

MAY 2024

GREATER WARREN/ CONNER NEIGHBORHOOD FRAMEWORK PLAN

Executive Summary

CITY OF DETROIT

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS PROJECT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE INVALUABLE CONTRIBUTIONS BY RESIDENTS AND NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS THROUGHOUT THE PLANNING PROCESS.

City of Detroit

- Planning & Development Department (PDD)
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- Detroit City Council District 4, Office of Council Member Latisha Johnson

Consulting Partners

- OHM Advisors
- Woods & Watts Effect
- livingLAB
- Spalding DeDecker
- Jumi Consulting Group



Community Partners

- 5th Precinct Police - Community Relations Council
- Brilliant Detroit
- Canfield Consortium
- Chandler Park Conservancy
- Chandler Park Neighborhood Association
- Detroit Greenways Coalition
- District 4 Community Advisory Council
- Eastside Community Network
- FCA Neighborhood Advisory Council (NAC)
- Friends of Parkside
- Good Stock Neighborhoods
- LEAP Neighborhood Improvement Committee
- Lemay Block Club / Living the Good Life Block Club
- Little Detroit Community Garden
- MACC Development
- Sanctuary Farms
- Sidewalk Detroit

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01 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The Greater Warren/Conner neighborhoods are shaped as much by their past as their aspirations. Residents have long been fighting for environmental justice due to the heavy industry and highways that have fragmented the community for decades.

The Greater Warren/Conner Neighborhood Framework Plan strives to address the needs and concerns of existing residents while serving as a guide to achieving their desired quality of life through community change. Developed by the City of Detroit in tandem with residents, this Plan serves as the community's road map toward a more resilient and equitable future.

What is a Neighborhood Framework Plan?

The Neighborhood Framework Plan is a collaborative effort between the City of Detroit and local residents, to ensure that the area thrives and the community advances alongside the rest of the city. The key recommendations across five focus areas were developed to guide community advancement. The specific recommendations in each focus area are summarized on the following pages and shown in the accompanying map.

Focus Areas



NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION



COMMERCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



MOBILITY & STREETS



PARKS & OPEN SPACE



CLIMATE RESILIENCE & HEALTH EQUITY

Building Activity through Focused Investments

The recommendations for the Greater Warren/Conner Framework Plan revolve around improving both the existing amenities and infrastructure of the neighborhoods, as well as identifying strategies to enhance the local economy, address ongoing environmental issues, and improve the overall quality of life for residents.

Given the limited amount of secured funding to implement the Plan's strategies, it is recommended that future investments are located near each other within the neighborhood. This ensures that the strategies support one another and maximize the positive impact to the area.

Future Conditions



NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION

- » Infill Housing
- » Vacant Land Activation
- » Redevelopment of Parkside Homes



COMMERCIAL & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- » Commercial Infill
- » Activation of Commercial Nodes



MOBILITY & STREETS

- » Street Safety Interventions
- » Bus Stop Improvements



PARKS & OPEN SPACE

- » Chandler Park Dome
- » Connections to Chandler Park

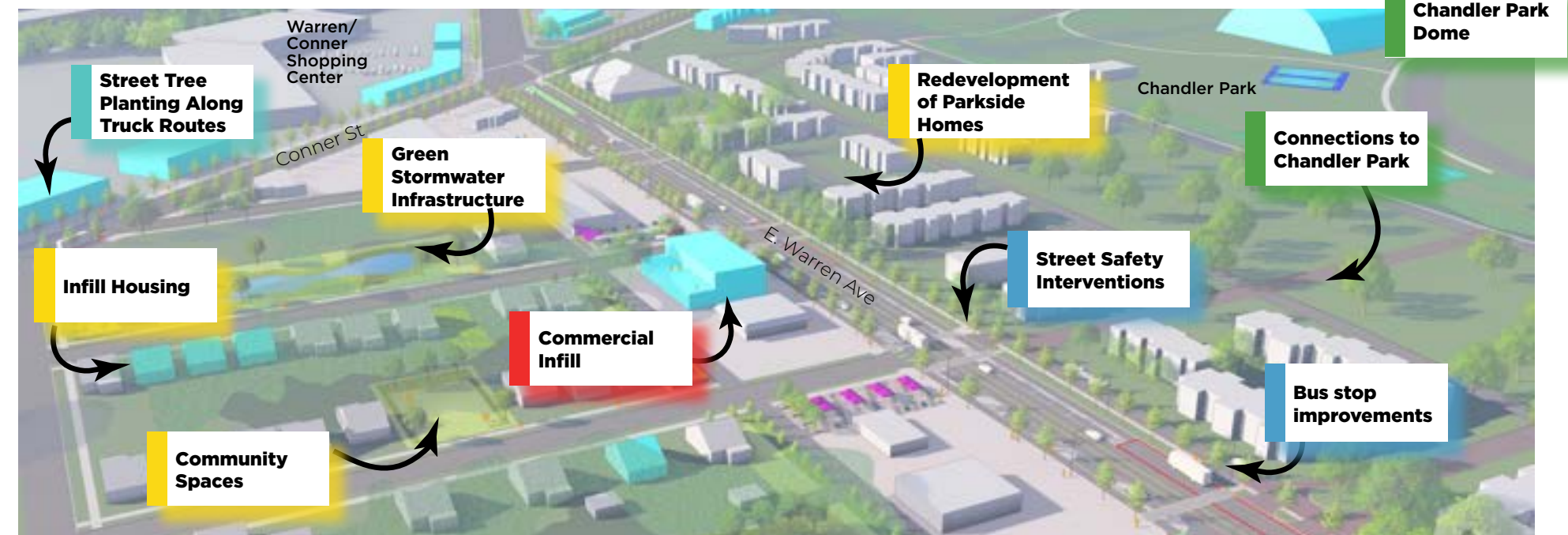


CLIMATE RESILIENCE & HEALTH EQUITY

- » Green Stormwater Infrastructure
- » Street Tree Planting Along Truck Routes



Existing conditions of E. Warren Avenue and Conner Street.



Proposed improvements at E. Warren Avenue and Conner Street.



Neighborhood Stabilization Framework Strategies



“Neighborhood Stabilization” is the process of improving the residential areas in the community through three strategies: **sustain, stabilize, and stimulate**. Each of these strategies is intended to be deployed in specific areas of the neighborhood, depending on the quality and availability of the existing housing stock, and also combined with other investments in mobility, sustainability, parks, vacant land activation, and commercial development.

The Plan’s key strategies to support Neighborhood Stabilization efforts include the following:

Focus stabilization efforts on **rehabilitating homes** within established housing markets, near neighborhood anchors and along primary commercial corridors.

Focus **commercial and retail development efforts** near these areas to ensure access to everyday goods and services.

Implement Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) initiatives on vacant parcels to alleviate and reduce flooding impact.

Support for greenway investments like the Canfield Connect, Iron Belle Trail, and Conner Creek Greenway routes in Chandler Park, East Canfield, Fox Creek, and West End will elevate desirability and value of existing properties around them.

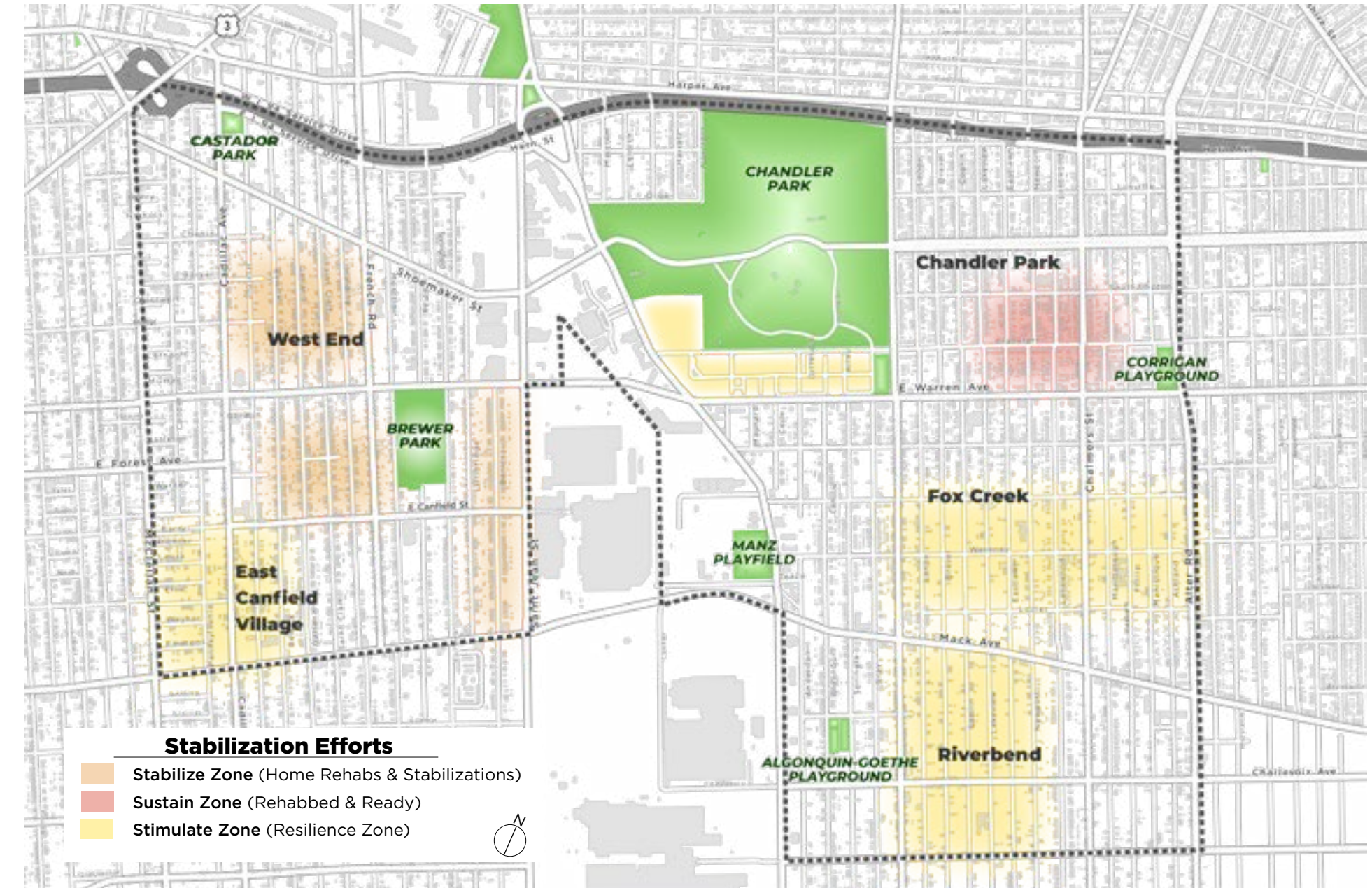
Leverage partnerships and expertise with organizations to provide additional funding and support for home repair and renovations.

Explore the possibility of a community land trust to manage targeted clusters of vacant land containing Resilience Zone land uses.

Integrate community-preferred land activation strategies to **create Resilience Zones** in suitable areas with large clusters of vacant land in Fox Creek, Riverbend, and East Canfield Villages.



Home Rehab and Stabilization Zones





SUSTAIN and STABILIZE: Residential Stabilization Zones

There are a variety of tools that the City of Detroit and its partners can use to support neighborhood stabilization efforts within Greater Warren/Conner. The proposed Rehabbed & Ready Program aims to **sustain** the Chandler Park neighborhood’s housing market by rehabilitating vacant homes to move-in ready condition, attracting homebuyers and increasing property values. In the East Canfield Village and West End neighborhoods, the **stabilize** strategy should be employed to preserve viable homes for future renovation, alongside targeted demolitions, side lot activations, and property marketing. Stabilizing existing structures and clearing blight can improve the neighborhood’s conditions in the short term and set it up for future investment, with a focused approach on single blocks recommended to maximize investment value.



Before and after of a Rehabbed and Ready home in the Cray St. Mary’s neighborhood in Northwest Detroit. Source: Curbed Detroit



STIMULATE: Resilience Zones

A major strategy of the Greater Warren/Conner Framework Plan is to establish Resilience Zones that activate publicly owned vacant land with productive uses. These areas co-locate urban farming, green stormwater infrastructure, public space, trails, and residential development to **stimulate** targeted areas in the neighborhood.



COMMUNITY PATHWAYS



COMMUNITY SPACES



COMMUNITY AGRICULTURE



LOW MOW



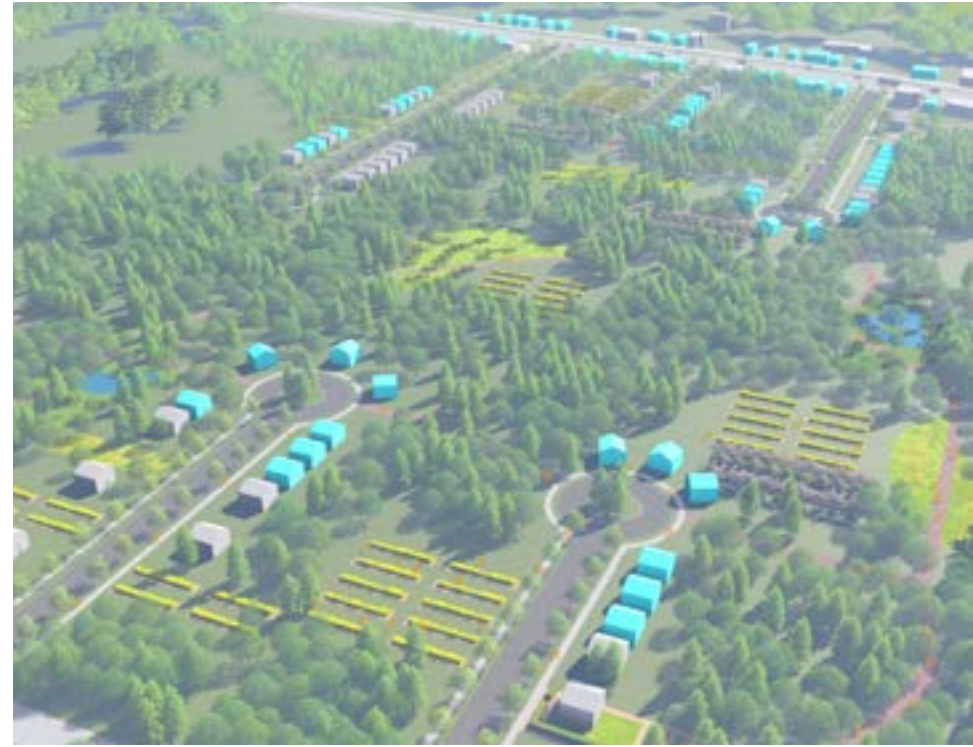
ECO+ LANDSCAPES



EDGE TREATMENTS



The vision of Resilience Zones in Greater Warren/Conner.





Commercial & Economic Development Framework Strategies



The once bustling commercial corridors in the Greater Warren/Conner neighborhood have experienced shifts due to population decline, evolving retail trends, online shopping, and economic factors. In Detroit and elsewhere, retail landscapes have transformed significantly since these neighborhoods were established. Instead of replicating extensive retail fronts, the emphasis is now on revitalizing neighborhood-focused commercial nodes, integrating essential services into a vibrant, walkable, and interconnected environment.

The Plan's key strategies to support Community and Economic Development efforts include the following:

Invest in the identified commercial nodes to establish local retail and commercial areas with services and stores that enhance the quality of life for residents.

Implement activation efforts first in primary nodes with existing business activity, then underutilized property areas, with food truck vendors, local markets, event programming, infrastructure upgrades, and landscaping enhancements.

Prepare commercial nodes to be 'redevelopment ready' through building demolition and rehabilitation, blight reduction, landscaping, and infrastructure improvements.

Re-zone former school properties slated for demolition to facilitate residential and mixed-use development compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.



Primary Nodes

CONNER STREET & E. WARREN AVENUE



MACK AVENUE & ALTER ROAD



Secondary Nodes

E. WARREN AVENUE & CHALMERS STREET



SHOEMAKER STREET & FRENCH ROAD





Mobility & Streets Framework Strategies



Streets and roads are critical pieces of infrastructure in any community. They not only provide opportunities for travel and connections, but are also vast public spaces that provide opportunities for local businesses, community interaction, and beautification. Improvements to the transportation network is focused on improving safety and connectivity for all users.

The Plan's key strategies to support Mobility efforts include the following:

Support Safe Streets for All (SS4A) initiatives and pursue funding to fill gaps in improvements.

Support pedestrian safety, accessibility, and connectivity throughout the area.

Apply safety improvements to I-94's bridges and service drive.

Plant green buffers of native vegetation for sound and pollution reduction on publicly-owned properties along the highway.

Reduce highway through-traffic on residential streets.

Implement a **new Chandler Park Drive design** to create a street that acts as both a connection through the park and as part of the park itself.

Explore the potential for a transit hub at the intersection of Conner Street and E. Warren Avenue to enhance transit use.

Coordinate bus stops improvements to include benches, bus stop signs, and route information.

Reduce the impacts of truck routes through the community with industrial buffering standards along roadways.

Proposed Improvements

CROSSING SIGNALS



CROSSWALKS



CURB BUMP OUTS



PROTECTED BIKE LANES



PAINTED BIKE LANES



PAINTED CONCRETE





Parks & Open Space Framework Strategies



Safe, active, and beautiful parks are a key feature of every great neighborhood. The Greater Warren/Conner neighborhood is fortunate to have Chandler Park nearby, one of the City's destination parks, nearby. However, the other parks and recreational assets in the neighborhood also deserve investment, including Brewer Park, the Conner Creek Greenway, and the Canfield Connect. The Parks and Open Space strategies will extend beyond the existence and maintenance of parks, to integrate gathering spaces into the everyday, nearby experience for residents in Greater Warren/Conner.

The Plan's key strategies to support Parks and Open Space efforts include the following:

Preserve park land for recreational purposes and open space through zoning changes or grants.

Implement the short-term, passive **improvements to Brewer Park** to activate the park and preserve space for future uses.

Implement the long-term **amenity and infrastructure improvements to Brewer Park** as identified in a future park master plan.

Enhance neighborhood connectivity and accessibility through a trail system, including the community-proposed Canfield Connect trail.

Ensure safe passage across Warren Avenue and improve connectivity to the neighborhoods north of Brewer Park.

Strategically enhance Iron Belle Trail visibility on Warren Avenue and **Conner Creek Greenway** on Conner Street through safety features, signage, and recreation amenities.



Brewer Park Concept Plan

Brewer Park is targeted for improvements from the General Services Department (GSD) in the future. Prior to that larger investment, initial improvements are recommended to activate the park and surrounding neighborhood.





Climate Resilience & Health Equity Framework Strategies



The Greater Warren/Conner planning area has long been negatively affected by flooding, air pollution, and urban heat, and is more vulnerable to the affects of climate change. The Plan's recommendations support the need for additional community safeguards from air pollution, environmental disasters, and the cooperative use of vacant land. These recommendations are intended to work in conjunction with the recommendations for the previous four focus areas.

The Plan's key strategies to support Climate Resilience and Health Equity efforts include the following:

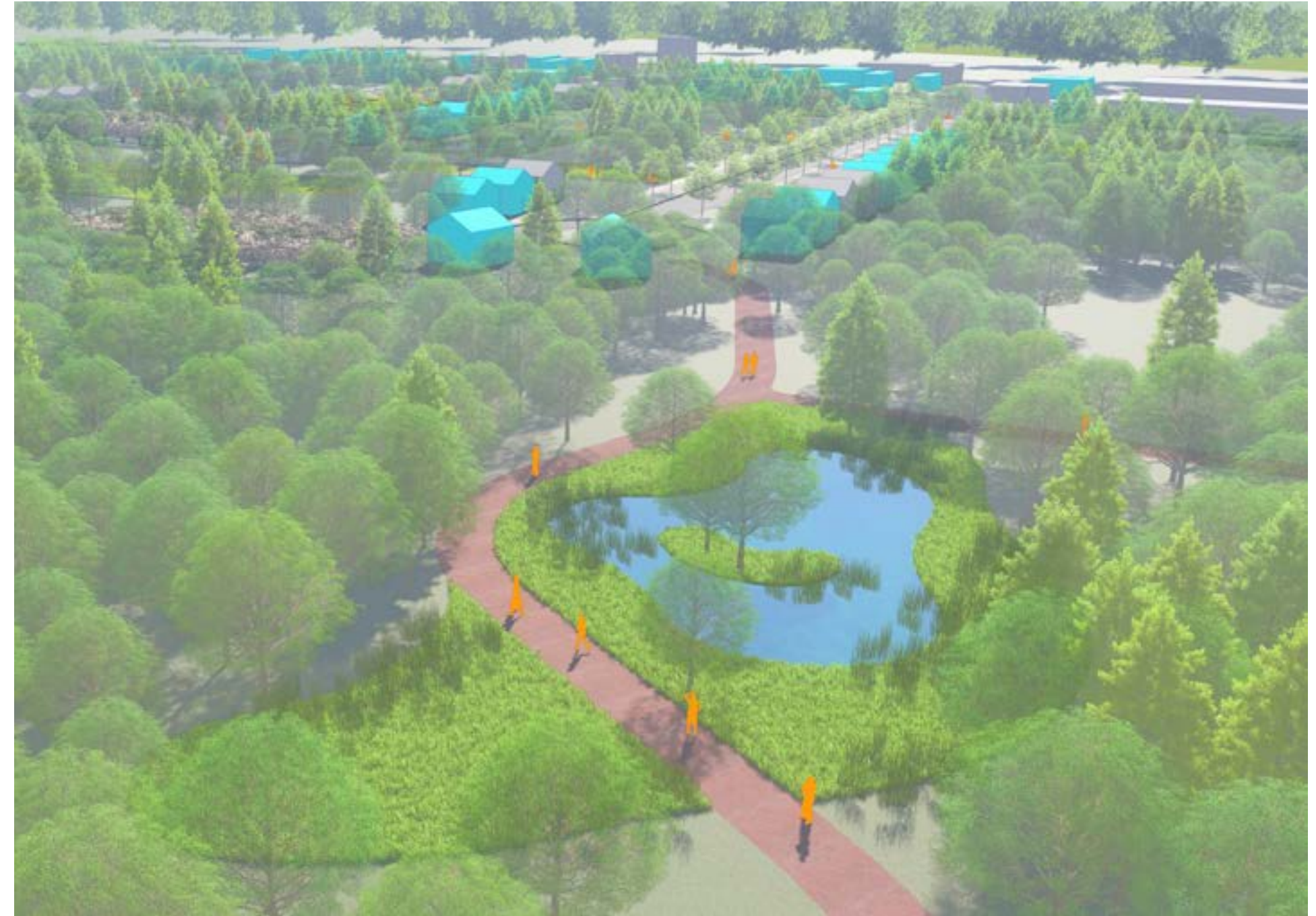
Invest in existing community buildings to provide resilience hub services.

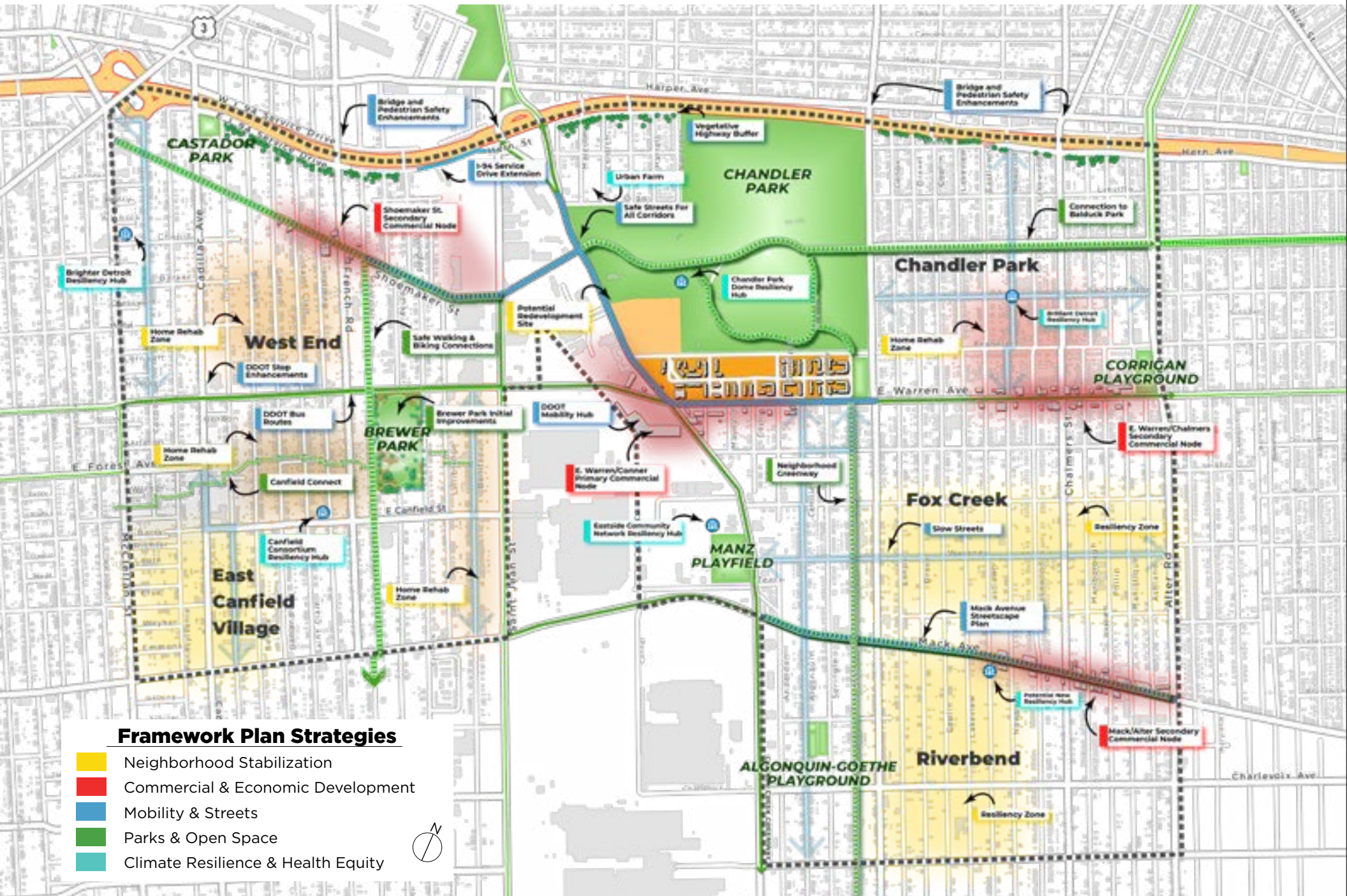
Support and **expand urban farming practices**.

Dedicate staff and funding to support **flood mitigation initiatives**, including the dedication of runoff storage space and green stormwater infrastructure.

Pursue federal, state, and local grants to monitor and reduce indoor and outdoor air pollution.

Grow and maintain the tree canopy along streets and on publicly owned property, using species suitable for filtering particulate matter and reducing air pollution.





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