

HASTINGS WEST

BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD DETERMINATION STUDY

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HANNA:KEELAN ASSOCIATES, P.C.

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BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD DETERMINATION STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Study/Conclusion

The purpose of this Study is to determine whether all or part of the designated project area in Hastings, Nebraska qualifies as a blighted and substandard area within the definition set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, Section 18-2103.

The findings presented in this Study are based on surveys and analysis conducted for an area referred to as the "Study Area" bounded as follows: North on Baltimore Avenue from "E" Street to 3rd Street; West on 3rd Street to Laird Avenue; South on Laird Avenue to 2nd Street; West on 2nd Street approximately 800 feet; thence South to Railroad Right-of-Way; East along Railroad Right-of-Way to Woodland Avenue; South on Woodland Avenue to "B" Street; East on "B" Street to Burlington Northern Railroad Right-of-Way; thence Southwesterly along Railroad Right-of-Way to "D" Street; thence South to "E" Street; and East on "E" Street to Baltimore Avenue.

Substandard Area

As set forth in the Nebraska legislation, a substandard area shall mean one which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of:

1. Dilapidated/deterioration;
2. Age or obsolescence;
3. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
4. (a) High density of population and overcrowding; or
(b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; or
(c) Any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morales or welfare.

This evaluation included a detailed exterior structural survey of 232 structures within the Study Area; a parcel-by-parcel land use inventory; a field reconnaissance of the entire area, conversations with city department staff members and a review of pertinent reports and documents containing information which could substantiate the existence of blight and substandard conditions.

Blighted Area

As set forth in the Section 18-2103 (11) Nebraska Revised Statute (reissue 1987), a blighted area shall mean "an area, which by reason of the presence of:

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures;
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
6. Diversity of ownership;
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
8. Defective or unusual conditions of title;
9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social liability;

is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one or more of the following conditions;

1. Unemployment in the study or designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;

2. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;
3. More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;
4. The per capita income of the study or designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or
5. The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses."

While it may be concluded the mere presence of a majority of the stated factors may be sufficient to make a finding of blighted and substandard, this evaluation was made on the basis that existing blighted and substandard factors must be present to an extent which would lead reasonable persons to conclude that public intervention is appropriate or necessary to assist with any redevelopment activities. Secondly, the distribution of blighted and substandard factors throughout the Study Area must be reasonable so that basically good areas are not arbitrarily found to be blighted simply because of proximity to areas which are blighted.

On the basis of this approach, the Study Area is found to be eligible as "blighted" and "substandard" within the definition set forth in the legislation. Specifically:

Substandard Factors

Of the four factors set forth in the Nebraska Community Development, two (2) are present to a significant/predominant extent and two (2) are present to a reasonable, but more limited extent.

The substandard factors which are present are reasonably distributed throughout the Study Area; the large parcel of vacant land and deteriorating structures within the built-up area.

Strong Presence of Factor

The conditions which provide inadequate provisions for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces were strong in presence and were sufficiently distributed throughout the Study Area to warrant a classification of a predominant factor.

The prevailing conditions evident during the field survey indicated over 35 percent of the structures were dilapidated or deteriorating. These structures do not meet present day occupancy standards and pose special safety and sanitary problems. Also evident in the area were several unpaved parking lots which present conditions detrimental to abutting properties and representing insanitary and unsafe conditions.

The conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes were strong in presence and were sufficiently distributed throughout the Study Area to warrant a classification of a predominant factor.

The prevailing conditions evident in the buildings from the field survey included:

1. Inadequate provisions for or lack of means of egress;
2. Excessive debris;
3. Frame buildings; and
4. Vacant and partially vacant buildings.

Reasonable Presence of Factor

Age and obsolescence is prevalent throughout the Study Area. A total of 70.7 percent of the structures were built over twenty-five (25) years ago, and of these structures 60.4 percent were built over fifty (50) years ago.

Dilapidated and deteriorating structures were present to a reasonable extent throughout the Study Area. A total of 29.7 percent of the structures were deteriorating, with major deficiencies and 5.2 percent were deteriorated/dilapidated.

Blighted Factors

Of the twelve factors set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, five are present to a significant extent and five are present to a reasonable, but more limited extent. The factors, tax or special assessment exceeding the fair value of land and defective or unusual condition of title had little or no presence.

The blighting factors which are present are reasonably distributed throughout the Study Area; the aged and deteriorating structures within the built-up area, incompatible mixed uses and lack of public improvements.

Strong Presence of Factor

Deteriorating or deteriorated structures are evident to a significant extent throughout the Study Area. A total of 87.1 percent of the structures inspected were found to be blighted and substandard.

Existence of defective or inadequate street layout is present to a significant extent throughout the Study Area. The street system presently limits the development potential of the land which is available. The remainder of the land is "land locked", devoted to streets and railroad right-of-ways. This condition is intolerable for commercial, industrial and residential land uses.

Diversity of ownership is present throughout the Study Area. This condition complicates land assembly and can substantially arrest potential for sound growth and development. The total number of owners in the Study Area is 185, more or less.

Conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes are present to some extent throughout the Study Area. Conditions contributing to this factor include: lack of adequate egress, excessive debris, inappropriate frame construction (buildings) and vacant/partially vacant buildings.

Reasonable Presence of Factor

Faulty lot layout exists to a reasonable extent throughout the Study Area. Conditions contributing to the presence of this factor include: underutilization of land and lack of accessibility/usefulness.

Insanitary and unsafe conditions exist throughout the Study Area. Conditions contributing to this factor include: vacant buildings, surface of parking lots, excessive debris, and evidence of vagrants.

Deterioration of site improvements is present to a reasonable extent throughout the Study Area. Contributing conditions include: absence of sidewalks, excessive debris, and unpaved and poorly maintained parking lots.

Improper subdivision or obsolete platting is present throughout the Study Area. Conditions contributing to this factor include: resubdivided lots, lots of irregular size and lot sizes incompatible to desired land uses.

The Nebraska Community Development Law includes in its statement of purpose¹ an additional criterion for a finding of blight, viz., "economically or socially undesirable land-uses". Conditions which are considered to be economically and/or socially undesirable include (a) functional obsolescence, (b) economic obsolescence, (c) incompatible uses or mixed-use relationships, and (d) excessive dwelling unit density. Economically and/or socially undesirable land-uses are present to a significant extent throughout the Study Area.

¹ Community Development Law, Nebraska Revised Statutes Reissue, 1987 Section 18-2101.

In addition, one of the required five (5) additional blight factors has a reasonable presence in the Study Area.

Conclusion

It is the conclusion of the Consultant retained by the City of Hastings C.R.A., the number, degree and distribution of blighting factors as documented in this report are beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory process in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids provided in the Nebraska Community Development Law. It is also the opinion of the Consultant, the findings of this Blight and Substandard Determination Study warrant designating the Study Area both "substandard" and "blighted".

The conclusions presented in this report are those of the Consultant engaged by the City of Hastings CRA to examine whether conditions of blight/substandard exist. The local governing body should review this report and, if satisfied with the summary of findings contained herein, may adopt a resolution making a finding of blight/substandard and making this report a part of the public record.

**TABLE 1
CITY OF HASTINGS
SUBSTANDARD FACTORS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STUDY AREA**

SUBSTANDARD FACTORS

- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| 1. | Dilapidated/deterioration. | ■ |
| 2. | Age or obsolescence. | ■ |
| 3. | Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air,
sanitation, or open spaces. | ■ |
| 4. | Existence of conditions which endanger life or
property by fire and other causes. | ■ |

Strong Presence of Factor	■
Reasonable Presence of Factor	■
No Presence of Factor	○

TABLE 2
CITY OF HASTINGS
BLIGHT FACTORS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STUDY AREA

BLIGHT FACTORS

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 1. | A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures. | ■ |
| 2. | Existence of defective or inadequate layout | ■ |
| 3. | Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness. | ■ |
| 4. | Insanitary or unsafe conditions. | ■ |
| 5. | Deterioration of site or other improvements. | ■ |
| 6. | Diversity of Ownership. | ■ |
| 7. | Tax or special assessment exceeding the fair value of land. | ○ |
| 8. | Defective or unusual condition of title. | ○ |
| 9. | Improper subdivision or obsolete platting. | ■ |
| 10. | The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes. | ■ |
| 11. | Other environmental and blighting factors. | ■ |
| 12. | One of the other five conditions. | ■ |
| | Strong Presence of Factor | ■ |
| | Reasonable Presence of Factor | ■ |
| | No Presence of Factor | ○ |

1. BASIS FOR REDEVELOPMENT

For a project in Hastings to be eligible for redevelopment under the Nebraska Community Development Law, the area must first qualify as a "substandard area" or as a "blighted area" within the definition set forth in the law. This study has been undertaken to determine whether conditions exist which would warrant designation of the Study Area as a "blighted and substandard area" in accordance with provisions of the law.

As set forth in Section 18-2103 (10) Neb. Rev. Stat. (reissue 1987), substandard area shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the following:

1. Dilapidation/deterioration;
2. Age or obsolescence;
3. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces;
4.
 - (a) High density of population and overcrowding; or
 - (b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; or
 - (c) Any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime;

is detrimental to the public health, safety, morales or welfare.

As set forth in the Nebraska legislation, a blighted area shall mean an area, which by reason of the presence of:

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures;
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
6. Diversity of ownership;
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;

8. Defective or unusual conditions of title;
9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social liability;

is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:

1. Unemployment in the designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;
2. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;
3. More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the city for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;
4. The per capita income of the designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or
5. The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses."

The Consultant for the Hastings West Blight and Substandard Determination Study was guided by the simple premise that a finding of blight and substandard must be defensible and that sufficient evidence of the presence of blighting factors should exist so members of the Hastings City Council (local governing body), acting as reasonable and prudent persons, could conclude public intervention is necessary or appropriate. Therefore, each factor was evaluated in the context of the extent of its presence, and the collective impact of all factors found to be present.

Also, these deficiencies should be reasonably distributed throughout the Study Area. Such a "reasonable distribution of deficiencies test" would preclude localities from taking concentrated areas of blight and expanding them arbitrarily into non-blighted areas for planning or other reasons. The only exception which should be made to this rule is where projects must be brought to a logical boundary to accommodate new

development and ensure accessibility, but even in this instance, inclusion of such areas should be minimal and related to an area otherwise meeting the reasonable distribution of deficiencies test.

2. THE STUDY AREA

The blight and substandard determination Study Area is comprised of 213.58 acres more or less. As identified in Illustration 1 (Location Map), the Study Area is bounded as follows: North on Baltimore Avenue from "E" Street to 3rd Street; West on 3rd Street to Laird Avenue; South on Laird Avenue to 2nd Street; West on 2nd Street approximately 800 feet; thence South to Railroad Right-of-Way; East along Railroad Right-of-Way to Woodland Avenue; South on Woodland Avenue to "B" Street; East on "B" Street to Burlington Northern Railroad Right-of-Way; thence Southwesterly along Railroad Right-of-Way to "D" Street; thence South to "E" Street; and East on "E" Street to Baltimore Avenue.

LOCATION MAP

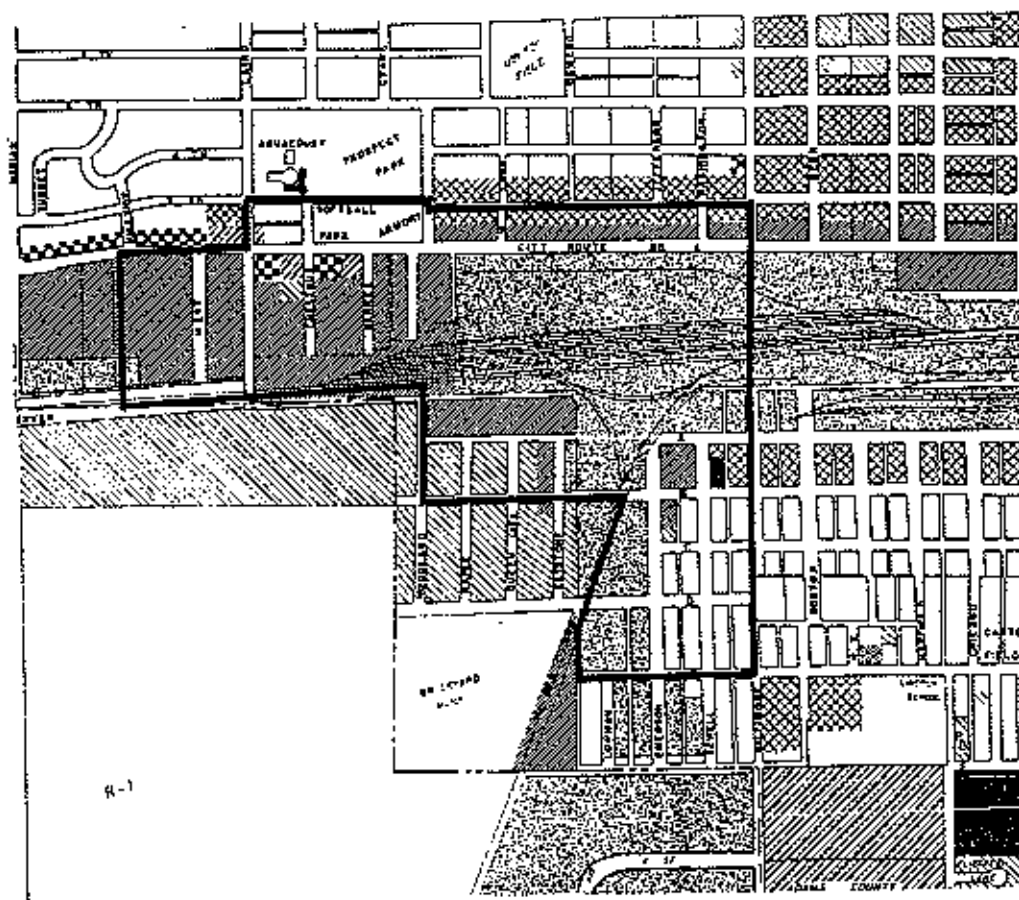
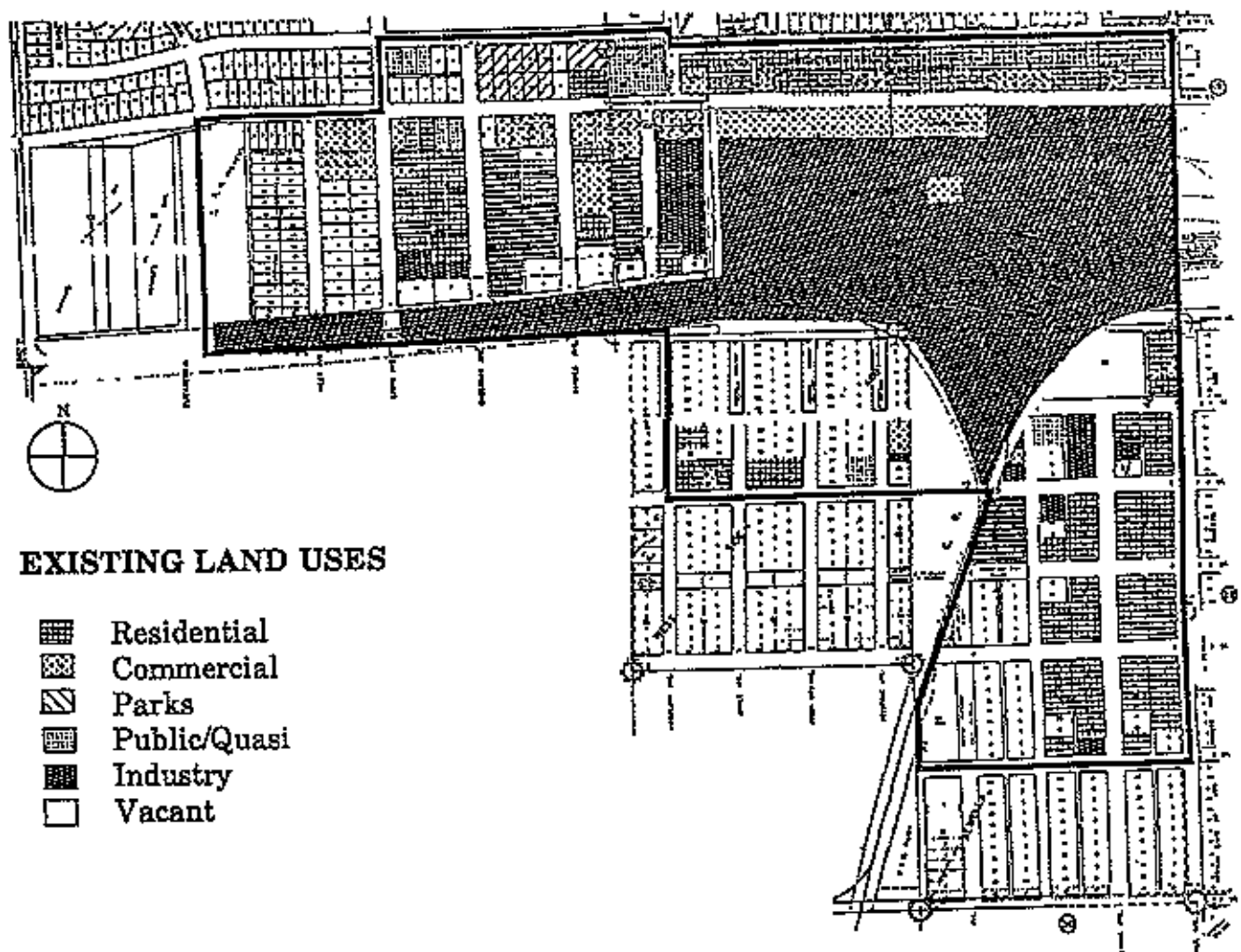


ILLUSTRATION 1

Illustration 2 identifies the existing land uses within the Study Area. The Study Area consist of six land uses: residential, commercial, industrial, public/semi-public, parks and vacant land. The most prominent uses being residential and vacant land.



Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 1991

ILLUSTRATION 2

Residential land usage, as identified in Illustration 2, is located in the northern and southern portions of the Study Area. Residential properties within these areas are predominantly single family. The housing stock is comprised of masonry, brick, and frame construction, with the majority of structures ranging in age from 50 to 100 years.

The commercial land use and building types, as identified in Illustration 2, exists primarily along both sides of 2nd Street. These commercial uses tend to be the type of use associated with Highway Commercial Districts. The buildings are predominantly over 25 years of age (52.4%) and are constructed from brick, steel and frame.

Industrial land use and building types exist on either side of the Railroad Right-of-Ways, with the majority in an area bounded by Chestnut Avenue to the West, Baltimore Avenue to the east, 2nd Street to the north and South Street to the south. The predominate industrial land uses are Dutton-Lainson Manufacturing, Pauley Lumber Warehousing and several storage and manufacturing buildings. Over 43 percent of these buildings are over 25 years of age.

The Study Area contains both new and refurbished buildings. A reasonable high percentage of the structures in the Study Area (34.9%) have major structural deficiencies, functional and economic obsolescence and problems difficult to correct related to current code requirements.

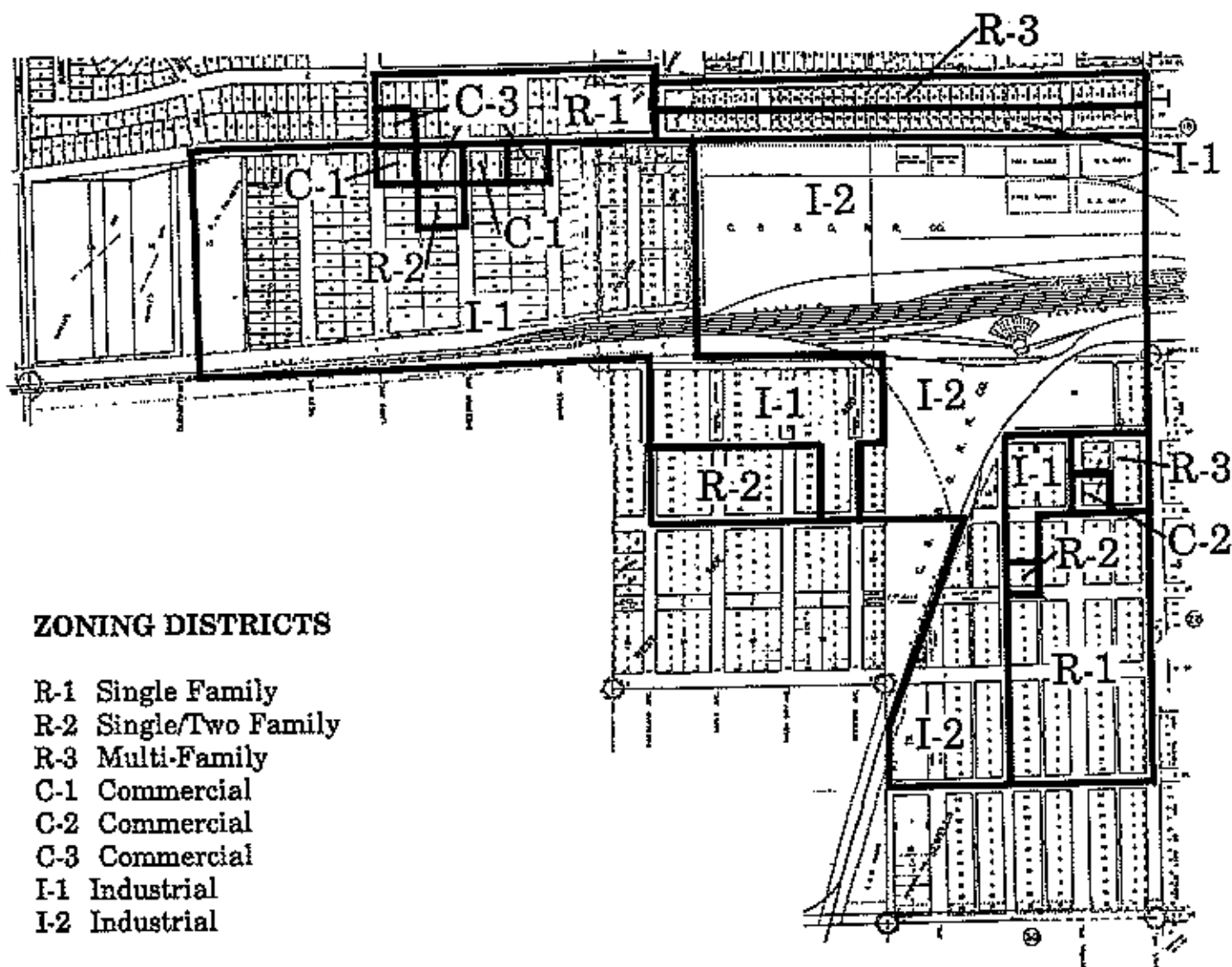
Table 3 statistically identifies the existing land use patterns within the Study Area, in terms of number of acres and percentage of total for all existing land uses.

**TABLE 3
CITY OF HASTINGS
EXISTING LAND USE
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STUDY AREA**

<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Acres/Percent</u>
Residential	30.66/14.4%
Commercial	12.51/5.9%
Industrial	37.34/17.5%
Public/Quasi Public	4.44/2.1%
Parks	2.49/1.1%
Streets and Alleys	85.38/40.0%
Total Developed	172.82/80.9%
Vacant	40.76/19.1%
Total Acreage	213.58/100.0%

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 1991

Illustration 3 identifies the existing zoning districts within the Study Area. The present zoning classification is compatible to existing uses.



Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C.

ILLUSTRATION 3

3. THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The research approach implemented for the Hastings West Blight and Substandard Determination Study included an assessment of the blight and substandard determination factors identified in the Nebraska Community Development Law. In brief, factors which were general in nature and existed in a continuous fashion, area wide, such as streets, alleys, sidewalks, driveways and other transportation systems, open spaces, parking areas, exterior structural condition, individual structures and properties and property ownership were investigated on an area-wide basis. Taxation status was investigated on a random-sampling basis excluding tax exempt properties.

The assessment of the aforementioned factors, excluding taxation status, was implemented utilizing an area-wide examination process as opposed to a random-sampling process, in an attempt to reduce errors associated with conducting a random-sampling method. In addition, an area-wide assessment provides the consultant with a more accurate understanding of the Study Area and allows for more informed conclusions and recommendations about the area.

4. ELIGIBILITY SURVEY AND ANALYSIS FINDINGS

An analysis was made of each of the blighted and substandard factors listed in the legislation to determine whether each or any are present in the Study Area, and if so, to what extent and in what locations.

The following represents a summary evaluation of each blight and substandard factor presented in the order of their listing in the law.

SUBSTANDARD FACTORS

(1) Dilapidation/Deterioration of Structures

The rating of building conditions is a critical step in determining the eligibility of a substandard area for redevelopment. The system for classifying buildings must be based on established evaluation standards and criteria and result in an accurate and consistent description of existing conditions.

This section summarizes the process used for assessing building conditions in the Study Area, the standards and criteria used for evaluation, and the findings as to the existence of dilapidation/deterioration of structures.

The building condition analysis is based on exterior inspections of all 232 structures within the Study Area, to note structural deficiencies in individual buildings and to identify related environmental deficiencies for individual sites or parcels within the Study Area. The Structural Site Condition Survey Form is identified in Appendix 1.

1. Building Components Evaluated

During the field survey, each component of a subject building was examined to determine whether it was in sound condition or had minor, major, or critical defects. Building components examined were of two types:

Primary Components. These include the basic elements of any building: foundation walls and girders, load bearing walls and columns, roof and roof structure, and floor structure.

Secondary Components. These are components generally added to the primary structural components and are necessary parts of the building, including exterior curtain walls, non-bearing walls and ceilings, interior stairs, porches and steps, fire escapes, etc.

2. Criteria for Classifying Defects for Building Components

Primary and secondary components were evaluated separately as a basis for determining the overall condition of individual structures. This evaluation considered the relative importance of specific components on the exterior of the building, and the effect that deficiencies in components will have on the remainder of the structure.

3. Building Component Classifications

The four categories used in classifying building components and systems and the criteria used in evaluating structural deficiencies are described below.

Sound. Building components which contain no defects, are adequately maintained, and require no treatment outside of normal ongoing maintenance.

Minor - Requiring Minor Repair. Building components which contain defects (loose or missing material or holes and cracks over a limited area) which often can be corrected through the course of normal maintenance. Minor defects have no real effects on either structural or architectural components and the correction of such defects may be accomplished by the owner or occupants, such as pointing masonry joints over a limited area or replacement of less complicated components. Minor defects are not considered in rating a building as structurally substandard.

Major - Requiring Major Repair (Deteriorating). Building components which contain major defects over a widespread area and would be difficult to correct through normal maintenance. Buildings in the major deficient category would require replacement or rebuilding of components by people skilled in the building trades.

Substandard (Dilapidated/Deteriorated). Building components which contain major defects (bowing, sagging, or settling to any or all exterior components causing the structure to be out-of-plumb, or broken, loose or missing material and deterioration over a widespread area) so extensive the cost of repairs would be excessive in relation to the value returned on the investment.

4. Final Building Rating

After completion of the building condition surveys, each individual building was placed in one of four categories based on the combination of defects found in various structural and architectural building components, each final rating is described below.

Sound. Sound buildings can be kept in a standard condition with normal maintenance. Buildings so classified have less than four minor defects.

Deficient-Minor. Buildings classified as deficient - requiring minor repairs- have more than three minor defects, but less than one critical defect.

Deficient-Major (Deteriorating). Buildings classified as deficient - requiring major repairs - have at least one critical defect, but less than two critical defects.

Substandard (Dilapidated/Deteriorated). Structurally substandard buildings contain defects which are so serious and so extensive the building must be removed. Buildings classified as structurally substandard have two or more critical defects. Critical defects are as follows:

Structural. Each of four primary structural components can receive a rating of one critical defect. Two primary structural components, each receiving a rating of major defects, equals one critical defect.

Building Systems. Two building systems, each receiving a rating of a major defect, equals one critical defect.

Architectural. Four architectural components, each receiving a rating of a major defect, equals one critical defect.

The following combinations of major defects is equivalent to one critical defect.

One major defect in the structural components plus one major defect in the building systems equals one critical defect.

Two major defects in the architectural components plus one major defect in either structural components or the building systems equals one critical defect.

Major deficient buildings are considered to be the same as deteriorating buildings as referenced in the Nebraska legislation; substandard buildings are the same as dilapidated buildings. The words building and structure are presumed to be interchangeable.

5. Field Survey Conclusions

The condition of the 232 primary buildings within the Study Area was determined based on the findings of detailed surveys. These surveys indicated the following:

- Thirty (30) structures are classified as structurally sound;
- One Hundred-Twenty One (121) structures are classified as minor defects;
- Sixty-Nine (69) structures are classified as deteriorating major defects; and
- Twelve (12) structures are classified as substandard, dilapidated/deteriorated critical defects.

The survey clearly indicates 81 (34.9%) of 232 structures throughout the Study Area are either deteriorating or dilapidated.

Conclusion

The results of the structural condition survey for the study indicates deteriorating structures are present to a reasonable extent throughout the Study Area. Table 4 identifies the results of the structural rating process per building type.

TABLE 4
CITY OF HASTINGS
EXTERIOR SURVEY FINDINGS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STUDY AREA

Activity	Sound	Deficient (Minor)	Structural Rating		Substandard Structures	Substandard
			Deficient (Major)	Sub standard Displaced		
Residential	22	81	45	6	154	51/33.1%
Commercial	4	12	5	0	21	5/23.8%
Public/Semi Public	1	3	0	0	4	0/0
Industrial	3	25	19	6	53	25/47.1%
Total	30	121	69	12	232	81/34.9%
Percent	12.9%	52.2%	29.7%	5.2%	100.0%	

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 1991

(2) Age or Obsolescence

According to the field survey conducted by the Consultant in February 1991 and May 1991, 69.0 percent of the structures within the Study Area were built over twenty-five (25) years ago. Of these structures 60.6 percent were built over fifty (50) years ago.

Conclusion

The result of the field surveys indicated the age and obsolescence of the structures in the Study Area is reasonably sufficient to constitute a substandard factor.

(3) Inadequate Provision for Ventilation, Light, Air, Sanitation or Open Spaces

The results from the exterior structural survey, along with other field data, provided the basis for the identification of insanitary and unsafe conditions. Factors contributing to insanitary and unsafe conditions are discussed below.

Over thirty-five percent (35%) of the structures in the Study Area are deteriorating or dilapidated. When not adequately maintained or upgraded to present day occupancy standards, buildings which are deteriorating or dilapidated pose special safety and sanitary problems. There is a significant number of wood framed single and two-story residential buildings which are in need of structural repair or fire protection. The field analysis indicated thirty (30) commercial and industrial buildings or 40.5 percent were substandard.

Within the Study Area, there are twenty-six (26) parking lots which are unpaved. These are characterized by irregular gravel and dirt surfaces with many depressions. The lack of maintenance and the ambient dust conditions of these areas are detrimental to abutting properties and represent an insanitary and unsafe condition.

Evidence of vagrants was found in portions of the Study Area, especially in areas in close proximity to railroads or industrial docks. Vagrants have created problems through vandalism, breaking into vacant structures and leaving debris strewn about.

Conclusion

The inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces is significantly predominant throughout the Study Area.

(4) The Existence of Conditions Which Endanger Life or Property by Fire and Other Causes

1. Inadequate Provisions for or Lack of Means of Egress.

Potential life threatening conditions exist in some buildings which lack adequate means of egress.

2. Excessive Debris.

Debris located on several sites poses as a fire hazard as well as an area to harbor pest which are detrimental to the public's safety.

3. Frame Buildings.

There are wood framed buildings throughout the Study Area which are in need of structural repair or fire protection. In several cases, industrial and commercial building framing has been left exposed and should be protected by a sprinkler system or covered with proper fire-resistive materials. There are significant wood framed single and two-story residential buildings which are in need of structural repair or fire protection. These buildings have been determined to be deteriorating or dilapidated.

4. Vacant Buildings and Partially Vacant Buildings.

The Study Area contains a minimal amount of vacant and partially vacant buildings as determined by the visual field inspection. Many of the conditions cited in this section are prevalent in these structures. These structures also promote vandalism, vermin, insect infestation, and other hazards which, because of the lack of proper maintenance, endanger adjacent properties.

Conclusion

The conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, while strong in presence, is predominantly distributed throughout the Study Area.

BLIGHT FACTORS

(1) Deteriorated or Deteriorating Structures

The rating of building conditions is a critical step in determining the eligibility of an area for redevelopment. It is important the system for classifying buildings be based on established evaluation standards and criteria, and it result in an accurate and consistent description of existing conditions.

This section summarizes the process used for assessing building conditions in the Study Area, the standards and criteria used for evaluation, and the findings as to the existence of deteriorating or deteriorated structures.

The building condition analysis is based on the exterior inspections of 232 structures within the Study Area, to note structural deficiencies in individual buildings and to identify related environmental deficiencies for individual sites or parcels within the Study Area. The Structural Site Conditions Survey Form is identified in Appendix I.

1. Building Components Evaluated

Each component of a subject building was examined to determine whether it was in sound condition or had minor, major, or critical defects. Building components examined were of two types:

Primary Components. These include the basic elements of any building: foundation walls and girders, load bearing walls and columns, roof and roof structure, and floor structure.

Secondary Components. These are components generally added to the primary structural components and are necessary parts of the building, including exterior curtain walls, non-bearing walls and ceilings, interior stairs, porches and steps, fire escapes, etc.

2. Criteria for Classifying Defects for Building Components

Primary and secondary components were evaluated separately as a basis for determining the overall condition of individual structures. This evaluation considered the relative importance of specific components on the exterior of the building, and the effect that deficiencies in components will have on the remainder of the structure.

3. Building Component Classifications

The four categories used in classifying building components and systems and the criteria used in evaluating structural deficiencies are described below.

Sound. Building components which contain no defects, are adequately maintained, and require no treatment outside of normal ongoing maintenance.

Minor - Requiring Minor Repair. Building components which contain defects (loose or missing material or holes and cracks over a limited area) which often can be corrected through the course of normal maintenance. Minor defects have no real effects on either structural or architectural components and the correction of such defects may be accomplished by the owner or occupants, such as pointing masonry joints over a limited area or replacement of less complicated components. Minor defects are not considered in rating a building as structurally substandard.

Major - Requiring Major Repair. Building components which contain major defects over a widespread area and would be difficult to correct through normal maintenance. Buildings in the major deficient category would require replacement or rebuilding of components by people skilled in the building trades.

Substandard - (Dilapidated/Deteriorated). Building components which contain major defects (bowing, sagging, or settling to any or all exterior components causing the structure to be out-of-plumb, or broken, loose or missing material and deterioration over a widespread area) so extensive the cost of repairs would be excessive in relation to the value returned on the investment.

4. Final Building Rating

After completion of the building condition surveys, each individual building was placed in one of four categories based on the combination of defects found in various structural and architectural building components, each final rating is described below.

Sound. Sound buildings can be kept in a standard condition with normal maintenance. Buildings so classified have less than four minor defects.

Deficient-Minor. Buildings classified as deficient - requiring minor repairs - have more than three minor defects, but less than one critical defect.

Deficient-Major. Buildings classified as deficient - requiring major repairs - have at least one critical defect, but less than two critical defects.

Substandard. Structurally substandard buildings contain defects which are so serious and so extensive the building must be removed. Buildings classified as structurally substandard have two or more critical defects. Critical defects are as follows:

Structural. Each of four primary structural components can receive a rating of one critical defect. Two primary structural components, each receiving a rating of major defects, equals one critical defect.

Building Systems. Two building systems, each receiving a rating of a major defect, equals one critical defect.

Architectural. Four architectural components, each receiving a rating of a major defect, equals one critical defect.

The following combinations of major defects is equivalent to one critical defect.

One major defect in the structural components plus one major defect in the building systems equals one critical defect.

Two major defects in the architectural components plus one major defect in either structural components or the building systems equals one critical defect.

Minor deficient and major deficient buildings are considered to be the same as deteriorating buildings as referenced in the Nebraska legislation; substandard buildings are the same as deteriorated buildings. The words building and structure are presumed to be interchangeable.

5. Field Survey Conclusions

The condition of the 232 primary buildings within the Study Area was determined based on the findings of detailed survey of each building. These surveys indicated the following:

- Thirty (30) structures are classified as structurally sound;
- One Hundred-Twenty One (121) structures are classified as deteriorating minor defects;
- Sixty-Nine (69) structures are classified as deteriorating major defects; and
- Twelve (12) structures are classified as substandard, dilapidated/deteriorated critical defects.

The survey clearly indicates 202 of 232 (87.1%), of the structures throughout the Study Area are either deteriorating or dilapidated.

Conclusion

The results of the structural condition survey indicates deteriorating or deteriorated structures are evident to a significant extent throughout the Study Area. Table 5 identifies the results of the structural rating process per building type.

TABLE 5
CITY OF HASTINGS
EXTERIOR SURVEY FINDINGS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
STUDY AREA

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Deficient (Minor)</u>	<u>Structural Rating</u>			<u>Structures</u>	<u>Blighted</u>
			<u>Deficient</u>	<u>Deteriorating</u>	<u>Sub standard</u>		
Residential	22	81	45	6		154	132/85.7%
Commercial	4	12	5	0		21	17/81.0%
Public/Semi Public	1	3	0	0		4	3/75.0%
Industrial	3	25	19	6		53	50/94.3%
Total	30	121	69	12		232	202/87.1%
Percent	12.9%	52.2%	29.7%	5.2%		100.0%	

Source: Hanna/Keelan Associates, P.C., 1991

(2) Existence of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

The street pattern within the Study Area consists of a grid system which is used throughout the City of Hastings. Street Right-of-Way widths range from 60 ft. to 80 ft. within and bordering the Study Area.

Existing streets provide a high level of accessibility to the north and northeast areas of the Study Area. However problem conditions exist in the Study Area. Basic problem conditions include:

1. Limited Vehicular Accessibility

The principle vehicular circulation system linkage of the Study Area with the majority of other points in Hastings is Second Street, an east-west arterial in the northern portion. Other streets in the Study Area provide less direct linkages to other parts of the City due to existing barriers.

The Study Area is bisected by railroad lines in a east and west alignment and a southwest and northeast alignment in the southern portion of the area. The existence of these rail lines creates a hazard for vehicular and pedestrian traffic in the Study Area while also disrupting the grid street system used for vehicular circulation throughout Hastings. The existing street layout in this Study Area discourages vehicular movement, north and south bound traffic is limited to Laird Avenue. The Laird Avenue crossing is interrupted periodically by railroad traffic. The nearest uninterrupted crossing is the underpass on Burlington Avenue, seven (7) blocks east of the Study Area.

An uninterrupted grid street system provides ready access from all directions to specific locations within the City. However, as is evident in the Study Area, where built barriers interrupt the continuity of the grid, or where restrictions are placed upon the direction of traffic flows, accessibility to locations in the vicinity of these constraints can be seriously impaired. Good vehicular accessibility is important for most commercial and industrial enterprises and is desirable for residential development.

The railroad right-of-ways are located approximately 30 feet both sides of the railroad tracks. These railroad right-of-ways serve at least two purposes: (1) act as a safety mechanism; and (2) act as a sound buffer zone to adjacent sites.

Throughout the Study Area, the composition of the railroad right-of-way was considered to be in "fair" condition. This area is utilized in several ways, including storage, warehousing and also a place for excessive debris to collect.

There appears to be minimal enforcement of the municipal code provisions in these railroad right-of-ways within the industrial districts of the project area.

2. Inadequate Provision of Pedestrian Movement

The lack of sidewalks to provide for pedestrian flow exists throughout the Study Area. Since a large portion of land in the Study Area is industrial and vacant, sidewalks have not been developed. According to the field survey conducted by the consultants, an estimated one hundred forty-one (141) platted lots did not have sidewalks. Sixty-six (66) platted lots had sidewalks which were in "excellent" or "good" condition. Overall 56.9 percent of the platted lots surveyed had no existing sidewalks.

3. Lack of Adequate Parking

With the increased use of the automobile as a mode of transportation, a strain has been placed on the urban infrastructure to accommodate not only car movement, but car parking as well. Because street layout and block development in the Study Area preceded this trend toward widespread use of the private automobile, an adequate provision for parking is a major concern, not only for the present time, but also for the future, sound growth of the area.

Available on and off street parking areas are inadequately defined and subject to inconsistent public use.

Conclusion

One or more of the discussed conditions are strongly present throughout the Study Area.

(3) Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility, or Usefulness

Building use and condition surveys, property ownership and sub-division records and field surveys have resulted in the identification of several problem conditions associated with faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness of land within the Study Area. The size and arrangement of lots within the Study Area has resulted in conditions which adversely affect the sound growth and development of the area. These problem conditions include:

1. Underutilization of land close to the core of the City.

Numerous buildings in the Study Area are reactively inactive and are devoted to storage and warehousing. Parts or all of some buildings are vacant. There are also vacant land parcels in the Study Area as indicated in Illustration 2, existing land use. The vacant land parcels comprise 19.1 percent of the total land area.

The underutilization of vacant land does little to contribute to the viability of the Study Area and surrounding areas. In fact, such conditions can result in making the area a liability to the overall economic and social well-being of the entire community.

2. Lack of Accessibility/Usefulness.

The current lot layout and lack of the development has left some vacant parcels "landlocked". Other vacant lots lack interior street systems to provide access throughout the land parcel. Land which is "landlocked" is deprived of economic potential since no reasonable vehicular access is obtainable.

3. Lack of Planned Open Space.

With a shift in land use in a significant portion of the area towards office, commercial and residential uses, planning of open space becomes a concern. Because of excessive land use and lot coverage, courtyards, plazas and mini-parks are generally lacking in the area. These spaces provide a retreat from the normal work environment during lunch hours and break periods, and are generally a welcome attraction in the urban environment. Modern planning generally requires certain amounts of open space, addressing both current and future use.

Conclusion

Problems relating to faulty lot layout are present to a reasonable extent in the majority of the Study Area.

(4) Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions

The results of the field survey (structural condition analysis, along with other field data) provided the basis for this identification of insanitary and unsafe conditions in the Study Area. Factors contributing to insanitary and unsafe conditions are discussed below.

1. Residential Buildings.

Over 54.0 percent of the single family residential buildings are 50 to 100 years of age. This results in sub-standard living units in need of rehabilitation services.

2. Commercial and Industrial Buildings.

The majority (70.2) of the commercial and industrial buildings in the Study Area are over 20 years of age, 20.2 percent are between 50 to 100 years of age. Problem conditions found to exist include lack of egress, natural ventilation and lack of adequate storage of materials. In some cases the lack of maintenance has posed safety hazards for occupants.

3. Vacant Buildings.

Vacant or partially vacant structures exist to a minimal degree throughout the Study Area. Apart from the many structural deficiencies prevalent in the vacant buildings, these properties evidence neglect and deferred maintenance.

Insanitary and unsafe conditions associated with vacant structures are found to exist, including improper means of lack of egress from upper floors; widespread infestation of pigeons and associated debris; and general lack of maintenance. These conditions impact occupied floors of partially vacant buildings due to water seepage, rodents or insects, and dust and dirt accumulation.

4. Surface parking lots.

Within the Study Area there are twenty-six (26) parking lots which are unpaved. These are characterized by irregular shaped gravel and dirt surfaces with many depressions. The lack of maintenance and the ambient dust conditions of these areas are detrimental to abutting properties and represent an insanitary and unsafe condition.

5. Excessive Debris.

Debris is present in the form of discarded materials in the commercial and industrial areas. The vacant land and other structures contain litter to a lesser degree. The debris is not only unsightly, but also promotes certain safety hazards.

6. Vagrants.

The evidence of vagrants was found in portions of the Study Area, especially in areas in close proximity to railroads or industrial docks. Vagrants have created problems through vandalism, breaking into vacant structures and leaving debris at the properties.

Conclusion

Insanitary and unsafe conditions are present to a reasonable extent in the majority of the Study Area.

(6) Diversity of Ownership

The majority of the Study Area contains blocks which have been platted into smaller lots to originally accommodate residential development. The areas abutting the railroad yard in the east portion of the Study Area have been platted into larger lots to accommodate industrial development.

This diversity of ownership makes redevelopment difficult. The assemblage of larger sites is difficult to accomplish when the number of properties to be secured is several.

The total number of owners in the Study Area is estimated to be 185. The situation is worsened by the fact that several of those blocks with only one or two owners are owned by public or institutional users, or are owned by and utilized for activities associated with the railroad systems. The remaining properties, which are privately held and which would be the most likely candidates for redevelopment, rarely have fewer than four owners in one block.

The blocks with unusually large numbers of owners are scattered throughout the residential districts of the Study Area. The majority of the one and two ownerships are generally located within the industrial and commercial districts especially areas adjacent to the railroad.

Land assemblage is an absolute necessity for major redevelopment. Without it, only small, individual renovation activities of existing buildings is possible. In order for the kinds of redevelopment to occur which are currently desirable, economically feasible, which will attract financial support and public patronage required to repay such financial support; it is necessary to assemble larger parcels of property. Such assemblage is most difficult without public intervention and constitutes one of the greatest deterrents to significant redevelopment within the Study Area.

Conclusion

Diversity of Ownership in the Study Area is strongly present as a Blight Factor.

(8) Defective or Unusual Condition of Title

Examination of individual deeds and encumbrances has been undertaken as part of this blight and substandard determination study. The study of property ownership data did not provide any basis for identifying any defective or unusual conditions of title. This factor is not found to be prevalent as a blighting factor within the Study Area.

(9) Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting

Improper subdivision and obsolete platting is a constraint throughout the Study Area.

The majority of blocks in the Study Area have experienced some degree of subdividing, since original platting. The present platting of lots or lack of, in these blocks, can be considered improper and obsolete for the type of commercial, industrial and residential land uses desired.

Efforts to overcome problems of inadequate subdivision and obsolete platting and to secure sites of reasonably adequate size and shape for modern development purposes, require the assemblage of adjacent parcels. This assemblage of parcels is complicated due to the numerous subdivisions and property owners within the Study Area. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting exist throughout the Study Area.

Conclusion

Improper subdivision or obsolete platting inhibits sound growth and development in the Study Area. There exists a strong presence of improper subdivision or obsolete platting throughout the Study Area.

(10) The Existence of Conditions Which Endanger Life or Property by Fire and Other Causes

1. Inadequate Provisions for or Lack of Means of Egress.

Potential life threatening conditions exist in some buildings which lack adequate means of egress.

2. Excessive Debris.

Debris located on several sites poses as a fire hazard as well as an area to harbor pest which are detrimental to the public's safety.

3. Frame Buildings.

Some of the commercial, industrial and retail buildings within the area are of wood frame or partial wood frame construction. In many cases, the framing has been left exposed and should be protected by a sprinkler system or covered with proper fire-resistive materials. There are significant wood framed single and two-story residential buildings which are in need of structural repair or fire protection, as well. These buildings have been determined to be deficient or substandard, in all instances.

4. Vacant Buildings and Partially Vacant Buildings.

The Study Area contains a minimal amount of vacant and partially vacant buildings as determined by the visual field inspection. Many of the conditions cited in this section are prevalent in these structures. These structures also promote vandalism, vermin, insect infestation, and other hazards which, because of the lack of proper maintenance, endanger adjacent properties.

Conclusion

The conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes, while strong in presence, is predominantly distributed throughout the Study Area.

(11) Other Environmental and Blighting Factors

The Nebraska Community Development Law includes in its statement of purpose an additional criterion for identifying blight, viz., "economically or socially undesirable land uses." Conditions which are considered to be economically and/or socially undesirable include: (a) incompatible uses or mixed-use relationships, (b) economic obsolescence, and (c) functional obsolescence. For purpose of this analysis, functional obsolescence relates to the physical utility of a structure and economic obsolescence relates to a property's ability to compete in the market place. These two definitions are interrelated and complement each other.

Substantial public improvements have occurred throughout the Study Area over the last ten plus years. A few of these include street and sidewalk improvement, commercial and industrial development and residential development. Private development has been undertaken on a piecemeal basis and most opportunity for redevelopment capable of carrying its own financial weight has already been accomplished within the Study Area. Without some type of public assistance and coordination of effort, a difficult challenge will be rendered for future private projects to be successful ventures. Numerous problems or obstacles exist for comprehensive redevelopment efforts by the private sector in the project area; problems that only public assistance programs can help remedy. These include removal of dilapidated structures and upgrading or development of streets, sidewalks and railroad crossings. These types of programs are proven stimulants to the creation of successful private developments.

1. Incompatible Uses or Mixed Use Relations.

The Study Area is divided into seven (7) zoning districts. These include three (3) residential districts, R-1, R-2, R-3, three (3) commercial districts, C-1, C-2, C-3, and two (2) industrial districts, I-1, I-2.

Within the Study Area, conditions exist in which structures and sites have uses that are incompatible with the zoning district in which they are located. For example, residential zones adjacent to industrial zones. This type of incompatible land use is most apparent along railroad right-of-ways and in the western section of the Study Area.

The Study Area in its entirety contains mixed and incompatible land uses and undesirable mixed uses. The industrial districts includes non-compatible commercial establishments and residential properties. This is particularly evident of properties adjacent the north of Second Street and in platted areas west of Woodland Avenue.

2. Economic and Functional Obsolescence

The Study Area contains a significant amount of vacant land as indicated in Illustration 2, Existing Land Use. A total of approximately 19.1 percent of the Study Area consist of vacant land. Vacant land is one of the indications of both functional and economic obsolescence.

Conclusion

Other Environmental, Blighted Factors are present to a reasonable extent throughout the Study Area.

(12) Additional Blighting Conditions

According to the definition set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, Section 18-2102, in order for an area to be determined "blighted" it must (1) meet the eleven criteria by reason of presence and (2) contain at least one of the five conditions identified below:

1. Unemployment in the designated blighted and substandard area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;
2. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;
3. More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the City for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;
4. The per capita income of the designated blighted and substandard area is lower than the average per capita income of the City or Village in which the area is designated; or
5. The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses.

One of the aforementioned criteria is prevalent within the designated blighted area.

A. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty (40) years.

According to the field survey conducted by the consultant in February 1991 and May 1991, 57.3 percent of the residential structures within the Study Area were identified as being built prior to 1940.

An age estimation for all structures in the study area revealed 70.7 percent of the structures were constructed 25+ years ago and of these 60.4 percent were built 50+ years ago.

The average age of the residential and commercial structures within the Study Area meets and exceeds the forty (40) years average age requirement set forth for blight determination eligibility.

Conclusion

One of the five blight determination criteria is prevalent within the Study Area.

5. DETERMINATION OF STUDY AREA ELIGIBILITY

The Study Area meets the requirements of the Nebraska Community Development Law for designation as both a "blighted and substandard area". There is a reasonable distribution of at least ten of the twelve factors present in the 214 acre Study Area to constitute a blighted area and a predominance of two of the four factors to constitute substandard.

Substandard Factors

1. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces; and
2. Existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes.

Blighted Factors

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures;
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
6. Diversity of ownership;
7. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
8. Existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
9. Other environmental and blighting factors; and
10. The average age of the residential and commercial units in the area is at least forty years.

Although all of the previously listed factors are reasonably present within the Study Area, the conclusion of the Consultant is the substantial number and distribution of deteriorated and deteriorating structures and the average age of buildings, as documented in this report, is in itself a sufficient basis for designation of the area as a blighted and substandard area.

In addition to the above, other environmental, blighting and substandard factors were found to be present throughout the 214 acre study area.

The extent of blight and substandard for each of the factors addressed in this study are presented in Tables 1 and 2. The eligibility findings indicate the Study Area is in need of revitalization and strengthening to ensure it will contribute to the physical, economic and social well-being of the City of Hastings. Indications are, the area, on the whole, has not been subject to comprehensive, sufficient growth and development through investment by the private sector nor would the areas be reasonably anticipated to be developed without public action or public intervention.

It is also the conclusion of the Consultant, after careful study of the Study Area, the entire area is appropriate for inclusion into one continuous area contiguous with other approved blighted and substandard areas.

APPENDICES I AND II

Appendix 1

STRUCTURAL/SITE CONDITIONS
SURVEY FORMSECTION I:

1. Type of Unit: ☐ SF ☐ MF ☐ Mixed Use
☐ Duplex ☐ No. of Units
2. Unit: ☐ Under construction/rehab
☐ For Sale ☐ Both
3. Vacant Unit: ☐ Habitable ☐ Inhabitable
4. Vacant Parcel: ☐ Developable ☐ Undevelopable
5. Non-residential Use: ☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Public
☐ Other/Specify _____

SECTION II: Structural Components

Primary Components		(Substandard) Critical	(Major) Substandard	Minor	None(sound)
1.	Roof	C	S	M	N
2.	Wall Foundation	C	S	M	N
3.	Foundation	C	S	M	N
	<input type="checkbox"/> Concrete <input type="checkbox"/> Stone <input type="checkbox"/> Rolled Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Brick <input type="checkbox"/> Other				
Secondary Components		(Substandard) Critical	(Major) Substandard	Minor	None(sound)
4.	Roof Covering	C	S	M	N
	<input type="checkbox"/> Asphalt Shingles <input type="checkbox"/> Rolled Asphalt <input type="checkbox"/> Cedar <input type="checkbox"/> Combination <input type="checkbox"/> Other				
5.	Chimney	C	S	M	N
6.	Gutters, Downspouts	C	S	M	N
7.	Wall Surface	C	S	M	N
	<input type="checkbox"/> Frame <input type="checkbox"/> Masonry <input type="checkbox"/> Siding <input type="checkbox"/> Combination <input type="checkbox"/> Stucco <input type="checkbox"/> Other				
8.	Paint	C	S	M	N
9.	Doors	C	S	M	N
10.	Windows	C	S	M	N
11.	Porches, Steps, Fire Escapes	C	S	M	N
12.	Driveway, Side Condition	C	S	M	N

FINAL RATING

☐ Sound ☐ Deficient-Minor ☐ Deficient-Major

☐ Substandard

Built Within: ☐ 1 year ☐ 1-5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 10-20 years ☐ 20-25 years
☐ 25-50 years ☐ 50-100 years ☐ 100+years

1. Parcel # _____
2. Parcel Address _____
3. Parcel Land Usage _____
4. Type and Number of Structures _____

5. Condition of Structure(s) _____ Worksheet
6. Adjacent Land Usage _____

7. Street Surface Type _____
8. Street Condition ____ (E) ____ (G) ____ (F) ____ (P)
9. Sidewalk Condition ____ (N) ____ (E) ____ (G) ____ (F) ____ (P)
10. Parking (off-street) ____ (N) ____ # of Spaces
_____ Surface
11. Railroad tracks/right-of-way composition
____ (N) ____ (E) ____ (G) ____ (F) ____ (P)
12. Existence of Debris ____ (Y) ____ (N)
13. Existence of Vagrants ____ (Y) ____ (N)
14. General Overall Site Condition
____ (E) ____ (G) ____ (F) ____ (P)

NOTE: E = Excellent
G = Good
F = Fair
P = Poor
N = None or No
Y = Yes

CITY OF HASTINGS
FIELD SURVEY RESULTS
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY STUDY AREA

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Residential*</u>	<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Industrial</u>	<u>Public/ Quasi-Public</u>	<u>Vacant*</u>
<u>Age of Structure</u>						
1 - 5 years	3	1	3	4	0	NA
5 - 10 years	7	3	1	3	0	NA
10 - 20 years	21	7	5	6	3	NA
20 - 25 years	32	14	1	17	0	NA
25 - 50 years	65	45	9	10	1	NA
50 - 100 years	99	84	2	13	0	NA
<u>Final Structural Rating</u>						
Sound	30	22	4	1	3	NA
Deficient Minor	121	81	12	3	25	NA
Deficient Major	69	45	5	0	19	NA
Sub-Standard	12	6	0	0	6	NA
<u>Street Condition</u>						
None	2	0	0	1	0	1
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Good	155	104	15	20	4	12
Fair	62	39	6	14	0	3
Poor	29	11	0	18	0	0
<u>Sidewalk Condition</u>						
None	141	73	11	45	2	10
Excellent	16	14	0	1	0	1
Good	50	37	4	4	2	3
Fair	38	28	6	2	0	2
Poor	3	2	0	1	0	0
<u>Debris</u>						
Major	81	36	9	27	0	9
Minor	63	34	2	19	2	6
None	104	84	10	7	2	1
<u>Vagrants</u>						
Yes	5	1	0	4	0	0
Probable	22	5	2	14	0	1
No	221	143	19	35	4	15
<u>Overall Site Condition</u>						
Excellent	10	6	1	1	0	2
Good	91	65	7	9	2	8
Fair	129	75	13	35	2	4
Poor	18	8	0	8	0	2
<u>Developable (Vacant Only)</u>						14
<u>Nondevelopable (Vacant Only)</u>						0
<u>Parking Spaces (Ranges)</u>		0-7	5-20	10-80	10-20	NA

*Includes Multi-Family Residential

Source: Hanna/Keelan Associates, P.C., Field Survey, 1991

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Plan/Conclusion

The purpose of this Plan is to serve as a redevelopment guide for implementation, by the Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA), of the previously designated Study Area. All Community Development Law State Statutes, 18-2101 thru 18-2154, and any to follow in this general section, should be utilized to promote the general welfare, the enhancement of the tax base, the economic and social well being, the development of any public activities and promotion of public events in the Study Area, along with any and all other purposes, as outlined in the Community Development Law.

A CRA Redevelopment Plan must contain the general planning elements required by Nebraska State Revised Statutes 1943, Section 18-211 re-issue 1987 items (1) through (6). A description of these items are as follows:

- (1) The boundaries of the redevelopment project area, with a map showing the existing uses and condition of the real property therein; (2) a land-use plan showing proposed uses of the area; (3) information showing the standards of population densities, land coverage, and building intensities in the area after redevelopment; (4) a statement of the proposed changes, if any, in zoning ordinances or maps, street layouts, street levels or grades, or building codes and ordinances; (5) a site plan of the area; and (6) a statement as to the kind and number of additional public facilities or utilities which will be required to support the new land uses in the area after redevelopment.

Furthermore, the CRA redevelopment plan must further address the items required under Section 18-2113, "Plan; considerations", which the CRA must consider prior to recommending a redevelopment plan to the City Council for adoption. These "considerations" are defined as follows:

"... whether the proposed land uses and building requirements in the redevelopment project area are designed with the general purpose of accomplishing, in conformance with the general plan, a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the city and its environs which will, in accordance with present and future needs, promote health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development; including, among other things, adequate provision for traffic, vehicular parking, the promotion of safety from fire, panic, and other dangers, adequate provision for light and air, the

promotion of the healthful and convenient distribution of population, the provision of adequate transportation, water, sewage, and other public utilities, schools, parks, recreational and community facilities and other public requirements, the promotion of sound design and arrangement, the wise and efficient expenditure of public funds, and the prevention of the recurrence of insanitary or unsafe dwelling accommodations, or conditions of blight."

Conclusion

The planning process for the CRA Study Area has resulted in a comprehensive listing of planning recommendations. As previously discussed in the blight and substandard determination study, there are many existing land uses, structural and substandard conditions which are nonconforming in nature, detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the community and generally obsolete in respect to the development and living environment norms of today's Nebraska community and the City of Hastings. To eliminate these conditions and enhance private development activities within the Study Area, the City of Hastings will need to consider the following planning and redevelopment actions:

- * an official reclassification of both land use and zoning districts to produce an appropriate, acceptable land use pattern, whereby each land use composition is complementary and is not detrimental to the next;
- * systematic removal of substandard and dilapidated structures within the area;
- * rehabilitation of both owner and renter occupied single family structures in areas experiencing stable, low density residential conditions;
- * consideration for planned open space, in the form of small scale neighborhood parks;
- * improved, planned off-street parking;
- * scattered street development and improvements within the area, accompanied with storm sewer, curbing, street lighting and sidewalk improvements;
- * public assemblage of land to allow for both planned multi-family residential and commercial development;
- * increased density development for residential areas;

- * consideration for screening and/or buffering of commercial areas from residential uses;
- * improved planned streetscapes within the area; and
- * code enforcement program for the clean up of areas in violation and detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the community.

Both a timeline and budget should be developed for the Redevelopment Plan. Each of these processes should be designed in conformance with the resources and time available with the City. A reasonable timeline to complete those redevelopment activities identified in the plan would be seven (7) to ten (10) years.

Various funding sources exist for the preparation and implementation of a capital improvement budget designed to meet the funding needs of proposed redevelopment activities. These include, in addition to city and federal funds commonly utilized to finance street improvement funding, community development grant funding, special assessments and general obligation bonds.

1. Future Land Use Patterns

The existing land use patterns within the Study Area were described in detail in the blight and substandard determination study portion of this document. In general, the 214 acre Study Area, more or less, consists of six (6) land uses. The primary land uses are streets and alleys, vacant land, industrial and residential. It appeared from the field survey incompatible land uses exist in the Study Area.

Illustration 4, Future Land Use, represents a long term effort to remedy the problem of incompatible land uses within the Study Area as well as provide for future business and residential opportunities of the area.

It can be observed in Illustration 4, primary low density residential land uses are reserved for areas located between Woodland and Baltimore Avenues adjacent to Third Street and south of "A" Street excluding the north-south railroad environs. The existing residential development within these areas is primarily of a single family type. High density residential areas are located in a block bounded by "D" and "E" Streets and west of Emerson Avenue to the Railroad Right-of-Way south of "A" Street between Woodland and Keystone Avenues and an area west of Chestnut Avenue. These areas are predominantly vacant land with a few single family dwellings. It is recommended these areas be developed through a transitional process to produce higher density residential uses. In some areas this transitional process can occur almost immediately, in others the process may not occur for several years. Public involvement by the City of Hastings, by assembling and offering the redevelopment, vacant properties and properties having vacant/dilapidated housing can be a first step in this transitional process. Due to its close proximity to the commercial and industrial nodes of the City including the core of the City, where pertinent services exist, the public's best interest is served by developing the proposed areas for high density land use.

Future commercial land uses are identified in Illustration 4 as being in close proximity to Second Street, a major arterial. The commercial land uses can serve as a buffer between residential and industrial land uses. Special attention should be given for commercial land uses north of Second Street between Woodland and Baltimore Avenues.

Within this area, it is recommended, in the future, the existing single family dwellings in poor condition be razed and reverted to commercial land uses. This would allow for opportunities of expansion of existing commercial uses as well as the assemblage and offering of land by the City of Hastings for commercial development.

Future industrial land usage within the Study Area should be concentrated in areas adjacent to existing railroad activities, to allow for easy access to rail service. In comparison to the existing land use pattern, Illustration 4 identifies some future industrial land use areas presently occupied by residential use or vacant properties. The City should give careful consideration to facilitating transitional land use activities in these areas, by assembling properties in capacity large enough in scale to accommodate future industrial park development.

Future street land usage is discussed in detail in Sections 3 and 4 of the redevelopment plan.

2. Future Zoning Districts

Future zoning districts for the Study Area are identified in Illustration 5. The Consultant utilized the current zoning district classifications available with the City of Hastings in designing future zoning districts. In turn, the permitted uses and development density allowed within the proposed future zoning districts are the same as those currently permitted in the respective zoning classifications identified in the City's official zoning ordinance. In general, future zoning districts overlay related future land use districts.

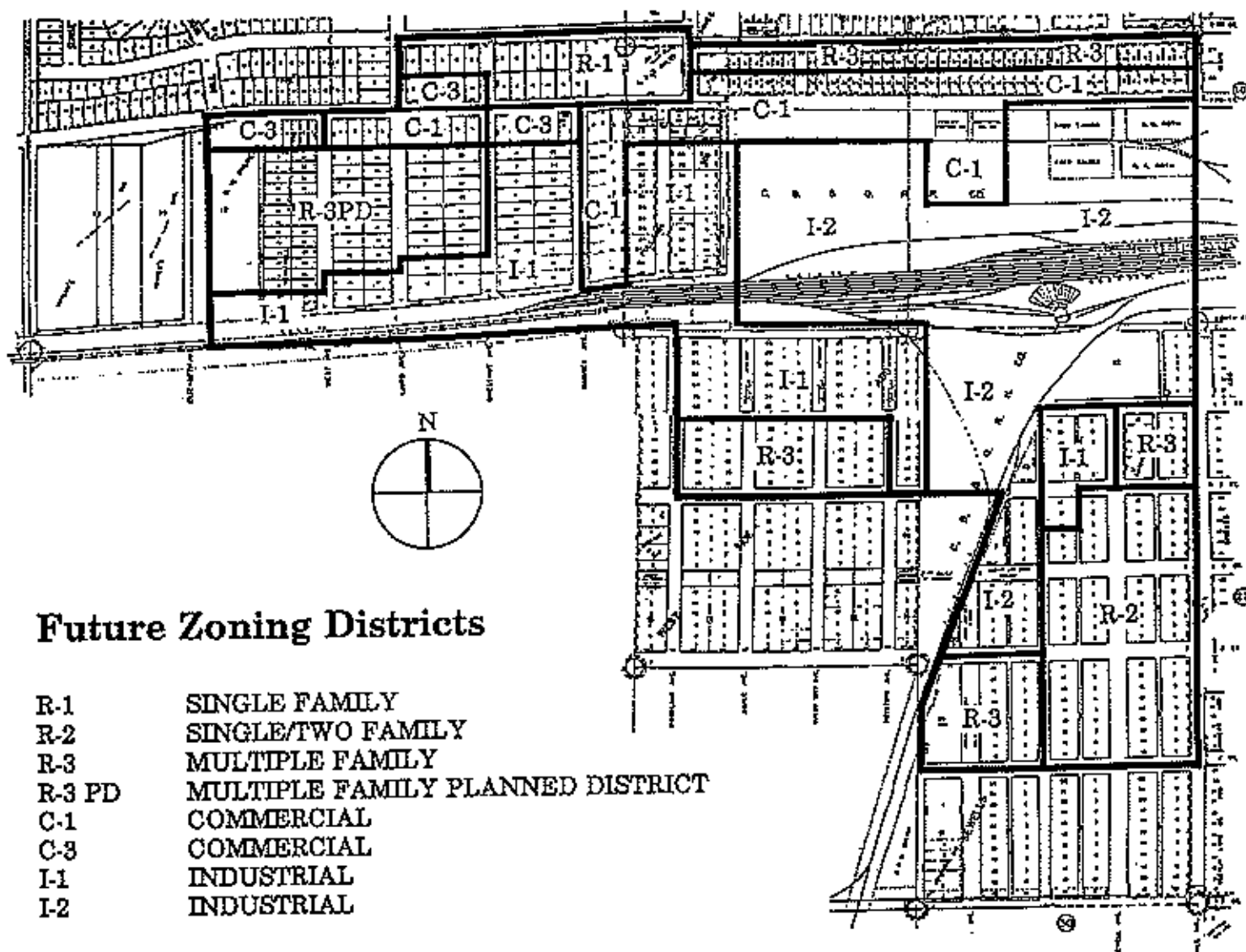
High density residential development has been designated for three parcels which are currently predominantly vacant land. The first parcel is bounded by "A" and "B" Streets and Woodland and Keystone Avenues, this parcel is primarily vacant land. The second parcel is bounded by "E" and "D" Streets and the Railroad Right-of-Way and Emerson Avenue, the parcel is vacant land. The third parcel is bounded by Chestnut Avenue and a line east of Elizabeth Avenue and the commercial districts to the north which border 2nd Street and the industrial district to the south bordering the Railroad Right-of-Way. This parcel is predominantly vacant, a few single family residences and industrial uses do exist in the eastern block of this parcel. The Consultant recommends this parcel be zoned as a multiple family planned district to encourage proper design integral for a development located between major circulation routes. There are two additional high density residential districts located in the Study Area. These tracts are similar to what presently exists.

The residential area in the southeast portion of the Study Area has been zoned R-2 single/two family dwellings by the Consultant, to accommodate existing residential lots and to provide for more affordable residential development in vacant parcels dispersed throughout the R-2 district. The remainder of the residential zones which are located north of Second Street remain similar to what presently exists.

Commercial zoning districts have been expanded on both sides of Second Street. This zoning provides a buffer for residential districts from a major arterial as well as including existing commercial uses and providing a district for further expansion.

The proposed industrial zones in the Study Area reflect what currently exists. These districts exist on either side of the rail lines. The industrial districts do have ample space for future industrial development.

Special attention was given to increasing the density of residential land usage and the buffering of proposed graduated land uses, when proposing future zoning districts for the Study Area. Overall, an estimated forty-four percent (44%) of the Study Area has been recommended for a change in zoning classification.



Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C.

ILLUSTRATION 5

3. Recommended Public Improvements

The primary purpose for the creation of a Redevelopment Plan, accompanied with the preceding blight and substandard determination study, is to allow for the injection of public intervention into a specific area. This public intervention is planned and implemented to serve as a "first step" for redevelopment and encourage private development within the area. The most common form of public intervention is the improvement of the public infrastructure, specifically streets, water and sewer systems and sidewalks. Illustration 6 identifies the recommended public improvements for the area. The following narrative describes these improvements.

- A. Grade Separation - The City of Hastings is presently in need of an additional safe access from South Hastings to North Hastings without direct contact with the east/west Burlington Northern Railroad route. The appropriate location(s) for grade separations are streets which can carry a high volume of traffic with minimal restrictions.

One alternative is to develop a grade separation on Baltimore Avenue between A and 2nd Street. The grade separation would make Baltimore Avenue a through street. Baltimore Avenue connects Highway 281 to the south and is one of two connections with Lochland to the north, it passes through Hastings residential areas and is also adjacent the Adams County Fairgrounds.

Another alternative for a grade separation is Marion Road to the west of the blight and substandard area. Marion Road is designed to carry heavy traffic loads. As development continues along Marion Road, traffic loads will continue to increase. The ability and anticipated traffic loads on Marion Roads in the future should indicate a need for a grade separation to reduce restrictions to traffic flow.

- B. Improvement and Modernization of the Laird Avenue Railroad crossing to enhance the warning system for safe vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- C. Gap Paving of Baltimore Avenue from "A" to South Street.
- D. Gap Paving of Chestnut Avenue from Second Street south to the Railroad Right-of-Way.
- E. Gap Paving of Barnes Avenue from Second Street south to the Railroad Right-of-Way.
- F. Gap Paving of Woodland Avenue from Second Street south to the Railroad Right-of-Way.

- G. Development and Gap Paving of a east and west local street from Woodland Avenue to Laird Avenue.
- H. Improvement of safety mechanisms in interior roads of industrial areas where rail crossings occur.

Each proposed resurfacing and paving proposal should include the improvement/creation of curbs and gutter, drainage structures, sidewalks and public lighting.

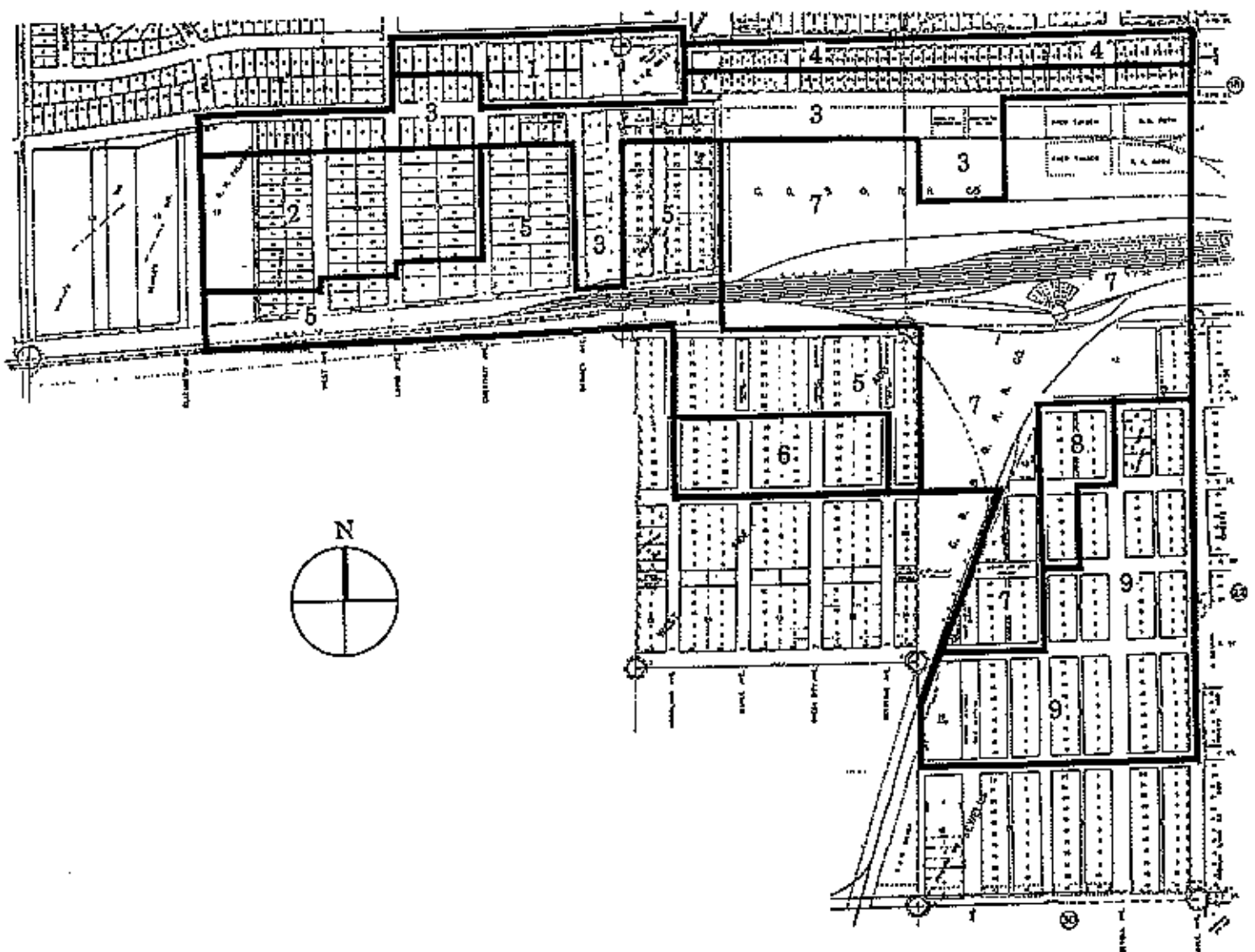
4. Recommended Redevelopment Activities

Illustration 7 identifies specific districts within the Study Area the Consultant recommends for redevelopment activities. A description of recommended redevelopment activities per district is as follows:

- * District 1 - This district should be reserved for Public/Quasi-public land uses. These sites should provide off-street parking and improved landscaping;
- * District 2 - District should be reserved for future high density residential planned development. Special attention should be given the proper design of the site to allow for adequate off-street parking, landscaping and where deemed necessary a sufficient internal street and sidewalk network;
- * District 3 - District should be transitioned into future strip commercial uses. The City should make a concentrated effort to relocate existing residential uses and assemblage of the land for commercial redevelopment. Special attention should be given the proper design of the sites to allow for adequate off-street parking and buffering of the area from adjacent industrial and residential land usage. Community development efforts should encourage the proper circulation system for maximum safety along Second Street;
- * District 4 - District should remain as a high density residential area, with scheduled housing rehabilitation and public improvements as necessary. The district currently consists of single family dwellings. The City should concentrate on the securement, assemblage and resale of property for the increased density of residential uses as well as encourage rehabilitation efforts of existing homes. Community development efforts should encourage the development of a sidewalk network along Third Street to increase pedestrian safety;
- * District 5 - District should remain commercial to industrial with future emphasis on light industrial land usage. The opportunity exist for the City to systematically acquire vacant and dilapidated properties for assemblage and resale for appropriate redevelopment. The northern portion of this district is in need of clean-up of debris and the removal of substandard buildings. Additional residential development should be prohibited in the District. Consideration should also be given the planned development of off-street parking areas and hard-surfaced streets to improve vehicular accessibility in the district;

- * District 6 - District should be reserved for future high density residential development. Special attention should be given the proper design of the site to allow for adequate off-street parking, landscaping and the development of sidewalks in the district;
- * District 7 - District should remain as a light to heavy industrial land use. A process should be encouraged for site clean up and removal of useless buildings and other structures. Improvement of access routes within the district to enhance emergency vehicular accessibility should also be undertaken. Streetscape improvements along Emerson Avenue would assist in buffering the district from adjacent residential land uses. Vehicular accessibility and safety improvements in this district will strengthen redevelopment efforts;
- * District 8 - District should remain light industrial. Proper landscaping and off-street parking should be required to provide buffering from adjacent residential land uses; and
- * District 9 - District should be reserved for medium to high density residential development. The City should continue its effort of removing dilapidated structures, provide financial assistance in rehabilitation of homes, and general clean-up activities in the district. Community development efforts should include proper design to develop compatible uses and also further the development of sidewalks in residential areas.

DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT MAP



Hanna Keelan Associates, P.C.

ILLUSTRATION 7

APPENDIX III

AUTHORIZATION

1. Purpose of Plan. This Redevelopment Plan has been adopted for the purpose of promoting the general welfare, the economic and social well being of the Hastings community, the development of any public activities and public events in the Hastings community, the enhancement of the tax base, and for any and all other purposes as otherwise described in this plan, and in the community development laws of the State of Nebraska, Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 18-2101 et seq., as amended from time to time.
2. Powers of Authority. In order to carry out the purposes and goals of this Redevelopment Plan, the Authority shall have the specific authority within the Community Redevelopment Area to clear areas and install public improvements, sell or retain land for public use, dispose of both real and personal property for fair value, acquire real property, and rehabilitate and resell it for dwelling purposes, and to provide grants, loans, or other means of financing to public or private parties in order to accomplish the rehabilitation or redevelopment in accordance with this Redevelopment Plan, subject however, to the provisions of Paragraph 4 which follows.
3. Activities Consistent With Plan. Any of the activities described in this Plan, when undertaken within the boundaries of the Community Redevelopment Area, and for one or more of the purposes set forth in this Plan, shall be deemed to be in accordance with the Redevelopment Plan notwithstanding the fact that the activities may not be entirely consistent with the Redevelopment Plan description of activities for any particular redevelopment project area. It is the understanding and intention of the Authority that the detailed description of activities in the Redevelopment Plan is included for the purpose of indicating the types of activities which are considered appropriate within the entire Community Redevelopment Area. The detail in the Redevelopment Plan description is conceptual only, and is not intended to establish or fix the specific type of redevelopment activities for any particular redevelopment project area. Accordingly, all powers afforded to community redevelopment authorities under Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 18-2101 et seq., as amended from time to time, may be exercised by the Authority without further amendment to the Redevelopment Plan, so long as the exercise of those powers is carried on within the Community Redevelopment Area, and is consistent with the concepts for redevelopment as shown in the Redevelopment Plan, subject however, to the provisions of Paragraph 4. The specific type of redevelopment activities for any particular redevelopment project area shall be established in the redevelopment contract between the Authority and the Redeveloper, or where there is no contract, then such specific activities shall be described in a resolution adopted by the Authority.

4. The powers of the CRA described herein are subject to the following:

- a) Prior to incurring any debt, the CRA shall furnish details of the transaction to the City Administrator for review.

If such debt will be considered as "qualified tax exempt obligations" under Section 265(b)(3)(B)(i)(III) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, the CRA shall also submit to the City the following:

- (i) a request for allocation of qualified tax exempt obligation pursuant to Section 148(f)(4)(C)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code stating the principal amount of said qualified tax exempt obligation, and the calendar year the transaction will be accomplished; and
- (ii) Any and all documentation requested by the governing body, the City Administrator, or the City Attorney pertaining to said transaction.

The CRA will incur no qualified tax exempt obligations without first obtaining the approval of the Hastings City Council, and the City's allocation of the obligation pursuant to Section 148(f)(4)(C)(iv) of the Internal Revenue Code.

- b) The CRA will not enter into any transaction or group of transactions with respect to a redevelopment project, totaling \$50,000.00 in the aggregate, or more, without first obtaining the approval of the Hastings City Council. For the purposes of this subparagraph, the term "transaction" shall mean any purchase, sale or lease of real or personal property by the CRA; any grant, loan or other means of financing provided by the CRA to a public or private party; or expenditure of any CRA funds for improvements to be made upon any property owned by the City.

5. In order to expedite the City's consideration of any requests made pursuant to paragraph 4 above, all staff reviews and City Council meetings shall be conducted as soon as its practical, and the City Council will call special meetings where appropriate.