NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES

HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD AREA

COLUMBUS • GEORGIA

NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES: HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD AREA

Prepared By Planning Division
Department of Community Development
Columbus, Georgia

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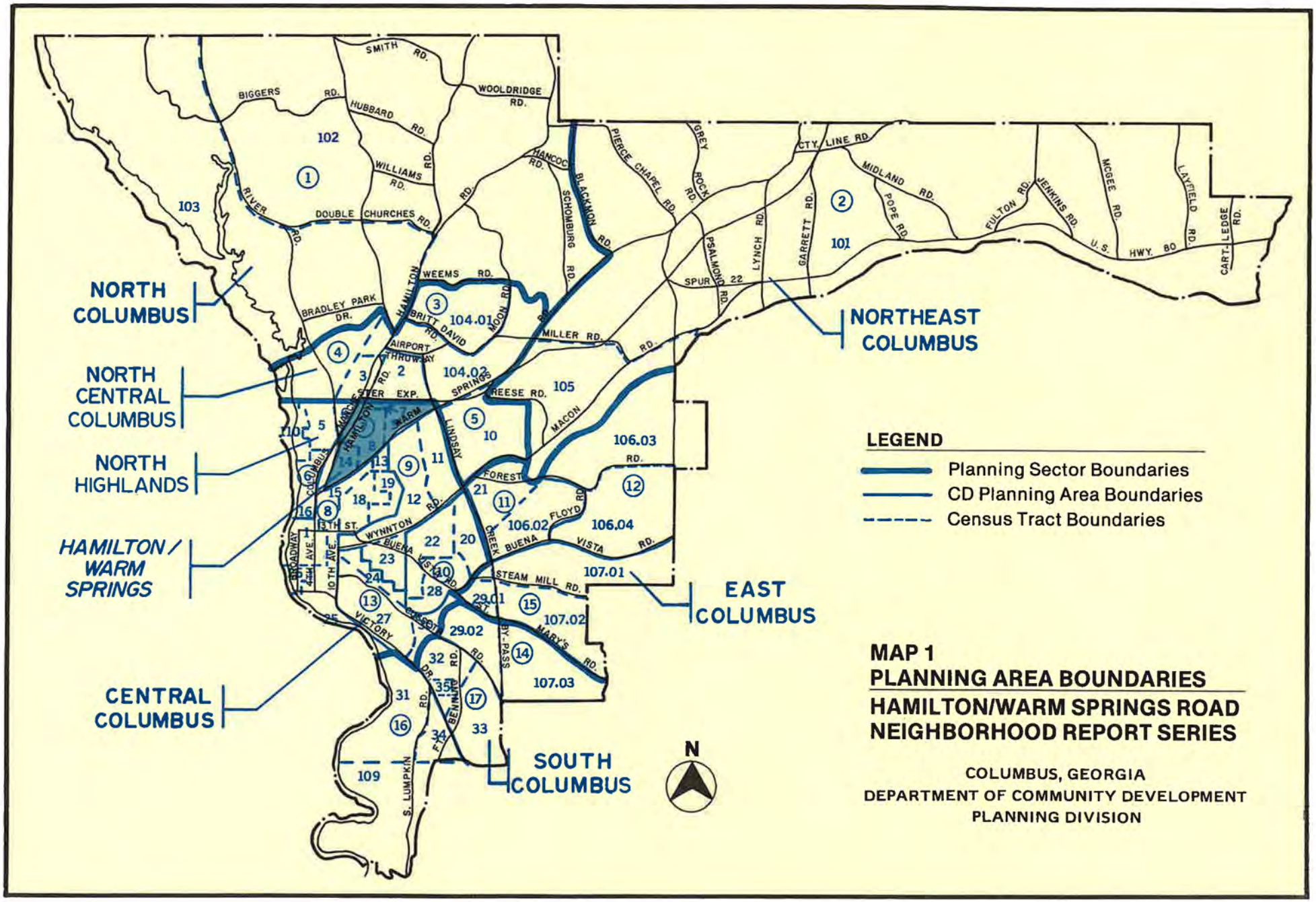
Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Population 3
Housing 6
Land Use and Zoning 10
Transportation 16
Recreation and Open Space 22
Community Facilities 24
Natural Environment 26
Summary 28

Table of Maps and Figures

Map 1 - Planning Area Boundaries ii
Map 2 - Existing Land Use 11
Map 3 - Zoning 13
Map 4 - Street and Highway System 17
Map 5 - Neighborhood Conditions 29

Figure 1 - Neighborhood Population 4
Figure 2 - Age of Population 4
Figure 3 - Median Family Income 5
Figure 4 - Number of Housing Units 5
Figure 5 - Owner - Occupied Housing Units as Percent of Occupied Housing Units 8
Figure 6 - Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units 8


NORTH COLUMBUS
NORTH CENTRAL COLUMBUS
NORTH HIGHLANDS
HAMILTON / WARM SPRINGS
CENTRAL COLUMBUS
SOUTH COLUMBUS
EAST COLUMBUS
NORTHEAST COLUMBUS
LEGEND
Planning Sector Boundaries
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MAP 1
PLANNING AREA BOUNDARIES
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING DIVISION

Introduction

This report is part of the neighborhood analysis program being carried out for the City of Columbus by the Planning Division of the Department of Community Development. The program has several objectives:

- to update and supplement the data in previous neighborhood analyses in order to determine area trends;
- to assess the effect on particular neighborhoods of the recommendations contained in the Land Use Plan and specific redevelopment projects;
- to identify and address issues concerned with planning and future development in the neighborhoods of Columbus; and,
- to direct public policy and action to preserve and improve neighborhood areas.

The Hamilton/Warm Springs Road Neighborhood report is being updated because of the redevelopment of the Medical Center Area, including improvements in the surrounding street and highway system.

Location

The location of the Hamilton/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is shown on Map 1. The area is bounded on the west by Hamilton Road, on the north by 45th Street, on the east by I-185, and on the south by Talbotton Road and the Southern Railroad tracks. The boundaries of the neighborhood follow 1980 census tract boundaries and include census tracts 7, 8, 9, and 14.

History

Hamilton Road and Talbotton/Warm Springs Road were two of the first highways which connected Columbus to other towns in the region. Developed along the routes of Indian trails, these two roads became important routes for the transportation of produce to the river for shipment. As the town expanded, it pushed out along these regional highways, and they have remained major thoroughfares in the city's street and highway system.

The land lying between these roads was originally developed as estates which served as country homes for some of the town's leading citizens. The construction of the railroad parallel to Talbotton and Warm Springs Road changed the character of the southwestern portion of the neighborhood in the late 1800's, but most of the area remained in large tracts until the 1930's.

Although some subdivision of land into residential lots occurred before the 1930's, the coordinated development of large tracts began in 1935, proceeding in a relatively orderly pattern from southwest to northeast. More than 75% of the houses in the neighborhood were built between 1930 and 1960. In order to provide homeowners with a protected residential environment, many developers attached convenants to the land which specified set-backs, minimum size and cost of dwellings, and uses to be allowed. The

regulations varied from one subdivision to another but were generally comparable to the R-2 and R-3 single-family residential zones in the current zoning ordinance. The availability of large sections of open land for subdivision and the use of convenants were the two most important factors in determining the present appearance of the neighborhood.

Major development over the past 20 years has included the construction of multi-family residential complexes in the northeast portion, commercial areas along arterial streets, and medical offices near the Medical Center and St. Francis Hospital and along Warm Springs Road. Of the 1,011 acres in the neighborhood, only 42 acres in scattered sites remain undeveloped.

Population

The Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood has lost more than one quarter of its population since 1960. The number of residents is now 7,939. This decline is due to smaller household size as both the number of households and the number of housing units have increased over this twenty-year period.

Minorities comprise about 15% of the total population of the area, as compared with 34% minority citywide. There are 1,170 black residents in the neighborhood; the 327 who live in census tract 7 and the 730 who live in census tract 14 account for 90% of the minority population.

Data from the 1980 Census for this area indicate that the number of residents under the age of 65 has decreased while the number over 65 has increased. The elderly now comprise a larger segment of the population than do the children. Residents over the age of 55 make up 43% of the neighborhood population. Columbus as a whole has experienced a shift toward an older age distribution; however, this area has a substantially higher percentage of elderly than the city (22% compared to 9%).

About 3% of the population live in group quarters in census tract 9. These 247 people are residents of two nursing homes on Warm Springs Road. Current expansion of Pine Manor will increase the number of group quarters residents to more than 300 within the next two years.

Planning Division population projections for the year 2005 indicate that the neighborhood will remain relatively stable in terms of the overall number of residents. Increases are projected for census tract 7 and 9 because of the anticipated construction of multi-family housing. Losses projected for census tract 14 will result from the replacement of housing with development related to the Medical Center. The continuing decrease in family size should result in a population decrease in census tract 8.

Economic conditions vary considerably from section to section in the neighborhood; however, the average income level has kept pace with that of the city over the past 10 years. There are 432 households below the Bureau of the Census poverty level, most residing the southwest portion of the area in and around the public housing apartments in Peabody Homes. The northwest corner of the neighborhood is also a low-income area, with 19% of the households below poverty level. Except in these two sections, the median family income is comparable to that of Columbus as a whole.

The appearance of the neighborhood reflects these demographic factors. For the most part, it appears to be a stable, middle-class area consisting of brick homes along quiet tree-lined streets. However, the pockets of deterioration in the northwest and southwest corners of the

FIGURE 1
NEIGHBORHOOD POPULATION
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
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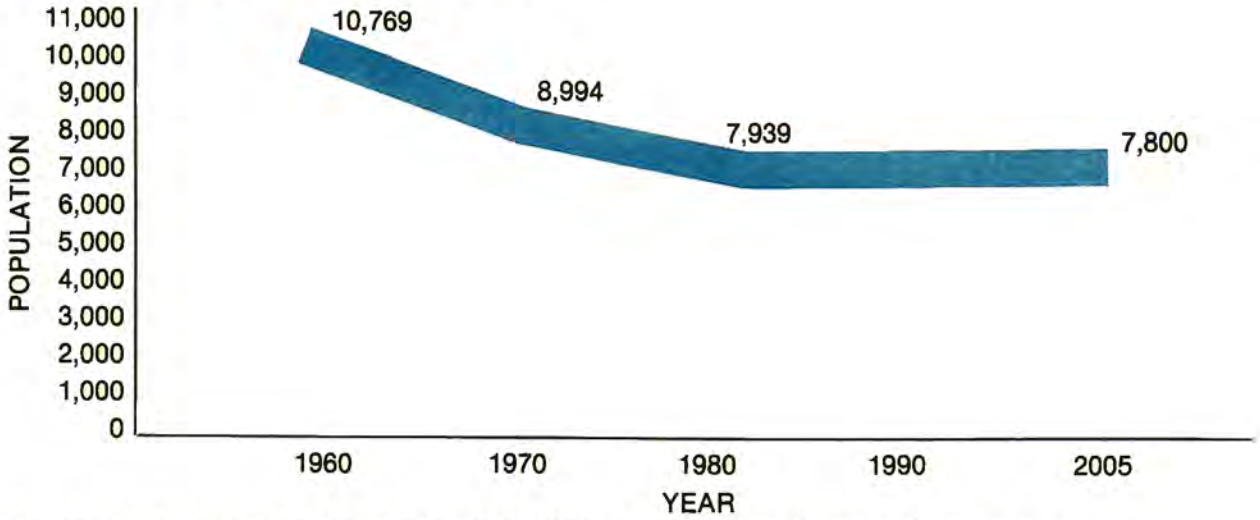
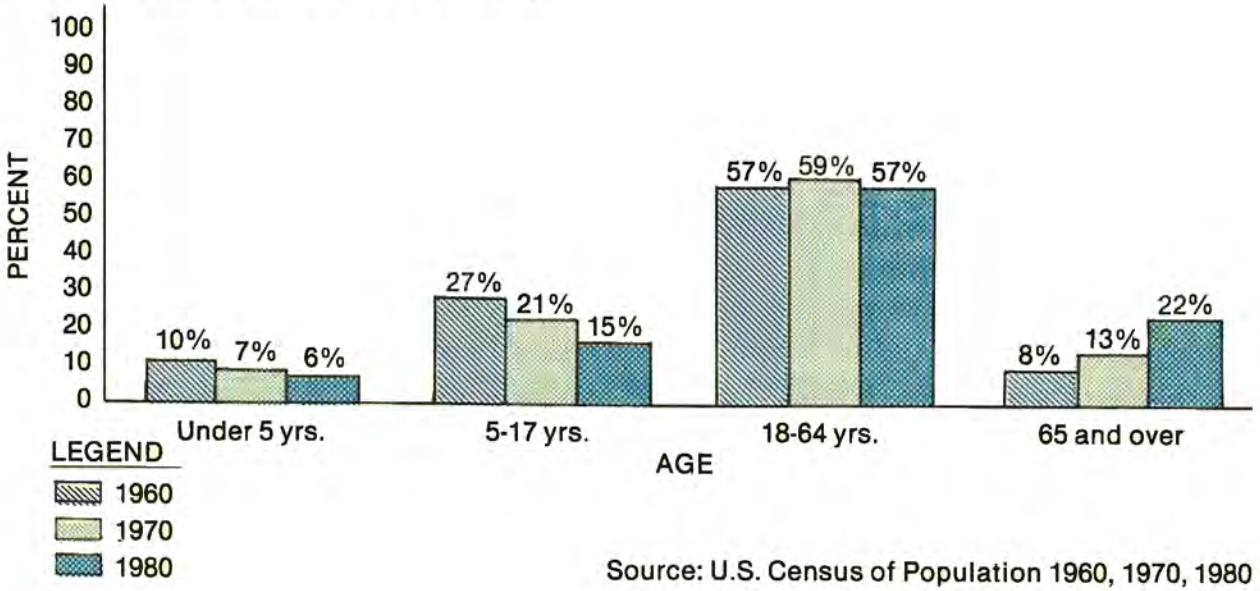


Sources: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980:Planning Division Projections

FIGURE 2
AGE OF POPULATION
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES



Source: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980

neighborhood, while not representative of the whole, cannot be isolated. As the population ages and faces more physical and financial limitations and, at the same time, the age of housing requires more repairs, deterioration could spread into the neighborhood rather than being confined to fringe areas as it is now.

Recommendations

1. Specific policies for this area should be directed toward the conservation and improvement of the stable residential uses.

2. The Planning Division should continue to work with public and private agencies to ensure that innovative residential and care facilities for the elderly are permitted uses in the Zoning Ordinance.

FIGURE 3
MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
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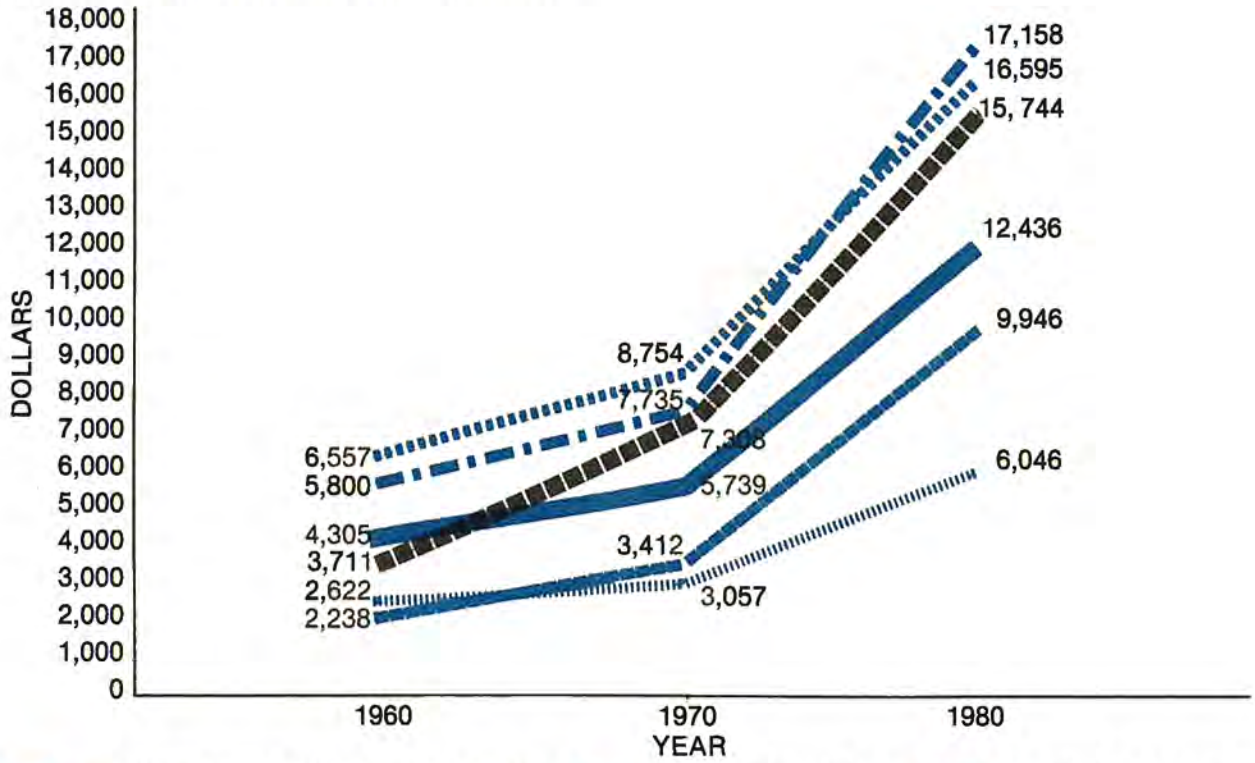


Source: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980

Housing

The Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood was developed for residential use primarily between 1930 and 1950. Seventy-five percent of the housing units are now more than 20 years old, the age at which major renovation usually becomes necessary. Because these houses were for the most part well-built with brick veneer, they have aged rather gracefully. Good construction coupled with adequate maintenance has produced a solid single-family residential area which covers most of census tracts 8 and 9.

The housing in census tracts 7 and 14 is generally older and has not received adequate maintenance. Most of the housing units in tract 7 were built in the 1940's and were poorly constructed. Although 12% of these units have been demolished since 1970, many remain as rental units for low-income families. About 10% of these remaining units are in need of major repairs.

Census tract 14 was developed prior to 1940 and is mostly comprised of Victorian cottages and bungalow-style houses. The addition of Peabody Homes, a 510-unit public housing project, in the 1940's eliminated many substandard units but doubled the number and density of poor people living in the area. Many of the older houses have been subdivided into apartments and allowed to deteriorate over the years. Now, however, interest in the restoration of old houses and the redevelopment spurred by Medical Center expansion have revitalized some residential areas and replaced others.

Medical office development, involving both rehabilitation and new construction, may be sufficient to stablize the area southwest of Peabody. Uncertainty as to the extent of this redevelopment is currently causing continued deterioration of housing because property owners are unwilling to invest in repairs while there is the prospect of a profitable sale.

Northeast of Peabody Homes, the rehabilitation of older houses is creating a more stable residential environment than existed ten years ago. The moderate price and historic character of these houses are expected to continue attracting private investment. The residents of Waverly Terrace, a 1906 planned subdivision just north of 27th Street, have applied for National Register Landmark status for a 13-block area in order to assure its future as a single-family residential area. The designation of a historic district in this part of the neighborhood should give impetus to rehabilitation efforts.

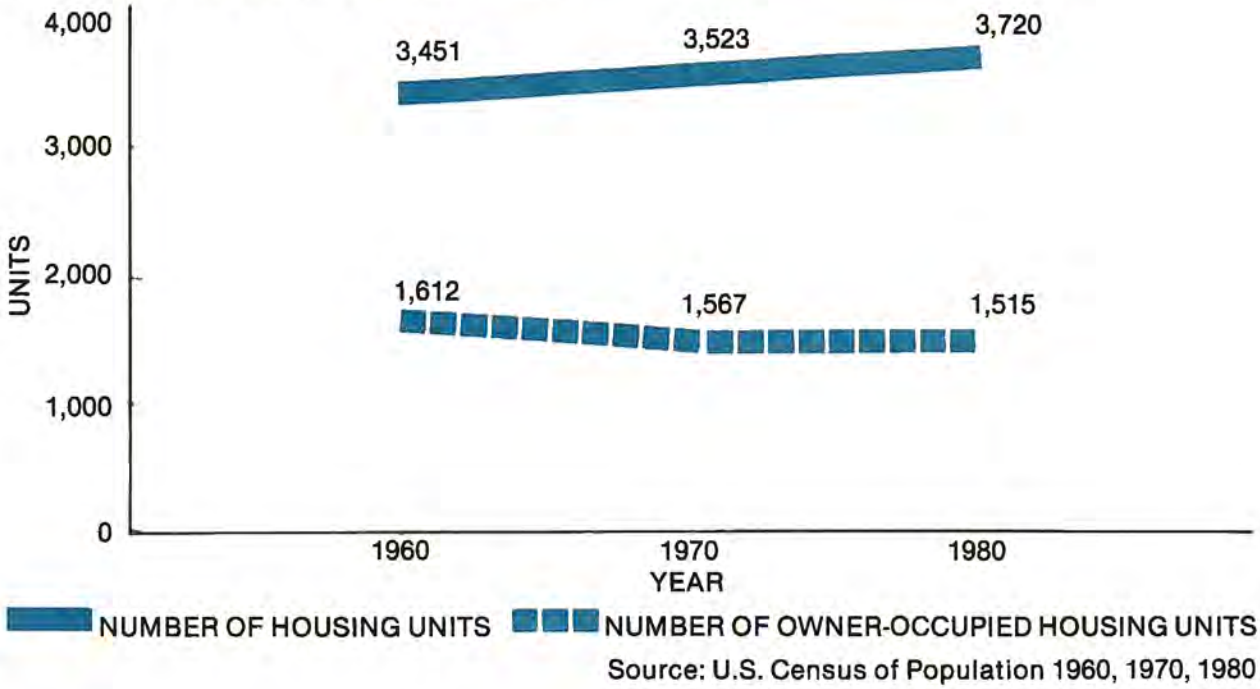
Census tract 7 and the southwest portion of census tract 14 have been designated as renewal areas by the Columbus Housing Authority. The boundaries of these areas reflect the concentrations of substandard housing. Such designation makes low- and middle - income owners eligible for low-interest and deferred-

payment loans for rehabilitation. This program, known as the Columbus Housing Improvement Program (CHIP), currently has 26 loans outstanding from its revolving fund; however, only one of these is within the Hamilton/Warm Springs Road neighborhood.

The problems of residential development along arterial streets are apparent along both Hamilton Road and Warm Springs Road. Heavy traffic volumes and a mixture of commercial uses have decreased the desirability of the houses on these streets for residential use. Uncertainty about the extent of commercial expansion along these roads discourages investment in and improvements to existing housing.

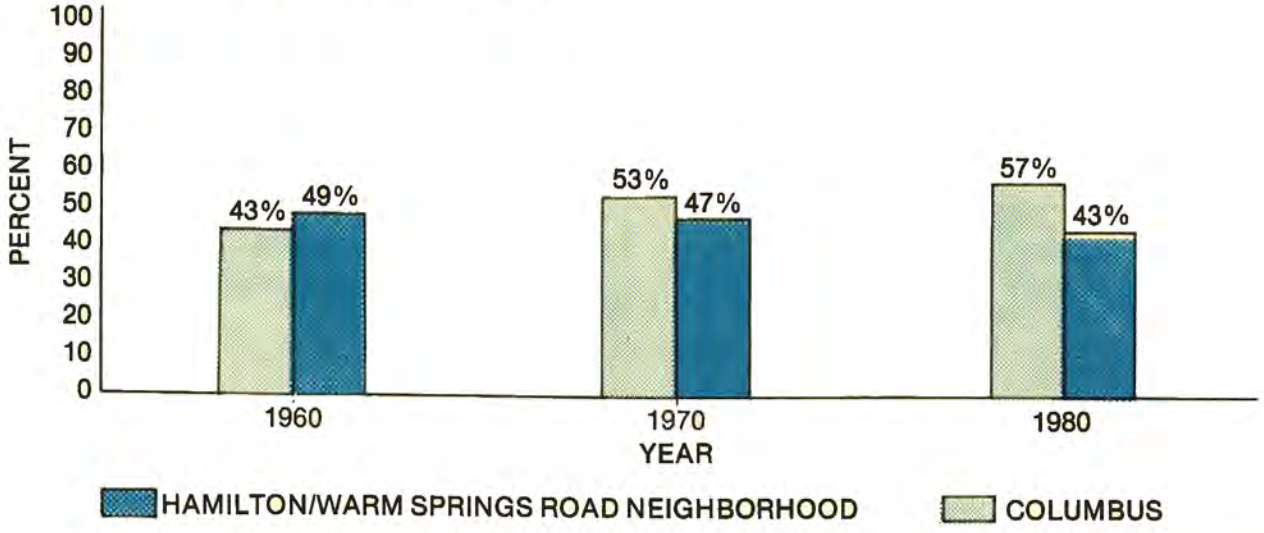
Forty-three percent of housing units in the neighborhood are owner-occupied, compared with 57% for Columbus as a whole. The number of owner-occupied units has remained relatively constant over the past 20 years, but the construction of new multi-family rental units has reduced the percentage of owner occupancy from 49% in 1960.

FIGURE 4
NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES



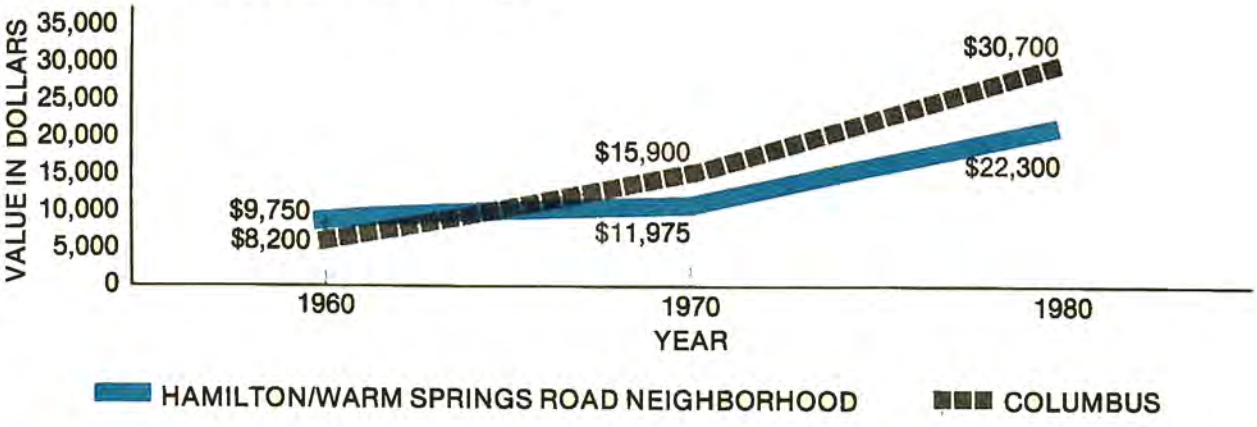
Source: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980

FIGURE 5
OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS AS PERCENT OF OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES



Source: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980

FIGURE 6
VALUE OF OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES



Source: U.S. Census of Population 1960, 1970, 1980

The value of owner-occupied housing units is below the median for Columbus, principally reflecting the advanced age of the houses. The neighborhood offers a wide variety of housing - from 100-year-old Victorian cottages to modern brick ranches - at moderate prices.

As with owner-occupied housing, the neighborhood offers a great variety of rental housing. The median contract rent is below the median for Columbus. Low-cost rental housing is available in the northwest and southwest corners of the neighborhood. By contrast, the new apartment complexes along I-185 south of Warm Springs Road have some of the highest rental rates in the city.

Recommendations

The variety of moderately-priced housing in the Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is a valuable asset to the city. Housing should be conserved, and efforts made to arrest potential deterioration.

1. The CHIP program and others like it should receive increased funding and publicity so that more homeowners will use these rehabilitation loans.

2. Rehabilitation efforts in census tract 14 should be supported by the inclusion of this area in the CHIP program.

3. A code enforcement program should be instituted for census tracts 7 and 14 to ensure that housing units are in standard condition.

- For low-income owner-occupants, code enforcement should function as the identification phase of a coordinated rehabilitation loan/grant program administered by the Columbus Housing Authority.
- For rental units, the program should provide timely reinspection and action on noncompliance.

4. Expansion of commercial use into existing stable residential areas via rezoning should be discouraged.

5. As plans for the improvement of arterial streets are implemented, measures to minimize adverse impacts on existing housing, such as road design, buffers, and landscaping, should be included.

The quality of the residential environment is an important factor in the preservation of neighborhood housing. Public policies which support rehabilitation and prevent the encroachment of incompatible uses and deteriorated conditions will encourage owners to invest in maintaining their properties.

Land Use and Zoning

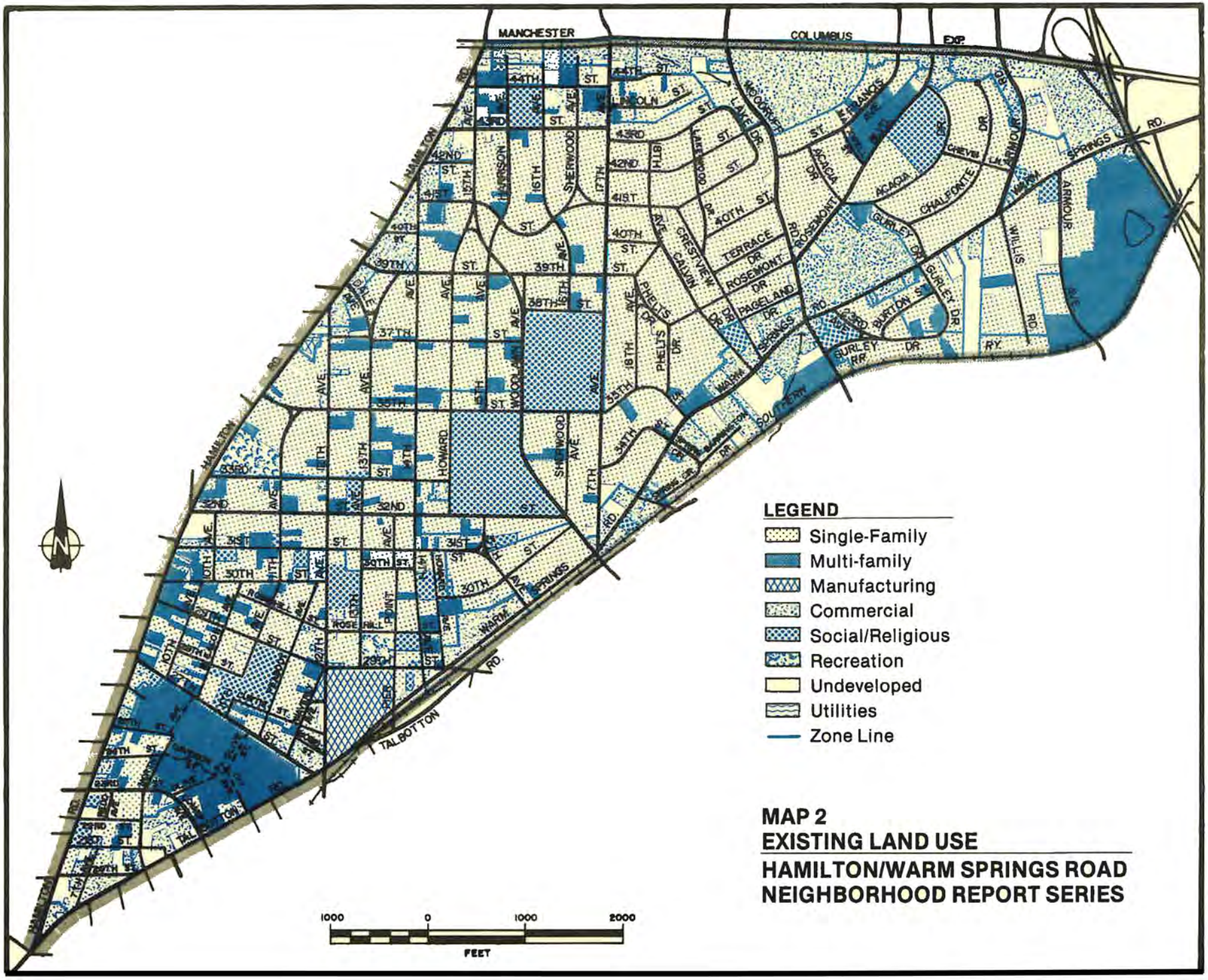
The Hamilton/Warm Springs Road neighborhood comprises 1011 acres of developed land. As the Existing Land Use map clearly shows, the majority of this land is used for residential purposes. Although there is some intrusion of commercial uses in the southern portion of the neighborhood, the more intensive uses are generally located along arterial streets: Hamilton Road, Talbotton/Warm Spring Road, Woodruff Road, and the Columbus-Manchester Expressway. The following list shows the percentage distribution of existing land uses:

57% Residential
19% Right-of-Way
11% Commercial
5% Schools
4% Undeveloped
3% Public/quasi-public
1% Manufacturing
1% Parks

Residential

Residential use is spread across the entire neighborhood, with 80% being single-family houses. Multi-family units are scattered throughout, but major complexes are located in Peabody Homes south of 27th Street and in the area south of Warm Springs Road and east of Armour Road. Zoning for residential areas east of 17th Avenue is R-2 and R-1A; this zoning corresponds with the low-density single-family character of existing housing. Most of the area west of 17th Avenue between 33rd and 43rd Streets is zoned R-3A, which allows multi-family dwellings of up to six units per building with height and density restrictions aimed at making it compatible with single-family housing. The remaining residential areas are zoned R-4, which allows buildings up to four stories with moderately high coverage of land; such development is quite different in scale and density from single-family housing. The opportunity to redevelop the area west of 17th Avenue to higher density residential has produced little change in the single-family character of the neighborhood. The stability of the portion zoned R-3A makes development to higher density unlikely as the property is desirable and marketable in its present use. In areas zoned R-4, the lots are generally substandard for multi-family housing, which creates the necessity for assembling parcels for new construction. Some of the larger houses have been divided into apartments in the southwest corner.

A major concern for the portion of this neighborhood zoned R-4 is that this zoning does not permit the construction of single-family houses except on substandard lots. This means that new construction must be for multi-family residential use and that a single-family home destroyed by fire could not be replaced. Such zoning appears inappropriate in light of the renewed interest and investment in the single-family residential potential of this area.



MAP 2
EXISTING LAND USE
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
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Industrial

Industrial activity in the neighborhood is confined to a textile mill building between 29th Street and Talbotton Road along 12th and 13th Avenues. Adjacent to the mill building is a full block which is vacant and fenced. This two-block area is the only one zoned for manufacturing use.

Commercial

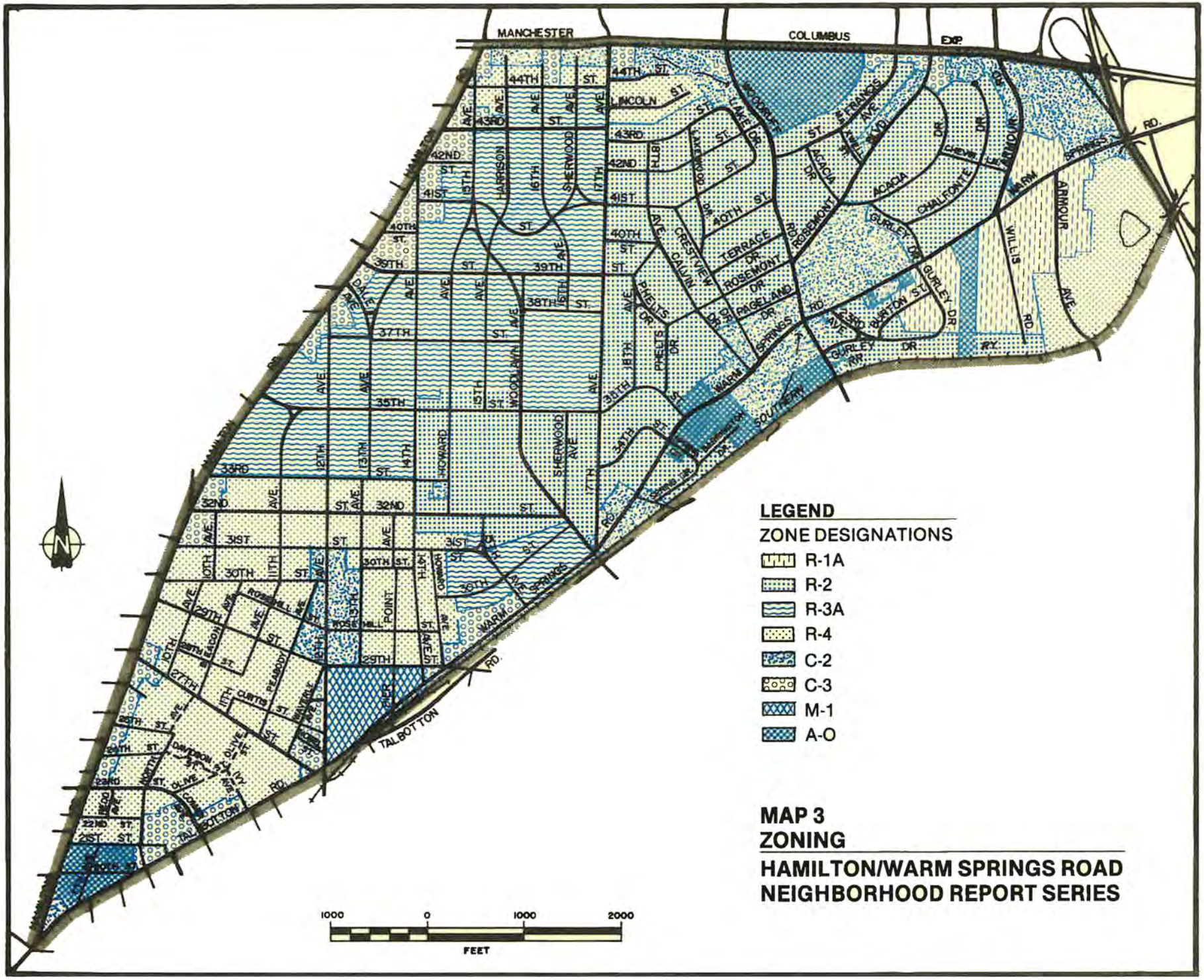
Commercial development has occurred primarily along the arterial streets which pass through the neighborhood or form parts of its boundaries.

The property fronting on the Columbus-Manchester Expressway is almost completely zoned and used for commercial purposes. This development includes a variety of retail and service businesses as well as St. Francis Hospital and its adjacent medical office complex. This strip of commercial use has spread from the Expressway south along Woodruff Road, Rosemont Boulevard and Armour Road into the residential parts of the neighborhood.

Hamilton Road is zoned and used for both commercial and residential purposes. From 37th Street to 45th Street, there is relatively consistent strip commercial development along both sides of the road. Here, too, there has been some spread of commercial use into residential areas. South of 37th Street, the property which abuts Hamilton Road is an assortment of commercial and residential properties, much of it in deteriorated condition. Expectations of redevelopment have resulted in a lack of investment in the maintenance of these structures. An exception is the two-block area of the Waverly Terrace Historic District which comprises the 2700 and 2800 blocks of Hamilton Road, where residents have worked to maintain the quality of the single-family residential environment.

Talbotton Road is zoned for commercial and manufacturing use except where Peabody Homes abut the road. Some substandard residential structures remain, but new development associated with the Medical Center is expected to replace or reuse these buildings. Warm Springs Road from Pierpoint Avenue to I-185 is a mixture of uses, from highway commercial to low density single-family residential. Between Pierpoint and 17th Avenue, businesses on the north side of the road utilize railroad right-of-way on the south side for additional parking space. Houses along this stretch of Warm Springs Road are being adversely affected by the heavy traffic volumes, piecemeal commercial development, and the unattractive railroad across the street. Although these houses receive adequate maintenance, the environment is not compatible with residential use.

Major commercial development in the vicinity of the intersection of



MAP 3
ZONING
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT SERIES

Warm Springs and Woodruff Roads includes several large office buildings and substantial retail businesses. From this commercial area north and east along the arterial streets residential uses are relatively new and appear to be in stable condition.

In the eastern half of the neighborhood there are nonconforming and spot-zoned commercial activities, particularly along 12th Avenue. These are small neighborhood-oriented businesses which present no major problems to the adjacent residential areas.

Over the past five years, there have been 18 rezonings in the Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood. Of these, 14 were changes from residential to commercial or office use. Most of the rezonings occurred in census tract 9 and were for more intensive use of the land than its single-family residential zoning would allow. Armour Road from the Expressway to Warm Springs Road has experienced five rezonings, some involving several parcels, in this period.

A small portion of the neighborhood from 21st Street south to the intersection of Hamilton and Talbotton Roads is included in the Medical Center Urban Renewal Plan. It is designated and zoned for medical office development, and there has been both new construction and rehabilitation for office use. No further public actions are planned for the area.

On April 8, 1983, the Historic Preservation Section of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources gave state approval to the application of the Waverly Terrace subdivision for National Register Landmark designation. The final decision by the U.S. Department of Interior should be announced by September 1983. This 13-block area bounded by Hamilton Road, 30th Street, Peabody Avenue, and 27th Street will not receive Historic District zoning. Rather, the residents have requested a continuation of residential zoning with each structure being treated as a separate landmark.

Employment

More than 4,000 people are employed within the neighborhood. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is the largest employer with almost 800 jobs. St. Francis Hospital, nursing homes, and medical offices provide another 1,200 positions. The other major employers are Cartersville Spinning Mills and the Muscogee County School District.

With the exception of neighborhood schools, places of employment are located along the arterial streets. Three-fourths of the jobs are located in the western part of the neighborhood, with concentrations along the Expressway and Warm Springs Road. The southern portion of census tract 14 is the other area with a large number of jobs.

Recommendations

The Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is basically a stable residential area with more intensive land uses confined to strips along major streets. Many of the land use problems confronting this part of the city stem from uncertainty about the extent of commercial redevelopment in the Medical Center area and along the arterials.

1. The area between 27th Street and the intersection of Hamilton and Talbotton Road should be rezoned A-O. The A-O zone would conform to the density of residential development established by Peabody Homes and would encourage replacement and rehabilitation of deteriorated structures.

2. The parts of census tracts 8 and 14 now zoned R-4 should be rezoned R-3A. The R-3A zone would allow the construction of single-family houses and multi-family housing which is compatible with the existing single-family environment.

3. When Warm Springs Road is widened to four lanes west of Crestview Drive, the north side of the road from Pierpoint Avenue to 17th Avenue should be rezoned for neighborhood commercial use. Residential use of property along Warm Springs Road east to Gurley Drive should be protected from further commercial intrusion.

4. Future rezoning to commercial uses should be restricted to uses oriented toward neighborhood residents and of an appearance compatible with the immediate environment.

The expansion of commercial uses from arterial streets into the residential areas of the neighborhood through rezoning can be disruptive to the stability of these areas. However, because of the numbers of elderly people living there, neighborhood retail services should be available to the residents. Future rezoning to more intensive land use should be conditional upon satisfactory relationship to the neighborhood and its residents.

Transportation

Streets

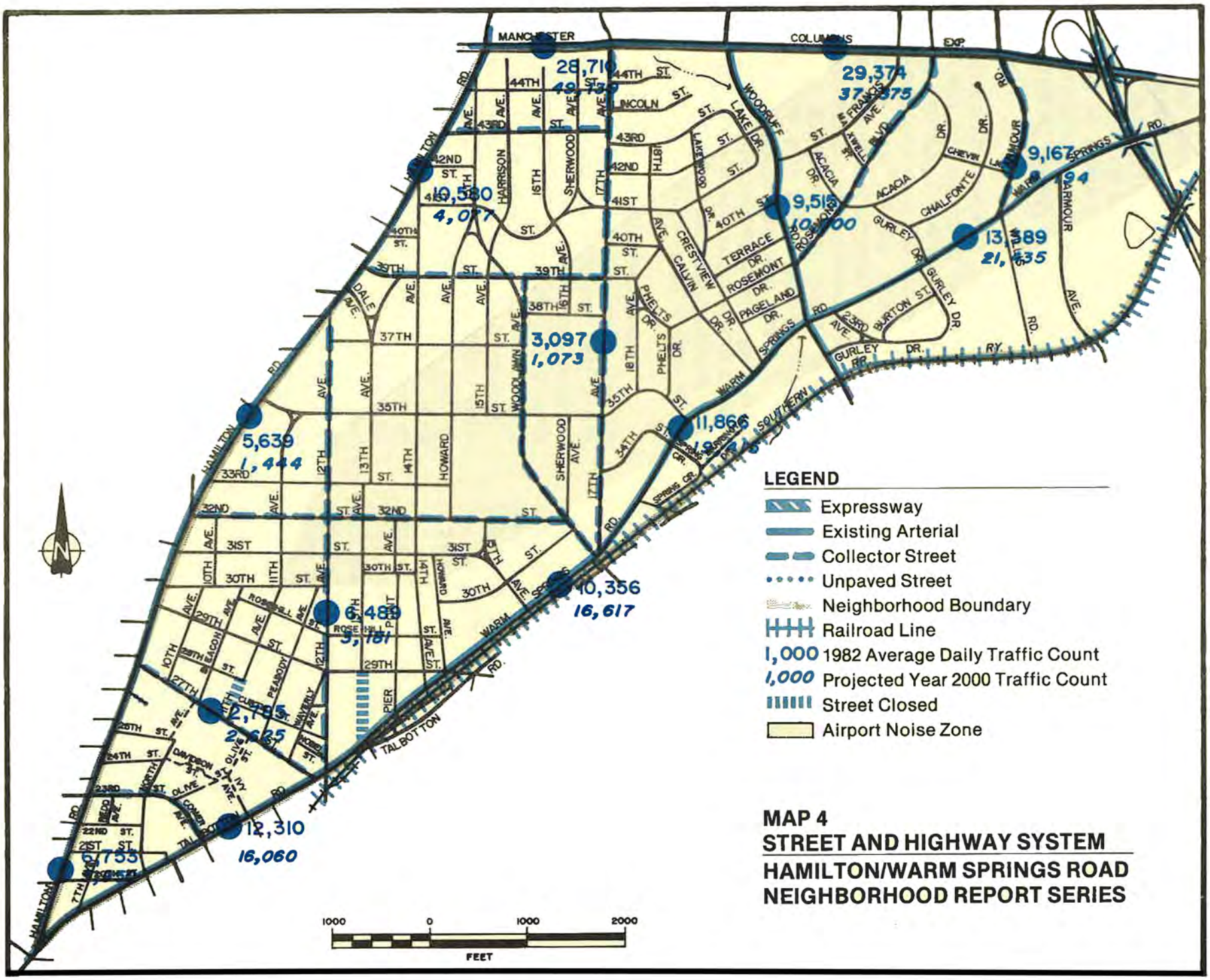
The street system in the Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood contains several major elements in the city-wide highway network. The area is bounded by arterials and an expressway, and two arterials -- Warm Springs Road and Woodruff Road -- run through the neighborhood. In addition, there are ten collector streets: 20th, 27th, 29th, 32nd, 39th, and 43rd Streets are east-west collectors and 12th Avenue, Woodlawn Avenue, 17th Avenue, Rosemont Boulevard, and Armour Road are north - south collectors.

The *Year 2000 Street and Highway Plan* proposes a number of improvements in the street system which would affect this neighborhood. Two projects funded for fiscal year 1984 are the widening of Warm Springs Road from two to four through lanes from Crestview Drive east to the Columbus-Manchester Expressway and the widening of Woodruff/Hilton Road from two to four through lanes from Edgewood Road to the Columbus-Manchester Expressway.

The widening of Woodruff Road from Warm Springs Road to the Expressway will be accomplished by constructing part of the new road over the culvert through which Weracoba Creek flows. For the most part, abutting uses were developed when the Creek ran through an open ditch and were set back and oriented away from it. Access to residential property adjacent to Woodruff Road is from local streets. Thus, while there will be increased traffic, the road widening will not have a substantial impact on developed uses.

The widening of Warm Springs Road from Crestview Drive to the Columbus-Manchester Expressway will have a more immediate impact on abutting land use. The project will involve a minimal loss of housing, but it will take land from residences which front on the road. The widening will relieve traffic congestion at the intersection of Woodruff Road and at the Blue Cross/Blue Shield offices and allow better access to abutting property. However, it will have a negative effect upon fronting residential properties by eliminating part of their set-back from the road.

Other major transportation improvements recommended include the widening of Talbotton-Warm Springs Roads from its intersection with Hamilton Road west to Crestview Drive and the realignment and widening of 20th Street to serve as the principal north access to the Medical Center from Second Avenue and the Columbus-Manchester Expressway. Preliminary engineering on intersection improvements on the Columbus-Manchester Expressway at its intersections with Woodruff Road and Armour Road is scheduled for fiscal year 1984. Widening of the Expressway from four to six lanes is expected to take place in 1988 but is dependent upon the availability of funding.



MAP 4
STREET AND HIGHWAY SYSTEM
HAMILTON/WARM SPRINGS ROAD
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The widening of Talbotton-Warm Springs Road will provide opportunity to correct difficult intersections and to eliminate the unauthorized use of railroad right-of-way for parking. It will also improve access to abutting land uses. Because of the density of development, the southwestern portion of this project will require some land acquisition, particularly in the vicinity of Peabody Homes. New development along Warm Springs - Talbotton Roads and along 20th Street is controlled by the Streets and Sidewalks Ordinance (Sections 18-2.1b. and i.) to assure that it will not be adversely affected by the proposed street improvements.

The number of major streets which run through this neighborhood and the heavy traffic volumes are disruptive to residential areas. Residents along Warm Springs Road in particular find traffic noise disturbing and access to their homes difficult. The major traffic related complaint in other areas is speeding and littering from cars, which occurs on the numerous collector streets. The hilly terrain and presence of six schools make the speeding problem one of particular concern.

In addition, unsafe conditions exist at several intersections on the Columbus-Manchester Expressway and on Warm Springs Road. On the Expressway, poor intersections exist at Woodruff Road, St. Francis Avenue, Rosemont Drive, and Armour Road. Two of these - the ones at Woodruff Road and Armour Road - are among the ten intersections in the city which average greater than 25 accidents per year. The intersections at St. Francis and Rosemont are not controlled by traffic signals and are aggravated by traffic using curb cuts too close to the intersections.

Along Warm Springs Road, intersection problems are aggravated by the presence of the Southern Railroad tracks. Twelfth Avenue and 27th Street, both collectors, enter Warm Springs Road from the north within 100 feet of each other, and between these two streets there is a curb cut for a neighborhood shopping center. The intersection of Talbotton Road with Warm Springs is controlled only a stop sign and happens at a point where the tracks cross Talbotton Road. Because of the long waiting times at the stop sign, a dirt cut-off has developed which crosses the tracks to the east of this intersection. Two five-point intersections occur along Warm Springs Road at 29th Street and Howard Avenue and at Woodlawn and 17th Avenues. Twenty-ninth Street and 17th Avenue both provide crossings to the area south of the railroad tracks.

Intersections along Hamilton Road are difficult because streets entering from the west do not align with those on the east. In addition, streets north of 35th Street do not enter at 90 degrees angles. Because of lower traffic volumes and the local character of

much of the development along Hamilton Road, these intersections are not significant problems at this time. An exception is the intersection with River Road which will be improved by realignment, addition of turn lanes, and rechannelization of traffic.

There are two unpaved streets in the neighborhood: Redd Avenue and Barrington Drive. Neither has sufficient right-of-way to meet minimum standards for a local street and, therefore, will not be paved unless additional right-of-way is acquired.

Railroad

The Southern Railroad tracks form the southern boundary of the neighborhood from 12th Avenue east to I-185. Between 12th and 17th Avenues, the tracks run parallel to Warm Springs Road, creating a strip of vacant land on the south side of the road. This area is used for parking by customers of the businesses on the north side of the road. The strip is unpaved and unattractive, and there is no provision for pedestrian crossings on this section of Warm Springs Road.

East of 17th Avenue, the tracks run through residential areas. Because the track is used only once a day, the residents have few complaints about noise from the railroad, but they do object to the trash and litter which accumulate on the right-of-way.

In 1978, there was discussion of the possibility of connecting this line to the Bull Creek line and discontinuing service along these tracks. Southern Railroad decided that the elimination of these tracks was not feasible; therefore, the city will have to address the conflicts created by the presence of the railroad tracks.

Airport

A large portion of the Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is beneath the approach path for aircraft using Columbus Municipal Airport. The northeastern section is in the Approach Zone of Runway 5/23, which serves as the primary runway, and has established height restrictions.

The major impact of proximity to the airport has been exposure to the noise of aircraft passing overhead. Airport management and the commercial airlines have taken steps to reduce the noise. Operating procedures bring all commercial aircraft over the same houses to minimize the number of people affected. Delta Airlines has retrofitted their DC-9 aircrafts with noise-suppressant engines to make them quieter. All commercial flights are currently scheduled between 7 am and 9 pm, and there are now nine flights each day. The majority of complaints from residents about noise are received when charter flights arrive between 10 pm and 6 am.

Rosemont School is located in the Approach Zone and is the one property most adversely affected by air-

craft noise. The Muscogee County School District plans to close this school in June 1983. Unless the School District finds another use for the building, it will revert to private ownership and the land will be redeveloped.

Transit

The Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is served by four bus routes. Three of the routes run on the peripheral arterial streets and connect the area with major activity centers throughout the city. The East Highland loop serves the interior of the neighborhood along 17th Avenue and Woodruff Road.

Many residents are dependent on METRA for their transportation. In the neighborhood as a whole, over 22% of households have no vehicle; in census tract 14, this number is 50%. In addition, many elderly residents prefer to use the bus.

Present service levels appear to be adequate for the needs of the residents in the eastern portion of the neighborhood. Those in census tract 14, however, would like to see service expanded to include a route along 12th Avenue to the Medical Center.

Pedestrian

The only part of this neighborhood with consistent development of sidewalks is that area west of 12th Avenue and south of 30th Street. Between 12th Avenue and 17th Avenue, most of the streets have sections with sidewalks; east of 17th Avenue there are very few. Of the five schools in the neighborhood, only Waverly Terrace and Johnson have sidewalks on all sides.

There is a substantial amount of pedestrian activity in the neighborhood. Much of this activity is made up of children walking to and from the five schools and the Boys Club. In the northwestern and southwestern sections, many residents walk to bus routes and retail services. With the short sight distance allowed by the hilly topography, the presence of pedestrians in the street presents an additional hazard. Along 43rd Street, the city has erected a sign to warn motorists of the potential problem.

Recommendations

1. When improvements are made to widen the Columbus-Manchester Expressway, consideration should be given to closing the median cut at St. Francis Road, which is a local street both north and south of the Expressway.

2. The proposed widening of Talbotton/Warm Springs Roads from Hamilton Road to Crestview Drive should include intersection improvements at Woodlawn Avenue and 17th Avenue, Howard Avenue and 29th Street, 12th Avenue and 27th Street, and the junction of Talbotton and Warm Springs Roads.

3. Until widening and improvements along Talbotton/Warm Springs Road are complete, additional curb cuts onto this road should be avoided and more intense land uses should be discouraged.

4. Through traffic on 29th Street, which travels through Waverly Terrace Historic District, should be discouraged by replacing traffic lights with stop signs. Preliminary studies for widening Warm Springs Road should examine the possibility of eliminating the 29th Street railroad crossing.

5. Speeding and littering laws should be strictly enforced.

6. Road hazard signs indicating schools, hills, and pedestrians should be erected at appropriate locations throughout the neighborhood.

7. Adequate transit service should be maintained. METRA should consider providing bus service along 12th Avenue.

8. Schools should have continuous sidewalks.

9. Sidewalks should be provided along one side of 43rd Street because of heavy pedestrian traffic.

10. Implementation of all street-widening projects should include substantial landscaping to protect residential uses.

Recreation and Open Space

The Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood has less than seven acres of land developed for park use. The land is in two parks, Rose Hill Heights and Peabody.

Rosehill Heights Park sits on 4.95 acres located along Hamilton Road at 33rd Street. Although it functions as a neighborhood park, it is below the standard acreage for such a facility. The park has a pool, tennis courts, a lighted baseball field, a picnic area with tables and shelter and restrooms. It was recently rehabilitated and is in good condition.

Peabody Park is a 2-acre mini park located within Peabody Homes, a Columbus Housing Authority project. It has a playground, ballfield, and community center. The park is heavily used and in poor condition. The baseball backstop has large holes, and clothesline supports intrude into right field. There is no grass or landscaping, and the play equipment is broken. *Recreation Plan* recommendtions for this park include relocation of the ballfield so that it could be used for both football and baseball and improvements to the site through planting and fencing.

In addition to these two parks, there is a minipark at the intersection of Rosemont and Woodruff Road. Maintained by the Clover Hill Garden Club, Woodruff Park has picnic tables and chairs and has been landscaped to provide quiet shady areas.

The *Fifteen Year Recreation Plan* proposes that three school sites be improved so that they serve as parks during the times when school is not in session. There is currently no agreement with the Muscogee County School District for use of these locations.

Johnson Elementary, with its 18 acre site at 17th Avenue and 35th Street, is centrally located in the neighborhood. In addition to the existing playground, the *Recreation Plan* proposes the addition of tennis courts and picnic facilities. Nature trails and unprogrammed areas would take advantage of the hilly terrain and ample space available.

Rosemont School is located on 6 acres at the intersection of Rosemont Boulevard and Acacia Drive in the northeastern part of the neighborhood. Classroom use of the building is being ended in June 1983, but the School District plans to house another function here. The proposed recreation use of the school site is directed toward the elderly population: a senior center, gardens, horseshoes, and shuffleboard. Existing facilities for baseball and basketball would be retained.

The Harrison Avenue School at 43rd Street is a special educational facility of the School District. The playground area on the 2.8 acre site is fenced. Additions suggested in the *Recreation Plan* are landscaping, a picnic area with shelters, and several multi-purpose courts.

In addition to the open space offered by the parks and school sites, the Recreation Department operates a senior citizens club which meets in the Community Center at Peabody Homes. The Peabody Fellowship Club meets once a week for handicrafts and exercise. The Club also participates in the city-wide social events sponsored by the Recreation Department. Membership is primarily for residents of Peabody but includes seniors who are bused to the center for the nutrition program, which provides lunch and activities for about sixty people on a daily basis.

The inadequate supply of park acreage is offset in part by the proximity of the neighborhood to Weracoba Park, a 24 acre regional facility. In addition, private recreation opportunities are available to some of the residents through the Boys Club and the apartment complexes in the northeastern section. While these facilities help to meet the needs of some residents, they are not substitutes for parks available to the entire population.

The development of parks in an established area which has little vacant land is a difficult task. This neighborhood is fortunate in having five school sites which provide open space for the residents. Use of these sites as parks would increase the acreage for recreation to almost 5 acres per 1,000 population. Although this is well below the national standard of 10 acres per 1,000, it would be a significant improvement over the current situation. Existing parks are small, poorly located, and inaccessible to most of the neighborhood. Utilizing the three schools would alleviate these problems as well.

Recommendations

1. Substantial rehabilitation should be carried out at Peabody Park.

2. Rosehill Heights Park should be planted along its northern edge to buffer adjacent residences from the lights and activity on the ballfield.

3. The sites of Johnson, Rosemont, and Harrison Avenue Schools should be developed in accordance with the recommendations of the *Recreation Plan.*

4. The site of the former Columbus Junior High School should be planted and landscaped to serve as a playground and minipark.

Community Facilities

Schools

The Hamilton Road/Warm Springs Road neighborhood has six schools, all of which are used by programs of the Muscogee County School District. Because of declining enrollments, the District plans to house a variety of functions in the schools, but none is scheduled for disposition by the District.

- Johnson Elementary: This school was built in 1947, with an addition in 1955, on an 18-acre site at 17th Avenue and 35th Street. Although in need of substantial rehabilitation, it will continue to be used for grades K-6.
- Rosemont Elementary: This school is currently being used to house classes for Columbus High School until repairs on that school are completed. Built in 1924, the building is on land which will revert to private ownership if it is not used for educational purposes. Because of its location close to the Muscogee County Airport, the School District feels that noise levels interfer with classroom uses; however, they plan to house some school function here in order to retain use of the building.
- Waverly Terrace Elementary: Built in 1919, this school is on a very small site. In order to provide parking and student crossing to the playground, 11th Avenue has been closed between Curtis and 28th Streets. The District plans for the school to remain in use for grades K-6.
- Jordan Vocational High: Originally constructed in 1936, Jordan is in need of some renovation. However, current plans call for its continued operation for grades 9-12.
- Harrison Avenue Elementary: This school was closed for regular classroom use because of declining enrollments and site constraints. The School District now operates a service center for children with mental disorders at this location. The facility is expected to continue in this use.
- Columbus Junior High: Built to house the second industrial high school in 1906, this building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was inactive until its rehabilitation to house classes for the displaced students of Columbus High School. The playground is used by the students at Waverly Terrace Elementary. The School District had planned to sell the building, but they do not want to lose the substantial investment in renovation necessary to house its current students. Although specific plans have not been finalized, some function of the school system will be housed in this building.

Police Protection. Police protection is provided by a schedule of two to three beat units per shift which operate from Police Headquarters.

With 5% of the population of Columbus, this neighborhood has about 8% of the city's crime. Thefts and disturbances are the most common offenses, and most crimes are non-violent.

Utilities. The Hamilton/Warm Springs neighborhood is completely served by public water and sewer. The Water Works identified no problems in this part of the city. The area receives utility service from Georgia Power, Southern Bell and the Gas Light Company of Columbus.

Fire Protection. Fire protection for most of the neighborhood is provided from Fire Station No. 2, which is located on 29th Street west of Warm Springs Road. Some areas are served by Fire Station No. 3, located in North Highlands, and Fire Station No. 9, located east of the I-185. The entire neighborhood is within two miles of a fire station, the standard distance for medium-density residential use.

Health Care Facilities. The neighborhood's health care needs are very well served. Within the area are two private nursing homes on Warm Springs Road and St. Francis Hospital, a private facility on the Expressway. The headquarters of the Columbus Health Department, with associated clinics, and the Medical Center Hospital and Doctors Hospital are a few blocks to the south.

Because of the proximity of major hospitals, many physicians have chosen to locate their offices in this area.

Human Services. Human services, both public and private, are available primarily in census tract 14, where economic conditions are the worst.

- The Columbus Housing Authority manages 510 units in Peabody Homes, a public housing complex. This project was constructed in the 1940's to replace an area of substandard housing which was cleared from the site. Peabody also includes a community center which is used as both a senior citizens club and a nutrition site.

- The North Columbus Boys Club, located at 29th Street and 13th Avenue, is a United Way agency which provides recreation and supervision for boys 6-17 years old. About 800 boys are members. Although there is a $5 per year membership fee, the Club allows boys to work to pay the fee. Facilities include an indoor pool, a gym, a game room, and outdoor playing fields.

Recommendations

1. Two elementary schools, Johnson and Waverly Terrace, should be retained to serve the neighborhood. The outdoor recreation area available for students at Waverly Terrace should be rehabilitated.

2. Because of the high incidence of crime in the neighborhood, particularly in the southwest portion, all street lights should be kept on.

Natural Environment

The Hamilton/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is situated on hills which rise over 100 feet above the altitude of downtown Columbus. The area has rolling topography with slopes of between 3% and 8% except for some steeper slopes in the vicinity of Weracoba Creek. This gentle hilly terrain provides a good setting for residential development. East of 17th Avenue in particular, subdivisions were adapted to fit into the hills with streets curving along the slopes. This break with the traditional grid system utilized in the earlier subdivisions west of 17th Avenue creates a visually pleasing streetscape and gives the residents a feeling of greater privacy.

The area is drained by Weracoba Creek, which runs parallel to Woodruff Road from 43rd Street to Warm Springs Road. The land adjacent to Weracoba is a flood hazard area, and any new development must meet the requirements of the Flood Plain Ordinance. The creek enters the neighborhood via a culvert under the Columbus-Manchester Expressway and is again directed into a culvert at 43rd Street until it reaches the south side of Warm Springs Road. In the two areas where the creek returns to its natural channel, it is eroding the banks. Where it enters the culvert which parallels Woodruff Road, it has eroded the area around the pipe, resulting in an area of standing water. The section south of Warm Springs Road is one of the problem areas identified in the *Storm Water Drainage Problem Categorization Study* prepared for the Planning Division in 1979.

Three minor streams traverse the neighborhood and flow into Weracoba Creek. The stream which flows between St. Francis Hospital and the residences facing the north side of St. Francis Avenue is causing erosion along the back yards of the homes. This problem has been exacerbated by the paving and construction associated with the medical office park being developed directly across the stream. There are long-range plans to improve drainage in this area. No significant problems with the other two streams have been identified.

Residents have specified numerous drainage complaints which relate primarily to the topography of the neighborhood. Storm sewers located near the botton of hills are often clogged with debris and cause water to back up onto lawns. Standing water after rain increases the problem mosquitoes. A small private cemetery in the northwestern section was eroding into 43rd Street because of inadequate growth of vegetation. The care which the majority of residents take with their property has prevented major problems from arising in the neighborhood.

One of this area's greatest assets is the abundance of large old trees which provide beauty and shade to the neighborhood. There are some problems with pin oaks which were

planted twenty to thirty years ago and have now grown too large for their locations. They are damaging curbs in some areas and have been trimmed into grotesque shapes to keep them out of power lines. Some trees along the street right-of-way have been lost and not replaced.

Recommendations

1. Funding should be made available for a program in which the city and property owner share the cost of correcting drainage problems.

2. A tree planting plan and program should be developed to provide a comprehensive approach to maintaining and replacing trees on public right-of-way.

3. Erosion problems along the portions of Weracoba Creek which are not confined to a culvert should be corrected.

Summary

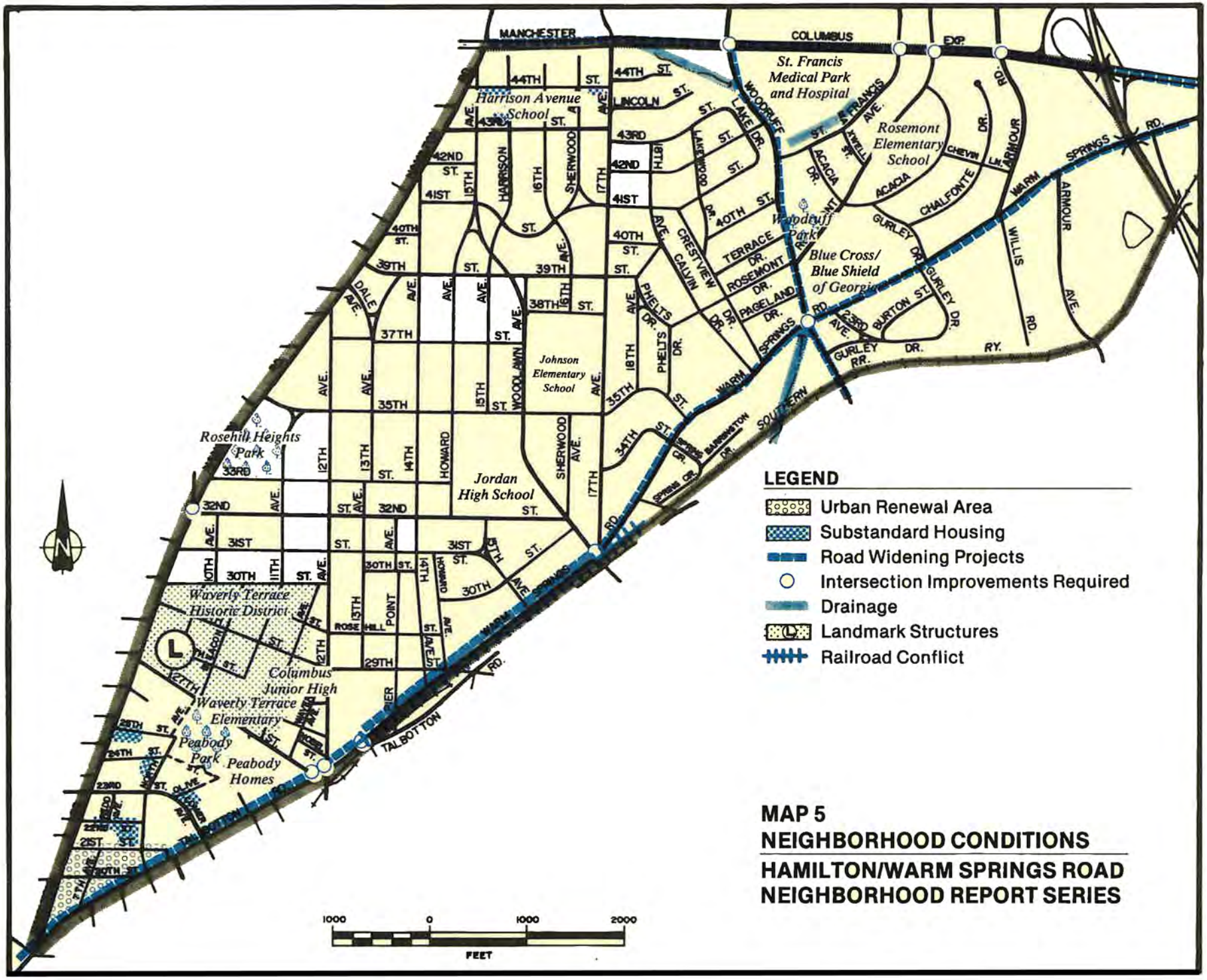
Previous Plans. The Hamilton/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is within the Central Columbus planning sector, as designated in the *Land Use Plan for Columbus, Georgia,* published in 1977. Recommendations in the Plan directed at this neighborhood stress the preservation and improvement of the existing residential environment. It details the need to establish firm policy for land use along both Hamilton and Warm Springs Roads and to assess the impact of transportation improvements in this neighborhood. In terms of general policy statements, this report does not conflict with the broad recommendations of the *Land Use Plan.*

Neighborhood analyses were done for the area in 1968 and 1978. *Neighborhood Analyses,* the 1968 report prepared by Barbour-Cooper and Associates, Inc., divides the neighborhood so that it forms all or part of two study areas. The findings for both areas include the presence of mixed land use, lack of sidewalks in residential areas, and inadequate recreation facilities. The recommended renewal treatment for census tracts 7 and 14 was to establish code enforcement and rehabilitation programs for housing. For census tracts 8 and 9, the analysis proposed conservation of existing land uses.

The Hamilton/Warm Springs Road Area Neighborhood Analysis prepared by Candeub, Flessig and Associates in 1978 covers the area in this report and the northern section of census tract 15. Conditions within the neighborhood had not changed substantially in ten years separating the two reports. Commercial retail and office development along arterial streets was the major difference. The number of substandard housing units was reduced during this period by demolition in census tract 7 and redevelopment related to the Medical Center in census tract 14. Recommended treatment of the issues identified in the 1978 analysis included the preservation of existing residential areas, better definition of commercial uses, operational improvements in the street system, and provision of additional recreation facilities.

Changes in Neighborhood Conditions, 1978 - 1983. The primary change in the neighborhood over the past five years has been in commercial development along arterial streets and office development near the Medical Center, St. Francis Hospital, and the intersection of Woodruff and Warm Springs Roads. New apartment construction has continued in the northeastern portion of the area.

The interest in historic preservation has led to an increase in rehabilitation of older homes in the southwest section. South of 27th Street some of the large Victorian homes have been adapted and renovated to accommodate medical offices. The nomination of Waverly Terrace subdivision to the National Register as an historic district has


MANCHESTER
COLUMBUS
EXP.
St. Francis Medical Park and Hospital
Harrison Avenue School
Rosemont Elementary School
Woodruff Park
Blue Cross/ Blue Shield of Georgia
Johnson Elementary School
Jordan High School
Rosehill Heights Park
Waverly Terrace Historic District
Columbus Junior High
Waverly Terrace Elementary
Peabody Park
Peabody Homes
TALBOTTON
SPRINGS
WARM
SOUTHERN RY.
GURLEY
BURTON ST.
WILLIS RD.
ARMOUR AVE.
CHALFONTE
ACACIA
ROSEMONT
PAGELAND
CRESTVIEW
PHELTS
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Substandard Housing
Road Widening Projects
Intersection Improvements Required
Drainage
Landmark Structures
Railroad Conflict
MAP 5
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resulted in more rehabilitation of the smaller homes north of 27th Street. Conditions in both of these areas have been improved substantially.

Demolition of substandard housing in census tract 7 has left it with a rather forlorn appearance. The small houses which remain are isolated by overgrown vacant lots. There has been some commercial intrusion into the residential area from Hamilton Road, particularly in the unscreened storage of commercial signs.

Of the three schools which were closed or scheduled to be closed, all will remain in active use within the neighborhood. Harrison Avenue Elementary has been reopened, as has the former Columbus Junior High. Although they will not be used for classroom activities, the buildings and their grounds will continue to be available for public use.

Treatment. The majority of the Hamilton/Warm Springs Road neighborhood is a stable residential area which has aged gracefully. The neighborhood now requires public policy and programs which support the efforts of private property owners to maintain and improve the quality of the environment.

Major expenditures of public funds in the neighborhood will be primarily directed toward transportation improvements along arterial streets. Although conceived to improve the operation of the city-wide street and highway network, these projects provide an opportunity to correct local problems as well. For example, the diversion of Weracoba Creek into a culvert to provide adequate right-of-way for widening Woodruff Road has eliminated the open ditch through which the creek flowed. Work on widening the first section of Warm Springs Road will reduce traffic congestion and improve hazardous intersections. Planning for the section of Talbotton/Warm Springs Road from Hamilton Road to Crestview Drive will include consideration of such neighborhood concerns as improvement of five-point intersections and use of the railroad right-of-way.

The recommendations in this report are aimed at conserving existing development and correcting substandard conditions. Sections of the neighborhood which are in transition need the direction of public policy to encourage their redevelopment in a direction which will be compatible with both adjacent land use and city-wide plans.

While public intervention in this part of the city need not be on a large scale, its role will be important in preserving the stability of the neighborhood.