

TOLEDO - LUCAS COUNTY PLAN COMMISSIONS

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DATE: November 4, 2021

REF: M-10-20

TO: President Matt Cherry and Members of Council, City of Toledo

FROM: Toledo City Plan Commission, Thomas C. Gibbons, Secretary

SUBJECT: Review and approval of the Garfield Neighborhood Plan

The Toledo City Plan Commission considered the above-referenced request at its meeting on Thursday, November 4, 2021 at 2:00 P.M.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Subject

Request	-	Review and the approval of the Garfield Neighborhood Plan
Applicant	-	Toledo Design Collective Paul Hollenbeck, Chairman One Seagate, Suite 123 Toledo, Ohio 43604

Applicable Plans and Regulations

- Toledo Municipal Code Part Eleven: Planning and Zoning
- Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan
- Main Street & Starr Ave UNO
- Marina District Overlay
- Maumee Riverfront Overlay

STAFF ANALYSIS

This request is for the review of the 2020 Garfield Neighborhood Plan, prepared by the Toledo Design Center in conjunction with the East Toledo Family Center and One Voice for East Toledo. The Core Planning Team started the planning process in July of 2020 with data gathering and monthly meetings. The normal level of person to person outreach was restricted due to the Covid 19 Pandemic. As a result, stakeholder and Core Planning Team meetings in 2020 were conducted primarily over Zoom. Volunteers canvassed the neighborhood by flyering for online forums to ask residents questions concerning quality of life and the future of their neighborhood. The Toledo Design Center design professionals and interns engaged in detailed visioning, including extensive meetings with stakeholders identifying five targeted zones, each requiring different actions to improve the quality of life within the Garfield Neighborhood. Within each of these targeted zones, there are six actionable elements reflected into each recommendation: objectives, potential partners, and strategies.

STAFF ANALYSIS (cont'd)

The planning area of the Garfield Neighborhood Plan encompasses 439.2 acres bounded by Euclid Avenue to the west, the Maumee River to the north with I-280 and the Glass City Metropark, Tribute Park and Ravine Park II to the east, then back to Starr Avenue, E Broadway Street and S Ravine Parkway Drive for the southerly border. Front Street runs along the northern edge of the residential district in the study area, and the Main Street Starr Avenue Corridor UNO bounds the business district to the western and southern edges. Both the Marina District and Maumee Riverfront Districts overlap with the land between Front Street and the Maumee River from Main Street to the I-280.

The Garfield Neighborhood hosts several of Toledo's key anchors, new and old, with the new Glass City Metropark and the National Museum of the Great Lakes to the north, the historic Weber Block Building at Front and Main Streets, and Waite High School with the Mollenkopf Stadium nestled between the residential and business districts. With iconic sites framing this long-established working-class neighborhood, a foundational toolkit such as a neighborhood plan will benefit residents and local businesses.

The Garfield Neighborhood Plan details this eastside community's rich history, and emphasizes why it is important to stabilize and preserve the neighborhood. The Plan assets include: quality housing stock, location along the Maumee Riverfront, and the new Glass City Metropark and large city parks directly bordering the neighborhood. Since its settlement dating back to the 1650s, this region was home to one of Toledo's most prominent early settlers, Peter Navarre. Over time timber and farming industries grew, supporting grist mills, saw mills and rolling mills. As more settlers arrived farmland soon made way for a thriving business district at what is now along Main and Front Streets which continue to thrive well into the 20th century. Over the past few decades, this community has struggled with issues including declining populations, vacant storefronts, and disinvestment.

The Garfield Neighborhood has been included in several previous neighborhood plans and corridor studies including: *Connecting the Pieces Plan* (2008), the *Toledo Strategic Plan for Arts and Culture* (2011), the *New Urban Waterfront Metropark Plan* (2018), *Toledo Riverfront Trail and Open Space Concept Plan* (2019) and *Glass City Riverwalk: Business Corridor Assessment* (2020). Generally, these plans highlighted the downward socioeconomic trends the community was facing, strategies for creative placemaking, improving mobility for local residents to the new Metropark and injecting interest for new business along Main and Front Streets and Starr Avenue. Problems identified through neighborhood feedback in earlier plans included increased vacancies, population decline and disinvestment, poor and unsafe connectivity to the river, and the loss of local retail and services. Although these issues have persisted for decades, these challenges remain.

STAFF ANALYSIS (cont'd)

After preliminary research and analysis, the Toledo Design Collective gathered feedback from the community. Two (2) public meetings, four (4) events, four (4) focus group meetings, fourteen (14) stakeholder interviews, and three (3) virtual workshops were held. For an added effort to collect public opinions and bring attention to planning efforts, neighborhood canvassing and cleanups took place as well as utilizing social media platforms for outreach. As part of the Lucas County Land Bank update, the planning team and volunteers went door-to-door asking residents about their quality of life and vision for the neighborhood. Thirty (30) business owners and education stakeholders responded to surveys and there were ten (10) postcard responses. The consultant, Midstory, was engaged to produce educational and promotional videos using resident and stakeholder interviews throughout this process. These outreach efforts resulted in limited but detailed feedback and suggestions, which then were incorporated into the plan. Once the Garfield Neighborhood Plan was completed, there was a final public meeting in August 2021 at the Glass City Metroparks event center where residents and stakeholders were presented with the plan's findings and recommendations.

The Garfield Neighborhood Plan followed many recommended land use changes from the Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan within the neighborhood to promote stabilization. These included Urban Village and Neighborhood Commercial districts along Front Street. The Urban Village land use designation encourages small scale commercial and pedestrian friendly corridors. The Neighborhood Commercial land use designation encourages higher housing density and pedestrian-oriented small-scale retail and service business to serve residents. Also following the 20/20 Comprehensive Plan, the Garfield Neighborhood Plan supports the creation of an Institutional Campus for historic anchors north of Morrison and east along N and S Ravine Parkways to Ravine I Park. This plan recommends increasing housing density to Multi-family Residential behind Main Street from Morrison to Euclid, both sides of Mott Street from East Broadway to Dearborn and along East Broadway from Mott Street to N Ravine Parkway.

Recommended projects and actions listed in the plan are categorized into the following action items:

1. Establishment of Neighborhood Implementers
2. Residential Core: Zone One
3. Main & Starr Business District: Zone Two
4. Icons & Anchors: Zone Three
5. Riverfront: Zone Four
6. Ravine I & II Parks: Zone Five

STAFF ANALYSIS (cont'd)

The Garfield Neighborhood Plan emphasizes how projects and ideas will not come to pass unless there is support from the neighborhood and leadership from individuals dedicated to the cause. This is why **Action 1** establishes the creation of neighborhood implementers which involves every successive action item. Having at least one individual or group dedicated to overseeing the execution of the plan will increase the likelihood of action items to be completed. **Action 2**, the Residential Core, addresses: robust home renovation programs and education, creative repurposing, increased tree canopy and improved connectivity. While this plan does not include any market analyses, **Action 3**, the Main & Starr Business District features: a market study to attract and retain business, expanding the Yondota historic district, mothballing and creative placemaking of vacant spaces, façade and streetscape improvements, and expanding safe connectivity. **Action 4**, the Icons & Anchors focuses heavily on the celebration of Waite High School and the Sacred Heart Church as well as improving mobility through road calming within this Institutional Campus, large- and small-scale civic art for creative placemaking. **Action 5**, the Riverfront, aligns closely with the existing plans and corridor studies for the Glass City Metropark and *2020 Glass City Riverwalk Business Corridor Assessment* from ConneCToledo. Added strategies focus on developing gateways into the neighborhood and improving safety for pedestrians crossing Front Street to access the Metropark. The Garfield Neighborhood Plan also recommends much-needed housing stock renovations and blight removal, and the creation of Community Benefit Agreements (CBA) between developers and neighborhood coalitions to ensure community buy-in. Finally, in **Action 6**, Ravine I & II Parks, youth programming, priority reforestation, and improving connectivity with wayfinding and street improvements are highlighted.

The Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan lists the Garfield Neighborhood as being located within the Eastside Neighborhood. The recommendations from the *Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan* for the Eastside Neighborhood area are as follows:

(p. 3-31) Toledo 20/20 recommends for the Eastside:

- Enforcing the housing code aggressively
- Encouraging infill housing, where appropriate
- Expanding greenways, trails, and hiking/biking paths

These recommendations are consistent and complement the initiatives that are proposed for the Garfield Neighborhood Plan.

Staff recommends the approval of the Garfield Neighborhood Plan for two reasons. First, the stakeholders in the Monroe Auburn community were involved from the beginning and their interests and concerns were incorporated into the plan. Second, the goals of the *Toledo 20/20 Comprehensive Plan* and the Garfield Neighborhood Plan mirror each other in their recommendations.

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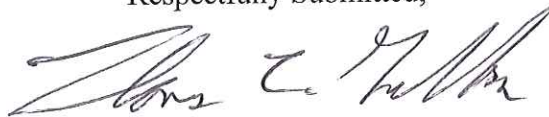
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PLAN COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Toledo City Plan Commission recommends approval of M-10-20, a request to review the 2020 Garfield Neighborhood Plan as an amendment to the 20/20 Plan, to the Toledo City Council, for the following two (2) reasons:

1. The 2020 Garfield Neighborhood Plan redefined the neighborhood's vision based on public outreach and created an action plan that addresses the neighborhood's goals.
2. The proposed 2020 Garfield Neighborhood Plan conforms to the recommended goals and land uses of the 20/20 Comprehensive Plan.

Respectfully Submitted,



Thomas C. Gibbons
Secretary

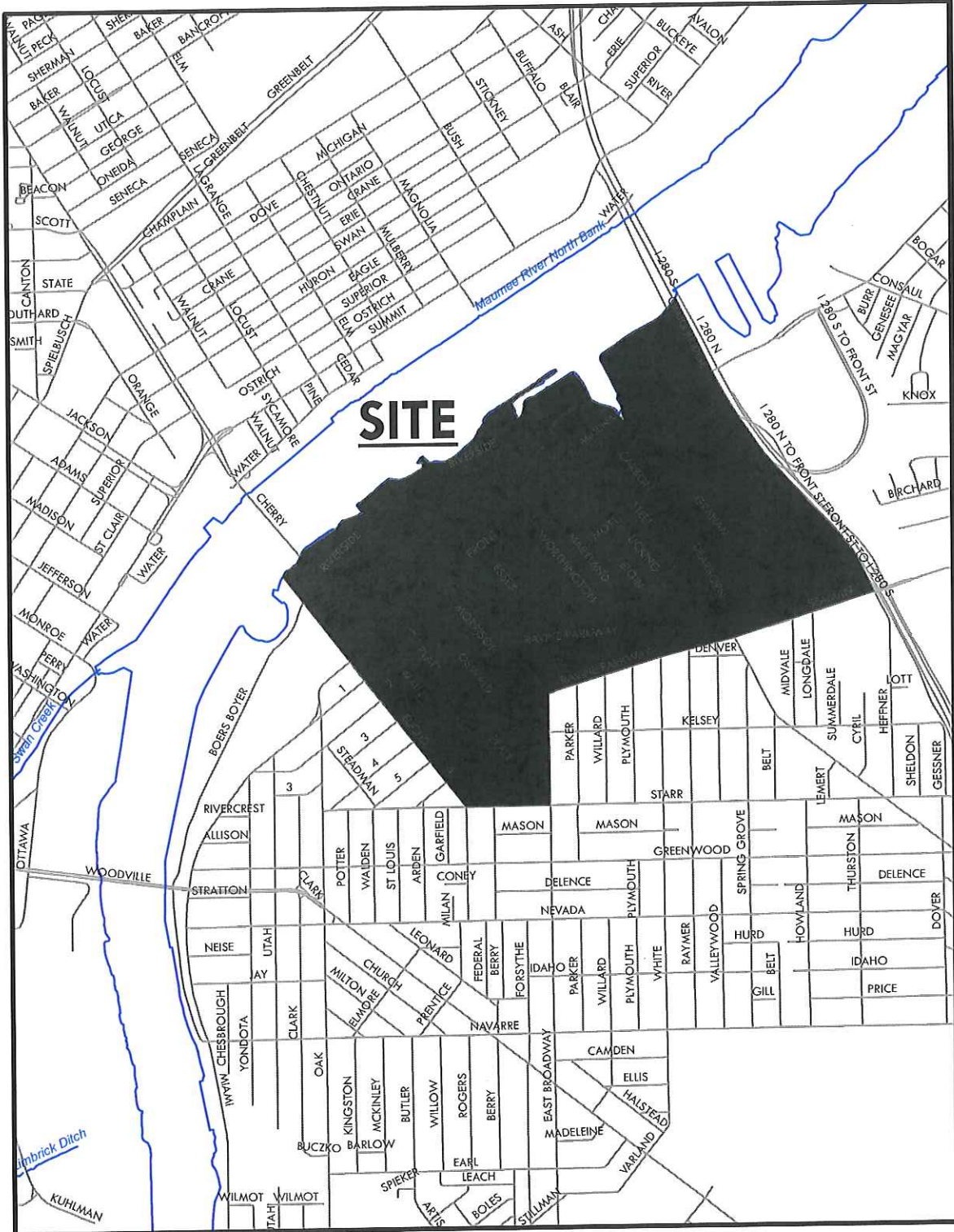
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Two (2) sketches follow

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Lisa Cottrell, Administrator
Nancy Hirsch, Planner

GENERAL LOCATION

M-10-20



ZONING & LAND USE

M-10-20

