

BROWNSVILLE ON THE MOVE: AN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I | ORIGINS OF THE PLAN

Shortly after her election as Mayor of the City of Brownsville in 2010, Jo Matherne, invited local residents, civic leaders, and municipal officials to work together to prepare a comprehensive development plan to guide the City's future growth and development. Aware of the extensive environmental, economic, and social data needed to formulate a solid blueprint to guide Brownsville's future, Mayor Matherne invited Thomas Skehan, formerly of the State of Tennessee's Office of Local Planning Services, and the students and faculty from the University of Memphis' Graduate Program in City and Regional Planning, to collaborate with local residents, institutional leaders, and municipal officials in creating the Brownsville on the Move Plan.

II | GOALS OF THE PLAN

In February of 2011, planners from the State of Tennessee and the University of Memphis met with Mayor Matherne, Planning Director Susan Hayes, and representatives of the Planning Commission, Historic Planning Commission and Board of Alderman to establish the following set of planning goals and guiding principles to guide the planning process. After extensive discussions, these officials asked their State and University planning partners to assist them in preparing a document that would:

- help local officials develop policies and implement programs that would produce a higher quality of life within the City;
- encourage new investment in local businesses that expand employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for current and future residents of the City;

- offer local residents, institutional leaders, and municipal officials the opportunity to work together to determine the future direction of their community's growth and development; and
- nurture the development of a new generation of civic leaders committed to building a more vibrant, sustainable, and just Brownsville.

III | COMMUNITY VALUES

Following several meetings involving Mayor Matherne, Planning Director Hayes, Tom Skehan of the State Office of Local Planning Services, and representatives of the University of Memphis, the Brownsville Planning Team agreed to work together to produce a plan that would be:

- informed by the City's rich social history and cultural heritage;
- shaped by a careful analysis of the best available quantitative and qualitative data describing local conditions and stakeholder preferences;
- based upon the community's many environmental, economic, and social assets;
- responsive to the hopes and aspirations of Brownsville's current residents, business owners, institutional leaders and elected and appointed officials;
- consistent with the county, region, and state's key economic and community development policies, plans, and programs;
- protective of the Brownsville's most important natural resources (Excellent soil, rich wetlands, abundant wildlife, remarkable scenic

views, and easy access to the Hatchie River and National Wildlife Refuge);

- respectful of the City's impressive stock of well-preserved historic homes, commercial buildings, religious institutions and public facilities;
- bold enough to inspire a broad cross-section of local stakeholders and their allies to work together to achieve the plan's most important elements;
- achievable using City resources that can be used to leverage significant amounts of external public and private funds; and
- responsive to the hopes and aspirations of local youth as well as the City's newest residents.

IV | PLANNING METHODOLOGY

The Brownsville on the Move Plan is based upon a careful analysis of existing data and new research conducted by the Brownsville Planning Team with the assistance of local residents and leaders. One of the unique aspects of the Brownsville planning process has been the active participation of more than 500 residents in the analysis of the environmental, economic, and social data on which the plan is based. These residents and their elected leaders played a central role in shaping this plan's overall development goal and specific improvement objectives; they also generated the vast majority of the more than sixty near, mid, and long term development projects highlighted in this document.

The following section summarizes the research activities carried out by the Brownsville Planning Team with the assistance of local residents and leaders between February and September 2011. More detailed information regarding these activities can be found within the Brownsville on the Move Plan and the project's website: www.brownsvilleonthemove.org.