

**City of Madison  
Interdepartmental Correspondence**

Date: June 4, 2013  
To: Community Development Block Grant Committee  
From: Linda Horvath, Planning Division  
Subject: FINAL DRAFT Arbor Hills-Leopold Neighborhood Plan

Planning Study Area: Multiple Jurisdictions

The Final Draft Arbor Hills-Leopold Neighborhood Plan proposes recommendations and implementation strategies for a study area that encompasses portions of Census Tracts 14.02 and 14.03 and three jurisdictions: City of Madison, City of Fitchburg, and Town of Madison (*Figure 1*). Approximately half the population lives in the City of Madison (3,125), half lives in the City of Fitchburg (3,630) and a small percentage live in the Town of Madison (514). The low to moderate income population is concentrated in the Leopold Neighborhood (City of Madison and Fitchburg residents) where U.S. Census 2010 data indicates that 38.3 percent of families are living at or below the poverty level, and in the City of Fitchburg around Nine Springs Golf Course (2010-2013 anecdotal information from social workers, the school and public health nurses).

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Committee chose this area to receive planning services as there are a higher percentage of low and moderate-income households compared to the City as a whole; the study area has never been the focus of a CDBG neighborhood plan; and it has undergone significant socio-economic and quality of life changes over the past 10 or so years, leading to issues and opportunities that the participating jurisdictions wanted to address through a neighborhood planning process.

Collaborative Planning Process with Extensive Public Participation

The City of Madison, City of Fitchburg and Town of Madison worked closely with the Leopold and Arbor Hills Neighborhoods, Madison Metropolitan School District, and Leopold Elementary School to lead a highly collaborative planning process. Strong working relationships have been forged among these partners. As a group, the partners also reached out extensively to stakeholders and the public to gather issues and opportunities and to solicit review and comment on plan drafts (*Figure 2*).

This outreach included interviews many different businesses, four public open houses, and interviews with community groups, centers of worship, agencies from the City of Madison, City of Fitchburg and Town of Madison, and organizations representing Spanish speaking residents. Other education and input opportunities included presentations and facilitated discussions with neighborhood associations, the Leopold Elementary School principal and staff, an interactive webpage where members of the public could submit written comments, and articles and announcements about the plan in area newsletters and webpages.

Final Draft Plan

The Final Draft *Arbor Hills-Leopold Neighborhood Plan* is a mid-range (10-15 year) plan that identifies neighborhood issues and proposes recommendations to address them. Plan recommendations are organized into five themes that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan: 1) Revitalize Commercial/Employment and Housing Sub-Areas and Guide New Development; 2) Strengthen Local Economic Development and Employment; 3) Improve Safety and Efficiency of Transportation; 4) Enhance Parks, Recreation and Open Space; and, 5) Improve Community Health and Wellness.

## Priority Recommendations

The recommendations within each theme were prioritized through input from the public and stakeholders. The top 12 recommendations across all themes were also identified and are shown below:

1. Establish Neighborhood Gathering Area with the following as top priorities:
  - a. Consider expansion of Leopold Open Schoolhouse to include additional community services and recreational and educational programming.
  - b. Enhance Aldo Leopold Park.
  - c. Consider potential next steps for Nine Springs Golf Course such as turning it into a City of Fitchburg Park.
  - d. Consider establishing community and economic empowerment services and programming in the Neighborhood Gathering Area for City of Fitchburg, Town of Madison and Madison residents.
2. Increase owner-occupancy of condominiums and 2-3 unit multi-family homes along Ashford Lane, Ardsley Circle, Coho Street, Pike Drive, Traceway Drive, Turbot Drive, Sunfish Court, Post Road, Churchill Drive, and Greenway View.
3. Strengthen existing neighborhood associations and consider establishing resident associations in apartment and condo complexes to strengthen relationships among tenants, and between tenants and landlords; encourage connection and coordination with area neighborhood associations.
4. Increase Metro Transit service between study area and Fitchburg's City Center; consider all day service, everyday along the Fish Hatchery Road corridor to City Center.
5. Explore crime and safety issues further with resident and business focus groups; identify challenged areas and create strategies.
6. Evaluate housing sub-areas and consider conducting programmed inspections of multi-family residences in targeted sections; work with housing providers group on strategies to improve landscaping, update and maintain buildings, and address nuisance issues.
7. Collaborate with ongoing efforts to create an Environmental Circle route that would connect the U.W. Arboretum to natural areas east of Fish Hatchery Road, along the Capital City Trail, Post Road extension, on-street bike routes and along waterways such as Lake Waubesa, Upper Mud Lake, Squaw Bay, Turville Bay, Wingra Creek, and back to the U.W. Arboretum.
8. Facilitate creation of a centralized information source to promote job services; include transportation information for Metro Transit, biking and walking; distribute information through listservs, webpages and at area businesses, libraries, and other places frequented by residents.
9. Support job service establishment at Leopold Open Schoolhouse, and explore additional locations; bring businesses to meet potential employees; include interpretation and translation services.
10. Improve pedestrian and bike safety along the Post Road Corridor.
11. Improve pedestrian and bike safety along W. Beltline Highway Frontage Road (south side).
12. Increase programming for children/youth within the neighborhood. Expand and create after/before school programs for school age children, and provide positive youth development activities, academic support and recreation for middle school and high school age youth, and strive to supplement existing youth programs. Replicate or grow successful programs in areas with unmet needs.

## Plan Implementation: Completed and Ongoing Activities and Projects

Implementation began during the planning process and included collaboration between stakeholders, city staff and community organizations to help achieve:

- Leopold Elementary Open Schoolhouse
- YMCA and partners Flag Football League at Aldo Leopold Park
- Freshmobile stops in Arbor Hills and Leopold Neighborhoods
- Leopold Neighborhood Association Community Garden at Aldo Leopold Park

- Leopold Neighborhood Association 'Art in the Park' Project at Aldo Leopold Park
- City of Madison Parks Division and Leopold Elementary School strategic clearing of non-native invasives between the Cannonball Path, Leopold Elementary School, and Aldo Leopold Park
- Zion International Ministries Leopold Larder Food Pantry and Clothing Distribution Center
- Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry – Arbor Covenant Church and Memorial United Church of Christ

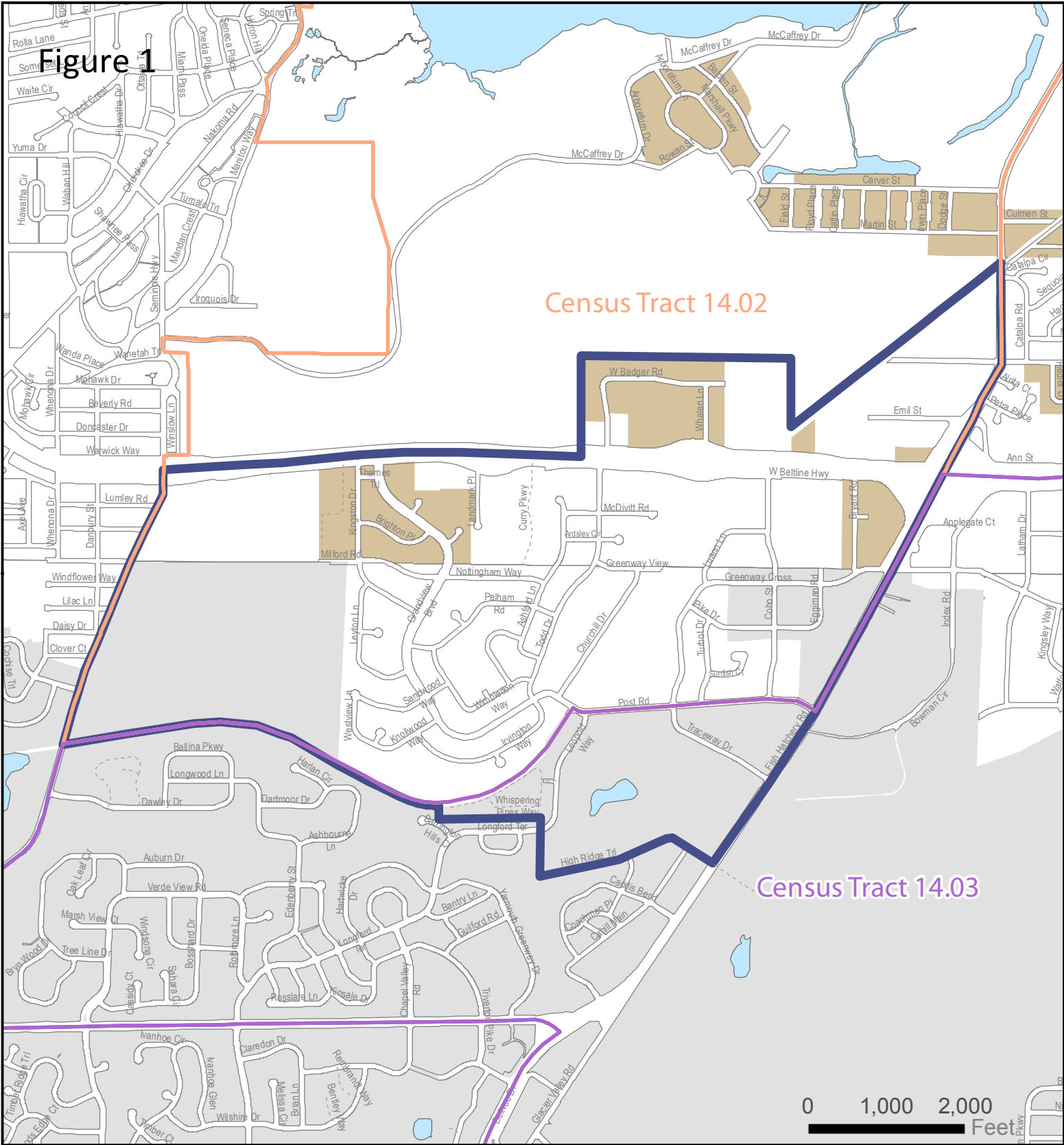
#### Community Development Block Grant Funds

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Committee allocated \$129,446 of CDBG funds for implementation of eligible plan recommendations. Using input from Public Open Houses, neighborhood association meetings, stakeholder meetings, and city staff meetings, the project staff identified the projects below to help implement the neighborhood plan's priority recommendations. Detailed implementation projects are being finalized by city staff in coordination with lead implementers.







- Up to \$10,000 for capital enhancements to the Aldo Leopold Park Community Garden. Proposed Lead implementer: Community Action Coalition for Southcentral Wisconsin.
- Up to \$55,000 for the 2014 capital improvement of a park shelter, and related items such as pathways, to encourage additional activities at Aldo Leopold Park. Proposed Lead implementer: City of Madison Parks Division.
- Up to \$65,000 for down payment loans to income eligible homebuyers to purchase homes in an identified focus area to help stabilize this area. Proposed Lead implementer: City of Madison Community Development Block Grant Office.

cc: Anne Monks, Mayor's Aide  
Ald. John Strasser, District 14

**Figure 1**



**Arbor Hills-Leopold Neighborhood Plan  
Census Tracts 14.02 and 14.03**

-  Arbor Hills-Leopold Neighborhood Plan Area
-  Census Tract 14.02
-  Census Tract 14.03
-  City of Madison
-  City of Fitchburg
-  Town of Madison



## Figure 2 - Planning Process and Outreach\*

**May – August 2011:** Plan Kickoff, Issues and Opportunities, Background Information Collection and Analysis, Outreach, Short-term Implementation

- May 9<sup>th</sup> Stakeholders Kickoff Meeting
- May 10<sup>th</sup> Leopold Neighborhood Association Meeting
- May 23<sup>rd</sup> and June 27<sup>th</sup>, August 30<sup>th</sup> South Neighborhood Resource Team Meetings
- May 24<sup>th</sup> Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association Meeting
- June 8<sup>th</sup> and July 13<sup>th</sup> Joining Forces for Families/Leopold Area Resource Coalition (JFF/LARC) Meetings
- June 15<sup>th</sup> La Sup Board Meeting
- June 23<sup>rd</sup> Open House I
- June 29<sup>th</sup> City Staff Meeting I
- July 21<sup>st</sup> U.W. Arboretum Interview
- July 26<sup>th</sup> Park and Recreation Leader Interview
- July 27<sup>th</sup> Faith Community Leader Interview
- July 29<sup>th</sup> Latino Community Leaders Interview
- August 4<sup>th</sup> Madison Libraries Interview
- August 17<sup>th</sup> Fitchburg Library Interview
- August 18<sup>th</sup> Survey of Businesses and South Madison Business Association Discussion
- August 23<sup>rd</sup> Community Garden – Exploring Potential Sites

**September – December 2011:** Draft Plan Recommendations, City Staff Discussions, Continued Outreach

- September 9<sup>th</sup> Parks Division Staff Discussion
- September 14<sup>th</sup> South Police District Discussion
- September 14<sup>th</sup>, November 9<sup>th</sup>, and December 14<sup>th</sup> JFF/LARC Meetings
- September 27<sup>th</sup> South Madison Resource Team Meeting
- October 3<sup>rd</sup> Leopold Elementary School VISTA Worker Interview
- October 10<sup>th</sup> JFF Client Interviews
- October 11<sup>th</sup> Play and Learn Centro Hispano Parent and Teacher Interviews
- October 15<sup>th</sup> Bridge-Lakepoint-Waunona Neighborhood Center Spanish Language Clients Interviews
- October 17<sup>th</sup> JFF Client Interviews
- October 26<sup>th</sup> City Staff Meeting II
- November 1<sup>st</sup> Stakeholders Meeting II
- November 2<sup>nd</sup> Leopold Landlord Association Meeting
- November 3<sup>rd</sup> Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association Annual Meeting
- November 14<sup>th</sup> Public Open House II

**January – May 2012:** Working Final Draft Plan Preparation, Review and Input Discussions with City Staff and Stakeholders, Short-term Implementation

- January 9<sup>th</sup> and April 9<sup>th</sup> Leopold/Arbor Hills NRT Meetings
- January 13<sup>th</sup> Community Action Coalition New Garden Application Submitted
- January 30<sup>th</sup> Leopold Elementary School Principal Meeting
- February 8, March 14, April 11<sup>th</sup>, and May 9<sup>th</sup> JFF/LARC Meetings
- February 13<sup>th</sup> Leopold/Arbor Hills NRT Neighborhood Tour
- February 15<sup>th</sup> Community Services and Housing Strategies Discussions
- February 17<sup>th</sup> Planning and Traffic Engineering Road Connection Discussion
- February 23<sup>rd</sup> Community Services Coordinating Committee Discussion
- February 24<sup>th</sup> Fitchburg Economic Development Director Discussion
- March 12<sup>th</sup> Domestic Violence MOU Meeting
- March 13<sup>th</sup> Alder Bruer Discussion
- March 13<sup>th</sup> Senior Center and Coalition Directors Discussion
- April 20<sup>th</sup> Discussion of Programmed Recreational Activities for Children at Aldo Leopold Park
- May 3<sup>rd</sup> Public Safety Discussion with Town of Madison, City of Fitchburg and City of Madison Police Departments
- May 8<sup>th</sup> Leopold Open Schoolhouse
- May 14<sup>th</sup> Stakeholders Meeting III
- May 18<sup>th</sup> Arbor Hills-Leopold Emerging Neighborhood Grant Submitted

**June – December 2012:** Draft Plan Review and Comment, Continued Outreach, Short-term Implementation

- June 6<sup>th</sup> Open House III Draft Plan and Kickoff YMCA Flag Football League
- June 13<sup>h</sup> and September 10<sup>th</sup> Joint JFF/LARC/Leopold/Arbor Hills NRT Meetings
- June 27<sup>th</sup> Freshmobile Kickoff
- July 13<sup>th</sup> First Planting of Leopold Park Community Garden
- October 11<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup> JFF/LARC Meetings
- December 10<sup>th</sup> Leopold/Arbor Hills NRT Meeting

**January – August 2013:** Final Public Review Draft; Public, Stakeholder and City Staff Review and Comment; City of Madison Review and Adoption

- January 15<sup>th</sup> Open House IV Final Public Review Draft
- January 9<sup>th</sup> Joint JFF/LARC/Leopold/Arbor Hills NRT Meeting
- January 15<sup>th</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup> City staff, neighborhood associations, other stakeholder groups, public review and comment
- February 13<sup>th</sup>, March 13<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup>, June 12<sup>th</sup>, and July 10<sup>th</sup> JFF/LARC Meetings
- March 13<sup>th</sup>, May 13<sup>th</sup>, July 8<sup>th</sup> Leopold/Arbor Hills NRT Meetings
- June 4<sup>th</sup> through Summer - City of Madison Committee and Board review and approval

\* In addition to the outreach shown above, plan updates were included in Arbor Hills and Leopold Newsletters, Centro Hispano News and other neighborhood publications and listservs, and public input was also invited thru the neighborhood plan webpage, email, letters, and phone calls.