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PEORIA

SOUTH VILLAGE REVITALIZATION:

MACARTHUR CORRIDOR  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

+

SOUTH VILLAGE  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



# PEORIA NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STUDY

## BACKGROUND

IDG has found through our experience and expertise that the urban environment is an ever-changing landscape that is rapidly gaining importance in the evolution of human society. More people need more buildings: houses, offices, schools, and leisure centers. The challenge is to design, plan, construct, and finance these buildings efficiently and with sustainability. To achieve optimum performance, urban areas need better transport, water, energy and waste management infrastructure, logistics facilities and public services from healthcare to education. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Section 11 specifically calls for additional urban investments through 2030 to “make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”. Worldwide, planners are working to make our cities safer, more sustainable and better connected.

The City of Peoria, Illinois is a thriving, and active urban community with people and opportunities that make living and working in Peoria very rewarding. The city has approximately 115,000 residents in the city proper and 339,000 in the tri-county area (datausa.io). Based on input from residents, community leaders, and various reports there are areas within the city that need to be addressed from a planning perspective. City officials currently have identified the need to revitalize the area within the South Village

Tax Incremental Finance District.

South Village, located on the near southside of Peoria, has been a historically disadvantaged and economically depressed area of the city (based on historical census track data and feedback received from residents). To this day most of the crime, poverty, and under served population are concentrated in this area. However, some areas within the southside have recently undergone significant infrastructure improvements over the past five years. Namely, the MacArthur Highway bridge and the revitalization of the Warehouse District. The area represented in the study, reflects the South Village TIF District, and focuses on the MacArthur corridor and the surrounding blocks seeking to coordinate revitalization efforts with ongoing studies undertaken by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA). This study also refers to information identified and incorporated from previous plans developed to provide revitalization input for the Southside Peoria.

List of Previous Plans and Data Sets  
Referenced in this Study

- 1) Urban Renewal Plan (1969)
- 2) Southside Plan (1992)
- 3) Revitalization Strategy for The Southern Gateway (2001)
- 4) Western Lincoln Jefferson (1995)
- 5) Heart of Peoria Plan (2002)
- 6) Census (2010)
- 7) The City of Peoria Comprehensive Plan (2011)
- 8) Art + Soul: Our Town Arts and Culture Plan for Peoria South Side Neighborhood (2012)
- 9) South Village TIF Redevelopment Plan (2013)
- 10) Realizing A Healthy Heart of Peoria (2016)
- 11) The Southside: Making a Case (2016)
- 12) Downtown Residential Market Study (2016)
- 13) Census American Community Survey (2017)
- 14) Downtown Residential Market Study (2018)
- 15) Near Southside Neighborhood Needs Assessment (IHDA 2019)
- 16) Near Southside Neighborhood Revitalization Research Summary

**OBJECTIVES**

Data collected from the referenced previous plans, along with community input via surveys and meetings have revealed a series of objectives that this revitalization effort should address and they are as follows:

Housing

- 1) Increase the amount of younger residents (The City of Peoria Comprehensive Plan (2011).
- 2) Enhance the sense of place by encouraging the highest design standards at all intervention areas (Art + Soul 2012).
- 3) Update the quality of housing by increasing the percentage of new construction.
- 4) Create environmentally friendly dwelling spaces that can accommodate multiple occupation scenarios.
- 5) Create Housing solutions that focus on homeownership and long term leasing.

Economic Opportunity

- 1) Provide places of employment within walking or biking distance.
- 2) Expand the socio-economic base of southside residents.
- 3) Provide leasable office space to support small businesses and startups within the community.
- 4) Increase wealth and access to capital of residents through homeownership.
- 5) Increase access to stable housing for residents through long-term leasing.
- 6) Raise the median income of residents in the South Village.

- 7) Demolish buildings in poor condition and replace them with new construction.
- 8) Renovate buildings in poor condition.
- 9) Create a place and opportunity for existing residents to learn new skills.
- 10) Increase corporate and private development support.

Community Engagement /  
Art & Cultural Celebration

- 1) Increase marketing and outreach for community events.
- 2) Provide venues for festivals, events, performances, and interactive classes.
- 3) Protect and preserve local heritage and historical narrative of the area.
- 4) Provide a place for local artists to thrive within the community.
- 5) Enhance existing public and community-based institutions.
- 6) Expand the presence of art in public spaces.
- 7) Build partnerships with public and private entities that can invest and enhance the cultural significance of the area.

Mobility

- 1) Relieve neighborhood isolation by increasing transportation options.
- 2) Create a community livable and accessible to people of all ages.
- 3) Provide a “complete street” solution that accommodates pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic.
- 4) Provide a commercial target for on-street parking.
- 5) Ensure all pedestrian paths are accessible to people with disabilities.
- 6) Renovate existing bus stops with

high design standards.

Safety

- 1) Increase street and pedestrian lighting.
- 2) Provide design solutions to address mental health.
- 3) Improve sightlines and neighborhood visibility to assist in natural surveillance strategies.
- 4) Secure, demolish or renovate vacant houses.
- 5) Encourage development of green space.

Environment

- 1) Develop strategies to create an eco-friendly environment.
- 2) Increase stations and opportunities for recycling and waste management.
- 3) Create an edge of landscaping along either side of the corridor.
- 4) Provide porous paving, landscaped parking lots and to manage stormwater runoff.
- 5) Provide access to and encourage the production of local foods and agriculture.

**METHODS**

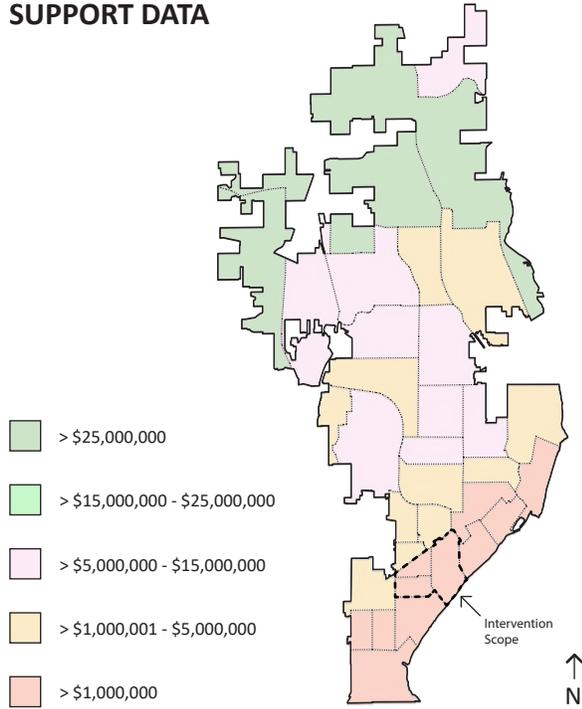
- 1) Quantitative research included:
  - b) Analyze all previous plans and data aggregated by the City of Peoria (1992-2019).
  - c) Conduct a survey regarding major data points to gather a current reflection of the communities needs and interests.
  - d) Home ownership/ Long term leasing community impact analysis.
  - e) Workforce training economic impact analysis.
- 2) Qualitative research included:
  - a) Interview community leaders, stakeholders, residents, and organizations operating within the community.
  - b) Attend community meetings to collect data regarding aesthetics and applicability.
  - c) Organize the plan to align with the interests of local partners and city government.
- 3) The quantitative research is used to establish the scope, objectives and projected efficacy of the revitalization study.
- 4) The qualitative research is used to reinforce the scope and objectives as well as temper the solution against local focus groups.

**RESULTS**

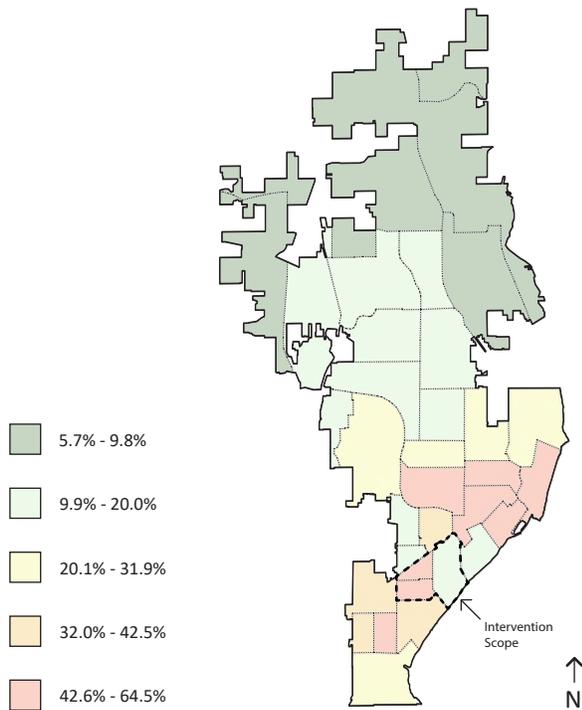
Through analysis of previous plans and revitalization efforts in the Southside area, it has been deduced that a truly comprehensive strategy was needed to address the primary issues and concerns affecting residents. For instance previous plans may have sought to solve the housing problem in isolation without considering a viable means of commercial development. Aside from lacking comprehensive and realistic solutions, many of the previous efforts seem not to provide a means by which the existing residents could narrow the extensive wage gap between those living in the South Village area (specifically the 61605 zip code) and the rest of Peoria. Upon completing this analysis, a framework was identified to organize the revitalization efforts. These efforts are as follows:

- 1) Identify areas of need.
- 2) Provide detailed and realistic solutions to address those needs.
- 3) Create a visualization of the various solutions to communicate a future state.
- 4) Provide an implementation framework using existing stakeholders and organizations.
- 5) Generate grass-roots energy around the solutions via community engagement.
- 6) Create a greater sense of connection between the South Village and the rest of Peoria.

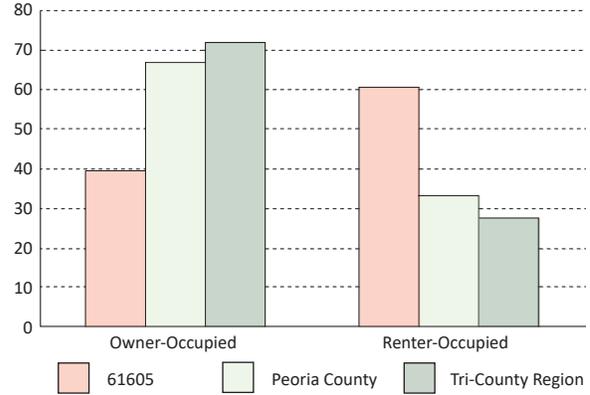
SUPPORT DATA



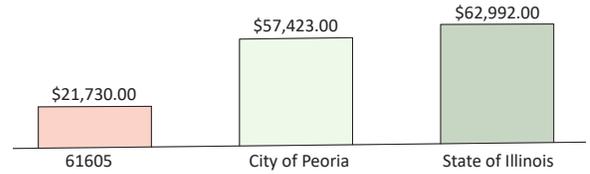
**Fig. 001: Real Estate Value**  
(Dept. of Planning & Growth Management, Source: 2009 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act)



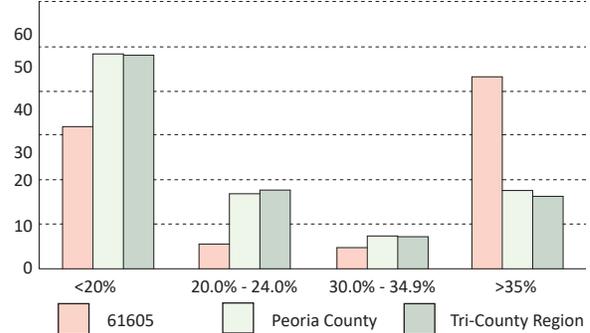
**Fig. 002: High Cost Loan Rates**  
(Dept. of Planning & Growth Management, Source: US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development)



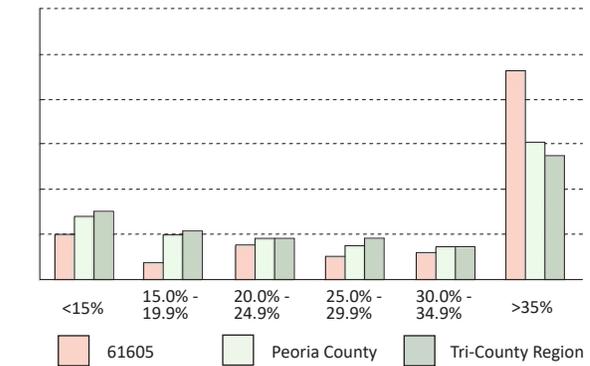
**Fig. 003: Housing Tenure (Percent)**  
(Source: 2010 US Census)



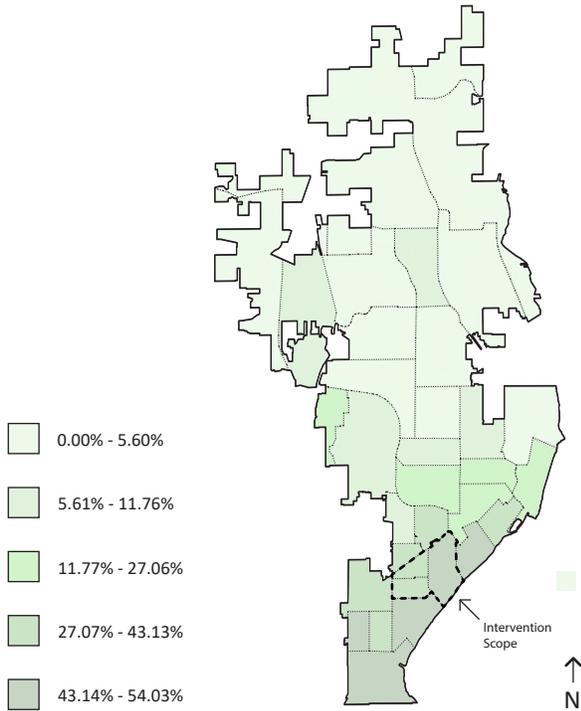
**Fig. 004: Median Household Income**  
(Source: 2017 US Census ACS)



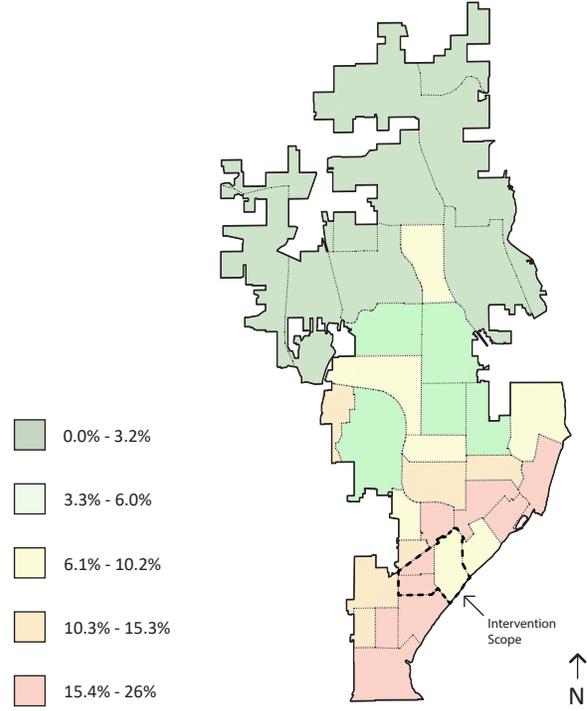
**Fig. 005: Owner Costs (Percentage of Income)**  
(Source: 2010 US Census)



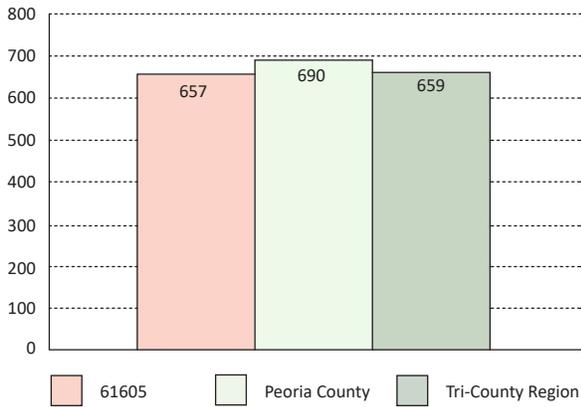
**Fig. 006: Gross Rent (Percentage of Income)**  
(Source: 2010 US Census)



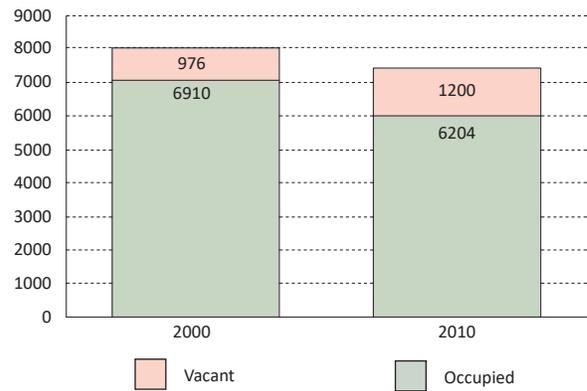
**Fig. 008: Poverty Rate**  
 (Source: Dept. of Planning & Growth Management)



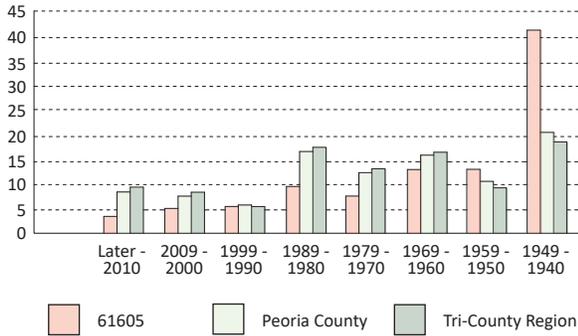
**Fig. 009: Residential Vacancy Rate**  
 (Dept. of Planning & Growth Management, Source: 2009 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act)



**Fig. 007: Median Rent**  
 (Source: 2010 US Census)



**Fig. 010: Housing Units**  
 (Source: 2010 US Census)

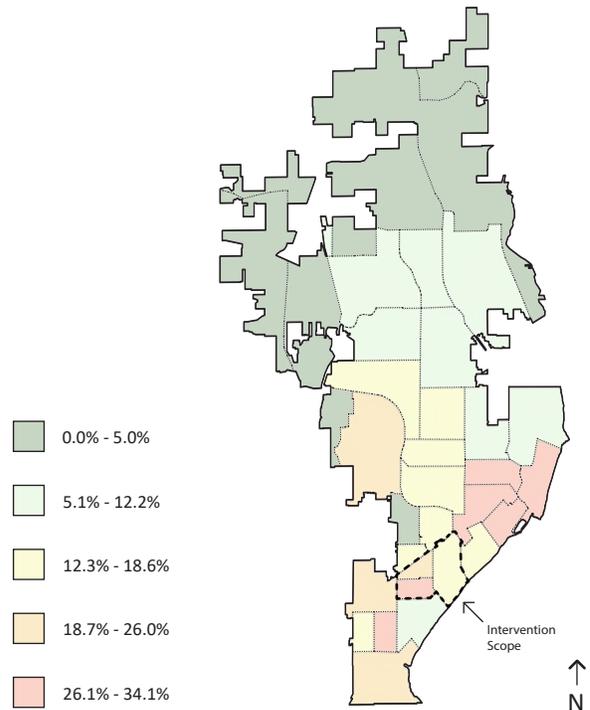


**Fig. 011: Year Structure Built**  
 (Source: 2010 US Census)

**Data-Driven Housing Analysis Results**

The South Village area has one of the lowest real estate values in the city, and a median household income of less than half of the rest of the county. South Village residents require stable and quality housing that can be made affordable. In addition to this, a solution must be provided to raise the median income to the levels of the surrounding county. Roughly 20% of the housing in the area stands vacant and dilapidated and the state of the unoccupied housing is so severe that it would not be financially responsible to renovate most structures (except in cases of historic preservation). With 40% of the housing over 70 years old, whose average value in 2016 was (\$42,731, compared to the Illinois average of \$186,500 (Source: city-data.com). Based on this we believe it would be in the best interest to raise the value of the housing via new construction which would then in turn, result in higher property tax collection for the city. However once concern is the nation-wide rise of gentrification in urban neighborhoods and its effect on low-income residents. The City and non-profit organizations such as LISC, IHDA, PCCEO, Tri-County Urban League, and others must support a strategy to ensure the existing residents and people of similar

socio-economic backgrounds cannot only afford to live in the new high quality developments but participate in the services used to bring about its construction.

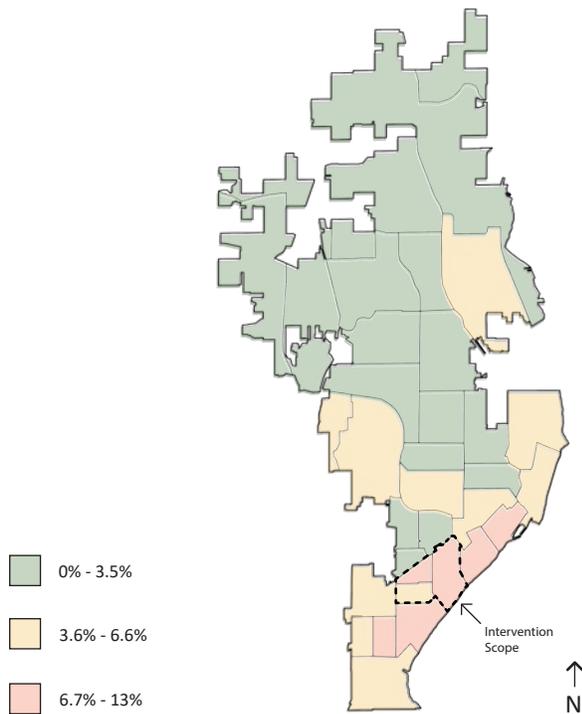


**Fig. 012: Business Vacancy Rate**  
 (Dept. of Planning & Growth Management, Source: 2009 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act)

**Data-Driven Business Analysis Results**

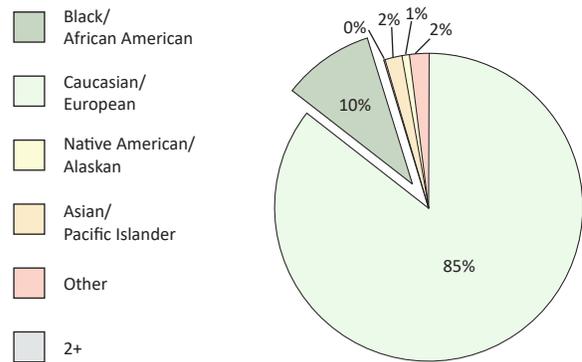
Businesses in the southern half of Peoria have been on the decline in recent years, which has a domino effect throughout the city. Not only for the remaining businesses, but in people’s ability to meet their everyday needs. According to a survey conducted by the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA), one of the highest-ranking issues for people living in the 61605 area was the ability to accomplish daily errands within a reasonable distance. Without the pres-

ence of major franchises to fulfill this need, there is a unique opportunity to position local businesses to fill the void. By creating developments that support the matriculation of small businesses in conjunction with efforts to attract major businesses to the area could develop a strong, vibrant locally-focused economy.

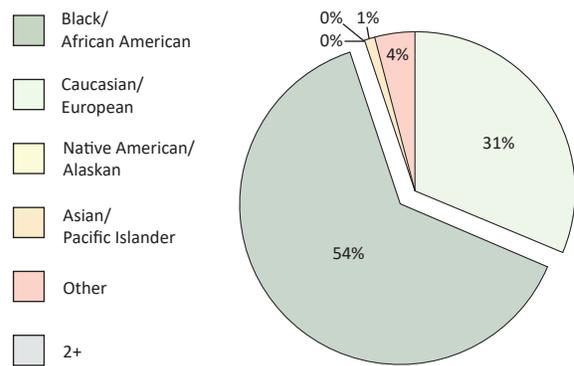


**Fig. 013: Educational Needs**  
 (Percentage of population without a 9th grade education)  
 (Dept. of Planning & Growth Management, Source: 2010 US Census)

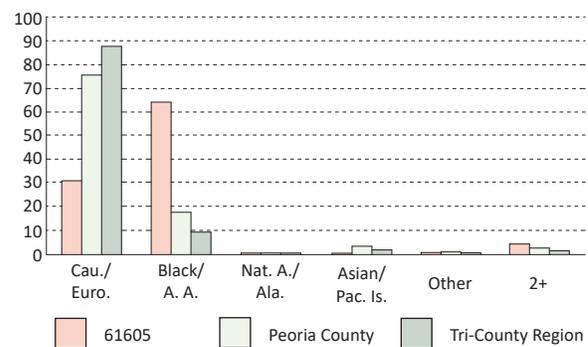
Education is one of the major keys to building wealth, education-driven solutions must not only address the youth, but working-class adults as well. Solutions must focus on developments that will be conducive to facilitating diverse types of educational programs. By providing skills training, after school initiatives and continuing education opportunities, the possibilities for the residents to increase income and the rate of career advancement can be expanded.



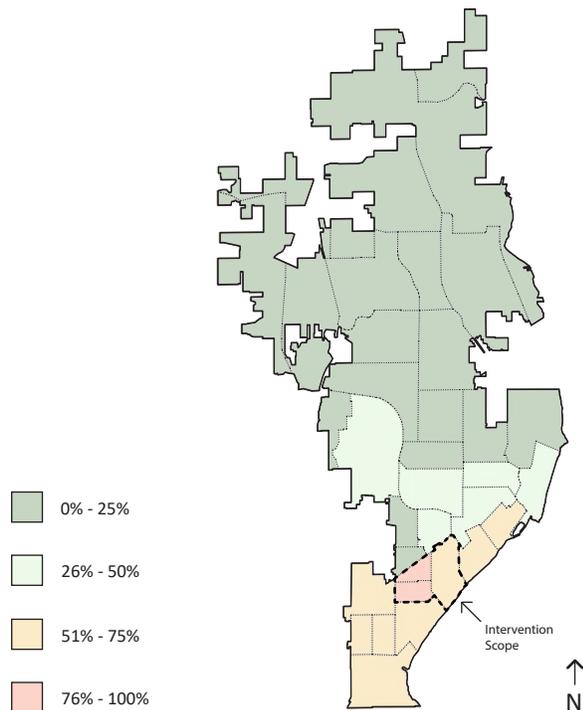
**Fig. 014: Race in Tri-County Area**  
 (Source: 2010 US Census)



**Fig. 015: Race in 61605 Area**  
 (Source: 2010 US Census)



**Fig. 016: Race in 61605 Area**  
 (Source: 2010 US Census)



**Fig. 017: Percentage of Minorities**

(Dept. of Planning & Growth Management, Source: 2009 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act)

It is well known locally that the South Village neighborhood has the highest concentration of minorities in the city. The challenges of poverty, lack of resources and support is compounded amongst minorities anchored in this area. To revitalize the area, residential and commercial development is not the end of the solution, there must also be an effort to revitalize the population through education, skills training, business, and wellness support. The focus of resources and opportunity must be consistent and the duration of that engagement must parallel the years this area has lacked economic development. It is imperative to note that improving the living and working conditions of residents living in this area will not only benefit those specific people, but the economy and quality of the city at large.

**CONTEXT**

The boundaries of the South Village TIF were established in adherence to the eligibility criteria and includes those parcels which would benefit from the proposed Redevelopment Plan and Program. The South Village TIF contains approximately 672 acres, and is generally east of Western Avenue, north of Adams Street, west of MacArthur Highway, and south of Martin Luther King Drive. The South Village TIF contains 1,745 principal structures on 3,299 parcels and covers 199 blocks. The area where this study is focused utilizes MacArthur Hwy as a central axis with the northern boundary at Martin Luther King Blvd., and the south boundary at W. Howett St. The western boundary is S. Webster St. and the eastern boundary is S. Richard Pryor Place.

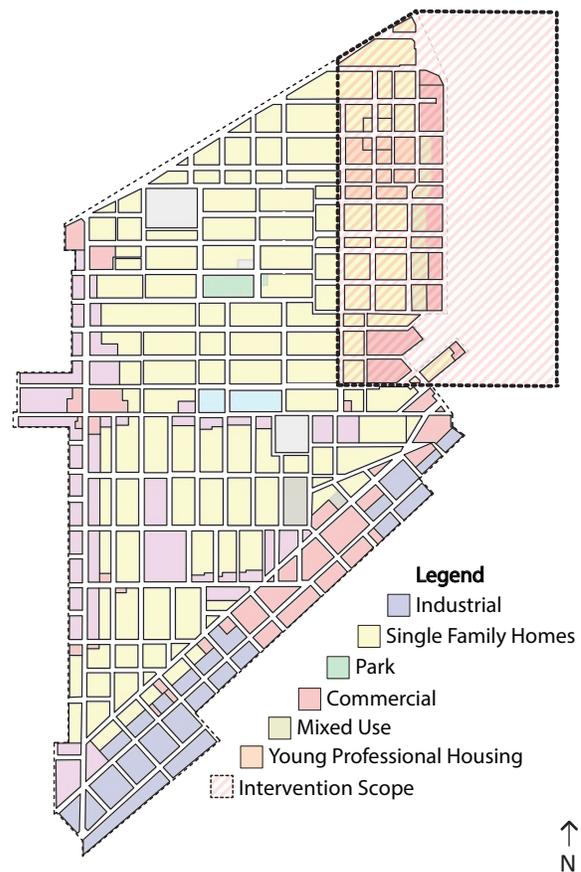
Existing Land Use of the South Village TIF boundary:

*Western Avenue Corridor* - Commercial clusters at key intersections such as at Howett/Lincoln and Garden Streets with primarily single-family residential uses in between these clusters.

*Adams Street Corridor* - Predominately industrial uses, with a mixed-use cluster of a bank, church, and other neighborhood services at the Garden/Adams intersection.

*MacArthur Highway Corridor* - Mixed-use, with some homes and a variety of small institutional and commercial uses such as the Urban League, laundry mat, barber, etc.

*South Village Neighborhood* - Predominantly single-family homes on small lots, with supporting institutional uses including schools, churches, the Lincoln Branch Library and the Proctor Recreation Center. The neighborhood lies in the river valley located below the Peoria Bluffs. The steep grade of the bluffs acts as a physical and psychological barrier between the South Side and the adjacent neighborhoods, preventing the street grid from extending northward and isolating the residents. Western and MacArthur Avenues are the only direct routes that traverse the bluffs linking the South Side to Greater Peoria. (Source: Tri-County Regional Planning Commission - 2012)



**Fig. 018: South Village TIF Map**  
 (Source: 2013 South Village TIF Plan)

## LAND USE STRATEGY

(Note: Proposed districts are not regulatory but marketing based.)

The land use strategy purpose is to subdivide areas into districts that will best serve the objectives of the revitalization plan. Based on analysis of the South Village TIF Plan and community feedback, the following districts and sub-districts were developed.

### Young Professional's District

To fulfill the City of Peoria's comprehensive goal of increasing the number of young residents, a young professionals district was identified as a solution that could expand the local tax base, strengthen the economic spending power of the area, and draw new capital investment. The target demographic for this district are first time homeowners or individuals in search of a starter home. With incentives offered toward teachers, nurses, and small business owners the district will introduce new individuals who can contribute to the success of the community economically and socially.

### Workforce District

To address the need for quality housing identified by residents and previously commissioned city plans, the workforce housing district focuses on single-family housing designed within state and federal assistance program parameters to encourage homeownership and longterm leasing. The effects of homeownership correlate directly with community engagement and prosperity, not to mention the individual benefits of gaining sustainable wealth. (Source: Social Benefits

of Homeownership and stable housing, Yun & Evangelou, 2016)

### Commercial District

The commercial district serves two major functions, to solve two major problems in the area. 1) To provide spaces where people can facilitate the necessities of daily life (as identified in the Near Southside Neighborhood Needs Assessment Results). 2) To create jobs, revitalize existing commercial assets and create spaces for small local businesses to thrive within the community. The commercial district seeks to activate the MacArthur corridor, attracting visitors from outside the neighborhood and provide destinations within walking distance for the existing residents.

### Institutional Zones

Existing institutional assets such as the NAACP, Urban League, and PCCEO represent essential components that have been instrumental in the success of the community. Minor renovations, way-finding signage, and landscape interventions are proposed in this study to increase the presence of these entities along the MacArthur corridor and within the neighborhood they serve.

### Educational Zones

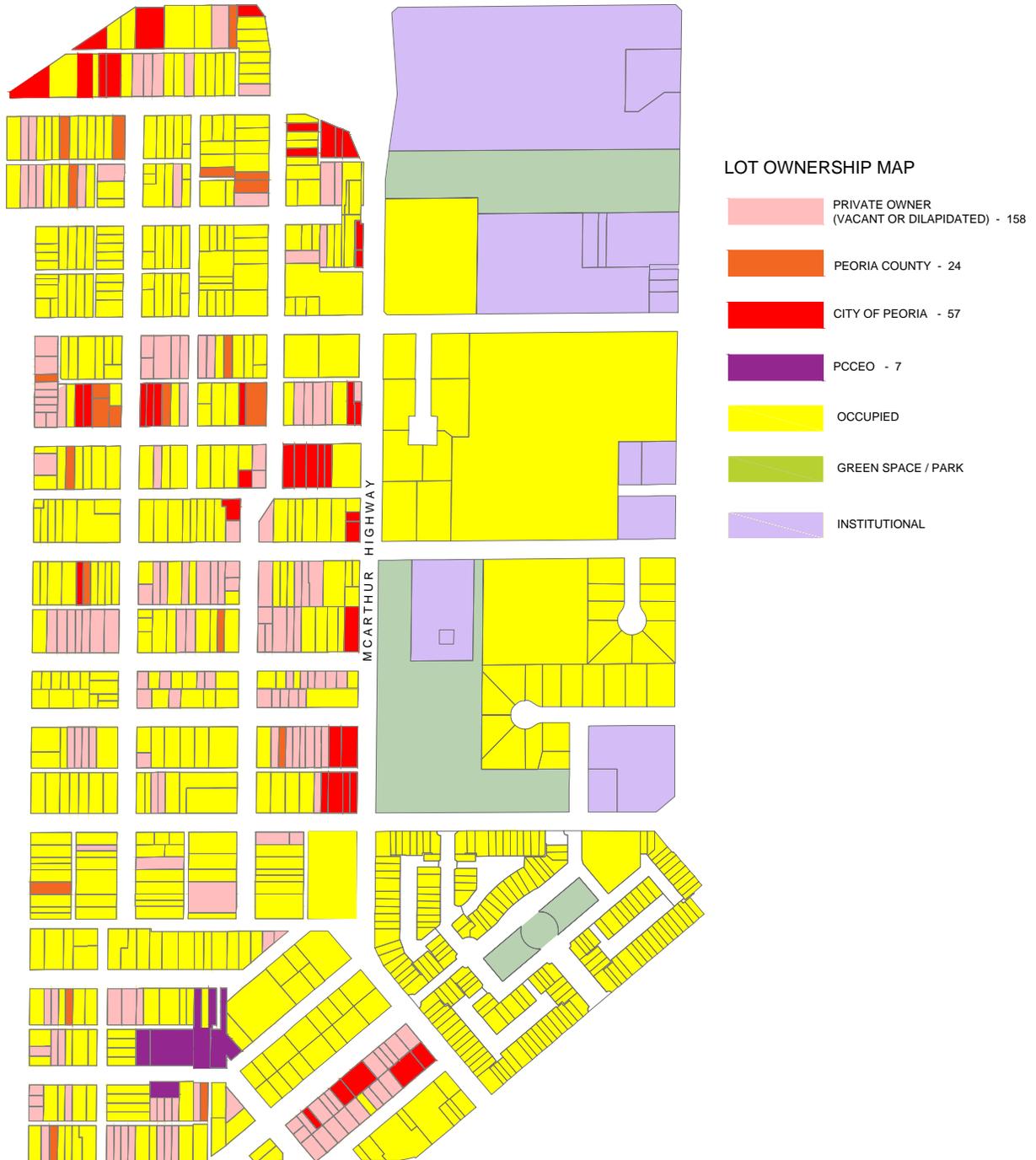
Existing assets within the community provide the foundation for scholastic success. Valeska Hinton Early Childhood Education Center and PCCEO Head Start provide an entry point for education. For the rest of the nearby public schools, a community school strategy is recommended. This strategy rethinks public schools to provide children in

low-income communities with a high-quality education. It centers public schools as hubs for communities and combines rigorous, relevant educational programs with extended learning opportunities, family and community engagement, and an infusion of social services. (Source: Building Community schools systems: Removing Barriers to success in U.S. Public Schools, McDaniels, 2018). The Wrap-Around Center, located in the nearby Trewyn School is an excellent example of this strategy, from this proposal's perspective continued and expanded support is suggested to meet the educational needs of the area that are youth specific. Aside from the efforts of Peoria Public Schools, the Tri-County Peoria Urban League has been a cornerstone in the community for decades, programs like the adult learning center and after school tutoring program provides a much-needed service to the area. This proposal recommends continued and expanded support for this non-profit as its increased capacity will have a direct correlation to the success of the community and its residents.

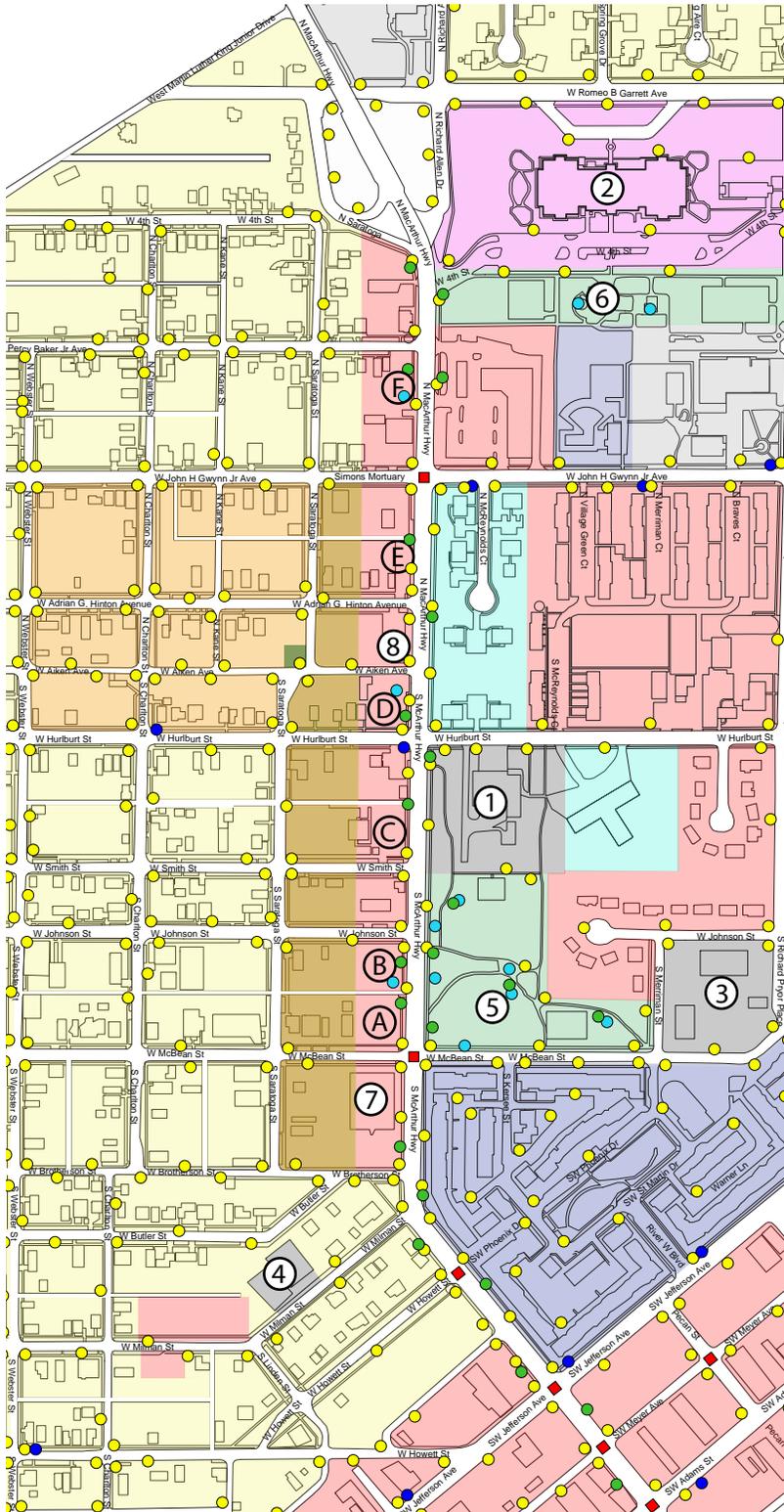
proposed, covered in an artistic intervention of color and vibrancy to pay tribute to the rich history of the court, and the game.

### Recreational Space

The MacArthur corridor has great sources for recreation, The Proctor Center, Carver Center, The John Gwynn Jr. Aquatic Center, John Gwynn Jr. park, and Martin Luther King Jr. Parks provide public gathering space and objects for youth to interact with. The primary recreational hubs flank the assisted senior living housing. To increase the value of outdoor recreation to the surrounding senior residents, an outdoor fitness area for seniors is proposed at Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Also, a dog Park for pet owners to gather. Since basketball is the most popular sport in the area, new basketball court paving is



*Fig. 019: Land Ownership Map*  
(Source: 2019 Peoria County Geographic Information System)



**Legend**



- Recreational
- Workforce Housing
- Park
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Young Professional Housing
- Religious
- Educational
- Senior Citizen Housing
- Civil
- Multifamily Housing

Existing Assets

- ① Fire Department
- ② Valeska Hinton School
- ③ PCCEO Headquarters
- ④ PCCEO Headstart
- ⑤ Martin Luther King Jr. Park
- ⑥ John Gwynn Park
- ⑦ Urban League
- ⑧ NAACP

Proposed Assets

- Ⓐ Community Air Market
- Ⓑ South Village Plaza
- Ⓒ Arts & Culture Center
- Ⓓ Art Garden
- Ⓔ Health & Fitness Center
- Ⓕ Food Truck Lot

Community Components

- Recycling/Waste Receptacles
- Outdoor Seating
- Bus Stops
- Street/Pedestrian Lights
- Traffic Lights
- Community Garden

Fig. 020: Detailed Revitalization Map