BACKGROUND

The residential neighborhood in the southeast quadrant of Grandview Heights is located between the Commerce District to the east and the Goodale Boulevard corridor to the south. By mid-2009, the Commerce District and portions of the Goodale Business District were well positioned for redevelopment and some development activity was already occurring. The redevelopment of the Commerce District into “Grandview Yard” will provide the adjacent residential areas with all of the same potential amenities derived from true mixed use developments. These opportunities include walking proximity to places of employment, personal services and entertainment plus increased bus service to other employment areas of the region. Grandview Yard is also likely to create new pressure for change and redevelopment on residential properties most adjacent to the new development.

In light of the current conditions, The Grandview Heights Planning Commission engaged in a planning process that examined the potential for change within the adjacent residential areas of the community. The transition of the Commerce District from a 50 year old industrial warehouse area to a vital mixed use center will likely change peoples perception of the neighborhood and result in increased investment. The Commission determined that a set of planning principles were necessary to articulate a community expectation of change that in turn will serve to guide both public and private investment in a comprehensive manner and increase the livability and vitality of those neighborhoods.

Southeast Area Neighborhood Map
WHAT WE KNOW

The Southeast neighborhood is a very important, but unique, part of the city’s overall neighborhood fabric. In relation to the rest of Grandview, the population is younger, the households are smaller, there is a larger proportion of rental housing, and the housing is more affordable.

The Southeast neighborhood has a population of approximately 2,197 persons residing in approximately 1,057 housing units, representing about one third of the city’s population. In general, the area is occupied by smaller households (1.9 persons per household compared to 2.2 for the remainder of the city) and is more likely to be in rental housing than the rest of the city (64% compared to 25% for the remainder of the city). The percentage of the population in the 20-34 age category is greater for this area (24%) than the remainder of the city (12%), suggesting that it is a place for first time renters or buyers. The average home value is slightly lower in this area ($139,000 compared to $148,000) than the city as a whole. (These statistics are based on the 2000 Census, which are the latest block-level statistics that are available.)
The area is characterized by primarily single and two family homes, except for multi-family apartments along Northwest Boulevard. It is anchored at the center of the area where Northwest Boulevard joins with First Avenue by a cluster of small scale local businesses, Pierce Field, and Stevenson Elementary School.

The area is designed with a well-connected grid pattern with an extensive system of sidewalks and rear alleys, although pedestrian connections could be improved in the areas adjacent to Grandview Yard and along Northwest Boulevard. In many ways, it is blessed with traditional neighborhood design features and a scale that is now being emulated by the “new urbanism” movement that is influencing the design of many new high end developments around the country.
PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

There are a variety of planning considerations that are of concern to the city and the residents of this area. The overarching consideration is to recognize this neighborhood as integral to the continued success of the city and to maintain it as a stable, family-friendly area.

The city has long recognized the importance of residential stability and active planning for this particular neighborhood. The 1997 Comprehensive Plan identified this area as part of a “Residential Protection Enhancement Area”. The plan calls for strategies to “reinvest, maintain, enhance” as follows:

- Prevent intrusion of non residential uses.
- Strengthen pedestrian ties to First Avenue and promote greater use of transit.
- Establish development site standards for parcels that may be attractive for new development.
- Encourage owner-occupancy of single-family houses and the ongoing maintenance and rehabilitation of multi-family dwellings.

This Southeast Neighborhood Plan reaffirms these planning values. However, since the time that the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, the Grandview Yard project has emerged as a replacement for the old Big Bear site and Goodale Boulevard has continued to transition as a business corridor. These potential external forces have caused the city to develop this plan to reinforce the Comprehensive Plan principles and develop more focused planning strategies for this area.

The following planning premises provide a framework of policies and related actions for this neighborhood. They are an extension of and part of the Comprehensive Plan. They supplement the Grandview Commerce District amendment to the Comprehensive Plan which was adopted by the city in 2008.

The planning premises are organized around themes, including neighborhood stability, Northwest Boulevard, neighborhood civic institutions, neighborhood connections, neighborhood transitions, adequate public facilities, managed traffic, and neighborhood initiatives.
PLANNING PREMISES

1. Neighborhood Stability

The Southeast Area will be anchored by a stable, well-maintained residential neighborhood that offers diverse, inclusive, compatible, and quality housing options.

Strategies:

a. The existing residential pattern of single family and multi-family land use will remain unchanged.

b. Surrounding commercial uses will not encroach into the current boundaries of the residential neighborhood area.

c. The city will continue to conduct both complaint driven and systematic enforcement of zoning and maintenance codes.

2. Northwest Boulevard

Northwest Boulevard will continue to be a well-maintained “grand boulevard” and will serve local traffic needs.

Strategies:

a. Northwest Boulevard will retain its iconic visual form.

b. The intersection of Northwest Boulevard and Goodale Boulevard will be a gateway into the residential neighborhoods of the community.

c. Multi-family housing options will continue to exist along Northwest Boulevard as a transition between Grandview Yard and the existing lower density housing to the west and north of Grandview Yard.
3. Neighborhood Civic Institutions

Civic institutional uses such as schools and parks will continue to be focal points for neighborhood activity.

Strategies:

a. Pierce Field and Stevenson Elementary will continue to be the civic jewels of the neighborhood.

b. Begin implementation of the Pierce Field improvements as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Board.

4. Neighborhood Connections

The neighborhood will contain multiple vehicular and pedestrian connections within it, between the neighborhood and Grandview Yard, and with the city as a whole.

Strategies:

a. Grandview Yard will be designed and developed to be integrated with the city and its neighborhoods, especially around its edges. The grid pattern of the existing neighborhood should be extended into and reflected in Grandview Yard.

b. As Grandview Yard develops, the city will consider reconfiguring the First Avenue and Northwest Boulevard intersection in a manner that promotes vehicular and pedestrian safety while enhancing the attractiveness of Pierce Field.

c. Sidewalks along Burr, Williams and Burrell Avenues will be extended to Northwest Boulevard when the streets are reconstructed within Grandview Yard.
d. The lack of crosswalks along Northwest Boulevard will be addressed to provide safe and accessible crossing opportunities between Goodale Boulevard and Oxley Road.

e. On-street bike routes will be extended into Grandview Yard in a manner that encourages ridership.

5. Neighborhood Transitions

Land use transitions within the neighborhood, between the neighborhoods and Grandview Yard, and between the neighborhood and the rest of the city will be designed to minimize potential negative land use impacts.

Strategies:

a. Residential land uses within Grandview Yard will be encouraged to be adjacent to residential land uses along Northwest Boulevard.

b. Density and building heights in Grandview Yard will transition from the existing residential areas to minimize impacts on the existing neighborhood.

c. The alley between Northwest Boulevard and Grandview Yard will be enhanced for additional residential uses along its east side or sufficiently buffered from commercial land uses.
6. Adequate Public Facilities

Public facilities will be provided and maintained in a timely and fiscally responsible manner to meet the needs of the neighborhood.

Strategies:

a. Potential storm water, utility, and other impacts associated with new development will be mitigated such that needed improvements are provided concurrent with new development.

b. All improvements to the public infrastructure will be designed to be comprehensive in scope and result in a “finished condition” where the infrastructure associated with new development joins existing development and infrastructure.

7. Managed Traffic

Traffic circulation into and around the neighborhood will occur in a safe manner that is consistent with family and pedestrian orientation of the area.

Strategies:

a. Potential negative traffic impacts associated with new development will be mitigated such that needed improvements are provided concurrent with new development; however roadway and traffic improvements will be balanced with other quality of life and quality of place concerns, such as providing an attractive and pedestrian friendly environment.

b. A city-wide traffic calming study will be conducted that will identify potential speeding, cut-through and/or conflict areas and recommend measures to minimize and slow cut-through traffic as the city and surrounding area continues to grow and redevelop.
c. Traffic calming and other access control measures will ensure that access to Grandview Yard for regional traffic will occur via Third Avenue and Goodale Boulevard, and access from Northwest Boulevard will be limited to local traffic.

d. As Grandview Yard develops the city will consider extending Burr Avenue so as to leave Edgehill Avenue primarily as a collector road for residential traffic.

e. The city will take proactive steps to promote mass transit as a means of reducing vehicular traffic into Grandview Heights and through the neighborhoods.

f. All new development in the area will be designed and maintained for comfortable and safe pedestrian and bicycle uses.

g. Street bicycling will be encouraged with signage and pavement markings.

8. Neighborhood Initiatives

The city will work collaboratively with neighborhood residents and businesses to engage in active initiatives that promote neighborhood stability and livability.

Strategies:

a. Block groups and other community organizations will be encouraged.

b. Neighborhood safety initiatives will be developed and supported by the city.

c. The city and neighborhood will develop alley clean up and street cleaning programs.

d. A comprehensive street tree policy and practice manual will be developed and implemented.
e. A community banner program will be utilized to promote community programs and neighborhood identity.

f. Entry features will be designed to visually and symbolically identify strategic locations within Grandview Heights and convey the city’s brand.

g. Community events will be sponsored in and around the park that will draw the participation of new businesses within Grandview Yard.