

LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5

BLIGHT / SUBSTANDARD DETERMINATION STUDY & REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



PREPARED FOR:
CITY OF LEXINGTON
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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**BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD
DETERMINATION STUDY**

BLIGHT AND SUBSTANDARD DETERMINATION STUDY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Study/Conclusion

The purpose of this Blight and Substandard Determination Study is to apply the criteria set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, Section 18-203, to the designated **Redevelopment Area #5 in Lexington, Nebraska**, to complete an analysis of the southwestern portion of the City, including the west side of the Highway 283 commercial corridor and adjacent residential areas. The results of this Study will assist the Lexington Community Redevelopment Authority (CRA), the City Council and the Authority's legal representation to compare the findings of the Study to statutory requirements as to the declaration of Redevelopment Area #5 as both **blighted and substandard**.

Location

The findings presented in this Blight and Substandard Determination Study are based on surveys and analyses conducted for the **Lexington Redevelopment Area**, referred to as **Redevelopment Area #5**. In general, Redevelopment Area #5 consists of an area that begins at the intersection of the center line of the Union Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way and the west extended line of the Plum Creek Parkway, thence south along said west line and continuing along the west line of the Plum Creek Parkway to its intersection with the south line of Ash Street, thence west along said south line to its intersection with the west line of Washington Street, thence north along said west line to its intersection with the south line of Oak Street, thence west along said south line to its intersection with the east line of Adams Street, thence south along said east line to its intersection with the northern line of the Dawson County Drainage Canal, thence northwesterly along said northern line to its intersection with the east line of West Acres 2nd Addition (also known as Hayden Lane), thence north along said east line to its intersection with the south line of Spruce Street (also the Corporate Limit Line), thence north along an extended line of the east line of West Acres 2nd Addition, crossing Spruce Street and continuing north along the west line of Lot 18 Block "F" of the Prices Addition, thence continuing north along the west line of Lot 11 of said block and Addition, crossing Elm Street and continuing north along said extended west line to the north line of Prices Addition, thence east along said north line to its intersection with the west line of C.L. Ervins Subdivision, thence north along said west line to its intersection with the south line of the Union Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way, thence southeasterly along said south line to its intersection with the west line of Madison Street, thence north along the extended west line to its intersection with the center line of the Union Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way, thence southeasterly along said center line to its intersection with the west extended line of the Plum Creek Parkway, also known as the point of beginning.

The Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 boundary is described as an area that is located both within the Corporate Limits of the City and adjacent, but beyond the City of Lexington, including areas currently located within the One-mile Planning Jurisdiction of the Community. **Illustration 1** identifies Redevelopment Area #5, in relation to the City of Lexington. Redevelopment Area #5 includes the Right-of-Ways of Adams Street (Highway 21), abuts the Plum Creek Parkway (Highway 283) and municipal roads within the City of Lexington.

The boundaries of Redevelopment Area #5 contain some land areas outside of the Corporate Limit Line of Lexington. These areas will need to be annexed prior to the use of Tax Increment Financing.

**CITY CONTEXT MAP
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

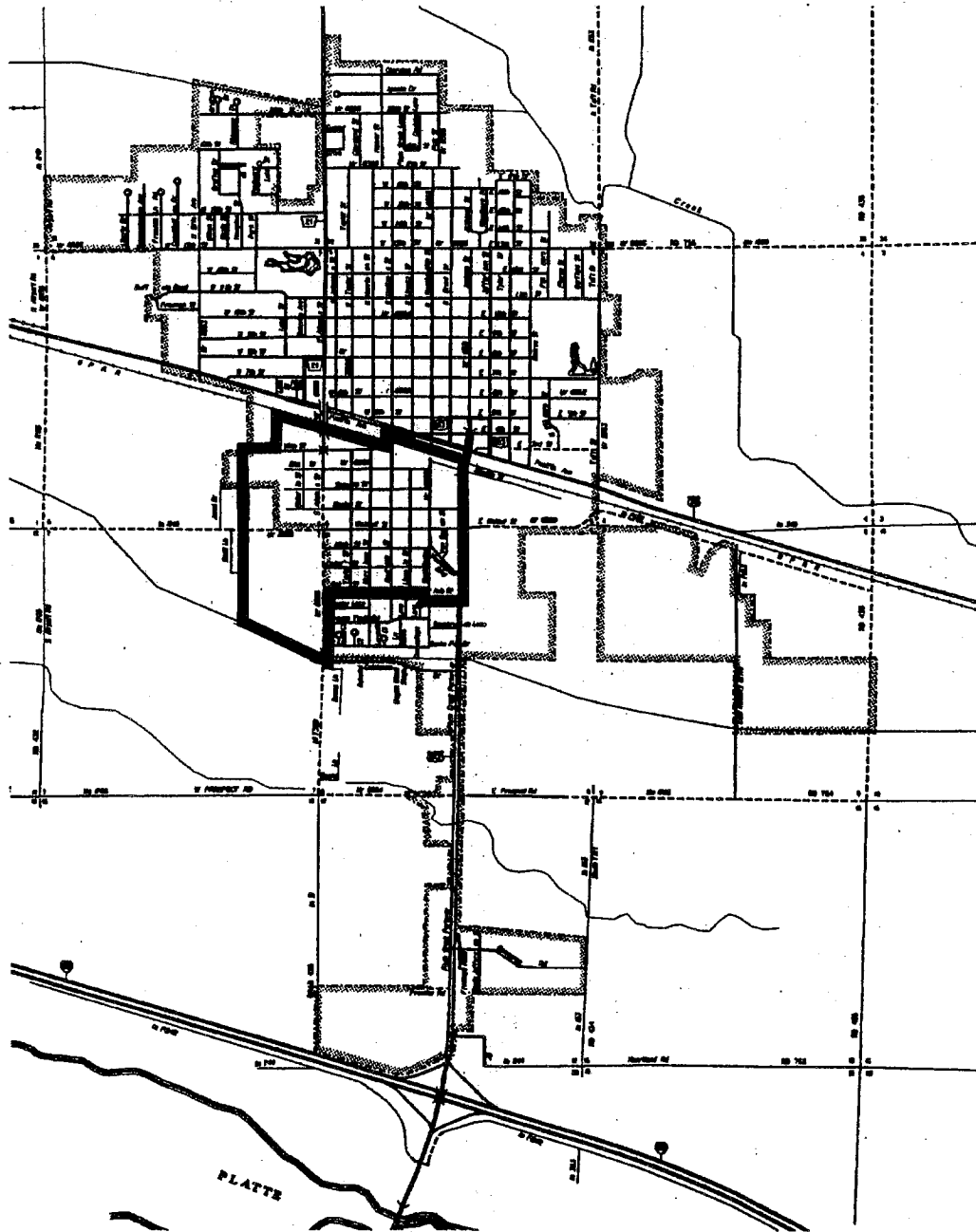


ILLUSTRATION 1

**Lexington Redevelopment Area #5
Blight and Substandard Determination Study**

SUBSTANDARD AREA

As set forth in the Nebraska legislation, a **substandard area** shall mean one in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the presence of:

1. Dilapidated/deterioration;
2. Age or obsolescence;
3. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces;
4. (a) High density of population and overcrowding; or
(b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; or
(c) Any combination of such factors, is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency, and crime, and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.

This evaluation included a detailed **exterior structural survey of 537 structures**, a parcel-by-parcel field inventory, conversations with pertinent City of Lexington department staff and a review of available reports and documents containing information which could substantiate the existence of substandard conditions.

BLIGHTED AREA

As set forth in the Section 18-2103 (11) Nebraska Revised Statutes (Cumulative Supplement 1994), a **blighted area** shall mean "an area, which by reason of the presence of:

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures;
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility, or usefulness;
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
6. Diversity of ownership;
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;

8. Defective or unusual conditions of title;
9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social liability; and
12. Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one or more of the following conditions exists;
 1. Unemployment in the study or designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;
 2. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least 40 years;
 3. More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in an area is unimproved land that has been within the city for 40 years and has remained unimproved during that time;
 4. The per capita income of the study or designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or
 5. The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses."

While it may be concluded the mere presence of a majority of the stated factors may be sufficient to make a finding of blighted and substandard, this evaluation was made on the basis that existing blighted and substandard factors must be present to an extent which would lead reasonable persons to conclude public intervention is appropriate or necessary to assist with any development or redevelopment activities. Secondly, the distribution of blighted and substandard factors throughout the Redevelopment Area must be reasonably distributed so basically good areas are not arbitrarily found to be blighted simply because of proximity to areas which are blighted.

On the basis of this approach, the Redevelopment Area is found to be eligible as "blighted" and "substandard", within the definition set forth in the legislation. Specifically:

SUBSTANDARD FACTORS

Of the Four Substandard Factors set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, all four Factors in the Redevelopment Area were found to be present to a strong extent. The Substandard Factors, present in the Area, are reasonably distributed throughout the Redevelopment Area.

**TABLE 1
SUBSTANDARD FACTORS
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

1.	Dilapidated/deterioration.	☐
2.	Age or obsolescence.	☐
3.	Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces.	☐
4.	Existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes.	☐
	Strong Presence of Factor	☐
	Reasonable Presence of Factor	■
	No Presence of Factor	○

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

STRONG PRESENCE OF FACTOR -

The Field Study method used to analyze exterior building conditions determined that 322, or 60 percent, of the 537 total structures, in the Redevelopment Area, were ***deteriorating or dilapidated***. This Factor is of a strong presence throughout the Area.

Based on the results of a parcel-by-parcel Field Analysis, approximately 412 (76.7 percent) of the total 537 structures within the Redevelopment Area are ***40+ years of age*** (built prior to 1966). The factor of ***age or obsolescence*** is a strong presence in the Redevelopment Area.

The conditions which result in *inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open space* are strongly present and distributed throughout the Redevelopment Area. Factors such as graveled roads with open storm water ditches, and structures with inadequate doors and windows are present throughout the Redevelopment Area. Additionally, undersized water mains, as well as the advanced age of both water and sewer mains throughout the portion of the Redevelopment Area within the Corporate Limit are inadequate utility systems.

The parcel-by-parcel field analysis determined that the substandard factor *existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes* was a strong presence throughout the Redevelopment Area. The primary contributing factors include areas with excessive debris (39 percent of the parcels had a combination of minor or major debris), and areas without modern water and/or sanitary sewer systems, as well as portions of the Redevelopment Area having underground utilities that are undersized, or excessively old and prone to breakage and repetitive maintenance.

The prevailing substandard conditions, evident in buildings and the public infrastructure, as determined by the field survey, include:

1. Aging structures;
2. Dilapidated/deteriorated structures;
3. "Fair" to "Poor" site conditions, or site conditions unimproved for industrial development;
4. Gravel surfaced roads with open storm water drainage ditches;
5. Frame buildings and wood structural components in masonry buildings as potential fire hazards; and
6. Parcels lacking adequate accessibility to residential, commercial and industrial land use types.
7. Age and associated condition of underground water and sewer mains in the portion of the area located north of the Highway 30 corridor; and
8. Areas within the Redevelopment Area that lack municipal utilities.

BLIGHT FACTORS

Of the 12 Blight Factors set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, seven are present to a strong extent, in the Redevelopment Area, and three are present to a reasonable, but more limited extent. The Factor "tax or special assessment excluding the fair value of land," was of little or no presence and "defective or unusual condition of title" was not reviewed. The Blighting Factors that are present are reasonably distributed throughout the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5.

**TABLE 2
BLIGHT FACTORS
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

1.	A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures.	☐
2.	Existence of defective or inadequate street layout.	☐
3.	Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness.	☐
4.	Insanitary or unsafe conditions.	☐
5.	Deterioration of site or other improvements.	☐
6.	Diversity of Ownership.	☐
7.	Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of land.	○
8.	Defective or unusual condition of title.	NR
9.	Improper subdivision or obsolete platting.	☐
10.	The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes.	☐
11.	Other environmental and blighting factors.	☐
12.	One of the other five conditions.	☐
	Strong Presence of Factor	☐
	Reasonable Presence of Factor	☐
	Little or No Presence of Factor	○
	NR = Not Reviewed	

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

STRONG PRESENCE OF FACTOR -

Deteriorated or dilapidated structures are a strong presence in the Redevelopment Area. A total of 60 percent of the 537 structures were found to be deteriorating or dilapidated.

Faulty lot layout exists to a strong presence throughout the Redevelopment Area. Conditions contributing to the presence of this Factor include inadequate lot sizes and limited accessibility.

Deterioration of site or other improvements is a strong presence throughout the area, where of the total, 410 (72.9 percent) parcels examined have "fair" to "poor" overall site conditions. A lack of sidewalks, parcels fronting on gravel surfaced streets, as well as the fact that 60 percent, or 322 structures are either deteriorating, or are dilapidated.

The existence of the ***Diversity of Ownership*** throughout the Redevelopment Area is present to a strong degree. An estimated 447 number of owners was documented to exist in Redevelopment Area #5, potentially limiting the effectiveness of future development opportunities.

The ***existence of conditions which endanger life or property*** by fire or other causes is strongly present throughout the Redevelopment Area. Conditions related to this Factor include the advanced age of wood frame buildings, several of which are abandoned and dilapidated. Areas within the corporate limits also contain underground utility mains that are undersized, or excessively old and prone to breakage and repetitive maintenance.

In regards to ***other environmental and Blighting Factors***, economically and socially undesirable land uses and functional obsolescence is strongly present throughout the Redevelopment Area. Related elements include removal of substantially dilapidated structures, mixed/nonconforming land uses, and developed neighborhoods with gravel surfaced streets and open storm water drainage ditches.

One of the required five additional blight factors has a strong presence throughout the Redevelopment Area. Based on the field analysis, the estimated average age of residential buildings is 70.9 years and the average age of commercial buildings is 51.3 years.

REASONABLE PRESENCE OF FACTOR -

Defective or inadequate street layout is reasonably present, due to the existence of large areas of land with little or no acceptable road access, a significant number of gravel surfaced roads, with open storm water ditches, as well as gravel surfaced private entry lane roads or driveways.

Insanitary or unsafe conditions are reasonably present throughout the Redevelopment Area. Conditions contributing to this Factor include substandard structures and age of structures, as well as the presence of abandoned and dilapidated buildings or underutilized buildings.

Improper subdivision or obsolete platting is a reasonable presence throughout the Redevelopment Area. Generally, lot sizes throughout the Redevelopment Area contain a variety of subdivisions in which individual lot sizes are too small in the core of the Community, or are too large in the area southwest of the intersection of Walnut and Adams Streets, by today's municipal development standards. Single parcels of large land areas generally have resulted in "piecemeal" development patterns in portions of the Redevelopment Area located west of Adams Street.

Conclusion

It is the conclusion of the Consultant retained by the City of Lexington that the number, degree and distribution of blighting factors, as documented in this Study, are beyond remedy and control solely by regulatory processes in the exercise of the police power and cannot be dealt with effectively by the ordinary operations of private enterprise without the aids provided in the Nebraska Community Development Law. It is also the opinion of the Consultant, that the findings of this Blight and Substandard Determination Study warrant designating the Redevelopment Area as **"substandard" and "blighted."**

The conclusions presented in this Study are those of the Consultant engaged by the City of Lexington to examine whether conditions of blight/substandard exist. The local governing body should review this Study and, if satisfied with the summary of findings contained herein, may adopt a resolution making a finding of blight/substandard and this Study a part of the public record.

BASIS FOR REDEVELOPMENT

For a project in Lexington to be eligible for redevelopment under the Nebraska Community Development Law, the subject area or areas must first qualify as both a "substandard" and "blighted" area, within the definition set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law. This Study has been undertaken to determine whether conditions exist which would warrant designation of the Redevelopment Area as a "blighted and substandard area" in accordance with provisions of the law.

As set forth in Section 18-2103 (10) Neb. Rev. Stat. (Cumulative Supplement 1994), **substandard area** shall mean an area in which there is a predominance of buildings or improvements, whether nonresidential or residential in character, which by reason of the following:

1. Dilapidation/deterioration;
2. Age or obsolescence;
3. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation or open spaces;
4.
 - (a) High density of population and overcrowding; or
 - (b) The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes; or
 - (c) Any combination of such factors is conducive to ill health, transmission of disease, infant mortality, juvenile delinquency and crime, and is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals or welfare.

As set forth in the Nebraska legislation, a **blighted area** shall mean an area, which by reason of the presence of:

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures;
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout;
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness;
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions;
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements;
6. Diversity of ownership;
7. Tax or special assessment delinquency exceeding the fair value of the land;
8. Defective or unusual conditions of title;

9. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting;
10. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes;
11. Any combination of such factors, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of the community, retards the provision of housing accommodations or constitutes an economic or social liability;
12. Is detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, or welfare in its present condition and use; and in which there is at least one of the following conditions:
 1. Unemployment in the designated blighted area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;
 2. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least 40 years;
 3. More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the city for 40 years and has remained unimproved during that time;
 4. The per capita income of the designated blighted area is lower than the average per capita income of the city or village in which the area is designated; or
 5. The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses."

The Consultant for the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 Blight and Substandard Determination Study was guided by the premise that the finding of blight and substandard must be defensible and sufficient evidence of the presence of factors should exist so members of the Lexington City Council (local governing body), acting as reasonable and prudent persons, could conclude public intervention is necessary or appropriate. Therefore, each factor was evaluated in the context of the extent of its presence and the collective impact of all factors found to be present.

Also, these deficiencies should be reasonably distributed throughout the Redevelopment Area. Such a "reasonable distribution of deficiencies test" would preclude localities from taking concentrated areas of blight and expanding them arbitrarily into non-blighted areas for planning or other reasons. The only exception which should be made to this rule is where projects must be brought to a logical boundary to accommodate new development and ensure accessibility, but even in this instance, the conclusion of such areas should be minimal and related to an area otherwise meeting the reasonable distribution of deficiencies test.

THE STUDY AREA

The purpose of this Study is to determine whether all or part of the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 in Lexington, Nebraska, qualifies as a **blighted and substandard area**, within the definition set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, Section 18-2103.

The findings presented in this Blight and Substandard Determination Study are based on surveys and analyses conducted for the **Lexington Redevelopment Area**, referred to as **Redevelopment Area #5**. In general, Redevelopment Area #5 consists of an area that begins at the intersection of the center line of the Union Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way and the west extended line of the Plum Creek Parkway, thence south along said west line and continuing along the west line of the Plum Creek Parkway to its intersection with the south line of Ash Street, thence west along said south line to its intersection with the west line of Washington Street, thence north along said west line to its intersection with the south line of Oak Street, thence west along said south line to its intersection with the east line of Adams Street, thence south along said east line to its intersection with the northern line of the Dawson County Drainage Canal, thence northwesterly along said northern line to its intersection with the east line of West Acres 2nd Addition (also known as Hayden Lane), thence north along said east line to its intersection with the south line of Spruce Street (also the Corporate Limit Line), thence north along an extended line of the east line of West Acres 2nd Addition, crossing Spruce Street and continuing north along the west line of Lot 18 Block "F" of the Prices Addition, thence continuing north along the west line of Lot 11 of said block and Addition, crossing Elm Street and continuing north along said extended west line to the north line of Prices Addition, thence east along said north line to its intersection with the west line of C.L. Ervins Subdivision, thence north along said west line to its intersection with the south line of the Union Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way, thence southeasterly along said south line to its intersection with the west line of Madison Street, thence north along the extended west line to its intersection with the center line of the Union Pacific Railroad Right-of-Way, thence southeasterly along said center line to its intersection with the west extended line of the Plum Creek Parkway, also known as the point of beginning. **Illustration 1** delineates the Area in relation to the City of Lexington.

The portions of the boundaries of Redevelopment Area #5 presently contain land areas outside of the Corporate Limit of Lexington. These areas will need to be annexed prior to the use of Tax Increment Financing.

Existing land uses within the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 are identified in **Illustration 2**.

Major land uses in the Redevelopment Area, include single family and mobile home residential, vacant, commercial and industrial land uses. The Redevelopment Area contains an estimated 287 acres, of which approximately 226 acres have been developed.

The principle roads within the Redevelopment Area are Adams Street, West Walnut Street, Plum Creek Parkway (its west line is the eastern boundary of the Redevelopment Area).

Table 3 identifies the estimated existing land uses within the Redevelopment Area, in terms of number of acres and percentage of total for all existing land uses. An estimated percent of the land use throughout the Area is comprised of agricultural land.

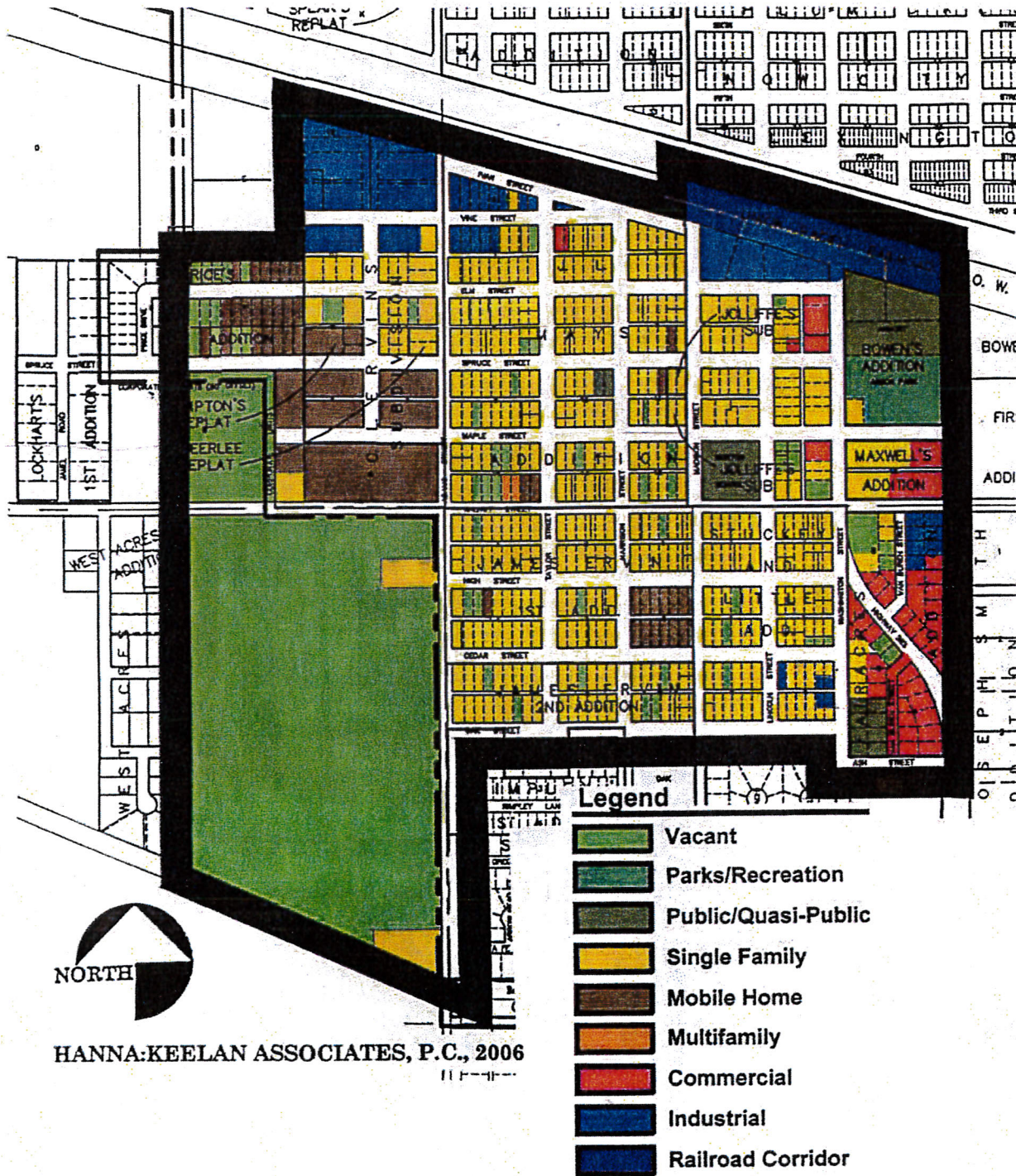
**TABLE 3
EXISTING LAND USE
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

<u>LAND USE</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>PERCENT</u>
Parks/Recreation	3.5	1.2%
Public/Quasi-Public	9.0	3.1%
Single Family	96.5	33.6%
Multifamily	0.2	0.1%
Mobile Home	37.0	12.9%
Commercial	14.0	4.9%
Industrial	21.0	7.3%
Railroad Trans. Corridor	4.0	1.4%
Streets and Alleys	33.8	11.8%
<u>Vacant</u>	<u>68.0</u>	<u>23.7%</u>
Est. Total Acreage	287.0	100.0%

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

Illustration 2 identifies existing land use in Redevelopment Area #5. **Illustration 3** identifies existing zoning. The portion of the Redevelopment Area located beyond the Corporate Limit Line of Lexington is within the One-Mile Planning Jurisdiction of the City, thus zoning throughout the entire Redevelopment Area is controlled by the City of Lexington.

EXISTING LAND USE MAP REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5 LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA



HANNA:KEELAN ASSOCIATES, P.C., 2006

ILLUSTRATION 2

Lexington Redevelopment Area #5
Blight and Substandard Determination Study

**EXISTING ZONING MAP
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

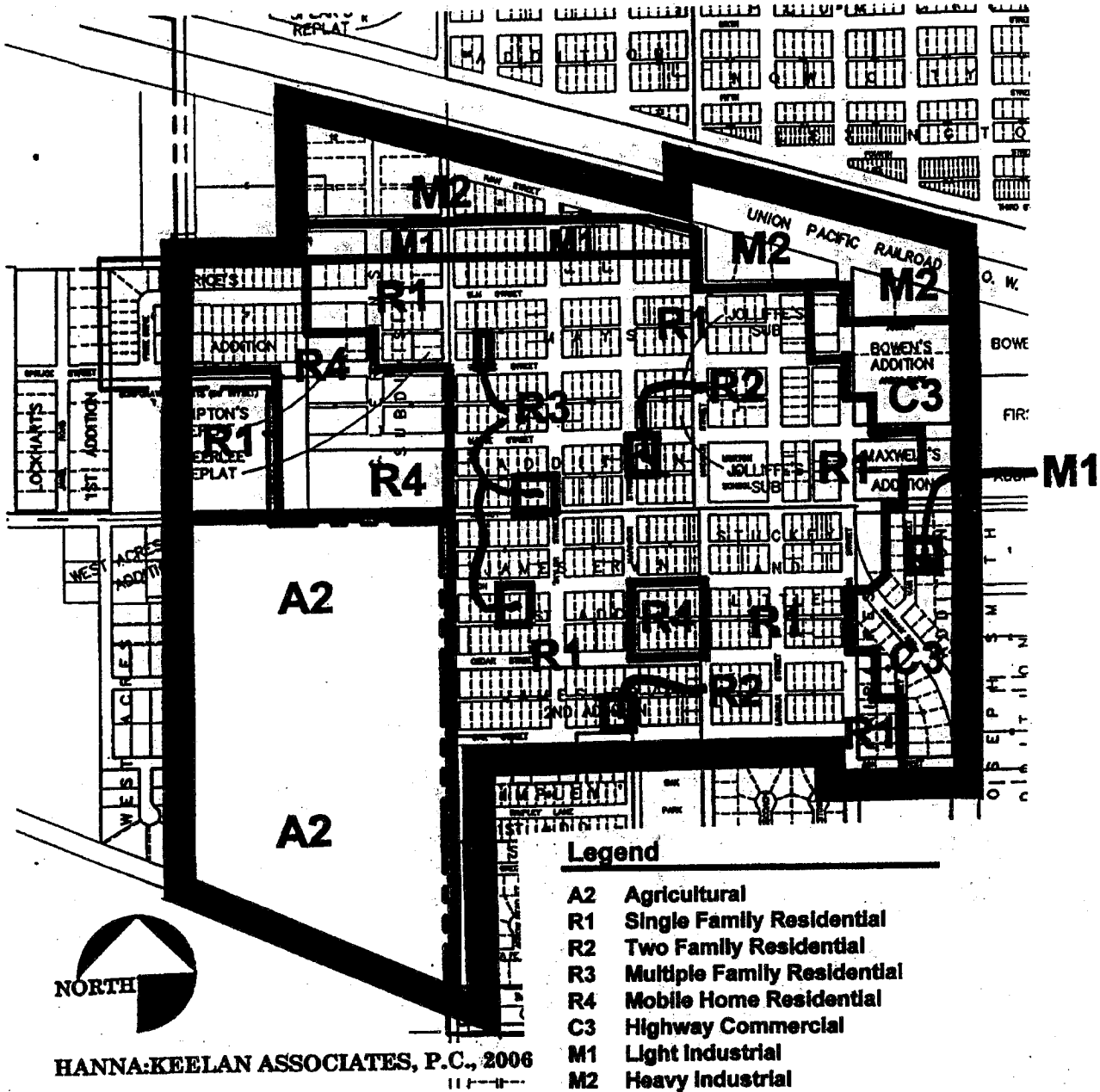


ILLUSTRATION 3

Lexington Redevelopment Area #5
Blight and Substandard Determination Study

THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The Blight and Substandard Determination research approach implemented for the Redevelopment Area included an area-wide assessment (100 percent sample) of all of the Factors identified in the Nebraska Community Development Law, with the exception of **defective or unusual condition of title**. All Factors were investigated on an area-wide basis.

Structural Survey Process

The rating of building conditions is a critical step in determining the eligibility of an area for redevelopment. It is important that the system for classifying buildings be based on established evaluation standards and criteria and that it result in an accurate and consistent description of existing conditions.

A structural condition survey was conducted in the month of June, 2006. **A total of 537 structures** received exterior inspections. These structures were examined to document structural deficiencies in individual buildings and to identify related environmental deficiencies in the Redevelopment Areas. The structural Condition Survey Form utilized in this process is provided in the **Appendix**.

Parcel-by-Parcel Field Survey

A parcel-by-parcel field survey was also conducted in the month of June, 2006. **A total of 562 separate parcels** were inspected for existing and adjacent land uses, overall site conditions, existence of debris, parking conditions and street, sidewalk and alley surface conditions. The Condition Survey Form is included in the **Appendix**, as well as the results of the Survey.

Research on Property Ownership and Financial Assessment of Properties

Public records and Cadastral Maps or aerial photographs of all parcels in the Redevelopment Area were analyzed to determine the number of property owners in each block.

An examination of public records was conducted to determine if tax delinquencies existed for properties in the Redevelopment Area. The valuation, tax amount and any delinquent amount was examined for each of the properties.

ELIGIBILITY SURVEY AND ANALYSIS FINDINGS

An analysis was made of each of the blighted and substandard factors listed in the Nebraska legislation to determine whether each or any were present in the Redevelopment Area and, if so, to what extent and in what locations. The following represents a summary evaluation of each blight and substandard factor presented in the order of listing in the law.

SUBSTANDARD FACTORS

(1) Dilapidation/Deterioration of Structures

The rating of building conditions is a critical step in determining the eligibility of a substandard area for redevelopment. The system for classifying buildings must be based on established evaluation standards and criteria and result in an accurate and consistent description of existing conditions.

This section summarizes the process used for assessing building conditions in the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5, the standards and criteria used for evaluation and the findings as to the existence of dilapidation/deterioration of structures.

The building condition analysis was based on an exterior inspection of all 537 existing structures, within the Redevelopment Area, to note structural deficiencies in individual buildings and to identify related environmental deficiencies for individual sites or parcels within the area.

1. Structures/Building Systems Evaluation

During the on-site field analysis, each component of a structure/building was examined to determine whether it was in sound condition or has minor, major, or critical defects. Structures/building systems examined included the following three types, **one Primary and two Secondary**.

Structural Systems (Primary Components). These include the basic elements of any structure/building: roof structure, wall foundation, and basement foundation.

(Secondary Components)

Building Systems. These components include: roof surface condition, chimney, gutters/down spouts, and exterior wall surface.

Architectural Systems. These are components generally added to the structural systems and are necessary parts of the structure/building, including exterior paint, doors, windows, porches, steps, and fire escape, and driveways and site conditions.

The evaluation of each individual parcel of land included the review and evaluation of: adjacent land use, street surface type, street conditions, sidewalk conditions, parking, railroad track/right-of-way composition, existence of debris, existence of vagrants, and overall site condition, and the documentation of age and type of structure/building.

2. **Criteria for Rating Components for Structural, Building and Architectural Systems**

The components for the previously identified Systems were individually rated utilizing the following criteria.

Sound. Component that contained no defects, is adequately maintained, and requires no treatment outside of normal ongoing maintenance.

Minor - Defect. Components that contained minor defects (loose or missing material or holes and cracks over a limited area) which often can be corrected through the course of normal maintenance. The correction of such defects may be accomplished by the owner or occupants, such as pointing masonry joints over a limited area or replacement of less complicated systems. Minor defects are considered in rating a structure/building as deteriorating/dilapidated.

Major - Defect. Components that contained major defects over a widespread area and would be difficult to correct through normal maintenance. Structures/buildings having major defects would require replacement or rebuilding of systems by people skilled in the building trades.

Critical Defect. Components that contained critical defects (bowing, sagging, or settling to any or all exterior systems causing the structure to be out-of-plumb, or broken, loose or missing material and deterioration over a widespread area) so extensive the cost of repairs would be excessive in relation to the value returned on the investment.

3. **Final Structure/Building Rating**

After completion of the **Exterior Rating** of each structure/building, each individual structure/building was placed in one of four categories, based on the combination of defects found with Components contained in Structural, Building and Architectural Systems. Each final rating is described below:

Sound. Defined as structures/buildings that can be kept in a standard condition with normal maintenance. Structures/buildings, so classified, **have less than six points.**

Deficient-Minor. Defined as structures/buildings classified as deficient--requiring minor repairs--**having between six and 10 points.**

Deteriorating. Defined as structures/buildings classified as deficient--requiring major repairs-- **having between 11 and 20 points.**

Dilapidated. Defined as structurally substandard structures/buildings containing defects that are so serious and so extensive that it may be most economical to raze the structure/building. Structures/buildings classified as dilapidated will **have at least 21 points.**

An individual *Exterior Rating form* is completed for each structure/building. The results of the *Exterior Rating* of all structures/buildings are presented in a *Table format.*

Primary Components	Secondary Components
One Critical = 11 pts	One Critical = 6pts
Major Deteriorating = 6 pts	Major Deteriorating = 3pts
Minor = 2 pts	Minor = 1 pt

Major deficient buildings are considered to be the same as deteriorating buildings as referenced in the Nebraska legislation; substandard buildings are the same as dilapidated buildings. The word "building" and "structure" are presumed to be interchangeable.

4. **Field Survey Conclusions**

The condition of the total 537 buildings within the Redevelopment Area were determined based on the finding of the exterior survey. These surveys indicated the following:

- One-Hundred Twenty Five (125) structures was classified as structurally sound;
- Ninety (90) structures were classified as deteriorating with minor defects.
- One-Hundred Fifty Four (154) structures were classified as deteriorating with major defects; and
- One-Hundred Sixty Eight (168) structures were classified as substandard.

The results of the Exterior Structural Survey identified the conditions of the structures, throughout the Redevelopment Area. A total of 322 (60 percent) of the total 537 structures, within the Area, are either deteriorating or dilapidated to a substandard condition.

Conclusion

The results of the structural condition survey indicates Deteriorating Structures are present to a strong extent throughout the Redevelopment Area. Table 4 identifies the results of the structural rating process per building type.

**TABLE 4
EXTERIOR SURVEY FINDINGS
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

Exterior Structural Rating

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Deficient (Minor)</u>	<u>Deteriorating</u>	<u>Dilapidated</u>	<u>Number of Structure</u>	<u>Deteriorating and/or Dilapidated</u>
Single Family	103	73	140	158	474	298
Commercial	8	1	5	1	15	6
<u>Industrial</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Other</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>7</u>
Totals	125	90	154	168	537	322
Percent	23.3%	16.8%	28.7%	31.3%	100.0%	60.0%

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

(2) Age of Obsolescence

As per the results of the Field Survey, the estimated average age of residential structures in the Redevelopment Area is 70.9 years of age and the average age of commercial structures is 51.3 years. The Survey also estimates that of the total 537 structures, 412 (76.7 percent) are 40+ years of age, or were built prior to 1966.

Conclusion

The Age and Obsolescence of the structures is a strong presence throughout the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5.

(3) **Inadequate Provision for Ventilation, Light, Air, Sanitation or Open Spaces**

The results from the Exterior Structural Survey, along with other field data, provided the basis for the identification of insanitary and unsafe conditions in the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5. Factors contributing to insanitary and unsafe conditions are discussed below.

The Field Survey determined that 60 percent of the total 537 structures in the Redevelopment Area were deteriorating or dilapidated. When not adequately maintained or upgraded to present-day occupancy standards, buildings that are deteriorating or dilapidated pose special safety and sanitary problems. There is a significant number of wood-framed, one and two-story commercial, farm or residential buildings in need of structural repair and/or fire protection.

A total of 218 parcels in the Redevelopment Area were identified as possessing minor to major excessive debris. This equals nearly 39 percent of the total 562 parcels. Coupled with unoccupied deteriorating and dilapidated structures, debris creates an environment inviting pests and vermin. These unwanted nuisances can create unsafe and insanitary repetitive. The parcel-by-parcel Field Survey identified a total of 285, or 51 percent of the total parcels as possessing "fair" overall site conditions. Additionally, 125, or 22 percent of the total 562 parcels were identified as being in "poor" condition. This represents a total of 73 percent of the total 562 parcels as being in "fair" or "poor" condition.

The majority of the developed areas of Redevelopment Area #5, according to City Utilities Departments, have water and sanitary sewer mains that generally range in age from 75 to 90 years of age, or older. Water mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are predominantly 4" in diameter. Current utility standards recommend no smaller than 6" diameter mains for adequate pressure for fire protection, as well as service needs in residential areas. Commercial and industrial areas recommended to have no smaller than 8" water mains. Sewer mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are adequately sized, however, age and condition are of primary concern. Cedar and High Streets have been recently upgraded to 6" and 8" mains respectively, but the City of Lexington has no current plans to replace any other mains throughout the Redevelopment Area. Lastly, vacant agricultural areas southwest of the Walnut and Adams Street intersection have no municipal utilities.

Conclusion

The Inadequate Provision for Ventilation, Light, Air, Sanitation or Open Spaces in the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 is strongly sufficient to constitute a substandard factor.

4) **The Existence of Conditions Which Endanger Life or Property by Fire and Other Causes**

1. **Frame Buildings**

There were wood-framed buildings with wooden structural elements, throughout the Redevelopment Area, in need of structural repair and/or fire protection. An estimated 60 percent of these buildings have been determined to be deteriorating or dilapidated. Additionally, the Field Survey identified that approximately 226 (or 42 percent) of the 537 total structures have substandard porches, steps and fire escapes.

2. **Limitations of Gravel Surfaced Streets.**

Conditions that are detrimental to the development potential of the Redevelopment Area are gravel surfaced streets with open storm water ditches. The majority of parcels in the mobile homes courts north of Walnut Street and west of Adams Street in the northwest portion of the Redevelopment Area, 127 (22.6 percent) front on gravel surfaced streets. Ambient dust, inclement weather and pests and vermin in the storm water ditches are all hazardous to area residents.

3. **Lack of Adequate Utilities**

The majority of the developed areas of Redevelopment Area #5, according to City Utilities Departments, have water and sanitary sewer mains that generally range in age from 75 to 90 years of age, or older. Water mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are predominantly 4" in diameter. Current utility standards recommend no smaller than 6" diameter mains for adequate pressure for fire protection, as well as service needs in residential areas. Commercial and industrial areas recommended to have no smaller than 8" water mains. Sewer mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are adequately sized, however, age and condition are of primary concern. Cedar and High Streets have been recently upgraded to 6" and 8" mains respectively, but the City of Lexington has no current plans to replace any other mains throughout the Redevelopment Area. Lastly, vacant agricultural areas southwest of the Walnut and Adams Street intersection have no municipal utilities.

Specific data relating to the Redevelopment Area is discussed in the following.

Minor and major debris located on 218 parcels (39 percent) is significant and poses a potential fire hazard, as well as a place to harbor pests, which can be detrimental to the public's overall health and safety.

Approximately 77 percent of the structures, in the Redevelopment Area, were built prior to 1966, thus 40+ years of age. There are masonry buildings with wooden structural elements, located throughout the Area, in need of structural repair or fire protection. Several of these buildings have been determined to be deteriorating or dilapidated.

Overall site conditions at properties throughout the Redevelopment Area were generally found to be in "fair" condition. The Field Survey determined that 285 parcels, or 51 percent of the total 562 parcels, are in "fair" condition, while 125 parcels (22 percent) were determined to be in "poor" condition. This overall condition rating included the evaluation of the general condition of structures and road and site improvements.

Conclusion

The conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes are strongly present throughout the Redevelopment Area.

BLIGHT FACTORS

(1) Dilapidation/Deterioration of Structures

The rating of building conditions is a critical step in determining the eligibility of a substandard area for redevelopment. The system for classifying buildings must be based on established evaluation standards and criteria and result in an accurate and consistent description of existing conditions.

This section summarizes the process used for assessing building conditions in the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5, the standards and criteria used for evaluation and the findings as to the existence of dilapidation/deterioration of structures.

The building condition analysis was based on an exterior inspection of all **537** existing structures, within the Redevelopment Area, to note structural deficiencies in individual buildings and to identify related environmental deficiencies for individual sites or parcels within the area.

1. Structures/Building Systems Evaluation

During the on-site field analysis, each component of a structure/building was examined to determine whether it was in sound condition or has minor, major, or critical defects. Structures/building systems to be examined will include the following three types, **one Primary** and **two Secondary**.

Structural Systems (Primary Components). These include the basic elements of any structure/building: roof structure, wall foundation, and basement foundation.

(Secondary Components)

Building Systems. These components include: roof surface condition, chimney, gutters/down spouts, and exterior wall surface.

Architectural Systems. These are components generally added to the structural systems and are necessary parts of the structure/building, including exterior paint, doors, windows, porches, steps, and fire escape, and driveways and site conditions.

The evaluation of each individual parcel of land includes the review and evaluation of: adjacent land use, street surface type, street conditions, sidewalk conditions, parking, railroad track/right-of-way composition, existence of debris, existence of vagrants, and overall site condition, and the documentation of age and type of structure/building.

2. **Criteria for Rating Components for Structural, Building and Architectural Systems**

The components for the previously identified Systems, are individually rated utilizing the following criteria.

Sound. Component that contained no defects, is adequately maintained, and requires no treatment outside of normal ongoing maintenance.

Minor - Defect. Component that contained minor defects (loose or missing material or holes and cracks over a limited area) which often can be corrected through the course of normal maintenance. The correction of such defects may be accomplished by the owner or occupants, such as pointing masonry joints over a limited area or replacement of less complicated systems. Minor defects are considered in rating a structure/building as deteriorating/dilapidated.

Major - Defect. Components that contained major defects over a over a widespread area and would be difficult to correct through normal maintenance. Structures/buildings having major defects would require replacement or rebuilding of systems by people skilled in the building trades.

Critical Defect. Components that contained critical defects (bowing, sagging, or settling to any or all exterior systems causing the structure to be out-of-plumb, or broken, loose or missing material and deterioration over a widespread area) so extensive the cost of repairs would be excessive in relation to the value returned on the investment.

3. Final Structure/Building Rating

After completion of the **Exterior Rating** of each structure/building, each individual structure/building was placed in one of four categories, based on the combination of defects found with Components contained in Structural, Building and Architectural Systems. Each final rating is described below:

Sound. Defined as structures/buildings that can be kept in a standard condition with normal maintenance. Structures/buildings, so classified, **have less than six points.**

Deficient-Minor. Defined as structures/buildings classified as deficient--requiring minor repairs--**having between six and 10 points.**

Deteriorating. Defined as structures/buildings classified as deficient--requiring major repairs-- **having between 11 and 20 points.**

Dilapidated. Defined as structurally substandard structures/buildings containing defects that are so serious and so extensive that it may be most economical to raze the structure/building. Structures/buildings classified as dilapidated will **have at least 21 points.**

An individual *Exterior Rating form* is completed for each structure/building. The results of the *Exterior Rating* of all structures/buildings are presented in a *Table format*.

Primary Components	Secondary Components
One Critical = 11 pts	One Critical = 6pts
Major Deteriorating = 6 pts	Major Deteriorating = 3pts
Minor = 2 pts	Minor = 1 pt

Major deficient buildings are considered to be the same as deteriorating buildings as referenced in the Nebraska legislation; substandard buildings are the same as dilapidated buildings. The word "building" and "structure" are presumed to be interchangeable.

4. Field Survey Conclusions

The condition of the total 537 buildings within the Redevelopment Area were determined based on the finding of the exterior survey. These surveys indicated the following:

- One-Hundred Twenty-Five (125) structures were classified as structurally sound;
- Ninety (90) structures were classified as deteriorating with minor defects.
- One-Hundred Fifty-Four (154) structures were classified as deteriorating with major defects; and
- One-Hundred Sixty-Eight (168) structures were classified as substandard.

The results of the Exterior Structural Survey identified the conditions of the structures, throughout the Redevelopment Area. A total of 322 (60 percent) of the total 537 structures, within the Area, are either deteriorating or dilapidated to a substandard condition.

Conclusion

The results of the Structural Condition Survey indicates Deteriorating Structures are present to a strong extent throughout the Redevelopment Area. Table 5 identifies the results of the structural rating process per building type.

**TABLE 5
EXTERIOR SURVEY FINDINGS
REDEVELOPMENT AREA #5
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA**

Exterior Structural Rating

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Sound</u>	<u>Deficient (Minor)</u>	<u>Deteriorating</u>	<u>Dilapidated</u>	<u>Number of Structures</u>	<u>Deteriorating and/or Dilapidated</u>
Single Family	103	73	140	158	474	298
Commercial	8	1	5	1	15	6
Industrial	7	8	7	4	26	11
<u>Other</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>7</u>
Totals	125	90	154	168	537	322
Percent	23.3%	16.8%	28.7%	31.3%	100.0%	60.0%

Source: Hanna:Keelan Associates, P.C., 2006

(2) Existence of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout

The developed portions of Redevelopment Area #5, or generally areas included within the Corporate Limit of Lexington, consist of a standard rectilinear grid system, of mostly hard surfaced roads throughout the incorporated areas of the Community. Walnut Street is the primary east/west Street, while Adams, Madison, and the Plum Creek Parkway (its west line is the east boundary of the Redevelopment Area) are the main north/south corridors that service the Redevelopment area. Major problem conditions that contribute to the factor of existence of defective or inadequate street layout are discussed below.

1. Lack of Sidewalks

Sidewalks are not present in nearly 23 percent, or 126 of the total 537 structures, as determined by the parcel-to-parcel Field Survey. The lack of sidewalks subjects pedestrians to unwarranted conflict with vehicular traffic. Future development along the Highway corridor will intensify the need for pedestrian friendly sidewalks.

2. Street condition

The field survey revealed that the highest concentration of gravel surfaced streets, with open storm water drainage ditches, are present in the northwestern portion of the Redevelopment Area. These conditions respectively generate heavy dust clouds and ambient dust conditions, or harbor pests and vermin detrimental to health and human safety. Overall, 127 parcels, 22.6 percent of the total 562 parcels, front on gravel surfaced streets. Future development in the Area will require road improvements, especially in the areas with mobile homes and trailers, which are concentrated in the northwest portion of the Redevelopment Area.

3. Pedestrian vehicular movement conflicts

Vehicular traffic along Washington Street and the Plum Creek Parkway (Highway 283) commercial corridor in the east, and Adams Street in the west portion of the Redevelopment Area, support high volumes of traffic. The main east/west street, Walnut Street, also was observed to have higher volumes of automotive traffic, negatively impacting the ability of pedestrians to travel across the Redevelopment Area. Pedestrians crossing these main corridors to employment centers, or to highway commercial uses, are hindered by traffic traveling at speeds in excess of posted limits.

Conclusion

The Existence of Defective or Inadequate Street Layout in the Lexington Redevelopment Area is present to a reasonable degree and constitutes a blighting factor.

(3) **Faulty Lot Layout in Relation to Size, Adequacy, Accessibility or Usefulness**

Building use and condition surveys, the review of property ownership and subdivision records and field surveys resulted in the identification of conditions associated with faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy and accessibility, or usefulness of land within the Redevelopment Area. The problem conditions include:

1. **Inadequate Lot Size.**

A variety of lot sizes and configurations are present throughout the Redevelopment Area. The diagonal, Union Pacific Railroad corridor, serves as the northern boundary of the Redevelopment Area. As a result, individual parcels abutting the corridor are triangular shaped, further complicating the use, adequacy and accessibility of the individual parcels.

Dimensions of individual parcels within the Redevelopment Area range in size from 50' x 140' to 57' x 140', and in several instances, entire half (300' x 140') or full (300' x 300') blocks remain un-platted as irregular tracts. Furthermore, the portion of the Redevelopment Area located between Washington and Madison Streets, from Walnut Street north to the railway corridor, is platted into a series of blocks that are irregular tracts, some with individual lots of record as small as 50' x 140', however, these individual lots are only identified as irregular tracts, or parcels.

Three blocks within the Fairacres Addition are all impacted by a curvilinear street that connects the intersection of Ash Street and the Plum Creek Parkway to the intersection of Washington and Walnut Streets. This curvilinear street results in a series of triangular lots and very small (100' x 75'), or very large (3+ acre) tracts of land that have not been conducive to development. Existing commercial, industrial and residential uses have generally acquired multiple lots to facilitate their needs.

2. **Limited Accessibility**

Only Adams Street (Highway 21) and the Plum Creek Parkway provide vehicular and pedestrian access, via overpasses of the Union Pacific Railroad and Highway 30 corridor. A new pedestrian bridge also traverses the corridor at Madison Street. All other at grade crossings of the railroad and highway corridor are closed to pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Likewise, the Adam Street and Plum Creek Parkway corridors tend to limit crossings due to high volumes of traffic.

Conclusion

Problems relating to Faulty Lot Layout are present to a strong extent in the Redevelopment Area.

(4) Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions

The results of the area-wide Field Survey, along with information retained from City Officials provided the basis for the identification of insanitary and unsafe conditions within the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5.

1. Age of Structure

The analysis of all 537 structures, in the Redevelopment Area, identified approximately 76 percent of the structures as being 40+ years of age, built prior to 1966. This results in the potential for deteriorating buildings.

2. Deteriorating Buildings

The deteriorating or dilapidated conditions cited in this Study were prevalent in 322 (60 percent) of the existing structures. The structures in this condition can result in hazards which endanger adjacent properties.

3. Existence of Debris

218 parcels (39 percent) of the total 562 parcels were found to have excessive debris. These structures and adjacent areas with debris can harbor pests and vermin, as well as be a threat to the health, safety and welfare of trespassers. The existence of these areas with excessive debris are a detriment to the appearance and development potentials of the Redevelopment Area.

4. Age of Water and Sanitary Sewer Systems

The majority of the developed areas of Redevelopment Area #5, according to City Utilities Departments, have water and sanitary sewer mains that generally range in age from 75 to 90 years of age, or older. Water mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are predominantly 4" in diameter. Current utility standards recommend no smaller than 6" diameter mains for adequate pressure for fire protection, as well as service needs in residential areas. Commercial and industrial areas recommended to have no smaller than 8" water mains. Sewer mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are adequately sized, however, age and condition are of primary concern. Cedar and High Streets have been recently upgraded to 6" and 8" mains respectively, but the City of Lexington has no current plans to replace any other mains throughout the Redevelopment Area. Lastly, vacant agricultural areas southwest of the Walnut and Adams Street intersection have no municipal utilities.

Conclusion

Insanitary and Unsafe Conditions are present to a strong extent throughout the Redevelopment Area.

(5) Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements

Field observations were conducted to determine the condition of site improvements within the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5, including municipal streets and alleys, storm water drainage ditches, traffic control devices and off-street parking. The **Appendix** documents the present condition of these site features. The primary problems in the Redevelopment Area are age and condition of public utilities, debris and inadequate public improvements.

A total of 285, or 50.7 percent of the total 562 parcels within the Redevelopment Area received an overall site condition rating of "fair", while 125 parcels (22.2 percent) received a "poor" rating. Conditions that lead to these findings included:

- A total of 126 (22.4 percent) of the parcels lacked sidewalks and a total of 142 (25 percent) of parcels fronted on streets that were in fair or poor condition.
- The Field Survey identified 222 (39.5 percent) of the total 562 parcels as having parking areas that were gravel or dirt surfaced. While 127 (22.6 percent) of the total parcels fronted on streets that are gravel surfaced and generally in "fair" (20, or 3.6%) or "poor" (122, or 21.7%) condition.
- Lastly, 154 (28.7 percent) of the total 537 structures were identified as deteriorating and 168, or 31.3 percent of the structures were found to be dilapidated. Together, these structures amount to significantly more than half of the buildings (60 percent) throughout Redevelopment Area #5, as being in need of rehabilitation, or, potentially if too dilapidated and cost prohibitive to restore, considered for demolition and replacement.

Conclusion

Deterioration of Site or Other Improvements is present to a strong extent in the Redevelopment Area.

(6) Diversity of Ownership

The total number of unduplicated owners within the Redevelopment Area, is estimated to be 447 individuals, partnerships or corporations. This diversity is established on a block-by-block basis. The number of owners within developed portions of Redevelopment Area #5 range from one to 18 owners per platted City Block or unified area. The central portion of the Redevelopment Area contains the largest number of owners per block, which is typical of a early to mid 1900's residential neighborhood. Large tracts of vacant agricultural lands to the west and southwest portions of the Redevelopment Area, however, generally have only one owner of record.

There are several publicly owned lands within the Redevelopment Area and when considered in combination with Lexington streets, alleys associated local public right-of-ways, they utilize significant portions of land.

The necessity to acquire numerous lots is a hindrance to redevelopment, especially in the developed portion of the Redevelopment Area, especially the commercial corridors. However, land assemblage of larger proportions is necessary for major developments, is more economically feasible and will attract financial support, as well as public patronage required to repay such financial support. Such assemblage is difficult without public intervention.

Conclusion

Problems resulting from Diversity of Ownership are of strong presence in the Redevelopment Area.

(7) **Tax or Special Assessment Delinquency Exceeding the Fair Value of the Land**

A thorough examination of public records was conducted to determine the status of taxation of properties located in the Redevelopment Area. It should be noted, real estate is taxed at approximately 98 percent of fair value, rendering it almost impossible for a tax to exceed value in a steady real estate market. If a badly dilapidated property was assessed/valued too high, a public protest system is designed to give the owner appropriate relief and tax adjustment.

1. **Real estate taxes.**

Public records were examined for the purposes of determining if delinquent taxes currently outstanding on parcels within the Redevelopment Area. The records indicated that **26 of the parcels were classified as delinquent** by Dawson County.

2. **Real Estate Taxes**

The tax values within the Redevelopment Area generally appeared to be equal to or greater than the market value of the properties.

3. **Tax Exempt**

Several tax exempt properties exist throughout the Redevelopment Area, approximately **20 single or multiple lot areas** are identified by the Dawson County Assessor and Treasurers Offices. Additionally, 29 residential properties have either partial or full Homestead Exemption status.

Conclusion

Examination and analysis of public records, leads to the conclusion that Taxes or Special Assessments Delinquency were of no presence of factor throughout the Redevelopment Area.

(8) Defective or Unusual Condition of Title

Whenever land is sold, mortgaged, or both, a title insurance policy is typically issued, at which time any title defects corrected. Once title insurance has been written, all other titles in the same subdivision or addition will only have to be checked for the period of time subsequent to the creation of the addition or subdivision, as everything previous is the same and any defects will already have been corrected. Thus, the only possibility for title problems are from improper filings, since platting on properties that have not been mortgaged or sold is very small. Thus, the only possibility for title problems are from improper filing, since platting on properties that have not been mortgaged or sold is very small.

Conclusion

Examination of public records does not provide any basis for identifying any Defective or Unusual Conditions of Title. Such few conditions as may exist would contribute to neither any existing problems nor to difficulty in acquisition or redevelopment and are therefore not found to exist at a level nearly large enough to constitute a blighted factor in the Redevelopment Area.

(9) Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting

An in-depth analysis of the subdivision conditions in the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 indicates that improper subdivision and obsolete platting is prevalent throughout the Redevelopment Area.

A substantial number of parcels exist, throughout the Redevelopment Area, that are either 50' x 140' (7,000 sq.ft.) or corner lots that are 57' x 140' (7,980 sq.ft.) Individual lot sizes of these acreages were intended for early to mid 1900's single family residential development. Residential development standards by current development trends dictate individual lot sizes of at least 75' to 100' property widths, with a depth of approximately 100', if not larger, or nearly 10,000 square feet lot area.

Substandard or obsolete platting also exists in areas within the Corporate Limit, such as in the eight block area bound by Washington and Madison, from Walnut to the Union Pacific Railroad corridor. Although divided into individual blocks, none of block areas have been platted with individual lots. Several of the blocks have been separated into smaller parcels of varying widths, all are identified as irregular tracts. However, entire half or whole blocks exist where only one tract is identified, but many individual dwellings have been constructed. This indicates that these parcels only exist by meets and bounds descriptions and not platted lots of record. This makes redevelopment efforts extremely difficult, due to the need to assemble multiple lots of record from many different land owners, without platted ownership.

Beyond the current Corporate Limit Line, southwest of the intersection of Adams Street (Highway 23) and Walnut Street, an approximate 66 acre land area is primarily utilized for agricultural production, with the exception of an approximate one acre farmstead. As future development is proposed for this southwest region, annexation must occur prior to the use of Tax Increment Financing as an incentive for development. Over the past several years, no residential subdivisions have been platted or proposed for development, thus further expansion of the City west of Adams and south of Walnut Streets has been curtailed.

The above referenced issues are inhibiting factors to development and redevelopment efforts throughout Redevelopment Area #5. Inadequately sized parcels and development without regard for existing platted subdivisions has and will continue to inhibit development without publicly supported programs that provide incentives for reinvestment in this Area.

Conclusion

A strong presence of Improper Subdivision or Obsolete Platting exists throughout the Redevelopment Area.

(10) **The Existence of Conditions Which Endanger Life or Property by Fire and Other Causes**

1. Frame Buildings

There were wood-framed buildings with wooden structural elements, throughout the Redevelopment Area, in need of structural repair and/or fire protection. An estimated 60 percent of these buildings have been determined to be deteriorating or dilapidated. Additionally, the field survey identified that approximately 226 (or 42 percent) of the 537 total structures have substandard porches, steps and fire escapes.

2. Limitations of Gravel Surfaced Streets.

Conditions that are detrimental to the development potential of the Redevelopment Area are gravel surfaced streets with open storm water ditches. The majority of parcels in the mobile homes courts north of Walnut Street and west of Adams Street in the northwest portion of the Redevelopment Area, 127 (22.6 percent) front on gravel surfaced streets. Ambient dust, inclement weather and pests and vermin in the storm water ditches are all hazardous to area residents.

3. Lack of Adequate Utilities

The majority of the developed parcels in Redevelopment Area #5, according to City Utilities Departments, have water and sanitary sewer mains that generally range in age from 75 to 90 years of age, or older. Water mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are predominantly 4" in diameter. Current utility standards recommend no smaller than 6" diameter mains for adequate pressure for fire protection, as well as service needs in residential areas. Commercial and industrial areas recommended to have no smaller than 8" water mains. Sewer mains throughout the Redevelopment Area are adequately sized, however, age and condition are of primary concern. Cedar and High Streets have been recently upgraded to 6" and 8" mains respectively, but the City of Lexington has no current plans to replace any other mains throughout the Redevelopment Area. Lastly, vacant agricultural areas southwest of the Walnut and Adams Street intersection have no municipal utilities.

Specific data relating to the Redevelopment Area is discussed in the following paragraphs.

Minor and major debris located on 218 parcels (39 percent) is significant and poses a potential fire hazard, as well as a place to harbor pests, which can be detrimental to the public's overall health and safety.

Approximately 77 percent of the structures, in the Redevelopment Area, were built prior to 1966, thus 40+ years of age. There are masonry buildings with wooden structural elements, located throughout the Area, in need of structural repair or fire protection. Several of these buildings have been determined to be deteriorating or dilapidated.

Overall site conditions at properties throughout the Redevelopment Area were generally found to be in "fair" condition. The Field Survey determined that 285 parcels, or 51 percent of the total 562 parcels, are in "fair" condition, while 125 parcels (22 percent) were determined to be in "poor" condition. This overall condition rating included the evaluation of the general condition of structures and road and site improvements.

Conclusion

The Conditions Which Endanger Life or Property by Fire and Other Causes are strongly present throughout the Redevelopment Area.

(11) Other Environmental and Blighting Factors

The Nebraska Community Development Law includes in its statement of purpose an additional criterion for identifying blight, viz., "economically or socially undesirable land uses." Conditions which are considered to be economically and/or socially undesirable include: (a) incompatible uses or mixed-use relationships, (b) economic obsolescence, and c) functional obsolescence. For purpose of this analysis, functional obsolescence relates to the physical utility of a structure and economic obsolescence relates to a property's ability to compete in the market place. These two definitions are interrelated and complement each other.

Several public improvements have occurred within the Redevelopment Area, in the past several years. Additional efforts are needed. Without some type of public assistance and coordination of effort, a difficult challenge will be rendered for future private projects to be successful ventures. Numerous problems or obstacles exist for comprehensive redevelopment efforts by the private sector in the project area; problems that only public assistance programs can help remedy. These include removal of substantially dilapidated structures, mixed/nonconforming land uses, and developed neighborhoods with gravel surfaced streets and open storm water drainage ditches. These types of programs are proven stimulants to the creation of successful developments.

The new Adams Street (Highway 21) overpass greatly enhances both vehicular and pedestrian safety, when crossing the Highway 30 and Union Pacific Railroad corridor. Although several other at grade crossings were closed between Adams Street and the Plum Creek Parkway, a new pedestrian bridge was also installed at the Madison Street crossing. Due to the approximately 170 trains per day that utilize the Union Pacific corridor, these new overpasses have improved safe access to the northern portion of Lexington.

Conclusion

Other Environmental and Blighted Factors are present to a reasonable extent throughout the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5. The Redevelopment Area contains a fair amount of functionally obsolete structures and a variety of mixed/nonconforming land uses.

(12) Additional Blighting Conditions

According to the definition set forth in the Nebraska Community Development Law, Section 18-2102, in order for an area to be determined "blighted" it must (1) meet the eleven criteria by reason of presence and (2) contain at least one of the five conditions identified below:

1. Unemployment in the designated blighted and substandard area is at least one hundred twenty percent of the state or national average;
2. The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty years;
3. More than half of the plotted and subdivided property in the area is unimproved land that has been within the City for forty years and has remained unimproved during that time;
4. The per capita income of the designated blighted and substandard area is lower than the average per capita income of the City or City in which the area is designated; or
5. The area has had either stable or decreasing population based on the last two decennial censuses.

One of the aforementioned criteria is prevalent throughout the designated blighted areas.

The average age of the residential or commercial units in the area is at least forty (40) years.

According to the Field Survey, **the estimated average age of the residential structures is 70.9 years of age**, while the average age of commercial structures is 51.3 years of age.

Conclusion

The criteria of One of Five Additional Blighting Conditions is average age of residential units is over 40 years of age and is strongly present throughout the Lexington Redevelopment Area #5.

DETERMINATION OF REDEVELOPMENT AREA ELIGIBILITY

The Lexington Redevelopment Area #5 meets the requirements of the Nebraska Community Development Law for designation as both a "blighted and substandard area." There is at least a reasonable distribution of all **four** Factors that constitute an area as Substandard in the Redevelopment Area . Of the 12 possible Factors that can constitute an area Blighted, **10** are at least reasonably present in the Area. Factors present in each of the criteria are identified below.

Substandard Factors

1. Dilapidated/deterioration.
2. Age or obsolescence.
3. Inadequate provision for ventilation, light, air, sanitation, or open spaces.
4. Existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire and other causes.

Blighted Factors

1. A substantial number of deteriorated or deteriorating structures.
2. Existence of defective or inadequate street layout.
3. Faulty lot layout in relation to size, adequacy, accessibility or usefulness.
4. Insanitary or unsafe conditions.
5. Deterioration of site or other improvements.
6. Diversity of Ownership
7. Improper subdivision or obsolete platting.
8. The existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes.
9. Other environmental and blighting factors.
10. One of the other five conditions.

Although all of the previously listed factors are reasonably present throughout the Redevelopment Area, the conclusion is that the average age of the structures, insanitary and unsafe conditions, lack of modern infrastructure systems, deterioration of site or other improvements and the existence of conditions which endanger life or property by fire or other causes are a sufficient basis for designation of the Redevelopment Area as blighted and substandard.

The extent of Blight and Substandard Factors for Redevelopment Area #5 addressed in this document are presented in **Tables 1 and 2**, located on Pages 6 and 8 respectively. The eligibility findings indicate the Redevelopment Area is in need of revitalization and strengthening to ensure it will contribute to the physical, economic and social well-being of the City of Lexington and support any value added developments. Indications are, the Area, on the whole, has not been subject to comprehensive, sufficient growth and development through investment by the private sector nor would the areas be reasonably anticipated to be developed without public action or public intervention.

APPENDIX

**Structural/Site Conditions
Survey Form**

Parcel # _____
Address: _____

Section I:

1. Type of Units: ___ SF ___ MF ___ Mixed Use ___ Duplex ___ No. of Units
 2. Units: _____ Under construction/rehab _____ For Sale _____ Both
 3. Vacant Units: _____ Inhabitable _____ Uninhabitable
 4. Vacant Parcel: _____ Developable _____ Undevelopable
 5. Non-residential Use: _____ Commercial _____ Industrial _____ Public
 _____ Other/Specify: _____

Section II: Structural Components

	Primary Components	(Critical) Dilapidated	(Major) Deteriorating	Minor	None	Sound
1	Roof					
2	Wall Foundation					
3	Foundation					
	___ Concrete ___ Stone ___ Rolled Asphalt ___ Brick ___ Other					
	Secondary Components	(Critical) Dilapidated	(Major) Deteriorating	Minor	None	Sound
4	Roof					
	___ Asphalt Shingles ___ Rolled Asphalt ___ Cedar ___ Combination ___ Other					
5	Chimney					
6	Gutters, Downspouts					
7	Wall Surface					
	___ Frame ___ Masonry ___ Siding ___ Combination ___ Stucco ___ Other					
8	Paint					
9	Doors					
10	Windows					
11	Porches, Steps, Fire Escape					
12	Driveways, Side Condition					

Final Rating:

_____ Sound _____ Deficient-Minor _____ Deteriorating _____ Dilapidated
Built Within: _____ 1 year _____ 1-5 years _____ 5-10 years
 _____ 10-20 years _____ 20-40 years _____ 40-100 years _____ 100+ years

Section III: Revitalization Area

1. Adjacent Land Usage: _____
 2. Street Surface Type: _____
 3. Street Condition: _____ E _____ G _____ F _____ P
 4. Sidewalk Condition: _____ N _____ E _____ G _____ F _____ P
 5. Parking (Off-Street): _____ N _____ # of Spaces _____ Surface
 6. Railroad Track/Right-of Way Composition: _____ N _____ E _____ G _____ F _____ P
 7. Existence of Debris: _____ MA _____ MI _____ N
 8. Existence of Vagrants: _____ MA _____ MI _____ N
 9. Overall Site Condition: _____ E _____ G _____ F _____ P

CITY OF LEXINGTON

TOTAL PERCENT RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL VACANT OTHER

AGE OF STRUCTURE

1-5 years	5	0.9%	1	1	3	NA	0
5-10 years	11	2.0%	6	2	1	NA	2
10-20 years	19	3.5%	11	1	2	NA	5
20-40 years	90	16.8%	70	3	3	NA	14
40-100 years	391	72.8%	365	8	17	NA	1
100+ years	21	3.9%	21	0	0	NA	0
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26	NA	22

FINAL STRUCTURAL RATING

sound	125	23.3%	103	8	7	NA	7
deficient minor	90	16.8%	73	1	8	NA	8
deteriorating	154	28.7%	140	5	7	NA	2
dilapidated	168	31.3%	158	1	4	NA	5
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26	NA	22

STREET CONDITION

none	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0
excellent	306	54.4%	273	2	7	14	10
good	114	20.3%	84	12	11	5	2
fair	20	3.6%	7	0	4	2	7
poor	122	21.7%	110	1	4	3	4
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

SIDEWALK CONDITION

none	126	22.4%	85	10	12	8	11
excellent	10	1.8%	10	0	0	0	0
good	156	27.8%	147	0	0	5	4
fair	215	38.3%	198	2	4	7	4
poor	55	9.8%	34	3	10	4	4
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

DEBRIS

major	44	7.8%	33	0	9	1	1
minor	174	31.0%	152	3	11	3	5
none	344	61.2%	289	12	6	20	17
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

OVERALL SITE CONDITION

excellent	15	2.7%	12	1	0	2	0
good	137	24.4%	118	4	0	11	4
fair	285	50.7%	246	9	6	9	15
poor	125	22.2%	98	1	20	2	4
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

CITY OF LEXINGTON

TOTAL PERCENT RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL VACANT OTHER

DOORS

sound	334	62.2%	295	14	14	N/A	11
none	0	0.0%	0	0	0	N/A	0
minor	103	19.2%	90	1	6	N/A	6
substandard	87	16.2%	78	0	4	N/A	5
critical	13	2.4%	11	0	2	N/A	0
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

WINDOWS

sound	289	53.8%	265	13	4	N/A	7
none	26	4.8%	1	1	17	N/A	7
minor	102	19.0%	94	1	1	N/A	6
substandard	100	18.6%	96	0	3	N/A	1
critical	20	3.7%	18	0	1	N/A	1
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

STREET TYPE

none	1	0.2%	1	0	0	0	0
concrete	400	71.2%	342	13	13	18	14
asphalt	34	6.0%	22	2	6	2	2
gravel	127	22.6%	109	0	7	4	7
dirt	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0
brick	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

PORCHES...

sound	145	27.0%	128	12	1	N/A	4
none	47	8.8%	6	0	24	N/A	17
minor	119	22.2%	116	2	0	N/A	1
substandard	140	26.1%	138	1	1	N/A	0
critical	86	16.0%	86	0	0	N/A	0
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

PAINT

sound	302	56.2%	276	10	11	N/A	5
none	68	12.7%	53	2	6	N/A	7
minor	76	14.2%	68	2	3	N/A	3
substandard	81	15.1%	68	1	6	N/A	6
critical	10	1.9%	9	0	0	N/A	1
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

DRIVEWAY

sound	134	25.0%	121	5	2	N/A	6
none	8	1.5%	8	0	0	N/A	0
minor	95	17.7%	89	2	1	N/A	3
substandard	205	38.2%	179	5	10	N/A	11
critical	95	17.7%	77	3	13	N/A	2
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

CITY OF LEXINGTON

TOTAL PERCENT RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL VACANT OTHER

ROOF STRUCTURE

sound	243	45.3%	199	10	19	N/A	15
none	0	0.0%	0	0	0	N/A	0
minor	147	27.4%	137	3	5	N/A	2
substandard	135	25.1%	129	2	1	N/A	3
critical	12	2.2%	9	0	1	N/A	2
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

WALL FOUNDATION

sound	190	35.4%	157	8	13	N/A	12
none	1	0.2%	1	0	0	N/A	0
minor	179	33.3%	161	5	8	N/A	5
substandard	140	26.1%	129	2	5	N/A	4
critical	27	5.0%	26	0	0	N/A	1
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

FOUNDATION

sound	212	39.5%	174	10	15	N/A	13
none	135	25.1%	135	0	0	N/A	0
minor	128	23.8%	113	4	7	N/A	4
substandard	55	10.2%	46	1	4	N/A	4
critical	7	1.3%	6	0	0	N/A	1
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

FOUNDATION TYPE

Concrete	388	72.1%	328	15	24	N/A	21
Stone	6	1.1%	6	0	0	N/A	0
Rolled Asphalt	3	0.6%	1	0	2	N/A	0
Brick	6	1.1%	5	0	0	N/A	1
Other	0	0.0%	0	0	0	N/A	0
None	135	25.1%	135	0	0	N/A	0
TOTAL	538	100.0%	475	15	26		22

ROOF SURFACE

sound	225	41.9%	186	10	18	N/A	11
none	0	0.0%	0	0	0	N/A	0
minor	175	32.6%	161	3	4	N/A	7
substandard	129	24.0%	121	2	4	N/A	2
critical	8	1.5%	6	0	0	N/A	2
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

ROOF TYPE

Asphalt Shingles	374	69.6%	351	8	1	N/A	14
Rolled Asphalt	95	17.7%	89	1	2	N/A	3
Cedar	4	0.7%	4	0	0	N/A	0
Combination	4	0.7%	1	3	0	N/A	0
Other	60	11.2%	29	3	23	N/A	5
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

CITY OF LEXINGTON

TOTAL PERCENT RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL INDUSTRIAL VACANT OTHER

CHIMNEY

sound	31	5.8%	29	1	0	N/A	1
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

GUTTER, DOWNSPOUTS

sound	115	21.4%	94	4	11	N/A	6
none	336	62.6%	300	10	14	N/A	12
minor	34	6.3%	33	0	1	N/A	0
substandard	48	8.9%	43	1	0	N/A	4
critical	4	0.7%	4	0	0	N/A	0
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

WALL SURFACE

sound	258	48.0%	226	11	11	N/A	10
none	0	0.0%	0	0	0	N/A	0
minor	148	27.6%	134	3	8	N/A	3
substandard	118	22.0%	104	1	6	N/A	7
critical	13	2.4%	10	0	1	N/A	2
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

WALL SURFACE TYPE

Frame	165	30.7%	158	3	2	N/A	2
Masonry	5	0.9%	2	1	2	N/A	0
Siding	306	57.0%	281	3	13	N/A	9
Combination	32	6.0%	18	8	1	N/A	5
Stucco	19	3.5%	10	0	3	N/A	6
Other	10	1.9%	5	0	5	N/A	0
TOTAL	537	100.0%	474	15	26		22

PARKING SURFACE

none	51	9.1%	16	1	3	23	8
concrete	279	49.6%	261	6	6	0	6
asphalt	10	1.8%	4	4	0	1	1
gravel	190	33.8%	164	4	17	0	5
dirt	32	5.7%	29	0	0	0	3
brick	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

PARKING SPACES

none	51	9.1%	16	1	3	23	8
1 to 2	467	83.1%	448	1	9	0	9
3 to 5	21	3.7%	9	3	6	1	2
6 to 10	11	2.0%	1	4	6	0	0
11 to 20	5	0.9%	0	3	2	0	0
21 or more	7	1.2%	0	3	0	0	4
TOTAL	562	100.0%	474	15	26	24	23

Lexington Redevelopment Area #5
Blight and Substandard Determination Study