

INSPIRE

Investing in Neighborhoods and Schools to Promote Improvement, Revitalization, and Excellence

Draft INSPIRE Recommendation Report John Eager Howard Elementary School Planning Area



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I. Introduction

INSPIRE Program Background



Through the 21st Century Schools Initiative, Baltimore City Public Schools, in partnership with the Maryland Stadium Authority, Baltimore City, and the State of Maryland, will be investing nearly one billion dollars to renovate or replace schools over the next several years. New and renovated schools will help transform student opportunities and achievement, provide jobs and resources to families, and help revitalize neighborhoods.



To leverage this investment in the schools, and to enhance the connection between the schools and the surrounding neighborhoods, the Department of Planning launched a new program called INSPIRE. INSPIRE stands for Investing in Neighborhoods and Schools to Promote Improvement, Revitalization, and Excellence. This planning program focuses on the neighborhoods immediately surrounding each of the new or renovated schools that are part of the 21st Century program, specifically the quarter-mile surrounding each school.



Focusing on a limited geographic area will allow plans to include recommendations for specific, implementable public investments to the surrounding neighborhood, improving the environment and quality of life for students, their families, and neighborhood residents. The plans will also articulate the community's long-term vision for guiding private investment, and address environmental, social, and economic conditions.



Contact Mary Colleen Buettner, INSPIRE Planner, with feedback to this Draft Recommendation Report. (410) 396-5937 or mc.buettner@baltimorecity.gov.

Recommendation Development and Overview

Between September 2014 and January 2016, Department of Planning staff worked with members of the school and neighborhood communities to better understand their neighborhood experiences, concerns, and needs. Once the John Eager Howard renovation is complete, the Westside Elementary School building will be closing, and many of the students currently attending that school will move to John Eager Howard. The Department of Planning staff will continue to conduct outreach to parents and students of Westside Elementary School to ensure that they are part of the INSPIRE planning process.

Through community workshops, surveys, and walking tours, over 150 stakeholders have helped inform the draft recommendations presented here. Staff from city agencies, including the Department of Planning, Housing and Community Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Department of Public Works also participated in meetings and/or the walking tour, and worked with the Planning Department staff to address stakeholder priorities. Stakeholders, community school staff, a representative from the Police Department, and community organization staff helped ensure community participation in the process thus far.

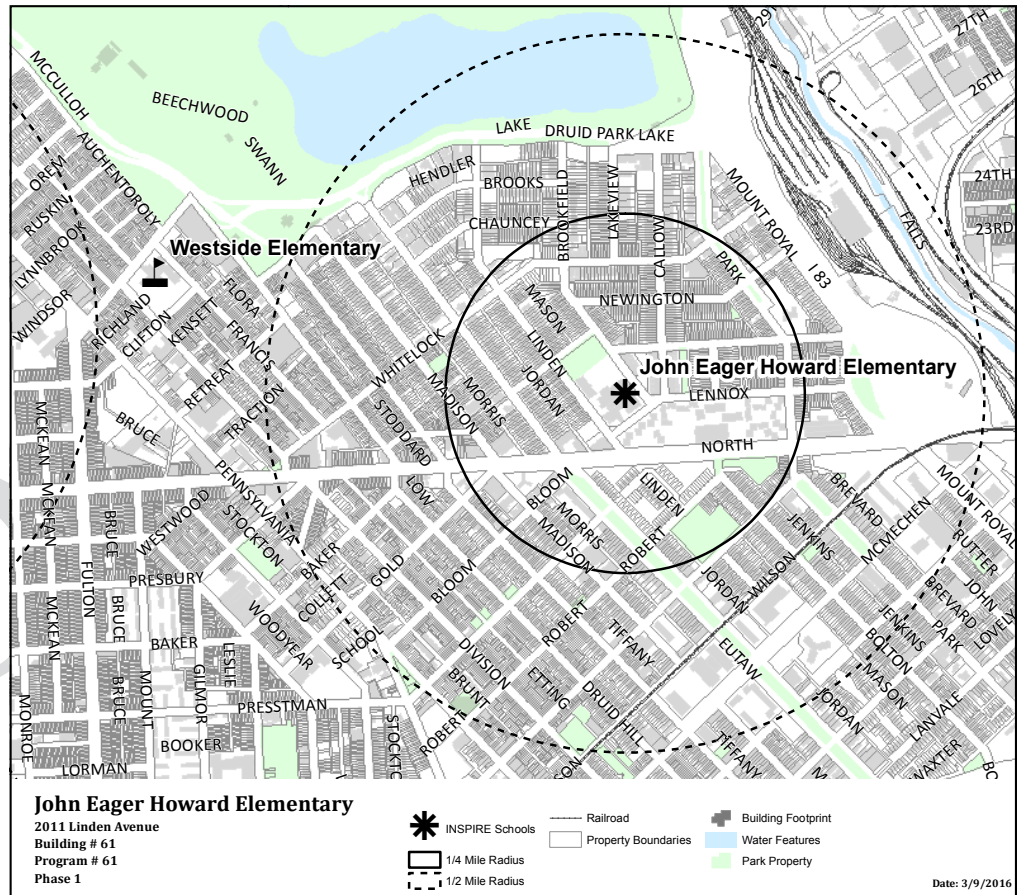
The INSPIRE plan will identify short- and long-term recommendations. Short-term recommendations, presented on page 9, are improvements that can be made by the opening day of John Eager Howard. Special attention is paid to physical improvements and maintenance to the perimeter of the school site and to the primary routes leading to the school, shown on page 8. Long-term recommendations are meant to guide future investment, and further address environmental, social, and economic conditions.

Next Steps

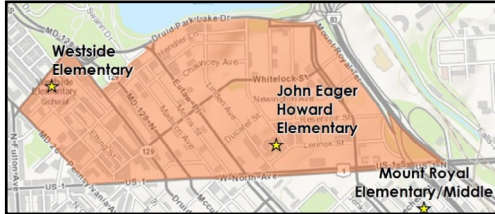
Through mid-April, Department of Planning staff will seek and incorporate additional community and agency feedback to the draft recommendations presented in this report. We will finalize recommendations, and develop the INSPIRE plan which will include commitments from city agencies, an implementation plan, and additional information including relevant citywide initiatives, other agency efforts, and existing plans for the area. Planning staff will seek additional feedback from community stakeholders about the plan. The final plan will be presented to, and adopted by, the Planning Commission over the summer. Department of Planning staff will work with the community to identify a “signature community project” that we can work on together right away.

INSPIRE Map – John Eager Howard Elementary School Planning Area

Once the John Eager Howard renovation is complete, the Westside Elementary School building will be closing, and many of the students currently attending that school will move to John Eager Howard. Westside will be the swing school John Eager Howard students attend during construction.

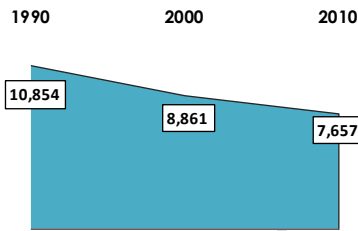


Key Neighborhood and School Data – John Eager Howard Elementary School Planning Area

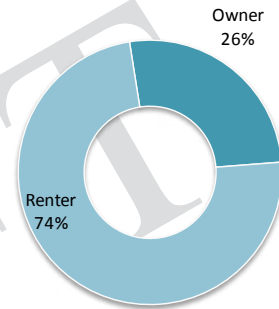


The charts below depict data from the Census Tracts highlighted in this map.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010-2014 American Community Survey.

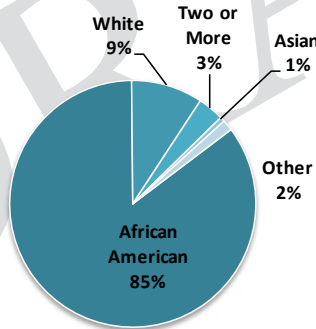
Population Change



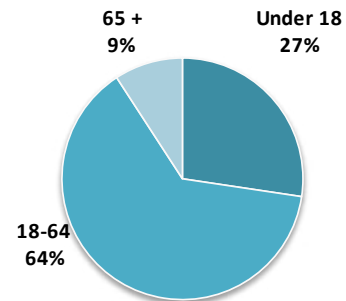
Housing Occupancy



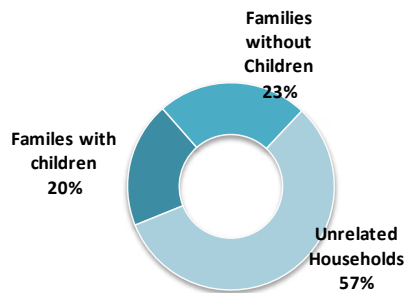
Race



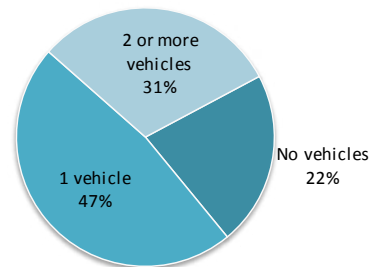
Age



Children in Households



Vehicle Availability



Student Data

Currently, less than 40 percent of the students enrolled at John Eager Howard are coming from within the school zone. Almost 70 percent of the students enrolled at Westside live in that school zone.

II. Neighborhood Observations

Housing, Sanitation, and Land Use

John Eager Howard Elementary School, and the quarter-mile INSPIRE radius predominantly is in Reservoir Hill. Westside Elementary School, which will be closing, is in the Penn North neighborhood. Reservoir Hill has many large, historic homes, most of which are well maintained. The neighborhood has seen public and private re-investment over the last two decades, resulting in more homeowners and fewer vacant buildings. The few remaining vacant buildings are either actively being renovated or are being addressed by the Reservoir Hill Improvement Council and the Baltimore Housing's Code Enforcement Division. In contrast, Penn North continues to struggle with the impact of decades of disinvestment in its housing stock and infrastructure, despite excellent transit access and proximity to Druid Hill Park. The neighborhood has both relatively high rates of vacancy and pockets of high homeownership.

Recreation and Open Space

Reservoir Hill has two recently-renovated parks: the John Eager Howard Park, which includes a new playground and basketball courts, and the German Park playground, which was built by the Baltimore Ravens and Kaboom. John Eager Howard Elementary School is also near the Whitelock Community Farm and the new community-managed, flexibly-used open space across the street. Druid Hill Park is adjacent to the Reservoir Hill and Penn North neighborhoods and offers walking trails, the Howard Peters Rawlings Conservatory, playgrounds, ball fields, and Safety City, a Department of Transportation-run program teaching children how to safely cross the street and bicycle. These neighborhoods, however, lack safe, comfortable pedestrian connections directly to Druid Hill Park.

Transportation

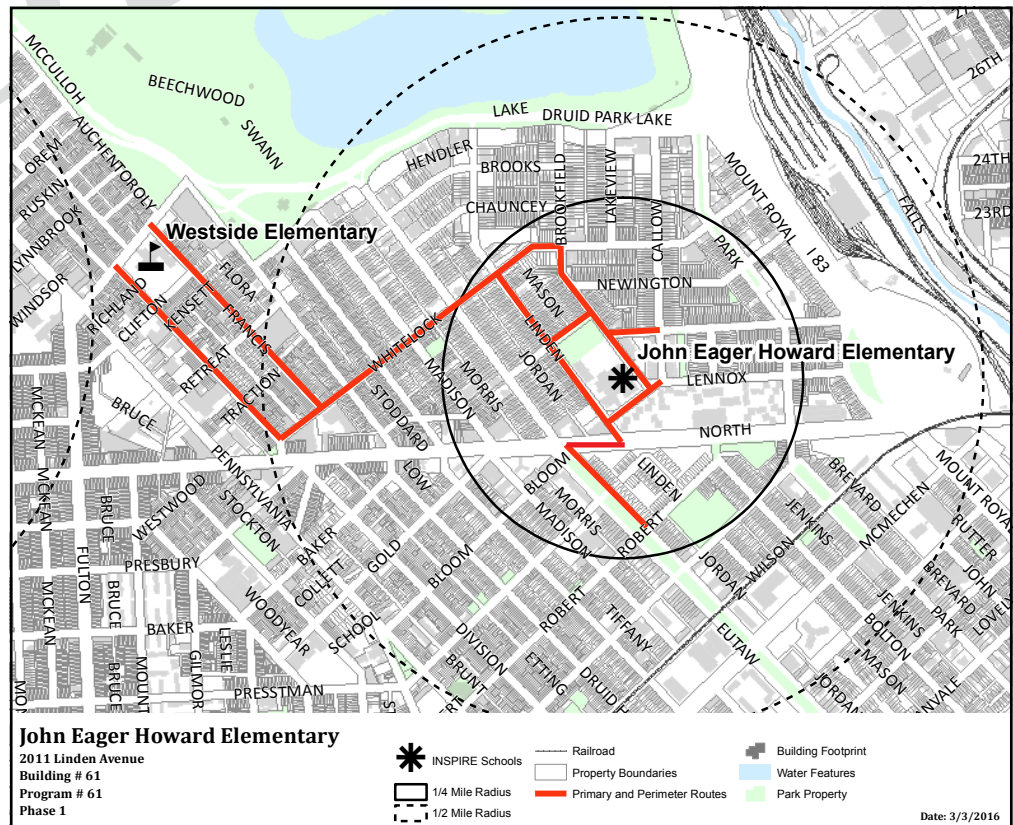
Reservoir Hill and Penn North are close to multiple transit options, including bus routes, light rail, and metro service. They are also close to I-83. Whitelock Street, is a primary link to the Penn/North Metro station at Pennsylvania and North avenues. Both neighborhoods experience a large amount of cut-through traffic and speeding issues on small neighborhood streets.

III. Preparing for School Opening Day

The new John Eager Howard Elementary school will be attended by children in Reservoir Hill, Penn North, and other neighborhoods, and used by residents in multiple communities. Through the INSPIRE process, Baltimore City agencies are evaluating the perimeter of the school site and primary routes leading to the school, and will make physical improvements along these routes by opening day of the renovated building, making travel to and from the school safer and more comfortable for students, families, and community members.

School Perimeter and Primary Routes to School

The map below identifies the perimeters around John Eager Howard and the primary routes leading to John Eager Howard and Westside. Most students walking from Penn North to John Eager Howard in Reservoir Hill will use the primary connector, Whitelock Street. The other most commonly used routes have been identified, and are shown below. Whitelock is also a primary link to the Penn/North metro station at Pennsylvania and North Avenues.



City Improvements to be Completed by Opening Day

The departments of Transportation, Housing and Community Development, Public Works, and Recreation and Parks will assess the school perimeter and primary routes, shown on page 8, and with the Department of Planning will develop an implementation plan to address the following:



- Trash and dumping
- Open and accessible vacant houses
- Market- and owner-sensitive code enforcement and nuisance abatement interventions
- Street tree health and density
- Safe Routes to School
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Street resurfacing and re-striping
- ADA ramps at intersections
- Safe lighting levels
- Intersection improvement
- Speeding
- Pedestrian countdown clocks/traffic signals
- Crosswalks
- Crossing guards
- School signage and beacons
- Bicycle infrastructure

An additional need that should be examined prior to John Eager Howard's opening is that of accommodating teacher and school staff parking. The renovation of the school will not significantly add onsite parking spots, and as a result school staff will need to park on the street. The existing street sweeping schedule hampers street parking. DOT and DPW should evaluate the street sweeping schedule and needs in the area.

The recommendations presented in the remainder of this report are in addition to those that address the issues listed above.

IV. Stakeholder Priorities and Draft Recommendations

Assets and Priorities

Through community workshops and surveys, residents provided input that informed the draft recommendations included in this report. Input included identifying assets and priorities, including the following:

Assets

Active community organizations	Good neighbors
Large properties available for redevelopment	Strong neighborhood services unit in Central Police District
Laundromat	Mutual Homes
Corner store	Playgrounds
Druid Hill Park	Recreation Center
Community garden	Access to good transportation

Priorities

Reduce vacancies	Mixed-use development
Commercial development	Redesign streetscape
Create central community open space for interaction	Partner with Friends of Druid Hill Park for programming for children
More family and community activities	Better parks
Recreation center in Penn North	Cleaner environment/less trash
Landscaping	Maintain trees/new trees
Make children safer through school signage	Reduce speed of traffic
Make North Avenue and Druid Park Lake Drive bridges to amenities and other neighborhoods rather than barriers	Complete Streets

Additional community input can be found in the John Eager Howard Workshop Summary and Summary Report, posted on the INSPIRE page of the Department of Planning website.

Draft Recommendations

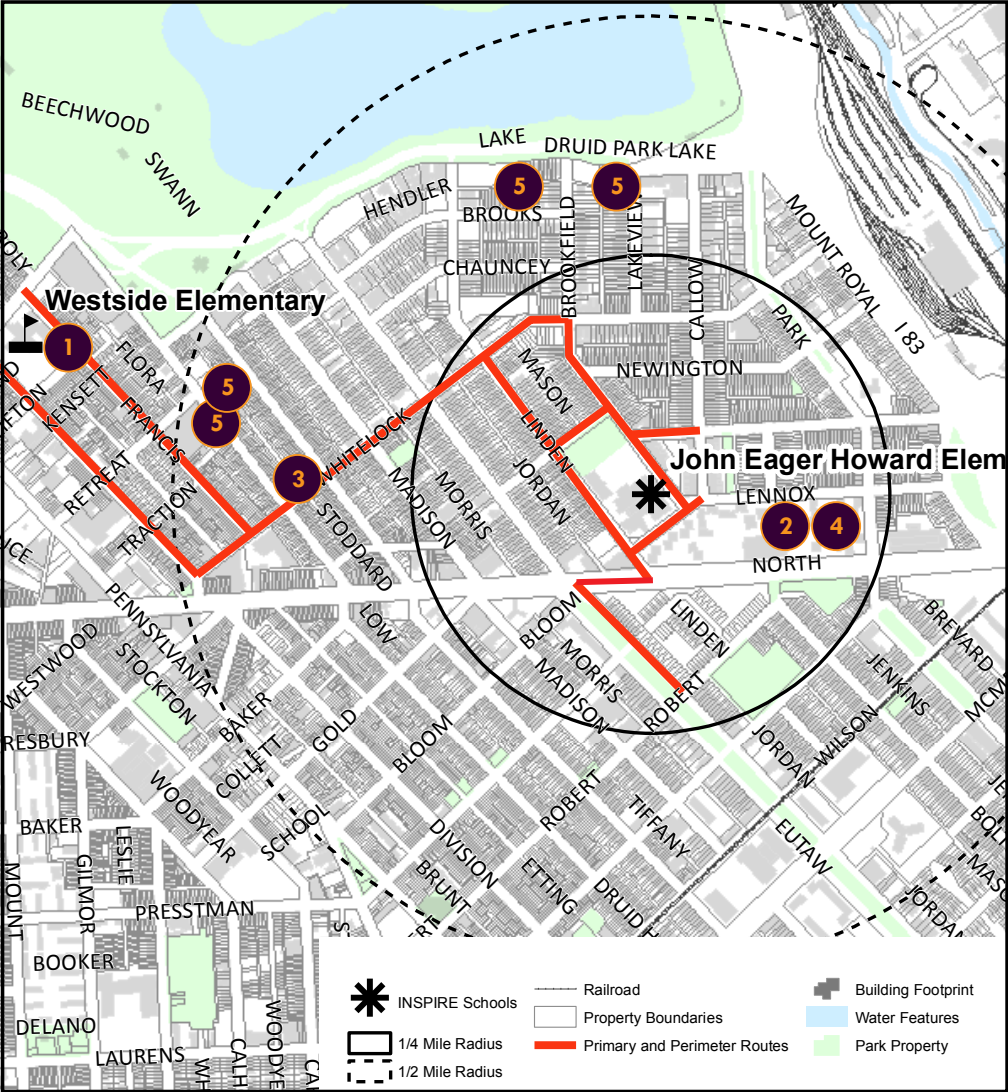
The recommendations presented in the remainder of this report are *in addition to* those that address the issues along the school perimeter and primary routes listed on page 9.

Recommendations presented in this section have been developed by the Department of Planning and informed by the community workshops, surveys, and walking tours. These recommendations are presented as activities that align with broader principles and goals (listed below). Many recommendations described can achieve multiple goals. Stakeholders in the John Eager Howard Elementary School Planning Area are already undertaking activities that address the principles.

The Department of Planning is seeking community feedback about these principles, goals, and recommendations.

- **Baltimore Neighborhoods Should Offer a Range of Housing, Commercial, and Community-based Developments**
 - Identify and Support Redevelopment Opportunities
- **Baltimore Neighborhoods Should be Green and Clean Environments**
 - Beautify Public Spaces/Contribute to the Green Network
 - Keep Neighborhoods Clean
- **Baltimore Neighborhoods Should be Safe**
 - Remove Dangerous Blight
 - Improve Lighting in the Neighborhoods
 - Engage Central Police District
- **Baltimore Neighborhoods Should Provide a Variety of Opportunities for Children, Families, and Residents to be Active**
 - Increase Use of Parks and Playgrounds
 - Improve Non-Motorized Access and Safety in Neighborhoods

BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD OFFER A RANGE OF HOUSING, COMMERCIAL, AND COMMUNITY-BASED DEVELOPMENTS



Identify and Support Strategic Redevelopment Opportunities



1. Explore reuse of Westside Elementary School.

Once Westside Elementary School closes, the site will undergo a process to “surplus” the building so that it can be reused in a productive way. There have been preliminary discussions with city staff and community members about how the site could be re-used. Further community visioning is needed. The Department of Planning is also working with the National Resource Network (NRN) to help develop a framework for analyzing reuse opportunities for closing schools. Read more about NRN in Appendix A.



2. Harness emerging market strength on McCulloh Street to stabilize and strengthen adjacent Druid Hill Avenue.

Baltimore’s Healthy Neighborhoods initiative, which helps stabilize neighborhoods through multiple programs, is active in Reservoir Hill, including along both sides of McCulloh Street. The program has helped create an emerging strength on this street that can be leveraged onto Druid Hill Avenue. Many blocks of McCulloh contain only a few vacant homes, and these homes are generally of a size that may be affordable to homebuyers priced out of other neighborhoods. As the market strengthens, and as developer interest increases, consider creating a Vacants to Value community development cluster in the area. Read more about Healthy Neighborhoods and Vacants to Value in Appendix A.



3. Explore mixed-use redevelopment opportunities with the new owner of the Madison Park North apartment complex site.

The reuse of the now-closed apartment complex site, located across the street from John Eager Howard, will have a significant impact on the area surrounding the school. In the short-term, ensure the site is demolished and cleared prior to the opening of the school. In the long-term, support community-enhancing use.

4. Amend the Madison Park North Urban Renewal Plan to allow for a flexible and modern mix of land use and building design in the area.

The existing 1963 urban renewal plan, which was last amended in 1975, is a rigidly prescriptive plan regarding the type of housing units and commercial buildings in the area. The plan should be amended to include guiding principles for modern, vibrant cities rather than rigid requirements that do not respond to context and nuance. Recommended principles, and specific recommendations, include:

- a. Restore street grid through the site into Bolton Hill, including Bolton and Brookfield streets
- b. Allow a mixture of land uses including medium-intensity commercial, institutional, and residential
- c. Place taller buildings, greater bulk, and higher-intensity land uses

along West North Avenue

- d. Place shorter, less bulky, lower-intensity uses along Lennox Street
- e. Wrap and hide parking behind buildings as much as possible
- f. Build to the front lot line of West North Avenue (no setback)



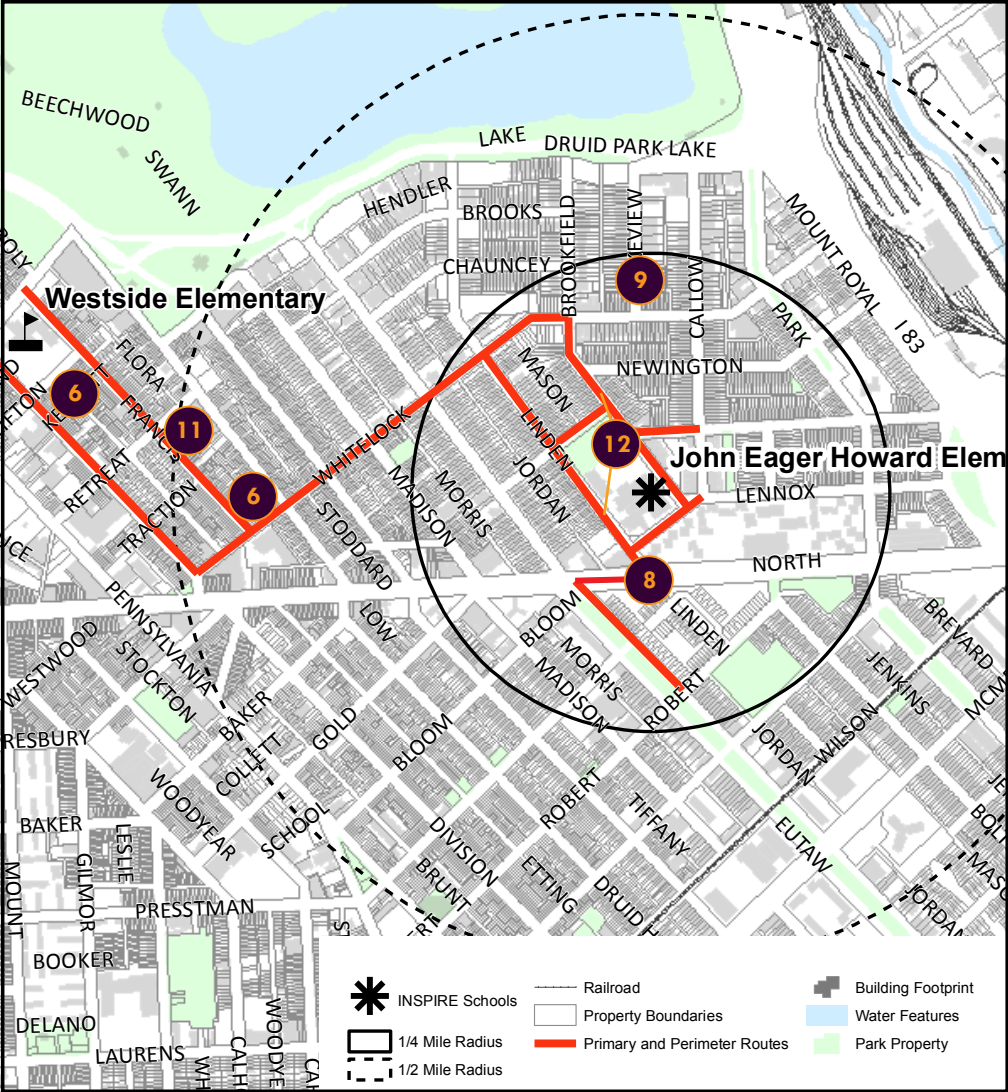
5. Redevelop vacant parcels as residential or mixed-use buildings.

There are multiple sites in both Reservoir Hill and Penn North that should be considered for development. Priority areas are the following:

- 825 Druid Lake Park Drive (city-owned)
- 735-747 Druid Lake Park Drive (city-owned)
- 2509-2513 Druid Hill Avenue (city-owned)
- 2480 Druid Hill Avenue (privately-owned)
- Madison Park North Apartment site (privately-owned)

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BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD BE GREEN AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENTS



Beautify Public Spaces/Contribute to the Green Network



6. Develop Growing Green Initiative treatments for lots where redevelopment is not feasible.

Some vacant lots in the neighborhoods are too small to support development. The City's Growing Green Initiative (GGI) can work with community stakeholders to create productive and beautiful green places in place of blighted spaces. Read more about GGI in Appendix A.

- 1400-1412 Whitelock Street (will also require demolition and acquisition)
- 1500 block of Kensett Street and 2500 block of Salem Street (will require acquisition)



7. Establish a “Bloom Your Block”-style competition that enhances community pride while residents have fun maintaining and beautifying properties.

“Bloom Your Block”-style competitions engage residents in a fun way to maintain properties and increase neighborhood spirit. Neighbors or blocks of neighbors compete for titles such as Most Green/Beautified Block and Best Community Managed Open Space.



8. Maintain the West North Avenue median at Linden Avenue.

Many John Eager Howard students live south of West North Avenue and use the Linden Avenue crosswalk, which runs through the West North Avenue median. This median is poorly maintained and is often filled with trash. Explore maintenance options for the median.



9. Maintain healthy trees and increase the tree canopy.

Many blocks in Reservoir Hill, and a few blocks in Penn North, have canopies of mature trees that provide shade, greenery, healthy air, and visual interest. Many other blocks however, need tree pruning or new tree pits and trees, including:

- 2400 block of Lakeview (new trees/pits, clean tree pits)
- Lennox Street Community Garden (prune/clear brush in front of garden fence)

Keep Neighborhoods Clean

10. Make taking out trash easy for residents by requiring an enforceable trash plan and/or requiring a trash room as part of the annual licensing of multi-family dwellings.

Many rowhomes have been converted from single-family to multi-family structures, and not all tenants have access to the rear of the property where trash is collected.

As a result, residents must travel around the block and back again in order to dispose

of their trash. This is a substantial burden, especially for seniors and those who are disabled. Some residents may take shortcuts, either throwing their trash out of upper stories to the backyard below or putting their trash in the municipal garbage cans on the corners. In addition to a policy change, consider amending the Reservoir Hill, Madison Park North, and Penn North urban renewal plans, and/or the Baltimore Building Code to include language requiring rear access for all tenants for rehabilitated and new construction buildings.



11. Prioritize dirty alleys and areas of chronic dumping for cleaning, code enforcement hot spot, and/or possible dumping camera locations.

The following sites should be explored with Housing and Community Development staff for the most effective remedies:

- 1400 Retreat Street (dirty street)
- 2300-2400 Druid Hill Avenue (dirty street)
- 2300-2500 Flora Street (dirty alley)
- 2400 Flora Street (possible location for a camera to catch chronic dumping behind vacant houses on Francis Street)
- 2366 McCulloh (possible location for a camera to catch chronic dumping in rear of house along Whitelock Street)
- 2480 Druid Hill Avenue (recently cleaned but should be monitored for illegal boat storage and construction debris)



12. Develop and implement an educational campaign, a dog-waste bag dispenser program, and regular park cleaning to address the problem of dog owners not picking up after their pets.

Dog owners often do not pick up after their dogs, creating both a nuisance and a health hazard. A community partner who can refill the bags at the existing dispenser at the entrance to John Eager Howard Park (on the corner of Reservoir and Brookfield) should be identified. The following locations should be prioritized for cleaning:

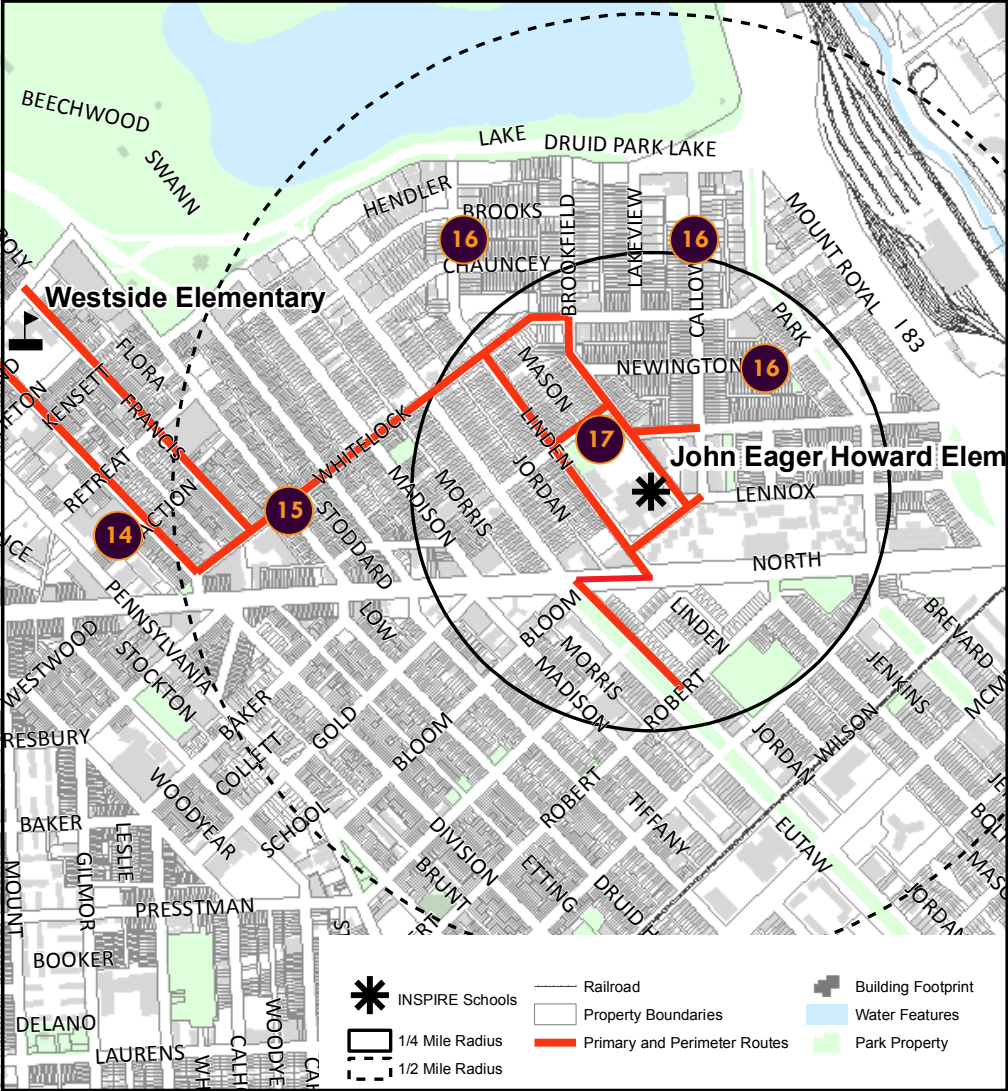
- On the school playfield
- John Eager Howard Park
- Tree pits along Linden and Brookfield Streets



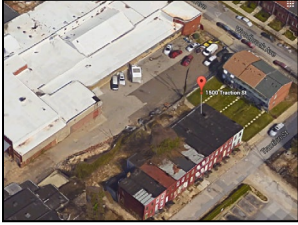
13. Implement a peer-to-peer “clean corps” program in Penn North and Reservoir Hill.

Work with residents to identify Clean Corps captains to implement the City’s Clean Corps peer-to-peer program in Reservoir Hill and Penn North. Complement the peer-to-peer work with community education campaigns. Read more about Clean Corps in Appendix A.

BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD BE SAFE



Remove dangerous blight



14. Demolish the 1500 block of Traction Street.

This block of vacant houses is severely deteriorated and has fostered criminal activity over a long period of time. Demolishing these houses would reduce some of the hazards associated with vacant properties, increase the safety of students and residents, and increase opportunity for development on an adjacent parcel (the former laundry facility).

15. The vacant and dilapidated houses along prominent corners of Whitelock Street must be remediated. Stabilize and receiver the properties.

Chronic dumping occurs in the rear of the vacant properties along Whitelock Street. These houses could be rehabilitated if there is a market, or demolished and used as managed-open space along Whitelock:

- 2340 Druid Hill Ave
- 2401 Druid Hill Ave
- 2366 McCulloh

Improve lighting in the neighborhoods



16. Evaluate lighting levels to make streets safer.

Many residents discussed how dark their streets are at night, which made them feel unsafe. Parents also voiced their concern about their children walking home from school in the dark in winter. In addition to assessing the school perimeter and primary routes for adequate lighting, evaluate lighting levels throughout the neighborhoods. Residents identified the Chauncey, Newington, Callow, and Brooks as other areas needing assessment.

Other lighting opportunities include applying for a small neighborhood lighting grant from Healthy Neighborhoods, restoring the historic light posts on West North Avenue and Mount Royal Terrace, and installing security or other types of lighting toward alleys by residents in the rear of their properties. Some of these are being pursued by neighborhood organizations.

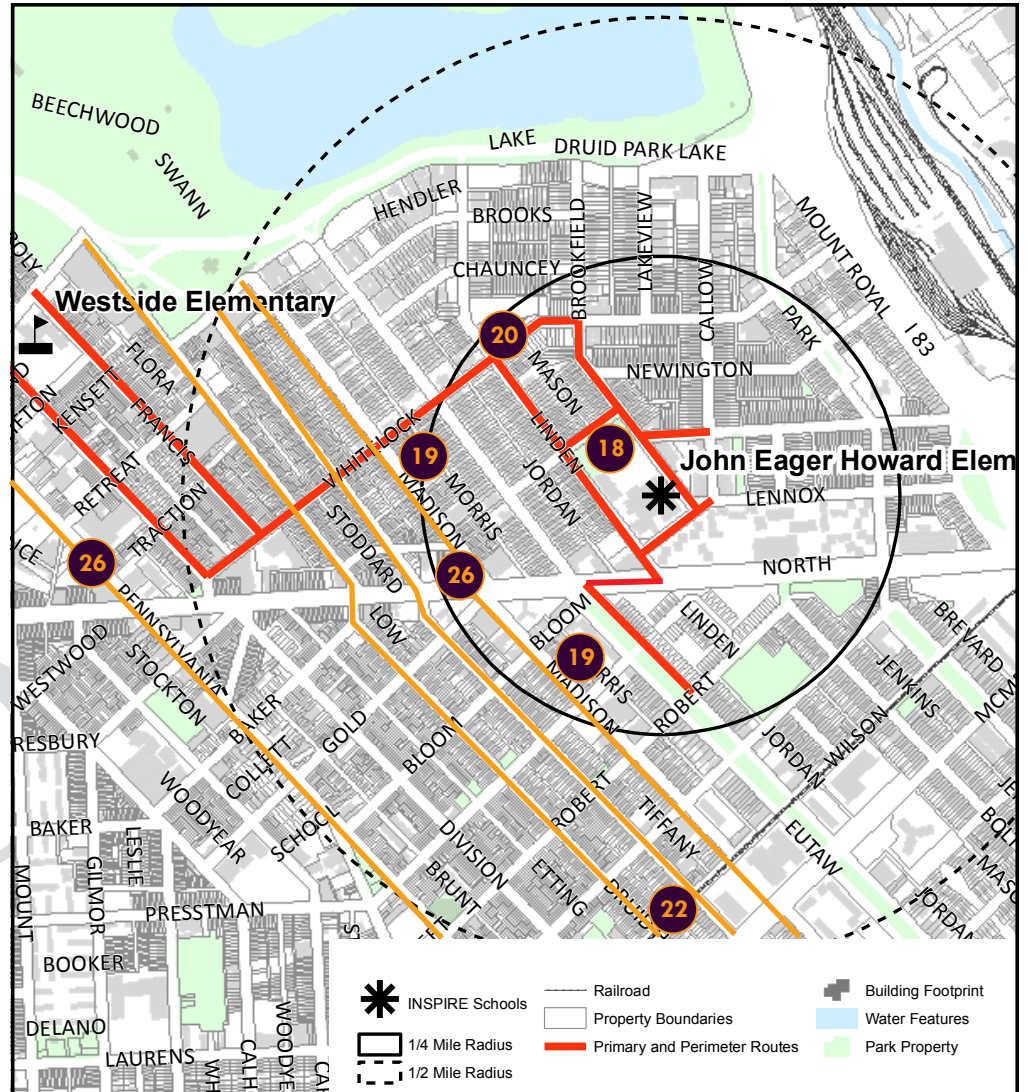
Engage Central Police District

17. Enforce park hours at John Eager Howard Park.

Park hours are ignored and there are people using the park for illegal activities after it is closed at dusk. The Baltimore Police Department should work with residents to enforce park hours.

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BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD PROVIDE A VARIETY OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND RESIDENTS TO BE ACTIVE



Increase Use of Parks and Playgrounds

18. Create partnerships to establish positive use of John Eager Howard Park. Parents of students at John Eager Howard, neighborhood residents, and Recreation Center staff all raised safety concerns about use of John Eager Howard Park. Illegal drug activity and homicides within the past few years have kept many people from using the park. The new school site design will create a more connected relationship by bringing the school building closer to the park and facing windows towards the park. Even with these additional “eyes on the park,” re-establishing a sense of safety and ownership of the space will require more people and positive activities occurring in the park. The John Eager Howard Recreation Center could partner with neighborhood institutions to provide programming in the park, similar to the programming that already exists at the Whitelock Community Farm and German Park.



19. Acquire and renovate the substandard playgrounds in Madison and Whitelock Park and at Presstman and Madison streets.

These two playgrounds, although substandard, are used by community residents who would like to play space for all ages in the neighborhood. A daycare center tries to maintain one of the playgrounds but standing water, construction debris, and other neglect makes this challenging. Property transfer and renovation options for the privately-owned playground should be explored by Recreation & Parks and Housing Land Resources. Significant investment will be required to remove the impervious surface, deteriorated wood play sculptures, and non-working fountains. A community visioning process should be implemented to ensure that community needs are addressed.

20. Make German Playground accessible and explore ways to keep it clean.

The German Playground is a valuable asset in the community. Lack of sidewalks and accessible paths around and within the park make this a challenge. Additionally, both adults and children complained about the trash and general lack of maintenance in the playground. Explore accessibility issues and trash pick-up and/or trash can needs.

Improve Walking and Biking Access and Safety in Neighborhoods



21. Continue to improve safe walking and biking connections to Druid Hill Park. Community members have a long-standing desire to be better connected to Druid Hill Park in order to take advantage of its many amenities. Druid Park Lake Drive however, acts as a highway and crossing to the park is dangerous. The Department of Transportation and Department of Recreation and Parks are currently improving pedestrian access at Madison and Fulton Avenues. It is recommended that DOT evaluate traffic patterns and study the area to improve connections to the park and to make Druid Park Lake Drive pedestrian friendly.

22. Conduct a traffic study on Druid Hill Avenue and McCulloh, and potentially return the streets to two-way traffic.

Druid Hill Avenue and McCulloh are each one-way streets. The high volume of high-speed traffic along these routes has a very negative effect on people walking in the area as well as on residents' quality of life and the housing market. Reverting these streets to their original, pre-1947 configuration may have positive effects without disrupting the flow of traffic.



23. Repair sidewalks and curb ramps so that they are ADA accessible.

Many sidewalks are in poor condition due to vacant properties and landowner neglect. Additionally, many curb ramps are too steep to safely navigate in a wheelchair. Uneven sidewalk surfaces and ramps that do not meet code force people in wheelchairs onto the street where they are much more likely to be hit by a vehicle. To make it safer and more comfortable for all users, these locations should be assessed:

- 700-800-blocks of Druid Park Lake Drive
- 1900-2100, and 2300 Mount Royal Terrace
- 2200-block of Eutaw



24. Create a walking school bus, bicycle train, or block captain sentinel program.

With most students likely not qualifying for school bus pickup, measures should be developed to ensure safety for children during the travel to and from school. Explore models and opportunities for walking school buses (a group of children walking with one or more adults), bicycle trains (a group of children biking with adults), and block captain sentinel programs. See Appendix A for more information.



25. Participate in the Safety City education program in Druid Hill Park.

The Department of Transportation's Safety City teaches students how to cross a street and ride a bike safely. The school should take advantage of this close-by opportunity.



26. Explore bicycle facilities to accommodate safe bicycle travel to school and in the neighborhood.

Residents and visitors often travel through the neighborhood by bicycle on their way to Druid Hill Park or in the opposite direction towards downtown. Students who want to bike to school should have a safe, easy way to do so. In addition to assessing opportunities along the school perimeter and primary routes, explore the addition of bicycle facilities (e.g. protected bicycle lanes, curbside with floating parking, share the road signage) on the following streets:

- Pennsylvania
- Madison
- W. 28th Street (connection to Remington)

Appendix A: Description of Citywide Programs

See below for information and links to the programs mentioned in this draft recommendations report.

- National Resource Network is a core component of the Obama Administration's Strong Cities, Strong Communities initiative, and develops and delivers innovative solutions to American cities to help them address their toughest economic challenges. The Network works with local leaders to identify practical solutions, share real-world expertise and best practices, and help cities develop the tools and strategies they need to grow their economies.
<http://www.nationalresourcenetwork.org/en/home>
- Healthy Neighborhoods helps strong but undervalued Baltimore neighborhoods increase home values, market their communities, create high standards for property improvements, and forge strong connections among neighbors. The initiative provides capital for rehabilitation and purchase of homes, funding community-based projects, marketing neighborhoods to homebuyers and developers, and creating partnerships between neighborhood organizations, non-profits, and lenders.
<http://www.healthyneighborhoods.org/>
- Vacants to Value is Mayor Rawlings-Blake's initiative to clean up and redevelop vacant properties, help raise property values, create community amenities, increase local tax revenue, and attract new residents and businesses.
<http://www.vacantstovalue.org/>
- The Growing Green Initiative is a City-led effort to use sustainable, innovative, and cost-effective practices for stabilizing and holding land for redevelopment, and reusing vacant land to green neighborhoods, reduce stormwater runoff, grow food, and create community spaces that mitigate the negative impacts of vacant properties and set the stage for growing Baltimore.
<http://www.baltimoresustainability.org/projects/growing-green-initiative/>
- Clean Corps Baltimore is a peer-to-peer network of city neighborhoods, working in partnership with the City and nonprofits to reduce trash and litter in their communities. Clean Corp, uses a peer-to-peer network to distribute

information and resources to City residents who are committed to having clean streets and alleys; train engaged community leaders to provide them with the tools and knowledge necessary to educate their neighbors; and engage them in community cleanups, art projects, and advocacy.
cleancorpsbaltimore.org

- A walking school bus is a group of children walking to school with one or more adults. That may sound simple, and that is part of the appeal. It can be as informal as two families taking turns walking their children to school or as structured as a planned route with meeting points, a timetable and a schedule of trained volunteers. A variation on the walking school bus is a bicycle train where a group of children and adult leaders ride together to school.
http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/walking_school_bus/

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Appendix B: List of Draft Recommendations

Baltimore Neighborhoods Should Offer a Range of Housing, Commercial, and Community-based Developments

- Identify and Support Redevelopment Opportunities
 - Explore reuse of Westside Elementary school
 - Harness emerging market strength on McCulloh Street to stabilize and strengthen adjacent Druid Hill Avenue
 - Explore mixed-use redevelopment opportunities with the new owner of the Madison Park North apartment complex
 - Amend the Madison Park North Urban Renewal Plan to allow for a flexible and modern mix of land use and building design in the area
 - Redevelop vacant parcels as residential or mixed-use buildings

Baltimore Neighborhoods Should be Green and Clean Environments

- Beautify Public Spaces/Contribute to the Green Network
 - Develop Growing Green Initiative treatments for lots where redevelopment is not feasible
 - Establish a “Bloom Your Block”-style competition that enhances community pride while residents have fun maintaining and beautifying properties
 - Maintain the West North avenue median at Linden Avenue
 - Maintain healthy trees and increase tree canopy
- Keep Neighborhoods Clean
 - Make taking out trash easy for residents by requiring an enforceable trash plan and/or requiring a trash room as part of the annual licensing of multi-family dwellings
 - Prioritize dirty alleys and areas of chronic dumping for cleaning, code, enforcement hot spot, and/or possible dumping camera locations
 - Develop and implement an educational campaign, a dog-waste bag dispenser program, and regular park cleaning to address the problem of dog owners not picking up after their pets
 - Implement a peer-to-peer “clean crops” program in Penn North and Reservoir Hill

Baltimore Neighborhoods Should be Safe

- Remove Dangerous Blight
 - Demolish the 1500 block of Traction Street
 - The vacant and dilapidated houses along prominent corners of Whitelock Street must be remediated. Stabilize and receiver the properties
- Improve Lighting in the Neighborhoods
 - Evaluate lighting levels to make streets safer
- Engage Central Police District
 - Enforce park hours at John Eager Howard Park

Baltimore Neighborhoods Should Provide a Variety of Opportunities for Children, Families, and Residents to be Active

- Increase Use of Parks and Playgrounds
 - Create partnerships to establish positive use of John Eager Howard Park
 - Acquire and renovate the substandard playgrounds in Madison and Whitelock Park and at Presstman and Madison streets
 - Make German Playground accessible and explore ways to keep it clean
- Improve Walking and Biking Access and Safety in Neighborhoods
 - Continue to improve safe walking and biking connections to Druid Hill Park
 - Conduct a traffic study on Druid Hill Avenue and McCulloh, and potentially return the streets to two-way traffic
 - Repair sidewalks and curb ramps so that they are ADA accessible
 - Create a walking school bus, bicycle train, or block captain sentinel program
 - Participate in the Safety City education program in Druid Hill Park
 - Explore bicycle facilities to accommodate safe bicycle travel to school and in the neighborhood