

## SECTION 1: COMMUNITY TO BE SERVED BY THE ORGANIZATION

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In the summer of 2013, the Main South CDC's Board of Directors determined that the agency's CIP for the years 2014-2019 should specifically target Census Tract 2013. The rationale behind this decision was that the Main South CDC should work to strengthen development in the areas immediately to the north and south of its successful Kilby-Gardner-Hammond (KGH) revitalization project. The board believed that focusing collaborative efforts and resources within a concentrated geographic area would be the most effective strategy for producing demonstrable economic growth within an ethnically diverse and economically marginalized inner-city community.

Maps of CIP target area and associated land uses are provided as part of *Attachment 1*. The northern and eastern portions of the CIP area adjacent to the CSX rail corridor are characterized by 19th century junction shops and light industrial mill buildings that are largely run down and underutilized. The Main Street Corridor houses a large number of small, largely minority owned businesses operating out of leased premises requiring facade improvements. The area is densely developed, with 25.5 housing units per residentially zoned acre as compared to the City's density of 8.4 units per acre. In addition to contributing to a very densely settled neighborhood, the majority of these houses are old: 77.5% were built before 1940 and only 7.3% are owner occupied<sup>1</sup>. Within the CIP area, only 3.4% of the land, or 13.4 acres, is park space. Poor infrastructure, site contamination, and public safety concerns have all contributed to a continued cycle of disinvestment and decline.

The socio-ethnic breakdown of the CIP area is as follows<sup>2</sup>: 48.6% Hispanic, 30.4% Caucasian, 9.1% African American and 12.8% Asian. Eleven percent of Main South residents over the age of 25 do not consider themselves proficient in the English language. The neighborhood accounts for 6.1% of crime city-wide even though it only comprises 3.1% of the total population. The median income is \$25,625 compared to a City median of \$45,679. 44% of the population is under the age of 24 and 34.1% of the households are headed by single mothers. The unemployment rate is 9.4%, significantly more than the City rate of 6.9%.

Educational achievement levels within the CIP area are low, only 20% of the population graduates college and 34.6% of the population does not have a high school diploma. 28.2% of the workforce either walk or take public transportation to work and over 55.3% of the workforce works in the production or service industry compared to the City rates of 9.9% and 33.9%, respectively. Overall it is an area of considerable socio-economic distress.

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<sup>1</sup> RKG Associates 2002

<sup>2</sup> Data Source: American Community Survey 2012

## SECTION 2: INVOLVEMENT OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS

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The Main South CDC, is a state certified Ch.40H community development agency. It was created by the community, for the community, and is governed by the community. The board of directors is comprised entirely of Main South residents, a Main South business owner and representatives from three neighborhood institutions (Clark University, Claremont Academy, and the Boys and Girls Club).

With over 11,000 residents within the Main South CDC's service area it is unrealistic to expect that the agency alone can adequately ensure the meaningful involvement of all its constituents. It has therefore adopted a two-pronged approach to resident and stakeholder engagement, both of which are on-going: 1) working as part of a network of service providers to continuously prioritize neighborhood needs as identified by residents with whom individual service providers connect and 2) direct engagement of residents by Main South CDC staff.

Fostering community and stakeholder involvement through the network approach involves collaboration between the multiple agencies serving as a "point of entry" for neighborhood residents into the network. The network allows for a two-way flow of information: Main South CDC can inform community members about existing programs and resources and community partners can provide feedback regarding the needs and concerns of Main South residents. This model ensures that as many Main South community members as possible are able to provide input into the Main South CDC's priorities, even residents with whom the organization does directly not connect.

Direct resident engagement is also critically important to an inclusive community engagement strategy. The agency's community organizer facilitates one community meeting and attends at least two additional ones every month. This person serves as a liaison between city departments (WPD, Inspectional Services, DPW, etc.) and Main South community members to help address identified neighborhood-based issues. The Main South CDC also continuously engages the community on current programs and projects through a variety of social media mediums. By fostering strong trust-based relationships with its residents, the Main South CDC is held accountable in ensuring its work continues to address neighborhood priorities.

Resident and community stakeholder involvement has been, and will continue to be, a governing principle in all stages of development and implementation of the CIP. Residents and stakeholders have already been heavily involved in identifying the plan's priorities and creating the proposed strategies. Going forward, residents and stakeholders will continue to oversee the agency's work to ensure the CIP's goals are being met and programs/strategies are effective.

Conceptually, much of this CIP was developed as a result of a Department of Education Promise Neighborhood Planning Grant awarded to the Main South community in 2010. A portion of the grant was used to fund the Main South CDC to engage community residents and stakeholders in a year-long intensive neighborhood revitalization planning process. The grant was awarded at an opportune time as the KGH project was entering its final stages and the Main South CDC was ready embark on its next large-scale planning and revitalization effort.

As part of the planning process two initial two meetings were held: one with over 40 representative of agencies that serve Main South residents, and one for residents with over 50 people in

attendance. Both of these meetings were open forums allowing people to identify areas of concern/need in the neighborhood. In addition, several one-to-one meetings were held with individuals in the community. All issues identified were then categorized and assigned to one of five planning sub-committees: Public Safety, Jobs, Housing, Physical Environment, and Community Building. These sub-committees met separately for several months to identify focus areas, strategies, and existing resources/needs. The subcommittees were comprised of about 10-15 people each, the majority of them being community residents. This year-long planning process was completed in 2011 and was used to help identify neighborhood priorities and revitalization strategies which have served as a guide for the Main South CDC's CIP. This intensive community planning process identified the CIP's initial scope and geographic focus.

Utilizing the findings from this participatory planning process, the Main South CDC worked with The Community Builders, Inc. to create an application for a Sustainable Communities Challenge Planning Grant which would fund a planning study for the redevelopment of the Crompton & Knowles complex and the surrounding neighborhood. That grant was awarded in 2012, and the MSCDC immediately started the community engagement process. The first step was a community meeting to inform the community about the project, receive initial feedback about the revitalization vision, and involve residents in planning the renovation of an abandoned turn of the century mill building within the industrial complex. Fifty residents attended this first meeting and it is expected that they will continue to be engaged throughout the entire multi-year planning and development process. The community feedback received at this meeting further refined the scope of the Main South CDC's CIP. The first draft of the CIP was developed in early 2013, and has been continuously modified since based on community feedback at board meetings and other community forums.

In late 2013, a planning consultancy was hired to undertake development feasibility studies for the Crompton and Knowles complex and to design a re-development plan. The RFP required that the firm propose a format for the community engagement process to ensure that residents and community stakeholders drive the work. This newly-adopted process is referred to as the "Bubbling up Process," whereby a series of small group meetings are held initially, and then a series of larger, community design charrettes. The intimate, "bubbling up" meetings with residents help design/inform the first participatory planning charrette. Both "bubbling-up" meetings and the design charrettes will be facilitated in English, Spanish and Vietnamese. This process intends to engage as many underrepresented/underserved constituents as possible and recognizes that not everyone will be represented at the larger, community meetings. It will utilize residents' experiential knowledge to create a revitalization plan for the Crompton and Knowles complex that honors the Main South community and builds upon its assets.

This CIP also includes the completion of the KGH Neighborhood Revitalization Project, which has been a community-driven initiative since its inception. Finalizing this project is a priority for the neighborhood, and the Main South CDC will continue to engage the community in these final stages. The agency will outreach for and facilitate public hearings regarding the design of public infrastructure improvements and the bike path and retaining wall.

There are several neighborhood-based governing bodies overseeing the implementation of the CIP. The Main South CDC's board of directors is one, who has adopted this Plan as a blueprint for the agencies' activities over the next five years. One priority identified is the need to reinforce the agency's current board with individuals with an interest or stake in the CIP. Secondly, a community-based advisory committee has been created to oversee the planning and implementation activities associated with the redevelopment of the Crompton & Knowles mill complex. The Advisory Committee is comprised of residents, local businesses, elected officials, chamber of commerce, WRTA, and representatives of the faith-based community and neighborhood institutions, and others. The Advisory Committee will meet on a regular basis to ensure that the redevelopment plan adheres to both DHCD's Sustainable Development Principles and HUD's Livability Principles. In addition, the Main South CDC's board of directors will facilitate a survey annually to community residents and stakeholders to monitor the CIP's progress and evaluate how the goals are being met. The implementation of the CIP will build upon the deep-rooted community engagement already underway in the neighborhood, long undertaken by the Main South CDC.

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### SECTION 3: PLAN GOALS

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#### CREATE GREATER ECONOMIC STABILITY & OPPORTUNITY FOR MAIN SOUTH RESIDENTS

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This CIP will improve the economic stability of Main South residents by directly creating employment opportunities, instituting additional job readiness and financial literacy programs, and collaborating with local institutions to increase local hiring. The plan will serve to increase public and private investment within the CIP target area. The development of both 93 and 95 Grand Street will create construction jobs, and the development of 95 Grand Street will provide long-term employment opportunities in the area. In addition, the financial stability of Main South residents will be supported through programs offered at the Main South CDC's Workforce Development and Economic Opportunity Center, such as the VITA program, resume and job placement assistance, and computer classes and financial literacy classes.

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#### INCREASE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND PRESERVE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

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As the housing debt burden of residents within the CIP area has traditionally been one of the highest in the City of Worcester, this CIP aims to increase access to and preserve affordable housing stock within the Main South neighborhood. The production and preservation of affordable housing units under non-profit management will ensure their long-term affordability and contribute to the economic stability of low-and-moderate income families.

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#### INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESSIBILITY

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The Main South neighborhood is centrally located, but has physical challenges that cuts it off from nearby resources and deters investment. It has historically suffered from a lack of sound planning,

resulting in confusing street patterns that lack continuity with surrounding areas. Blight and safety concerns associated with the area's abandoned industrial plant discourage use of the few existing sub-standard connections across the CSX rail corridor. This CIP includes the creation and implementation of a neighborhood accessibility and infrastructure-improvement plan to address these issues, as well as to increase the walk-bility and bike-ability of the community. It will increase the neighborhood's connectivity to downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, and integrate with other local and regional accessibility initiatives. This work will ensure that the Main South neighborhood is effectively positioned to receive investments in emerging industry sectors and the new jobs they may bring, all of which will provide direct economic and environmental benefits to local residents.

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#### IMPROVE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH K-12

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The idea of education as a pathway to economic stability is well-established, as education leads to greater job opportunities and/or access to jobs with a higher pay scale. The Main South CDC is an active member of the Main South Promise Neighborhood Partnership (MSPNP), a cross-sector collaborative focused on improving the academic success of Main South youth. Through this partnership, a wide variety of both in-school and out-of-school programming and supportive services are being facilitated to support Main South families and provide expanded career opportunities for young people. These programs and initiatives will continuously expand over the timespan of this CIP.

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#### ELIMINATE BLIGHT AND ENHANCE AESTHETICS OF PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT:

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This CIP will improve the aesthetics of the Main South neighborhood by renovating blighted properties, improving public infrastructure, and renovating business facades. The renovation of the former Crompton & Knowles complex is an extremely important activity to accomplish this goal. Eliminating blight improves the perception of a community and its tolerable activity, thus improving the public safety of public spaces, decreasing crime and attracting investment.

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### SECTION 4: ACTIVITIES

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#### REDEVELOPMENT OF FORMER CROMPTON & KNOWLES COMPLEX:

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The Main South Neighborhood was once home to the Crompton and Knowles Loom Works factory, which opened in the 1890s and grew to become one of the largest manufacturers of heavy textile machinery in the country during the early-to-mid 20th century. Eventually the company expanded to occupy over thirty different buildings in the area, and it was by far the dominant employer for area residents. At one time over 2,800 people were employed there, but in 1979 the company shut down the location and moved all operations out of state. The adjacent neighborhood still struggles with the void left by the shuttered factory. While some of its buildings continue to house small businesses, and a few smaller buildings have been renovated as housing, the vast majority of the site remains vacant, abandoned, and

neglected. The former industrial buildings discourage use of the few existing connections across the CSX rail corridor through poor street design and blight's negative impact on safety and comfort. The redevelopment of this mill complex is a necessary project in the continuing revitalization of the Main South neighborhood, and a priority for the Main South CDC over the next five years.

The catalyst for the redevelopment of this complex is the renovation of the property located at 93 Grand Street into 94 units of affordable housing. The Main South CDC completed the site preparation and environmental clean-up on this property and in October of 2013 sold it to The Community Builders, Inc. (TCB). The redevelopment of this anchor property will serve to create local employment opportunities through a "local hire" agreement as well as serve as a catalyst for the revitalization of the rest of the industrial complex.

The creation of a community redevelopment plan for the remaining buildings and vacant sites within this former mill complex is already underway. Of particular interest is the vacant, city-owned, 3.5 acre brownfield site located at 95 Grand Street. The Main South CDC will facilitate an extensive community engagement process to identify a preferred development scheme for this property that benefits the community and leverages further investment. The preferred development will be identified by the end of 2014, with an RFP for development issued in 2015.

For the redevelopment plan to be successful it will be necessary to control both permitted development activity and key sites within the complex. The Main South CDC will work on obtaining zoning changes and site control of strategic properties, including the Chess King Building, located at the intersection of Tainter and Hammond Street.

The redevelopment plan for the Crompton & Knowles complex must result in the creation of jobs for neighborhood residents. The development of a regional Food Hub in the community, which would contain a concentration of food-related industrial, commercial and educational facilities and employment opportunities, is being explored. A working partnership is evolving between the Main South CDC and Clark University's Community Development and Planning (CDP) department to develop this concept. Details and a feasibility determination are expected to be in place by the end of 2016.

By the end of the CIP's lifespan, the expectation is for the property at 93 Grand Street to be complete and occupied, the development of the site at 95 Grand Street to be underway, and one or two key additional parcels either under site control or in development.

#### NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESSIBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE-IMPROVEMENTS:

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The Main South CDC will work with the community to create and implement a neighborhood accessibility and infrastructure improvement plan, initially focusing on the area around the Crompton and Knowles Complex. This plan will also recommend ways in which the pedestrian environment can be improved and how the use of alternative means of transport, such as bicycles and car share programs, can be increased. The first step will be to conduct an extensive assessment of the target area's public infrastructure, including sidewalk and road conditions, lighting, parking, and sewer, electrical, and vehicular capacity. The adequacy of public transportation in terms of its connectivity to employment opportunities and resources will be analyzed as well. Once the plan is completed, the Main South CDC

will then begin to identify appropriate funding sources and garner the necessary political support to implement identified improvements. The expectation is for this infrastructure improvement and accessibility plan to be created by 2015 and for funding to begin to be sought in 2016.

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#### COMPLETION OF KGH REVITALIZATION PROJECT:

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An important activity of this CIP is the completion of the KGH project including the construction of the retaining wall and bike path, development of the track and field complex for Clark University and the Boys and Girls Club, and street and sidewalk improvements along Kilby and Gardner streets. The Main South CDC will continue to manage this project through its realization. The expectation for a reasonable timeline is as follows: completion of site design and public regulatory approvals by summer 2014; construction of the bike path and retaining wall complete by early 2015; street and sidewalk improvements will be completed by end of 2015, and the construction of the athletic complex by 2016.

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#### PARTICIPATION IN CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIP FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF MS YOUTH:

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A significant part of the Main South CDC's work over the next five years will be to continue to partner with neighborhood schools to support youth academic success as a pathway to economic stability and asset development. The agency will continue to facilitate, and expand the capacity of, the Virtual Library Program in partnership with Woodland Academy. The Virtual Library Program gifts electronic readers to selected elementary school students in an effort to mitigate the summer reading slide. The program was piloted in 2012 with 70 students and increased to 100 students the following summer. The expectation and hope is that this program continues to grow over the next five years.

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#### THE OPERATION OF A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY CENTER:

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The Center, which operates out of the Main South CDC offices, is intended to promote financial stability for Main South residents. In 2007 the Center partnered with the Worcester Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) Coalition in 2007 to become a VITA site. Since then, the Main South CDC site has prepared 1,171 free tax returns for low/moderate income residents, resulting in a total of \$1,617,374 in tax returns back to the community. The agency will continue to offer this program for the next five years and expects the number of participants to increase annually.

During the VITA season, the Main South CDC will also offer Financial Literacy Seminars. These seminars educate residents about ways to understand and improve credit, how to open bank accounts, save money for retirement, and prepare for major purchases such as a home.

The Main South CDC will also provide one-on-one resume and job search assistance year-round, free at charge, to area residents. Workforce Central will offer bi-weekly Career Seminars at the agency focusing on interview skills and professional trainings. Lastly, the Main South CDC's Center will provide introductory computer classes in both Spanish and English to area residents.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK:

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The Main South CDC has had a long history of successfully acquiring and rehabilitating strategic properties as part of its affordable housing development program. Therefore, an initial assessment of the housing stock in the neighborhoods to the north and south of the KGH block will be necessary. A housing inventory for neighborhood surrounding the Crompton & Knowles complex has already been completed as part of a collaborative effort between students from Clark University and the Main South CDC. An inventory of properties within the Beacon Federal Neighborhood still needs to be prepared. Once completed, the Main South CDC will work with Clark University's GIS department to produce a map categorizing the properties by condition, those at risk, those available for adaptive reuse, those available for acquisition, and those requiring demolition. The map will be linked to an ownership database. This will help identify priorities and determine an implementation plan for strategic investments.

These strategic investments will include the acquisition of properties that will facilitate the development of multi-unit residential structures as well as smaller 1-4 unit at-risk or distressed properties that threaten the stability of their surroundings. The rehabilitation of the smaller properties will allow the Main South CDC to market such properties for sale and provide prospective buyers with homeownership counseling and financing assistance.

The Main South CDC's preservation strategy also includes the refinancing of 88 LIHTC units. In order to maintain the affordability and quality of this housing, the agency will utilize the 4% LIHTC to fund necessary repairs and energy saving modifications to these properties.

The Main South CDC will also press the City of Worcester to reinstate funding through its CDBG program to help existing owners seeking assistance to undertake costly repairs to their properties.

## THE CREATION OF A VIBRANT AND SUCCESSFUL MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

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The Main South CDC will partner with Clark University to ensure public participation in the design of the extensive streetscape improvements and new facility construction that are planned for the section of the commercial corridor between Maywood and Hawthorne Street. This process is expected to begin in 2015 with construction complete in 2016. The Main South CDC will also work with the City of Worcester to reinstate the Main Street corridor as a designated Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) and replenish the NRSA facade improvement funding for business owners. Once re-established, the Main South CDC staff will actively market the program and help small businesses access the funding.

The Main South CDC will also work with owners of existing and new businesses to ensure they are both aware of and have access to resources and services in the community. This includes, but is not limited to, CDBG business enhancement grants, Clark University's Small Business Development Center, and the City of Worcester's business development courses. The Main South CDC will offer technical support for applications and any Spanish translation needed to allow business owners to participate in trainings or access funding.

## SECTION 5: HOW SUCCESS WILL BE MEASURED

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The success of this CIP will be measured by monitoring the level of achievement of the proposed activities and their impact on goal attainment.

### Goal- Create greater economic stability and opportunity for Main South residents:

- VITA participants records will be compiled in a database to track the number of returns that are filed and the amount of tax money returned to the community.
- Records will be maintained on the number of clients served in the Workforce Development Center, through resume assistance, computer classes, career seminars, and job search/placement assistance will be counted as well.
- The number of renovated storefronts and small business loans processed will be monitored to ensure that the MSCDC's outreach and supportive services to small business owners is fruitful. Lastly, the agency will evaluate success of this goal by the number of new neighborhood jobs created through CIP activities.

### Goal- Increase access to affordable housing and preserve existing housing stock:

- The number of affordable housing units created, both rental and homeownership, and both the renovation of existing units and the creation of new housing units created will be the measurement criteria for success. (Over the timespan of this CIP, at least 100 new affordable units will be created and 88 existing affordable units preserved.)

### Goal- Increase neighborhood accessibility and improve public infrastructure:

- The completion of the strategic neighborhood accessibility and infrastructure-improvement plan in a timely manner will demonstrate success towards this goal.
- The amount of public funding leveraged to support the identified public infrastructure improvements will be tracked and will be a measurement of success.

### Goal- Improve academic achievement of Main South youth K-12:

- Assess annual performance evaluations done by the neighborhood schools.
- Annually evaluate the reading skills of the Virtual Library Program participants and thus the success of that initiative.
- Conducts surveys with parents and interviews with participants at the end of the summer for recommendations on how to improve the program the following year.

### Goal- Eliminate blight and enhance physical environment of Main South:

- The completion of the KGH project and all associated construction will show success.
- The number of blighted properties renovated and any other physical environment improvement work will be tracked and will display success.

- A reduction in the amount of citations through Inspectional Services for illegal dumping or code violations in the neighborhood.
- A reduction in the amount of incidents of graffiti sightings in the target area.

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## SECTION 6: COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

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The spe of the CIP is too great for any one entity acting alone to successfully implement the range of proposed activities and generate the desired economic growth. The Main South CDC intends to utilize successful, established partnerships with neighborhood stakeholders as well as encourage and foster new collaborations and investment when common objectives exist. Proposed partnerships are:

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### CLARK UNIVERSITY:

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Clark and the Main South CDC have been partners in efforts to revitalize the Main South neighborhood since the CDC was founded in 1986. Clark’s collaboration in the CIP will involve both direct development work and academic support for implementation of the CIP.

*Neighborhood Revitalization Efforts:* Clark will work to implement streetscape improvements within the Main Street Corridor, complete the construction of its track and athletic field complex in the KGH area in 2015, provide funding for the renovations of University Park and develop a new \$23 million student facility including enhanced parking facilities on Main Street. It will provide loan guaranty assistance to the Main South CDC for more speculative development projects. Clark also provides free tuition to any student from the neighborhood that is accepted to the University. Furthermore, Clark will continue to incentivize employees to purchase homes in the neighborhood by offering financial assistance

*Academic support:* Faculty and students from Clark’s International Development and Community Engagement Department will work closely with the Main South CDC in developing the concept of a regional food hub. Students will also work on data assembly and mapping projects associated with research components of the CIP. Clark interns will work at the CDC offices on specific components of the plan, including evaluation strategies.

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### PUBLIC PARTNERS:

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The support and collaboration of the City of Worcester will be essential in facilitating the regulatory aspects of the project as well as proving the necessary capital investment to support the implementation of the plan (see financing strategy). Senior executive changes, including a new City Manager, offer an opportunity for a new administration to take a leadership role in driving such an important project forward. Mass Highway, who is overseeing the construction of federally funded (FHA) street improvements in KGH, the creation of the Bike Path and pedestrian walkway and streetscape improvements on Main Street, will also be an important public partner.

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PRIVATE PARTNERS:

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The Community Builders, Inc. have invested significantly in the development of 93 Grand Street and are a vested neighborhood stakeholder. They are collaborating in the planning process for the redevelopment of the Crompton and Knowles complex. Likewise, the members of the Advisory Committee for this redevelopment represent an assortment of collaborators and stakeholders with specific expertise to bring to the initiative, e.g.: the WRTA, Chamber of Commerce, Preservation Worcester, the Institute for Energy and Sustainability, the Regional Environmental Council, neighborhood residents and clergy and the Worcester Tree Initiative.

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MAIN SOUTH PROMISE NEIGHBORHOODS PARTNERSHIP (MSPNP):

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An innovative collaboration has been established between a cross sector of stakeholders who are concerned with improving academic standards for neighborhood youth. This “MSPN” committee has met for over two years and its goal is to successfully apply for funding to initiate a “cradle through college” support system that will help neighborhood youth achieve economic independence through enhanced academic performance. Collaborators in this effort are: The Latino Educational Institute, the Worcester Education Collaborative, the Worcester Public Schools, Clark University, the Boys & Girls Club of Worcester and the United Way.

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NON-PROFIT PARTNERSHIPS FOR FINANCIAL LITERACY AND JOB TRAINING PROGRAMS:

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The CDC has established collaborative relationships with the Worcester Community Action Council and Worcester State University to run its VITA program through the CDC offices. The CDC also partners with Workforce Central to provide job training services for youth and the hard to place. Clark interns provide resume writing assistance and computer training services through the MSCDC center for Community Revitalization.

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LOCAL BUSINESS ASSOCIATIONS:

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The Main South CDC will look to develop closer collaborative works with the business community as part of this CIP. The Webster Square Merchant’s Association has over 80 members and there is a fledgling group of businesses at the northern end of the Main Street Corridor. Both groups are lobbying hard to have streetscape improvements throughout the length of the commercial corridor. Through collaboration we may be able to better leverage those sought after improvements.

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SECTION 7: INTEGRATION OF ACTIVITIES/CONSISTENCY WITH COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND VISION

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The overall goal of the CIP is to create economic growth within the target area that directly benefits the area residents. The proposed CIP activities contribute to that end goal. Together the activities are designed to provide a consistent and supportive interrelationship that will create new economic

opportunity for the area residents and serve to turn around a history of economic exclusion. The Activities that are suggested in this plan follow a sequential approach designed to:

- Establish a vision for the area
- Develop specific project concepts
- Provide the necessary infrastructure, accessibility and physical enhancements to the CIP required to attract development
- Construct the specific improvements

As such, the plan activities demonstrate strong interrelationships designed to achieve a specific goal. An example would be the interrelationship between the “neighborhood accessibility and infrastructure improvements” and the “redevelopment of the former Crompton and Knowles complex”. In this example a feasible development plan for the Crompton and Knowles complex will certainly be dependent on addressing the need to improve the sites infrastructure capacity and its accessibility.

A similar relationship is demonstrated between when we consider the research component of these two activities. Early socio-economic research associated with the CIP plan shows that approximately 70% of the residents of the target area travel no more than 15-30 minutes to work and 40% of the residents walk or take public transportation. Therefore the CIP’s goal of creating new economic opportunity within the target area, because of area resident’s limited mobility, is advanced through the synthesis of “research” and “empirically relevant solutions”.

All of this physical work needs to be supported through investment in asset development, such as education and workforce development. An activity such as “Participation in cross-sector partnerships for the academic success of Main South Youth” is such an example. This type of investment is necessary in order that businesses seeking to locate within the CIP area can find appropriately skilled employees or conversely that academic achievement levels can be dramatically improved and thus offer residents a wider geographic window of economic opportunity.

The CIP goals are designed to not only benefit the immediate target area, but also the entire community. Worcester is a Gateway City, therefore fostering economic growth and attracting new business is challenging when the rate of educational attainment and median incomes are less than the state average. If municipal investment ignores the urban cores of Gateway Cities, then they will continue to decline economically and thus create concentrated centers of poverty with all of the associated social problems. Crime rates will escalate and spill over into “stable neighborhoods”, the middle class will move out, and snowballing disinvestment will exacerbate a cycle of decline that will affect the entire community. This plan recognizes the need to prevent such neglect and the attendant consequences.

The Main South’s CIP integrates seamlessly with and is consistent with other neighborhood and community plans:

- A planning study of the Beacon-Federal section of the neighborhood was prepared by the Cecil Group in August 2009. A portion of the Beacon-Federal Study area falls within the CIP area and the planning studies are complementary.
- The 5.5 acre South Worcester Industrial Park borders the CIP area on its eastern boundary. Development ready lots are available yet the lack of a coordinated vision for economic development within the Park has resulted in limited private interest. The development of an economic cluster of activities such as a food hub, could benefit both the CIP area and serve as a catalyst for private development within the SWIP.
- KGH: This CIP has evolved directly from the neighborhood’s previous large-scale strategic community plan, the KGH Revitalization Project. The CIP target area was chosen as it is the

area for the natural progression of the progress made to date in the KGH neighborhood. In addition, as the KGH plan focused on housing and recreational opportunities, this CIP focuses on employment and the creation of economic opportunity for residents.

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## SECTION 8: FINANCING STRATEGY

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Significant funding in support of the CIP has already been secured. However, if limited resources are to be committed to the redevelopment of an area that has traditionally suffered from a lack of municipal investment and economic exclusion, it will be necessary to raise political awareness and municipal support. Some of the CIRC proceeds will be used to cover the personnel costs of marketing the plan to appropriate policy makers. CIRC funds will also pay for necessary research and grant writing associated with the implementation of the development strategy.

The financial strategy is to proceed logically and sequentially in terms of identifying and securing appropriate resources to advance concept design, advance concept recommendations to specific project design and ultimately secure funding for specific improvements and programs.

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### REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER CROMPTON & KNOWLES COMPLEX

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The Crompton and Knowles complex and adjacent neighborhood will receive “preferential consideration” for Federal funding associated with its redevelopment due to its \$930,000 “Sustainable Communities Challenge Planning Grant”. Funding has already been secured by TCB for the \$23 million renovation of 93 Grand Street, which will serve as a catalyst for this redevelopment effort. The funding includes traditional State and Federal Housing subsidies, LIHTC and State Historic Tax credits, and City controlled NSP funds.

To determine site suitability, Federal EPA Brownfield funds or City controlled EPA Revolving Loan Funds will be requested to procure environmental investigations and fund clean ups. Mass Development’s Brownfield remediation program will also be a useful source of funding and tax credits for this purpose, if and when it is recapitalized through State bonds.

Site control of targeted properties can be obtained through use of the City’s Section 108 loan authority and the City will be lobbied to facilitate new employment generating development through the utilization of tax increment financing agreements. The development of an economic driver for the area, such as a “food hub”, will require EDA funds and New Market Tax Credits as part of the subsidy requirements for facility construction. Mixed-use developments may also be suited to the Crompton & Knowles complex, in which case a wide array of affordable housing subsidies would come into play.

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### COMPLETION OF THE KGH REVITALIZATION PROJECT

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Federal Highway Administration funding in the amount of \$2.4 million has been secured to fund the development of a retaining wall and bike-path that will connect Hammond Street to the new Boys & Girls Club and support streetscape improvements in the immediate area. Clark University has reserved \$2.5 million for the construction its athletic facility.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AND PRESERVATION OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK

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The financial strategy for the preservation of the CIP area housing stock is to use City controlled CDBG funds to assist with emergency repairs of private housing units and for the Main South CDC to continue to acquire and renovate targeted properties using a combination of State and City (HSF, HOME, AHT, NSP, CDBG) funds whenever available. Costs are kept down on such projects through our partnership with the Youth Build program. An important component of our housing preservation strategy will be the use of 4% tax credits through Mass Development to finance the improvements to 88 units of affordable housing owned by the Main South CDC. Credits will be applied for in 2014 to be available for use in 2015.

Potential exists for the adaptive reuse of historically significant commercial and industrial buildings within Beacon-Federal for affordable housing or mixed use developments. However, to be financially feasible these will need to a range of housing subsidy programs. i.e. Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits, State funding assistance (AHTF, HSF, HOME, CBH), City support (HOME) and State and Federal Historic Tax Credits. New Market Tax Credits have the potential to provide up to 30% of the development cost for mixed use developments and the HDIP program for Gateway Cities offers tax relief incentives.

## THE CREATION OF A VIBRANT AND SUCCESSFUL MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR:

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Clark University has received a \$2 million Federal Highway Administration grant to plan for and undertake streetscape improvements along the section of the commercial corridor that abuts University Park. The park itself is undergoing substantial renovation. The Master Plan calls for \$1.5 million of improvements and Clark will contribute \$75,000 per year for 20 years to fund this work as part of a PILOT agreement with the City.

The Main Street commercial corridor is a City designated NRSA area. Grants of up to \$10,000 are available to owners to improve commercial facades.

## NEIGHBORHOOD ACCESSIBILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

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New development associated with the CIP will require the upgrading and enhancement of the municipal infrastructure. The CIP strategy would be to fund such improvements through the local, state, and federal sources listed in this sub-section.

### LOCAL FUNDING:

*Local CDBG funding:* This can be applied to support public infrastructure work associated with the CIP but these amounts are relatively small. A better leveraging strategy may be to use CDBG funds as a short term source of 108 Loan repayments in advance of eventual new tax revenue supporting the debt. In addition, the sale of the City owned lot at 95 Grand Street could potentially realize \$500,000 in revenue that should be earmarked towards infrastructure improvements.

*Debt Supported by Future Incremental Revenues in Identified Districts:* Whilst “Betterments and Special Assessments” are permitted under MGL 83 Sec.25, the Main South CDC considers them an unsuitable method of funding improvements as part of the CIP. Likewise debt supported by future incremental revenues in the CIP area such as DIF and I-Cubed require complex filings and committed developers and the project is not at that stage yet. Perhaps the most suitable immediate mechanism to support infrastructure improvements within the CIP area is the establishment of a “Gift Account”. Mass General Laws Ch. 44 Section 53A allows for gift accounts to be created and for the funds to be used for stated purposes associated with the gift. It may well be worth exploring this option as a future PILOT contribution from Clark University.

*General Obligation Bonds:* Given the City’s current investment in City Square, it is unlikely to be willing to extend its bond liability any further at present. However this option should remain in play and become part of a future funding priority within the City’s Capital Investment Plan.

#### STATE FUNDING:

The State’s Capital Budget prioritizes funding for transportation and public infrastructure projects throughout the Commonwealth. Worcester’s Commonwealth Capital rating and its Gateway City status should position it competitively for transportation and infrastructure awards associated with the CIP. Particularly relevant are: *The Mass Works Program* which in 2013 allocated \$44.7 million statewide for public infrastructure improvements that supported the development of mixed income housing or efforts to reclaim economically distressed areas; and *The Commonwealth’s Chapter 90* funding to support road works and road surfacing improvements. In 2014 Worcester’s allocation of Chapter 90 funding is \$4,115,000.

#### FEDERAL FUNDING AND LOAN GUARANTIES:

The Federal Section 108 loan program should be explored as a means to fund new infrastructure improvements within the CIP area. The Main South CDC successfully used this program to undertake the acquisition and site preparation costs associated with the KGH revitalization project. The City still has unutilized loan authority based on its annual CDBG entitlement.

EDA funds can be used to support Investments in Public Works and Economic Development Facilities that foster job creation and promote private investment in economically distressed areas. The funding is therefore applicable to the CIP target area. With annual funding of over \$200,000,000 available through The Federal Government, EDA funds will be a critical component for funding infrastructure improvements associated with the CIP. Usually a local match of 50% is required.

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#### CROSS SECTOR PARTNERSHIP FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS OF MAIN SOUTH YOUTH

Educational achievement, or lack thereof, within the target area is the greatest impediment to economic opportunity for area residents. The Promise Neighborhood collaboration will continue to pursue “Promise Neighborhood” funding to improve academic achievement standards as well as apply

for related funding opportunities such as the DOJ's Byrne grants that target youth gang activity. The Virtual Library Program will be funded with private donations.

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#### OPERATION OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY CENTER

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The Main South CDC will continue to run its workforce development programs and computer training classes which are funded through private donations. CDBG funding and corporate donations will be sought to continue funding the Volunteer Income Tax program at the Main South CDC's offices.

The Main South CDC has demonstrated the capacity to leverage a wide range of resources necessary to undertake comprehensive successful neighborhood revitalization initiatives such. Over \$50 million of development in Main South to date is a direct result of work undertaken by the agency and its development partners.

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#### SECTION 9: HISTORY, TRACK RECORD, AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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During the early 1980's, Clark University and the surrounding neighborhood shared a troubled co-existence. Viewed by residents as isolated and unresponsive, Clark was the focus of many of the traditional town and gown tensions. However, in 1985 Richard Traina was appointed the President of the University and institutionalized the philosophy that "Clark is part of the community" rather than "Clark is the community". Under Traina's stewardship, Clark took corrective actions to address community concerns of noise and parking, and the inflationary impact of student demand on apartment rentals. What were small actions to Clark none-the-less fostered a new sense of trust between residents and the institution. As a result, a working group of community members and Clark representatives who were worried about the socio-economic and physical decline of the neighborhood, and who had a broader vision for an action strategy to reverse the ongoing decline of the neighborhood, was formed.

The first act of this group was to commission a planning study of the area to analyze the socioeconomic characteristics of the various sub-neighborhoods within Main South and to offer recommendations about a realistic but strategic approach to combat the ongoing disinvestment and social problems that were negatively impacting the quality of life for residents and threatening the economic viability of Clark University. As a result of this study, prepared by Don Chamberlayne in 1985 and entitled "A Planning Study of the Neighborhoods of Main South", the group of activists decided that they needed to establish a capable development entity that implemented the plan's recommendations, promoted desirable neighborhood change, and was accountable to the community that it served.

A grant application was prepared and submitted to SEEDCO for grant funding to finance the creation and initial staffing of such an organization. Through this, the Main South CDC was established and has subsequently enjoyed a long and successful working partnership with Clark University. The tangible benefits of this partnership are visible in over \$50 million of new investment within the Main South area.

The Main South CDC's neighborhood revitalization efforts have always been based on a strategic development approach and over the years have evolved through what can be categorized into

four distinct strategic planning phases. The last of which is the Main South CDC's current CIP which was adopted by the organization's Board of Directors in 2013.

#### Phase 1: 1986-1995:

Between the years 1988, when the CDC became a staffed organization, and 1995 the agency's strategy was to concentrate on the targeted acquisitions of "problem properties" in proximity to Clark University and along the Main Street corridor. During this period, the agency acquired and renovated 186 units of housing at a development cost of \$9.5 million. The approach was strategic but limited. It allowed the Main South CDC to establish itself as a credible development agency capable of undertaking the renovation of multi-family residential properties, however it was limited in terms of the broader holistic impact it was having on the community.

#### Phase Two: Creation of University Park Partnership & Strategic Development Approach: 1995-2000:

In 1995 the Main South CDC's Board of Directors undertook a critical evaluation of the agency's first seven years of staffed operations. The objective was to assess performance in terms of the goals and objectives of Donald Chamberlayne's original planning study. The Board concluded that although significant physical improvements had been made to the housing and commercial real estate along Main Street, these accomplishments were falling short of the goal of creating a community in which residents would seek to live and raise their children. The implications were clear: a better balance was required between physical development work and community development in its more holistic sense, and the agency would need to expand its scope of work.

The Board identified five key areas in which the Main South CDC and Clark needed to collaborate more closely: physical rehabilitation, economic development, public safety, social and recreational opportunity, and education. The Partnership between Clark and the Main South CDC was strengthened when the University committed to providing greater direct investment of staff and in-kind resources to the Partnership. The new strategy was designated as the University Park Partnership (UPP) Revitalization Initiative.

In 1995, the UPP was awarded a HUD Joint Community Development Grant in the amount of \$2.4 million. This highly competitive grant award served as the catalyst for the expanded work of the Partnership during this period, and leverage over \$11 million of private investment into the community. This brought new educational opportunities and physical and quality of life improvements to the neighborhood. Programs for Main South residents and business started under the UPP such as the small business loan program, the first-time homebuyers program, computer training, and a homework center. The University Park Campus School seeded through this initiative was listed by Parade magazine as one of the top 100 highest performing public high schools in the nation.

Another significant policy decision made by the Main South CDC's board during this period was that the entire blocks should be targeted for comprehensive redevelopment efforts rather than continue a scattered site approach of acquiring individual problem properties. In 2000, the agency completed the renovation of nine abandoned and fire-damaged buildings on the corner of Beacon and Oread Streets. This project had a significant impact in that it facilitated the demolition of substandard property, the acquisition

of vacant and blighted lots, the renovation of existing buildings, and the construction of new affordable housing units that were aesthetically and architecturally compatible with the surrounding properties. The result was the transformation of one of the most troubled streets in the neighborhood.

### Phase Three: The KGH Neighborhood Revitalization Project: 2000-2013:

The success of the Beacon-Oread Redevelopment project heavily influenced the thinking behind the third phase of strategic planning in Main South. The result was Kilby–Gardner–Hammond Revitalization Project.

The KGH Project represents a community driven approach to the redevelopment of an inner city neighborhood. The Main South CDC worked with its development partners (Clark University, the Boys and Girls Club, and the City of Worcester) to reclaim a 30-acre blighted section of the neighborhood that had over 40 vacant lots and over \$600,000 of property tax liens. The guiding philosophy for the redevelopment of this area was established through a series of community planning sessions that led to the creation of a strategic plan. The vision was to bring about the social, physical and economic resurgence of a the neighborhood through the cleanup of contaminated property, the construction of affordable housing for both first-time home-buyers and renters, development of a new Boys & Girls Club facility and an outdoor athletic complex, and the provision of quality of life enhancements and economic opportunity for neighborhood residents.

Through multiple construction phases, the KGH project produced 107 affordable housing units (58 of new construction and 49 renovated units), including 44 units that were sold to First Time Homebuyers. The Main South CDC used DHCD’s Sustainable Development Principles as a guide to its construction of these units and incorporated as much green design as financially possible. KGH units have energy efficient appliance and heating systems, low flow plumbing features, R-4 rated windows and bamboo flooring. Ten of the homeownership units even have photovoltaic solar panels on the roofs of the new buildings. Not only were vinyl products avoided for the exterior of the properties, healthy indoor environments were promoted through the use of non-toxic materials, adequate natural ventilation and plentiful natural daylight. In addition, passive measures included optimizing southwesterly orientation for solar heat gain in winter and use of deciduous trees for shading in summer.

The KGH Redevelopment Plan incorporated more than housing development. A critical component of it was the acquisition, clearance and remediation of the 7.8 acre industrial brownfield site. Section 108 loan authority was used to assist in financing the acquisition of the site, which originally housed turn of the century manufacturing facilities that had become obsolete and largely abandoned. The revitalization plan called for the clearance of these structures and the creation of a new clean site on which to build a new Boys & Girls Club and a track and field facility that would be owned by Clark University but also provide for shared usage with the adjacent Boys & Girls Club.

The KGH Neighborhood Revitalization Project cost is an estimated \$32 million. To date, all of the proposed housing has been constructed, the Boys & Girls Club built, and the Main South CDC’s Center for Revitalization established on Main Street. Utilizing a \$2.4 million Federal Highway Grant, a new bike path and retaining wall will be constructed by the Spring of 2015 and Clark’s athletic facility will be completed by 2016.