

# **Report to the Provo Municipal Council for Revitalization of the South Joaquin Neighborhood**

**Prepared for the  
South Joaquin Neighborhood Study Group**

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## **Background**

In May, 2000, Mayor Billings appointed a seven-member citizens ad hoc committee to study and make recommendations on actions on the South Joaquin neighborhood. The committee's charge was to find ways to both stabilize and enhance the functioning of that portion of the Joaquin neighborhood south of 5<sup>th</sup> North (see map "A" Redevelopment Potential). The impetus for establishing this committee came from a number of sources including the following:

- The study for a high-density "student village" north of 500 north to BYU
- Council concerns about the functioning of central city neighborhoods
- A neighborhood request to include the South Joaquin area in the SCAMP moratorium boundary
- Neighborhood interest in preserving the area's unique mix of historic housing

The committee has met approximately six times and has been assisted in their investigations by staff from the Community Development and Legal Departments. What follows is a brief summary of the results of the committee's meetings and deliberations.

## **May 23, 2000 First Meeting**

The committee met with staff and discussed the following items: Council direction for the committee came from the minutes of the February 15 Council meeting. At that meeting neighborhood representatives asked Council to include the area of Joaquin below 500 North in the proposed moratorium. Their concerns centered on the loss of historic housing; impacts of high density housing on the neighborhood, cut through traffic and commuting student parking impacts and the steady reduction in the number of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood.

Staff presented a preliminary outline of the staff's work program for investigating the problems and potential solutions for the Joaquin neighborhood. Staff also provided the committee with a variety of background facts about the status of current land use arrangements within South Joaquin neighborhood, especially that portion of the neighborhood zones R-4 and R-5 west of 4<sup>th</sup> East. The key facts regarding the neighborhood include the following:

- Approximately 40% of the housing in the area has the appearance of single family although it may be used for two or three units.
- Approximately 35 % of the R-4 and R-5 parcels east of 4<sup>th</sup> East are still in single family use.
- However, only 7% of the total number of housing units in this area are owner-occupied.

The bulk of the meeting focused on objectives for the committee and after an extensive discussion, the group determined that recommendations would address the following key objectives:

- Reduce the impact of existing housing on the neighborhood
- Improve the homeownership ratio in the neighborhood
- Preserve and upgrade historic homes in the area
- Preserve the single family appearance of the area
- Provide incentives to recycle older, run-down single family homes
- Introduce traffic calming measures to improve neighborhood livability

The meeting concluded with a scheduled (May 30) walking tour of the neighborhood.

## **May 30 Second Meeting      Walking Tour**

The group convened at City Hall at 4 PM and staff used a 12-passenger van to bring the committee's members to the core part of the neighborhood. On the two-hour tour, committee members saw the area's housing and public area conditions and expressed the following additional concerns:

### **Loss of Owner Occupancy**

Committee members knowledgeable of the ownership patterns in the neighborhood pointed out numerous properties, which have recently moved from owner occupancy to a rental status. Even well maintained owner occupied sites were identified which are in danger of converting to rental because of the perceived decline in support for ownership in the area. At present, the neighborhood as a whole has only a 7.35% ownership rate although there are a number of blocks where 35-40% of the properties are owner occupied.

### **Lot Pattern**

The properties in the area have been subdivided into a variety of shapes with some lots on side streets being quite small and lots on east-west streets are quite deep. When multifamily development has occurred on the east-west streets on deep lots, the design has often been incompatible with surrounding homes. New apartments have been built boxcar style with a blank narrow face to the street, several levels of apartment entrances to a long driveway or parking lot.

### **Incompatible Additions**

The area has a number of homes of irreplaceable historic or architectural interest. Several of these homes have been modified with additions as the needs of the household occupants have changed. Unfortunately, many of these additions have been with incompatible materials or in a totally different style than the original construction. As a result, often the building's exterior is now a composite of different styles and materials, which detracts from the overall sense of the neighborhood's architectural and historic character.

### **Home Maintenance**

Committee members noted the need to improve the exterior appearance of a number of historically significant dwellings, which have not been well maintained. These included both owner occupied and rental dwellings. It was noted that the City has not provided any financial assistance to owners of historic property to maintain the property.

## **June 8 Third Meeting**

At this meeting staff summarized the concerns expressed by committee members both at their first meeting and during the walking tour. Key factors effecting the development potential of the area were reviewed in mapped form including these items:

### Owner Occupancy

The attached map notes the location of owner-occupied homes within the South Joaquin neighborhood as circles. The highest concentration of ownership housing is between 200 and 300 North and 200 to 400 East.

### Historic Resources

According to the State Historic Preservation office, the South Joaquin neighborhood contains the highest concentration of historic housing at risk of any neighborhood within the entire state of Utah. The accompanying map depicts that concentration.

### Redevelopment Potential

Fregonese/Calthorpe Associates as a part of conducting the SCSAMP study looked at the potential for additional housing development within the South Joaquin neighborhood. The analysis was based on an evaluation of the relative value of improvements to land value for properties in the area. While the South Joaquin neighborhood as a whole has the potential for over 300 units of new housing, most of that potential is concentrated east of 4<sup>th</sup> East and in small parcels.

The result of reviewing these maps lead to the following general conclusions from the committee:

- The area's historic housing is subject to inappropriate conversion and/or loss from new development;
- As home ownership declines, the remaining single family homeowners feel isolated;
- The current one-acre zoning standard may stop further inappropriate residential development in the area but it won't result in the area's renewal.

### **June 15 Fourth Meeting**

Staff presented the Committee with a draft set of recommendations for objectives and strategies for implementing the objectives. David Keller, a committee member also presented the committee with a set of key objectives and strategies. Based on an extended discussion of these issues, a consensus developed as to how to best formulate a program of action that would meet the key objectives identified for both neighborhood preservation and enhancement. Staff was asked to blend the two lists together into a comprehensive set of recommendations to be considered by the committee.

### **June 29 Fifth Meeting**

Staff presented the committee with an integrated strategy of two key values, five goals and 20 objectives to implement the values and goals. The committee gave staff feedback of the program and asked for a comprehensive background report to frame the issues and a final meeting to adopt the committee's recommendations.

### **July 6 Sixth Meeting**

Staff presented the following program to the committee for their consideration. The final set of signed recommendations represent the consensus of the committee.

## **Recommendations to the Provo Municipal Council for Revitalization of the South Joaquin Neighborhood**

These recommendations are organized in the same hierarchy as the Provo General Plan of value statements, goals, and objectives. Value statements are general policy statements, which express a desired outcome. Goals are more focused and detailed policy statements, which identify how values can be achieved. Objectives are detailed and action-oriented policy statements, which specify how values and goals can be achieved. To be effective, objectives should be detailed enough to be measurable and identify the party responsible for implementation.

**Value Statement:** Maintain and enhance a safe, comfortable and livable residential neighborhood with a sense of community for all residents. *This is a restatement of General Plan Value Statements 1 and 2 in the context of the Joaquin neighborhood. Most of the proposed policies apply to the entire South Joaquin neighborhood (see Map “A”).*

**Goal 1:** Increase the number of owner-occupied housing units in all of the central city neighborhoods. *Currently only 7.35% of the housing units in the South Joaquin neighborhood are owner occupied but over 35% of the parcels are single family structures.*

**Objectives:**

1. Make available six homes per year in the five central city neighborhood for repurchase by low-moderate income homeowners through the coordinated use of various city, state and federal housing programs (*City initiative*).
2. Continue using HOME funds for a first- time homebuyers program with an emphasis on central city neighborhoods. Set a target of funding ten homes a year in the central city neighborhoods (*Neighborhood Housing Services initiative*).
3. Coordinate with Neighborhood Housing Services to develop a demonstration home ownership project (8-10 units/acre) in a central city neighborhood. Establish an overlay district and special design standards to ensure new housing is compatible with the historic character of the existing neighborhood (*City initiative*).
4. Consider rezoning all R-4 and R-5 areas of the South Joaquin neighborhood west of 4<sup>th</sup> East and south of 5<sup>th</sup> North to R1-6A. (*City initiative*)
5. Conduct an annual city-sponsored seminar for owners or purchasers of historic housing on the cost-saving advantages of using the Historic Building Code for remodeling. In addition, develop a video presentation for the rules and resources for remodeling historic homes within the city (*City/neighborhood initiative*).

6. Establish a homeowners association for each central city neighborhood to provide education and support for existing and potential homeowners (*Neighborhood/Neighborhood Housing Service initiative*).
7. Commit to an annual meeting between the Provo Municipal Council and the Provo School Board to set common objectives for the development of strong schools and strong neighborhoods in Provo (*City initiative*).

**Value Statement:** Maintain and enhance a safe, comfortable and livable residential neighborhood with a sense of community for all residents.

**Goal 2:** Reduce the negative impacts of existing housing on the neighborhood.

- Objectives:**
1. Based on a neighborhood vote, City adopts a residential parking permit program to limit the impact of BYU commuter parking in the area (*Neighborhood and City initiative*).
  2. Neighborhood routinely provides all area residents with information on the rules and procedures governing traffic, parking, garbage collection, noise, snow removal and other applicable ordinances (*Neighborhood and City initiative*).
  3. City adopts an ordinance requiring leases for rentals with strict enforcement of occupancy limits and civil penalties for violations (*City initiative*).
  4. City sponsors residential façade program with a revolving loan fund to upgrade the public appearance of residential property (*City initiative*).

**Goal 3:** Preserve the single-family appearance of the South Joaquin neighborhood.

- Objectives:**
1. Enforce nuisance ordinance provisions for property maintenance (*City*).
  2. City sponsored neighborhood clean-ups with free dumpsters (*City*).
  3. Sponsor a Home-of-the-Month program (*Neighborhood initiative*).
  4. Consider adoption of a fit premise ordinance (*City initiative*).
  5. Direct staff to work with the neighborhood on a traffic calming program (*Neighborhood approval and City funding*).
  6. Expand facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians in entire Joaquin neighborhood (*City initiative*).

- Value Statement:** Recognize and protect the historic nature of the South Joaquin neighborhood by promoting preservation of its historic resources and buildings.
- Goal 4:** Preserve, maintain and upgrade historic homes within the South Joaquin neighborhood.
- Objectives:**
1. Adopt the Landmarks Commission recommendation to form a local historic district within the Joaquin neighborhood (*City initiative*).
  2. City seeks private funding for national register district improvements (*City*).
  3. Neighborhood seeks to secure funding from Heritage Foundation and/or other private organizations (*Neighborhood initiative*)
  4. Investigate the feasibility of gradually replacing standard light fixtures in the central city neighborhoods with replicas of historic fixtures (*City initiative*).
  5. Implement the established General Plan policy for the Joaquin neighborhood and reinstall the landscaped median back in Center Street between 100 East and 900 East (*City initiative*).
  6. Investigate the feasibility of special “historic Provo” signage in the area, to create a sense of uniqueness and to help publicly define boundaries in the district (*City/neighborhood initiative*).

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