
North Canton, Ohio

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1992

B O H M
NBBJ

North Canton, Ohio

COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

SEPTEMBER 1992

**B O H M
NBBJ**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	v
<i>Section 1</i>	1
STUDY BACKGROUND	
<i>Section 2</i>	7
THE COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN	
<i>Section 3</i>	63
IMPLEMENTATION	
<i>Section 4</i>	75
COMMUNITY RESOURCE IDENTIFICATION & ANALYSIS	
<i>Section 5</i>	139
APPENDIX	

LIST OF MAPS

1. Main Street Enhancement Program	21
2. Community Gateway Identification	35
3. Proposed Land Use & Circulation	41
4. Annexation Priorities	47
5. 2010 Highway Plan	50
6. Existing & Proposed Park System	52
7. Enhancement Projects	67
8. Main Street Land Use - North Segment	80
9. Main Street Land Use - Core Segment	81
10. Main Street Land Use - South Segment	82
11. Topographic Levels	85
12. Slope Analysis	86
13. Vegetation Analysis	87
14. Floodway & Floodway Fringe	88
15. Soil Analysis	89
16. Growth Sequence	94
17. School Districts	97
18. Community Facilities	100
19. Major Water Lines	106
20. Existing Land Use	128
21. Political Jurisdiction/Regional Location	129
22. North Canton Zoning	130
23. Township Zoning	131
24. Traffic Volumes	132
25. Visual Image	135
26. Character	136

LIST OF TABLES

1. Public Park & Recreation Facility Inventory	56
2. Enhancement Plan Program	68
3. CNC Soil Characteristics	90
4. North Canton City Schools 10 Year Enrollment Projection	99
5. CNC Police Department Statistical Recap	104
6. 1970, 80, 90, 95 Population	116
7. 1980 Population By Age Group	117
8. 1990 Estimated Population By Age Group	118
9. 1995 Projected Population By Age Group	119
10. Stark County Population Projections	120
11. Changes in Median Household Size	121
12. 1979, 1990 & 1995 Median Family Income	122
13. 1980 Median House Value Comparison	123
14. North Canton Major Employment By Industry	124

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. North Canton Downtown Plan	24
2. Downtown Special Events Streetscape	26
3. Square Streetscape	27
4. Streetscape Improvements - Main Street	28
5. Near North Main Street & South Main Street Streetscape	30
6. Far North Main Streetscape	31
7. Commercial Linkage	33
8. New Berlin 1831 Entry Feature	36
9. Movable Entry Features	37
10. Permanent Entry Feature	38

LIST OF APPENDICES

I. North Canton Community Enhancement Plan Questionnaire	141
II. Citizen Survey Results	144
III. Workshop #1 - Memo & Agenda Workshop #2 - Memo & Agenda Workshop #3 - Memo & Agenda	150
IV. North Canton Community Enhancement Plan - Discussion Guide	154
V. City of North Canton 5 Year General Capital Expenditure Program	158
VI. Combined Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Changes in Fund Balances	160
VII. 1980, 1990, 1995 Ohio Population By Age Group	164
VIII. 1980, 1990 & 1995 Stark County Population By Age Group	165
IX. 1980, 1990 & 1995 Median Household Size	166
X. Senior Adult Survey	167
XI. Senior Adult Survey Comments	169
XII. North Canton Community Enhancement Plan Traveling Slide Show Outline	170
XIII. North Canton Business Survey Results	172
XIV. Funding Sources	178

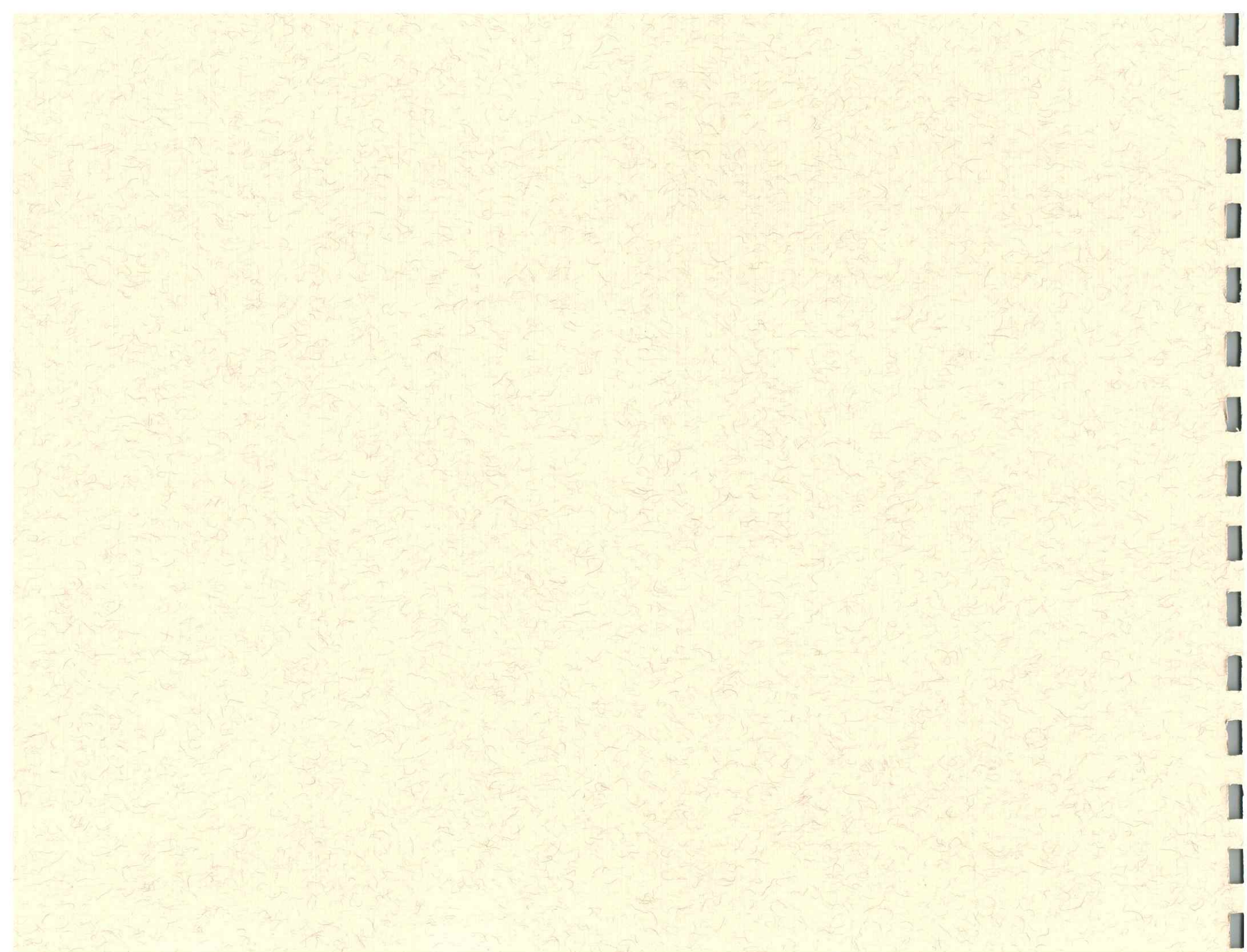
FOREWORD

The North Canton Community Enhancement Plan would not have been possible without the dedication and concerns of community leaders and interested citizens. This project was spearheaded by the staff of the City of North Canton and North Canton TAP (Talk About Potential). This public/private partnership was funded by The Hoover Foundation, the Herbert W. Hoover Foundation, The Hoover Company and funds released by City Council.



Section 1

STUDY BACKGROUND



PREFACE

North Canton has served as community for thousands of residents, as work place for thousands more, and as market place, and religious-cultural-educational center as well. There is a sense of permanence, of a certain unalterable stability about North Canton that comes from a blend of unique albeit difficult to describe components. Certainly, physical setting is a contributor including major community "orienting devices" that change slowly, if at all; The Hoover Company, the center core of the community, Main Street as a community spine, and even mature trees reinforce a sense of permanence. The delivery of high quality services to its citizens has been a hallmark of North Canton and its city government, educational system, and social and cultural services.

A more abstract contributor to a community's sense of stability and permanence is the character and values of its people as expressed through the successive generations of individuals who comprise a community's citizenry and its leadership. Many communities have distinguishing physical characteristics that can contribute to a community's unique identity; most communities with a professionally managed city government and educational system can also point with pride to delivering high quality services. What distinguishes communities is the character of its people and a sense of mission, a sense of community involvement as a requirement of leadership within the community. This is North Canton's greatest community enhancement. Without a concerned and

involved leadership, and supportive citizenry, a community and what it becomes is a matter of happenstance and not guidance.

Those individuals within the public and private sector who have a leadership role in North Canton's future then take their place in a long line of leaders who have stewarded the community to what it is today. If North Canton has been this successful so far, won't it continue to be successful? How stable or how fragile are communities? Can and how do communities move from a growth phase to a maturity and maintenance phase? These and many other questions in the minds of North Canton's leadership have lead to the undertaking of a community-wide planning effort designed to take stock of the community at present; evaluate its resources, its character, anticipate future trends and impacts, and help lay out a course of direction for positive enhancement of North Canton and its future.

WHY AN ENHANCEMENT PLAN?

Why an Enhancement Plan? Is an Enhancement Plan different from a Master Plan? Planning as an action helps to identify factors that can be controlled, factors that cannot be controlled, and, as a result, how can one influence a future. Many community plans and planning efforts are need- or problem-driven; for example, a planning effort for a high growth community certainly would have to address how to appropriately manage ongoing, dynamic growth in that jurisdiction. Such planning efforts would be a reactive response to a given problem or issue (growth) and would attempt to identify how such issues can be rectified.

A Community Enhancement Plan is different. An Enhancement Plan is a proactive versus a reactive planning action that anticipates problems and undertakes timely actions so that the problem never occurs. For example, for North Canton, an Enhancement Plan means ongoing investment and maintenance in the Downtown community core that is not necessitated by the core needing to be redeveloped. The underlying purpose of the North Canton Community Enhancement Plan is to identify wise investments to be made into the community in time, resources and talent that will best assure that North Canton's values as a community, as a physical place, and as a people, will stand the test of time and be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

In addition to providing some insight as to how North Canton has changed over the last thirty years since its first comprehensive plan, the purpose of the study effort is to:

- identify and enhance North Canton's unique character as a basis for future reinvestment
- assure continued commitment to investment as well as reinvestment in the community by developing strategies for enhancing these unique characteristics
- improve the overall economic base and provide additional areas for community activities
- examine potential expansion into adjacent geographic areas that may contribute positively to the community's image
- list specific policy implications and capital improvement projects for the community to pursue for the next ten to twenty year period.

The Community Enhancement process, unlike the traditional comprehensive planning process, first requires a thorough understanding of the community's character before planning for future change. In that way, potential negative impacts of change (on behalf of the general population) are moderated because those special characteristics that contribute to a community's uniqueness are not overlooked. Instead, the

identity and unique features of North Canton will be retained and will serve as a basis for further community enhancement.

Because of the potential for future community expansion, the study limits include a much broader area than the present jurisdictional boundaries. North Canton's growth is blocked by Canton to the south and I-77 to the west. Fewer constraints to expansion exist to the north and east which also coincide with where growth is likely to occur (See Map 21). Because North Canton derives much of its economic base and community image from the Main Street Corridor, particular emphasis was placed on Main Street and the core area at the intersection of Maple and Main Streets for future enhancement and investment.

METHODOLOGY

The following principles were adopted at the onset of the study:

1. Understand all facets of the community.
2. Recognize the importance that the established "community landscape" plays in creating and sustaining community identity.
3. Provide for a wide array of "spaces, places and services" for residents.

4. Maintain a sense of history by recognizing and integrating the old into the new.
5. Increase awareness of community features and community pride among the general population.
6. Focus on minimum investment for maximum results.

The Community Enhancement Plan study process involved nine work steps in which the consultant worked with representatives of the City of North Canton, the business community and community residents.

The first step in the process included an orientation with resident and business groups through the TAP group. Interviews were then conducted with over twenty-five community leaders identifying their perceptions of North Canton's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints. These interviews were supplemented with a random mailer survey of North Canton residents and businesses.

Existing conditions within North Canton were then analyzed and reviewed in the first Workshop with the Resident and Business Groups. In that first workshop, a questionnaire was submitted to each group asking what they felt was important and unique about North Canton. Following this work session, general goals, objectives and enhancement strategies were

developed and then reviewed in a second workshop with both the resident and business groups.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES:

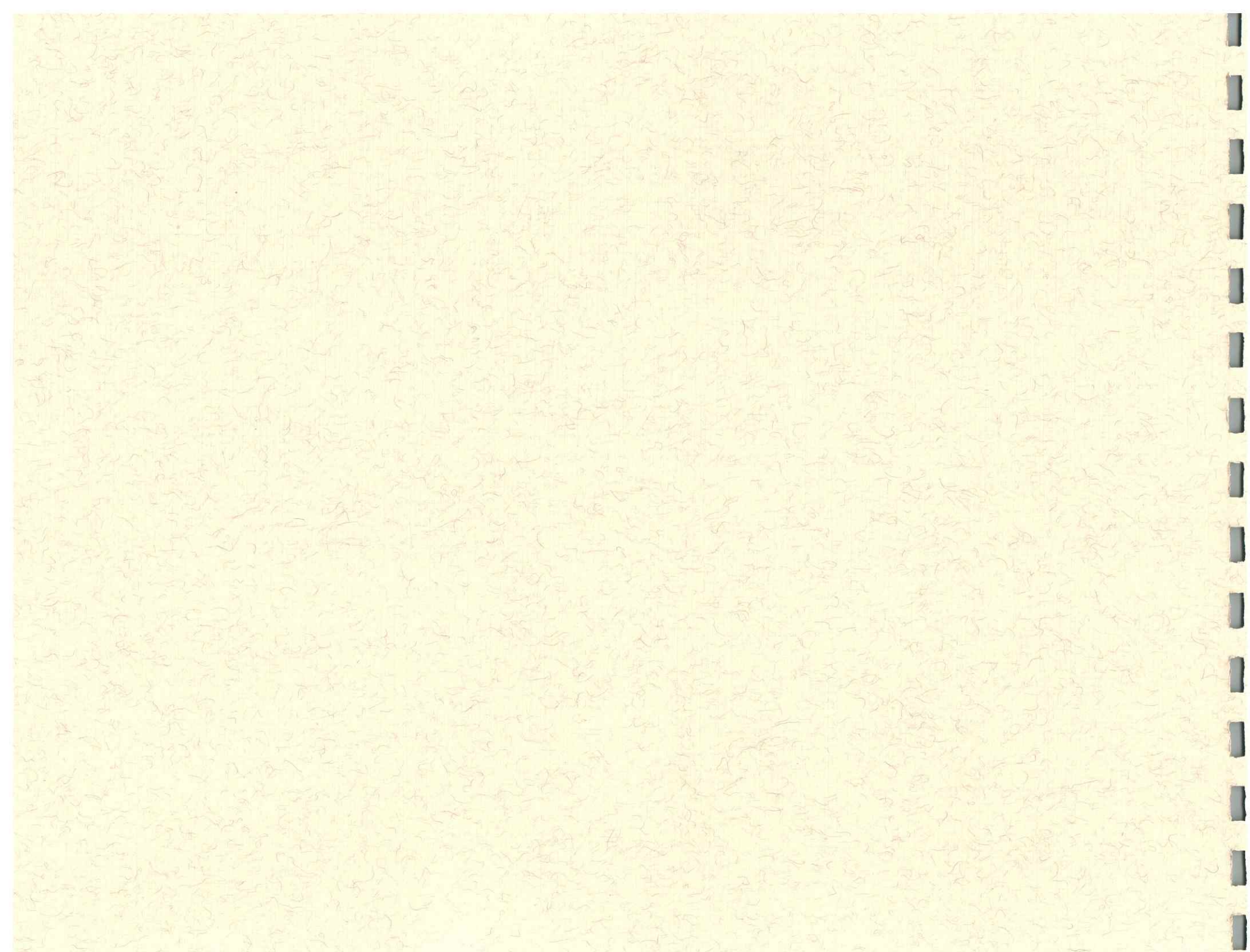
The following twelve goals serve as a basis for more specific objectives and strategies in response to community growth and change:

- Promote economic development.
- Maintain excellence in education.
- Protect natural resources.
- Preserve historic and cultural values.
- Maintain delivery of high value government service.
- Control and encourage appropriate land use, both new development and re-development.
- Provide appropriate housing to meet citizen needs.
- Maintain, enhance and evolve recreational opportunities to meet citizen needs.
- Ensure long-term viability of Main Street as center core and spine to North Canton.
- Preserve and enhance important community visual images.
- Preserve and enhance community environmental qualities.
- Encourage and promote appropriate annexations.

Once these strategies were identified, community enhancement projects were reviewed and prioritized in a third and final workshop, including a list of capital and non-capital enhancement projects. Each project was later outlined in specific detail including responsibility, timing, estimated cost and potential funding sources.

Section 2

THE COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN



INTRODUCTION

A successful planning effort entails three primary ingredients:

- **A Plan:** one of the end products of a study effort, a guideline that is both practical and yet creative
- **A Process:** a procedure or methodology by which goals, problems, and resulting strategies become articulated, an effort that includes problem-seeking as well as problem-solving
- **Participation:** the “people” side of the equation, the involvement of citizens, community leaders and other interested parties in the planning process that ultimately produce a plan; participants who understand the community’s past and present and who have been willing to struggle with defining its future.

Within the following section, the North Canton Community Enhancement Plan, as one of the two products of the planning process, is described in detail. A second and more critical product is to achieve participation; North Canton is blessed with strong public and private leadership, and with concerned, involved citizens. Within Section II of this report, an Action Plan Matrix has been provided that lists individual actions that can enhance the quality of life and sense of community in North Canton. Participation is everything. Many creative planning concepts are contained within the following section;

however, it is only through the actions of people, individually and collectively, that the unique qualities of North Canton as a community can be preserved and enhanced.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

The following goals, objectives and strategies were formulated as a result of the Citizens' Survey, Business Survey and the community workshops that were attended by individuals representing various groups throughout the City. A broad variety of objectives are possible for inclusion within the Enhancement Program, however the following twelve major objectives were considered to have the highest priority:

I. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- A. Establish an economic development group as a public/private partnership as the entity most responsible for economic development activities.
- B. Inventory economic development opportunities and sites within North Canton with specific focus upon North Main Street.
- C. Monitor vacancy trends along North Main Street and maintain general overview of rent structure on North Main Street and competitive space elsewhere in the region.
- D. Develop a variety of tools or incentives that may be used to achieve economic development:
 - public relations, marketing and distribution of information

- ombudsman or liaison
- financial assistance
- tax abatement

II. EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- A. Continue high level of community involvement in school educational activities and programs.
 1. Allow students to participate directly with business and industry in order to establish vocational interest early in life.
 2. Continue to encourage and expand day and night use of existing facilities by general population.
 3. Increase use of volunteers from general community, especially elderly citizens.
- B. Encourage shared use of educational programs and facilities with other institutions.
 1. Work with Walsh College and other post-secondary institutions in potential joint programs offered to the general public.