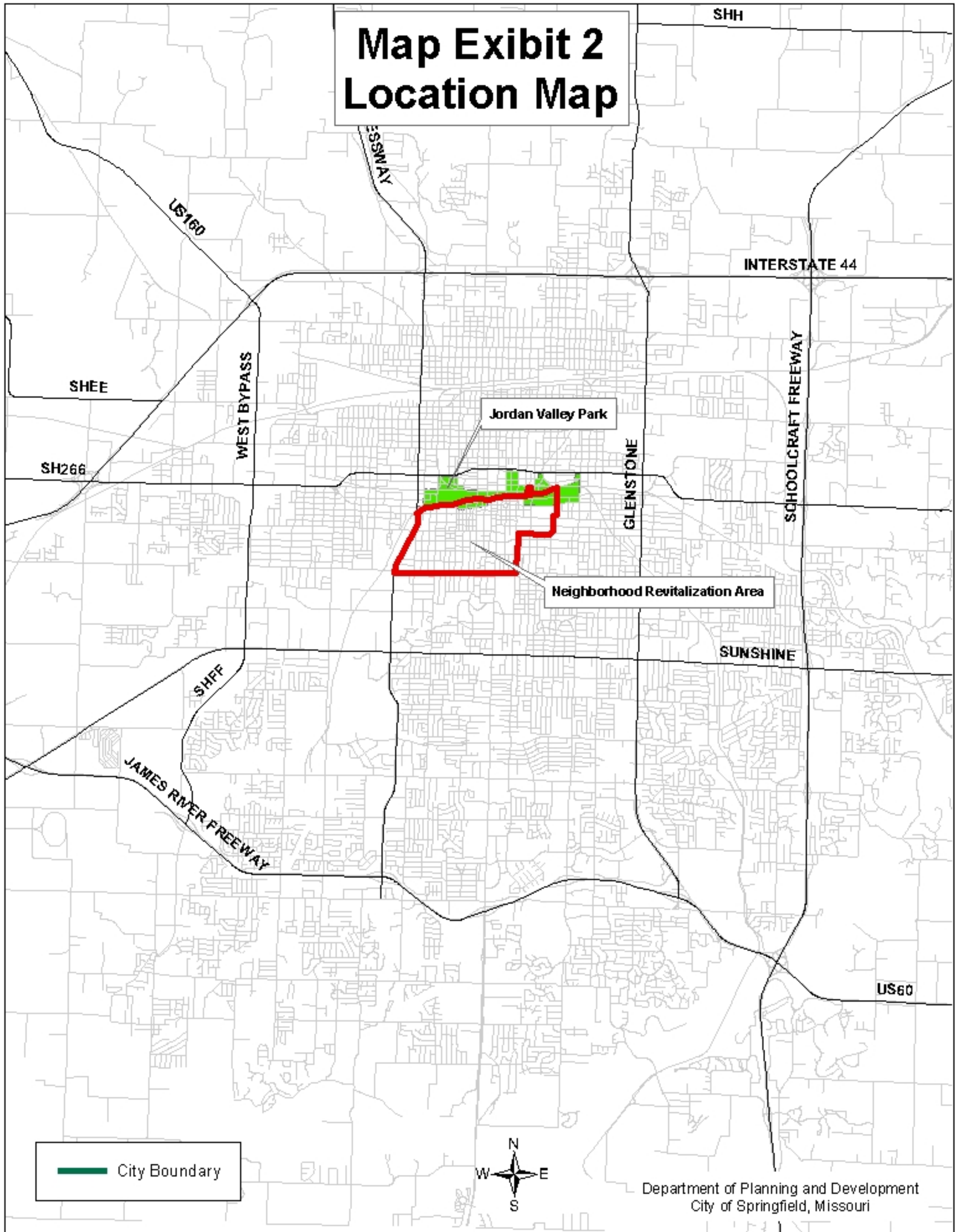


Neighborhood Revitalization Area Boundary



Department of Planning and Development
City of Springfield, Missouri

Map Exhibit 2 Location Map



City Boundary



Department of Planning and Development
City of Springfield, Missouri

Map Exhibit 3 Aerial Photo Map

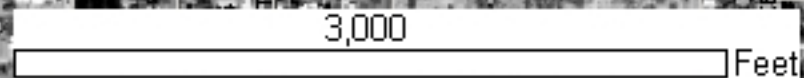
JORDAN VALLEY PARK

West Central
Neighborhood

Downtown



Neighborhood Revitalization Area Boundary



Department of Planning and Development
City of Springfield, Missouri

