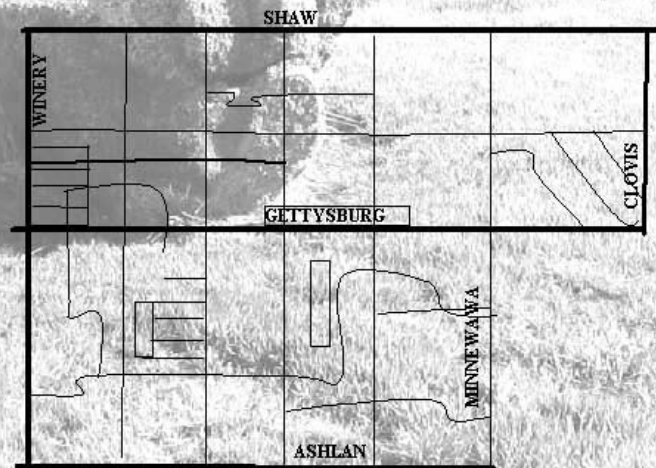


Southwest Clovis Neighborhood Revitalization Action Plan



CITY OF CLOVIS



City of Clovis Acknowledgements

Community

Thank you to all of the southwest area residents and property owners who came to the meetings and contributed to this process.

City Council

Nathan Magsig, Mayor
Bob Whalen, Mayor Pro-tem
Harry Armstrong, Council Member
Lynne Ashbeck, Council Member
José Flores, Council Member

City Staff – Department Heads

Kathy Millison, City Manager
Jeff Witte, Assistant City Manager
Michael Dozier, Community and Economic Development Director
Rob Woolley, Finance Director
Mark Aston, Fire Chief
Robert Ford, General Services Director
John Wright, Director of Planning and Development
Jim Zulim, Police Chief

Contributing City Staff

Tina Sumner, Housing Project Manager
Janet Davis, Police Captain
Lisa Kohen, Assistant Public Utilities Director
Dwight Kroll, City Planner
Carlos Martinez, Redevelopment Technician
Luke Serpa, Assistant Public Utilities Director
Steve White, City Engineer

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

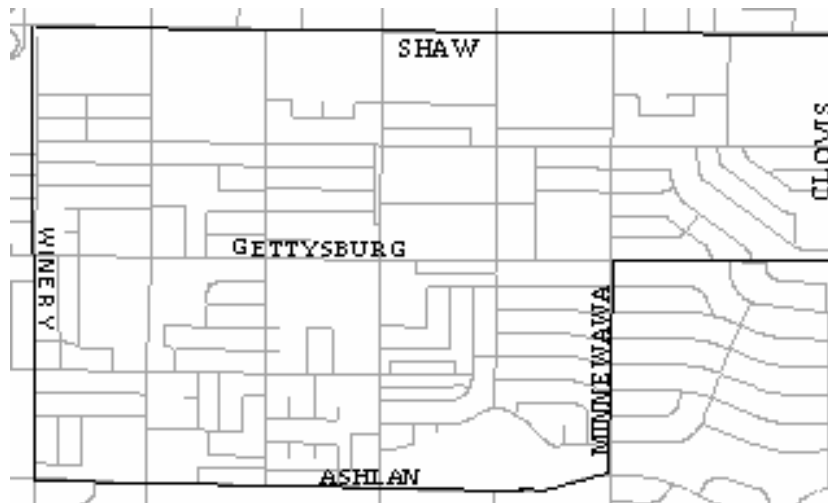
INTRODUCTION

In 1999, the City of Clovis began to discuss concerns regarding the deterioration of the southwest portion of the city. During the following two years, the City worked to create a southwest Clovis redevelopment project area. The redevelopment project area creation effort was based on the following concerns:

- Fair to poor building and site conditions;
- Irregular parcelization; and
- High crime rates

The City held public meetings and worked with a Project Area Committee made up of residents and business owners to draft a project list. There was significant public support for redevelopment of the area. However, due to active opposition from the County of Fresno, the redevelopment project area adoption was abandoned.

Because of the renewed public concern from area residents, the City Council directed staff to look for other opportunities to pursue revitalization of southwest Clovis. On March 2, 2005 the City convened the first in a series of four meetings with property owners and residents of the southwest area bounded by Shaw Avenue to the north, Winery Avenue to the west, Ashlan Avenue to the south, and Clovis Avenue to the east to discuss the condition of the area. Subsequent meetings were held on April 19, May 26, and September 28, 2005.



Workshop participants engaged in detailed discussions of the southwest area. They were given the opportunity to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and

threats, which resulted in a vast range of ideas, concerns, and issues that subsequently developed an inventory of priorities, leading to the creation of Action Items.

From the inventory of priorities, residents developed six areas of concern:

1. Property Conditions
 - a. Community Cleanup
 - b. General Disrepair – tarps on roofs, shabby/non-existent landscaping
 - c. Home Based Businesses
 - d. Rental Property Conditions and Tenant Conduct

2. Public Infrastructure
 - a. Median Islands on Willow Avenue
 - b. Public Area Landscape Quality and Maintenance
 - c. Land Use Plans
 - d. Condition of Streets and Sidewalks
 - e. Street Sweeping

3. Traffic
 - a. Trucks and CUSD buses on neighborhood streets
 - b. Traffic Diverter at Minnewawa and Santa Ana Avenues
 - c. Gettysburg Avenue connection to Clovis Avenue
 - d. Ashlan Avenue widening
 - e. Shaw Avenue widening

4. Law Enforcement
 - a. Traffic Enforcement
 - b. Crime – gangs, drugs, loitering, and truancy
 - c. Curfew Violations
 - d. Code Enforcement

5. Unengaged Residents/Lack of Sense of Belonging
 - a. Neighborhood Identification (Branding)
 - b. Community Center/Activities

6. School District Boundaries

From this list of concerns, City staff formulated a draft action plan and presented the document at the subsequent public forum on September 28, 2005. The draft document, known as the Southwest Clovis Neighborhood Revitalization Plan (SWCNRP), identified a preliminary strategy to address the six concerns. At the meeting of September 28, 2005, attendees reviewed the action items and made final recommendations for the City Council to consider and take necessary action. The attendees believe that implementation of these components will positively impact the

southwest area with the intent of improving the property and living conditions for all residents.

APPROACH

This document is the primary product that resulted from the Southwest Clovis Neighborhood Revitalization public meeting process. During that process, property owners and residents expressed concern about the future of the southwest area. The primary purpose of the Southwest Clovis Neighborhood Revitalization Plan is to provide a vision and five-year strategic plan for the improvement of the southwest area.

CONCLUSION

The areas of concern and actions that will be taken are as follows:

PROPERTY CONDITIONS

Community Cleanup

- Issue corrective action notices when community cleanup debris is placed on the street too early. If debris is not removed, a special pick-up will be ordered and billed accordingly.

Code Enforcement/General Disrepair of Homes and Dilapidated Property Conditions

- The City is committing two full-time officers to code enforcement. A code enforcement schedule will be developed and implemented.
- The City will target programs to assist low income home owners cleanup and improvement of their homes.

Home Based Business

- Use code enforcement to resolve home based business problems or to eliminate illegally operated businesses.

Rental Property Conditions/Tenant Conduct

- Identify violations through complaints and staff observation. Staff will work with owners to gain voluntary compliance when possible. If staff is unable to gain voluntary compliance, they will issue citations and utilize the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance to prosecute violators.
- The Police Department meets with rental property managers on a quarterly basis.
- The Police Department will coordinate community activities in these areas.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Condition of Public Infrastructure

- Survey public infrastructure that needs repairs. Prioritize repairs and include them in the five year capital improvement project schedule as appropriate.
- Property owners will be notified to make repairs of sidewalks, curbs and gutters damaged by private trees.

Street Sweeping

- Provide timely notification to minimize vehicles that are parked on streets that are to be swept.

TRAFFIC

- Request City Council direction as to whether to remove the W. Santa Ana Avenue diverter.
- Complete a traffic study to determine the amount of bus and truck traffic on neighborhood streets.
- Use traffic calming devices such as traffic signals, traffic restrictors, and bulb-outs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Traffic Enforcement

- Educate residents regarding the traffic hotline telephone number to report problem traffic areas.
- Traffic officers will provide additional enforcement for those areas identified with ongoing traffic problems.

Crime

- The Police Department has established a gang unit consisting of one supervisor and three officers.
- Educate residents regarding the graffiti hotline.

UNENGAGED RESIDENTS/LACK OF SENSE OF BELONGING

- The Police Department will hold a Southwest Community Picnic and three Community Nights during 2006.
- CCDA and the Planning Division will work to create a theme to “brand” the area.

SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

- Meet with residents from the impacted area on November 9, 2005 to discuss a strategy for approaching the change. Establish a committee of interested residents to move the process forward.
- Following the resident meeting, set up a meeting with residents and representatives from CUSD and FUSD to discuss the change.
- The resident committee will work through the process with city staff assistance as necessary.

The commitment from City Council and staff, along with collaboration from the property owners and residents, will enable the southwest Clovis neighborhoods to realize the potential of the collective vision. The programs and activities proposed in this document are intended to promote revitalization in the area. While many of these activities will be accomplished in one year, some of the program activities will provide opportunities for both incremental and long-term revitalization. The Southwest Clovis Neighborhood Revitalization Plan is written with a five-year time frame and counts on the continued support and ongoing collaboration between the City of Clovis and area property owners and residents.

EXISTING CONDITION OF SOUTHWEST CLOVIS NEIGHBORHOODS

AREA DESCRIPTION

The Southwest Clovis Neighborhood Revitalization Plan area extends from Shaw Avenue to the north, Winery Avenue to the west, Ashlan Avenue to the south and Clovis Avenue to the east. This area consists primarily of single family and multi-family residential uses. There are also churches, small neighborhood commercial, Tarpey Elementary School, a roller skating rink and the Clovis Boys & Girls Club. The area consists of two school districts, Clovis Unified and Fresno Unified.

Residents who attended the meetings identified strengths of the area as the strong sense of neighborhood and community pride and a vested, lifelong interest in their neighborhoods. The area is very nearly built out and there is a solid infrastructure of roads, sewer and water services. Shopping, schools and bus service are readily available in the area. The residents acknowledged that for the most part they receive good response from the City for policing and infrastructure matters.

The southwest neighborhoods include an aging housing stock, lower income residents, a higher percentage of rental units and a higher crime rate than elsewhere in the City. Although a few of the housing units are older, subdivision housing and apartment units began developing in southwest Clovis 50 years ago in 1955. The most recent subdivision to be developed was 21 years ago in 1984.

Although many of the residents in the southwest have incomes above the moderate income range, overall the area's income is nearly 25 percent less than the City's as a whole. The City's median is \$42,283 and the southwest area is \$31,490.¹

Of the City's 24,347 housing units, 47 percent of all residential units are rental (9,653).¹ So, although the southwest area provides less than 20 percent of the City's total housing units, it provides over 32 percent of the City's rental units.¹ The southwest neighborhoods include 4,774 residential units. Of those, 1,654 (34.6 percent) are owner occupied and 3,120 (65.4 percent) are rental units.¹

All of these factors combined have resulted in stress on the southwest neighborhoods. These stresses require consideration when developing and executing an action plan that addresses area concerns.

¹ 2000 Census Data

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTION ITEMS

1. PROPERTY CONDITIONS

Community Cleanup

Issue

Residents expressed concern that some households put rubbish out for community cleanup too early. Twice a year the City provides community cleanup as a means for residents to dispose of rubbish that will not fit in their toters. The rules governing neighborhood cleanup allows residents to put rubbish out two weeks prior to their pick-up date. When rubbish is put at the curb weeks in advance of pick-up, it creates blight on the neighborhood. Scavengers pick through the piles, trash is spread and blows through the neighborhood. Water cannot travel down the gutter to the storm drain inlet so it pools behind the pile of rubbish.



Scope of Work

1. To educate residents about the appropriate time line for putting rubbish at the curb for community cleanup.
2. To work with residents who continue to disregard established time limits. If that fails, then the Solid Waste Division would do a special pick-up and charge the resident accordingly.

Recommended Action

- Issue corrective action notices when community cleanup debris is placed on the street too early. If debris is not removed, a special pick-up will be ordered and billed accordingly. To report problems with community clean-up residents should call 324-2604.

Cost

Use existing resources to issue notices. The special pick-up costs will be recovered from the property owners.

Responsibility

Public Utilities Department, Solid Waste Section

Code Enforcement /General Disrepair of Homes and Dilapidated Property Conditions

Issue

Many of the residents' concerns discussed below relate to code enforcement issues. There is a perception that code enforcement may not be fully utilized to address some of the problems occurring in the southwest area.

Residents expressed concern regarding the general disrepair of homes in some neighborhoods in the southwest area. They discussed issues like tarps nailed to leaking roofs and carports, RVs and boats, deferred maintenance and shabby or non-existent landscaping.



Scope of Work

In 1994, the Clovis City Council adopted Chapter 5.18 of the municipal code, known as the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance. This chapter was developed based on the belief that the current and future values and the general health, safety, and welfare of the community are affected significantly by the appearance and maintenance of real property. The Council also determined that the sanctions and penalties contained in this chapter were a last resort, only after reasonable efforts at resolving problems by educational and nonconfrontational means were exhausted.

The Police Department and the Planning Division have applied the tenets of this ordinance when the public has brought violations to their attention and when violations have been observed by staff.

Typically, owners or responsible parties are contacted in person, when possible, and given notice of the nature of the violation. In every case, it is the desire of the City that the violation be corrected in a reasonable period of time without any further

action beyond initial notice. It is staff's practice to work closely with the parties to come to a reasonable and practical resolution. There have been instances where the responsible party does not take necessary action to correct the problem. In those cases, the full measure of the ordinance is invoked in a progressive manner starting with a written notice of violation and continuing with citations that carry significant financial penalties. This is done only to the extent necessary to accomplish a satisfactory resolution.

Many of the issues are code violations that can be managed by existing code enforcement efforts. The Police Department and Planning Division are working to coordinate efforts to work with property owners to alleviate problems.

Recommended Action

- The City will commit two full-time officers to code enforcement. A code enforcement schedule will be developed and implemented. Call 324-2339 to report code enforcement problems.
- The City will target programs to assist low income home owners cleanup and improvement of their homes. These programs include: the summer youth employment yard care and paint programs, World Changers, and housing rehabilitation loans. Additionally, there are many volunteer groups who would be willing to assist residents with cleanup, fix-up type problems. Staff will work together to better coordinate assistance to those identified by the code enforcement efforts. Call 324-2080 to inquire about assistance programs.

Cost

Use existing resources.

Responsibility

Police Department, the City Planning Division, and the Clovis Community Development Agency

Home Based Business

Issue

Residents expressed concerns about the impact home based businesses have on their neighborhood. They are concerned by the increased traffic businesses bring to the neighborhood. The greatest is in regard to auto maintenance and trucking type businesses that operate illegally in the neighborhood.

Scope of Work

The scope of work is twofold: make sure that businesses that are operating legally are abiding by the rules governing their operation, and identify businesses that are operating illegally and take action to remove them from the neighborhood.

Recommended Action

- Use code enforcement to resolve home based business problems or to eliminate illegally operated businesses. Call 324-2339.

Cost

Use existing resources.

Responsibility

The City Planning Division and Police Department

Rental Property Conditions/Tenant Conduct

Issue

The southwest area bears a larger burden of rentals than other neighborhoods in the City. The southwest area provides almost 20 percent of housing units (owner and renter occupied) within the City but has over 32 percent of the rental units. While there are many good quality tenants and rental property owners in the area, the neighborhood is impacted by a transient population and absentee property owners. This is an issue that involves both single family rental homes and multi-family buildings.

Scope of Work

The Police Department and Planning Division code enforcement officers will utilize the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance to address deteriorating rental properties.

Staff will work with property managers and owners to use good management practices when selecting tenants and to take action when tenants are breaking the law or degrading the quality of the rental unit.

Recommended Action

- Identify violations through complaints and staff observation. Staff will work with owners to gain voluntary compliance when possible. If staff is unable to gain voluntary compliance, they will issue citations and using the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance prosecute violators to the full extent of the law. To report code enforcement issues call 324-2339. To report non-emergency criminal activity call 324-2459.
- The Police Department will meet with rental property managers on a quarterly basis.
- The Police Department will coordinate community activities in these areas. These programs are designed to help stabilize rental areas and build a sense of community. These events include Southwest Community Nights/Street Fairs, an annual community picnic. The department is also working with local church groups and businesses to provide after school programs.

Cost

There may be a need for additional resources to assertively address this issue. Two new Community Service Officers have been assigned to address this issue.

Responsibility

Police Department

2. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Condition of Public Infrastructure

Issue

Residents expressed concern that the public infrastructure in some areas has fallen into poor condition. Because the southwest area neighborhoods are older, the aging streets, curbs, gutters and sidewalks may need to be repaired.



Scope of Work

The scope of work would need to be determined by an inspection of the public infrastructure identifying areas that are damaged.

Recommended Action

- Survey public infrastructure that needs repairs. Prioritize repairs and include them in the five year capital improvement project schedule as appropriate.
- Property owners will be notified to make repairs of sidewalks, curbs and gutters damaged by private trees.

Cost

The cost for inspecting will be completed using existing resources. Total cost of improvements is unknown.

Responsibility

Public Utilities Department, Street Maintenance Section

Street Sweeping

Issue

In some areas there are many vehicles parked on the street preventing the street from being swept. As a result, rubbish builds up in the gutter giving the area a dirty, uncared for look.

Scope of Work

Provide timely notification to minimize vehicles that are parked on streets that are to be swept.

Recommended Action

- When a route is swept, a rider with the sweeper will document which blocks are most affected by parked vehicles. Courtesy notices will be printed notifying residents of the scheduled sweeping days and requesting that vehicles be parked elsewhere on those days.
- The notices will be delivered to the residences or to the apartment managers for distribution to the residents. The day prior to the next sweeping event, the notices will be distributed on the windshield of all vehicles parked on the street.
- Citations will be issued for vehicles identified as abandoned.

Cost

The cost will be negligible. The notices can be prepared in-house for the cost of paper. Limited-duty employees will be used for documenting congested areas and distributing the notices.

Responsibility

Public Utilities, Street Sweeping Section

3. TRAFFIC

Issue

Traffic is a major concern of the residents in the southwest area. The streets intended to carry heavier traffic loads are compromised so traffic finds its way onto neighborhood streets. Of the streets running north and south, only Clovis, Peach, and Willow Avenues run unimpeded through the southwest area. Where Tarpey Elementary School is located on Minnewawa Avenue, the street is narrowed and often congested. Villa Avenue has four-way stops at each intersection and dead ends into a neighborhood at Gettysburg Avenue. Of the east-west running streets, Shaw Avenue is often congested, Gettysburg Avenue dead ends into a neighborhood at Minnewawa Avenue, and Ashlan Avenue narrows to two lanes east of Minnewawa Avenue. As the City's population continues to grow to the east, there is an increasing volume of traffic traveling through the southwest area.

As a result of the street issues discussed above, drivers look for an easy, quick way to get through the area that is often on neighborhood streets. Santa Ana Avenue that is located one block south of Shaw Avenue has become a favored way to avoid the traffic volume on Shaw Avenue. To try to stop this problem, the City installed a temporary traffic diverter at the corner of W. Santa Ana and Minnewawa Avenues.

Residents have also reported an increase in bus and truck traffic on the interior neighborhood streets.

Scope of Work

A permanent resolution of traffic flow problems in the area is to provide for additional traffic volume and flow in some of the restricted areas. This is a long-term situation that would require purchase of property to complete Gettysburg Avenue east to Clovis Avenue and to work with the County of Fresno to widen Ashlan Avenue.

In the near term, some residents want the diverter on W. Santa Ana Avenue to remain and become a permanent fixture while others want it removed. A decision needs to be made on this issue.

A determination needs to be made as to whether the residents' perspective of increased truck and bus traffic is accurate.

Recommended Action

- Request City Council direction as to whether to remove the W. Santa/Minnewawa Avenue diverter. Act on Council direction.
- Complete a traffic study to determine the amount of bus and truck traffic on neighborhood streets. If the study finds significant bus and truck usage, utilize

traffic enforcement to redirect the traffic to the main through streets. Discuss with the Clovis Unified School District the issue of bus traffic.

- Use traffic calming devices such as traffic signals, traffic restrictors and bulb-outs. To report street traffic concerns call 324-2362.

Cost

The cost of the diverter will depend on the Council's resolution. It may be the cost of removing the diverter, which would be minimal. Cost to replace the diverter will depend on the scope and design. The bus and truck traffic study could be done by staff at minimal cost, as could the development of long-range projects. Design and construction of long-range projects will vary and can be financed using grant funding as available.

Responsibility

Planning and Development Services Department, Engineering Division

4. LAW ENFORCEMENT

Traffic Enforcement

Issue

Throughout the southwest area there are a number of trouble spots regarding traffic. There are neighborhood streets on which drivers chronically drive over the speed limit and stop signs at which many drivers do not stop.

Scope of Work

Identify the problem areas and increase enforcement of traffic laws in those areas.

Recommended Action

- Educate residents regarding the traffic hotline telephone number to report problem traffic areas. To report locations with ongoing traffic concerns like speeding and running of stop signs call 324-2445.
- Traffic officers will provide additional enforcement for those area identified with ongoing traffic problems.

Cost

Use existing resources.

Responsibility

Police Department

Crime

Issue

The southwest area has higher calls for service than elsewhere in the City. These calls for service are also due to the population density of the southwest area. Residents in southwest are concerned about gang activity and juveniles out after curfew and graffiti.

Scope of Work

The Police Department will activate a gang unit to deal exclusively with gang members who live in Clovis. This unit will contact gang members at home as well as juveniles who are loitering and who are out after curfew. This will be a proactive unit design which will be very active in the southwest neighborhoods.

The Police Department has a full-time graffiti removal program. The goal of the program is to have graffiti removed within 24 hours of having been identified. In some instances, the graffiti is removed immediately. Residents need to call the graffiti hotline as soon as it is noticed and have it removed.

Recommended Action

- Police have established a gang unit consisting of one supervisor and three officers who will be working in the SW Area beginning December 2005 and will contact gang members at their residents and in public. To anonymously report non-emergency crime information call 324-2459.
- Educate residents regarding the graffiti hotline. To report graffiti call 324-2426.

Cost

Use existing resources.

Responsibility

Police Department

5. UNENGAGED RESIDENTS/LACK OF SENSE OF BELONGING

Issue

There are several factors that lead to the general sense of unengaged residents or lack of sense of belonging: high percentage of tenant occupied units; lack of unifying theme or sense of neighborhood; being located in two school districts; the high percentage of low income households and households with English language barriers.

The result of these factors is a large area in which many do not have neighborhood pride or a sense of community. This begins the cycle of problems with code enforcement issues and crime.

Scope Of Work

Work with area residents to involve them in the community through community functions held in their area, such as creating a theme identification for the southwest area and inviting southwest area residents to participate in a neighborhood committee.

Cost

Existing resources will be used.

Recommended Action

The following work items are intended to create a sense of place, pride, and belonging for the residents of the southwest area:

- The Police Department will hold a Southwest Community Picnic and three Community Nights during 2006.
- CCDA and the Planning Division will work to create a theme to “brand” the area.

Responsibility

Police Department, Planning and Engineering Divisions, and Clovis Community Development Agency

6. SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

Issue

The southwest area is in two school districts: Clovis Unified School District and Fresno Unified School District. The area from Peach Avenue west to Winery Avenue is in the Fresno Unified School District. This is unusual because it is the only area within the Clovis city limits that is not in the Clovis Unified School District. As a result, residents in the FUSD area feel disenfranchised from the City of Clovis.

Scope of Work

There is a process whereby an area can be moved from one school district to another. The process involves a grass roots effort of the residents in the area and both school districts. City staff will work with the residents to determine interest in the issue and then assist the resident committee in getting organized to carry out the process.

Recommended Action

- Meet with residents from the affected area on November 9, 2005, to discuss a strategy for approaching the change. Establish a committee of interested residents to move the process forward.
- Following the resident meeting, set up a meeting with residents and representatives from CUSD and FUSD to discuss the change.
- The resident committee will work through the process with city staff assistance as necessary.

Cost

The cost of the initial mailings will be paid for by the City. Additional costs will be the responsibility of the resident committee.

Responsibility

Clovis Community Development Agency