



RENEWAL PLAN

The September 1967 Grand Opening of the City of Shoreline's Sears was heralded with great fanfare. After 45 years the Sears facility and its surroundings are in need of renewal, and the City of Shoreline is seeking renewal partners.

AURORA SQUARE CRA

The Shoreline City Council designated the 70+ acre Aurora Square area as a Community Renewal Area (CRA) where economic renewal would clearly deliver multifaceted public benefits. Now that the CRA and Renewal Plan is established, the City is empowered to partner with private enterprise to encourage 21st century renewal.

JANUARY 2018 UPDATE



Aurora Square Community Renewal Plan

Project Type
Public Private Partnership

Web Site
[www.shorelinewa.gov/
aurorasquarer renewal](http://www.shorelinewa.gov/aurorasquarer renewal)

Aurora Square CRA
70+ acres
155th & Aurora Ave N

Current Anchors
Sears, Central Market,
Marshalls, Pier 1, Big Lots

“Aurora Square
is a sleeping
giant”

THE VISION

Imagine an open, green plaza in the center of Shoreline, filled with sunbathing and studying students, young families watching their children run and play, an elderly couple enjoying a Central Market picnic, dogs wagging their tails, actors practicing their lines, and the sound of college-age buskers singing with an occasional clink as coins fall into a hat.

This is the backdrop to the busy comings and goings of shoppers and lunching workers who relish the time of their day that allows them to visit the renewed Aurora Square shopping center. It is a “one-stop” convenient shopping solution that provides dining, nightlife, and healthy-lifestyle options. It is a community gathering place, where a leg stretching walking easily turns into a serendipitous rendezvous with friends.

It is an environmentally sensitive district within walking distance of Metro’s Rapid-Ride bus service and the Interurban Trail: the intersection of life, study, entertainment, sustainability and retail.

THE CHALLENGE

Aurora Square was developed as a Sears-anchored retail center in 1967, and Sears Holding Company owns almost 17 acres of the site and operates an enormous building. Unfortunately, given the current retail climate the building and site are underutilized. Ownership of the balance of the site over time was sold to nine other property owners creating a difficult environment for cohesive planning and renewal. While many excellent tenants operate in Aurora Square, they are not aided by synergy one would expect from a comparably-sized center.

The lack of economic productivity is illustrated by a mid-2012 comparison of sales tax revenues generated by Shoreline’s nearby retail center, Aurora Village. Aurora Village generated over six times more sales tax per acre than did Aurora Square’s retail area. If Aurora Square became even half as effective as Aurora Village, it would generate over \$500,000 annually in sales tax revenues while adding many more jobs, goods, and services for the community.

On September 4, 2012, the Shoreline City Council designated Aurora Square as a Community Renewal Area after finding that it qualified as economically blighted according to most of the qualifying conditions defined in RCW 35.81: old, obsolete buildings, defective or inadequate street layout, faulty lot layout, excessive land coverage, diversity of ownership, and connectivity problems.

THE CRA TOOLKIT

The Council's action to designate Aurora Square as a CRA provides a toolkit of powers that the City intends to utilize to bring renewal to the CRA.

PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

- With a CRA, a city is allowed to buy, lease, condemn, acquire, and dispose of real property with the intent to be resold to private parties for economic development.
- Although allowed by State statute, the Shoreline City Council expressly prohibited the use of condemnation to cure economic blight in the Aurora Square CRA.
- With a CRA, a city can hold, clear, or improve real property not only for public facilities, but also for eventual private use and ownership.

PLANNING AND ZONING

- With a CRA, a city can use its resources to master plan private property or create a special district with unique rules.
- In a CRA, the city can create a Subarea Plan utilizing a planned action SEPA review to expedite the process and lower costs for future project permits.

PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

- In a CRA, a city can identify partners to develop all or part of a property prior to purchasing the property, and it can also dictate how the property will be used by the eventual owner.
- With a CRA a city can select a buyer that agrees to further the area's goals.
- The CRA expands the public purposes for contracts and other instruments needed to correct blight.

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

- Without a CRA, a city can only close, vacate, and rearrange streets and sidewalks for city purposes, but with a CRA, these purposes can include promotion of economic development.
- Only with a CRA in place can a city borrow money and accept grants to carry out economic renewal.

INCENTIVES AND IMPACTS

- With a CRA, a city is given more flexibility to provide incentives to tenants who help fulfill the community renewal plan. With a CRA, a city can provide loans, grants, or other assistance to property owners or tenants affected by the CRA process or implementation. With a CRA, a city can provide financial or technical incentives for job creation or retention. Without a CRA, these incentives are either not allowed or extremely limited.

“The CRA toolkit can be used to make a worthy project pencil.”

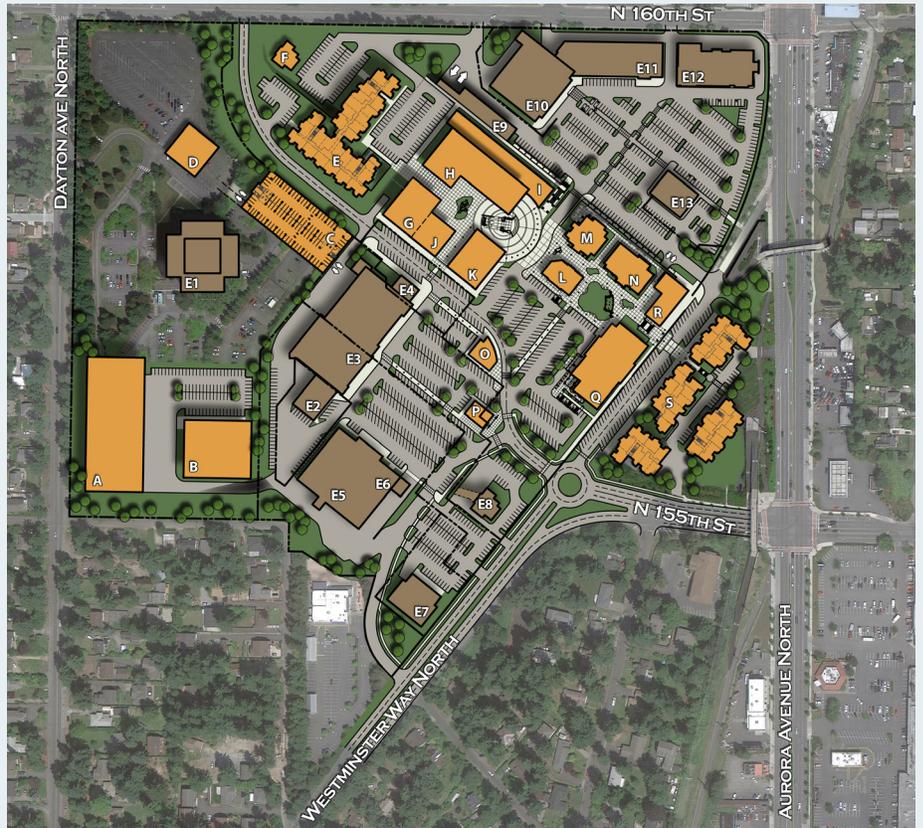
MASTER PLANNING

Aurora Square is home to many outstanding businesses, but due to the absence of cohesive planning to guide investment, the center provides little synergy. In order to create an effective Renewal Plan, the City of Shoreline conducted a master planning effort that identified ten projects for renewal, which are further explained in the pages to follow.

The ten renewal projects provide a dynamic and flexible framework for guiding public-private partnership projects by allowing individual property owners to understand and invest in the “big picture” without control of other properties. The projects aren’t about specific buildings or uses as much as about infrastructure, connectivity, jobs, and attracting people. The renewal projects help the CRA become more economically healthy for the property owners, tenants, and community while providing significant public benefit.

The City of Shoreline seeks renewal at Aurora Square by mobilizing its resources to improve the existing infrastructure; we believe this to be both environmentally responsible and honoring of the investment already made. That is why the master planning suggests such projects as repurposing the Sears building, increasing land use efficiency, enhancing the “on-ground” experience, and providing solutions to stubborn design and connectivity problems.

The City’s role will be complete when the obstacles for typical investment are overcome and significant investment is attracted. The City is attempting to be the catalyst that starts the boulder of private enterprise rolling down the hill toward a wonderful outcome.



INCREASE
LAND
EFFICIENCY

CITY-LED RENEWAL PROJECTS

Master planning identified a number of projects that the City of Shoreline can accomplish on its own. Following the adoption of this CRA Plan, the City will initiate action on these projects according to assigned priority and available resources. While this list is ambitious, as time passes and needs arise these city-led projects may be augmented further.

- Analyze and account for environmental impacts of major redevelopment through a **Planned Action** or similar legislation which would allow future investors to eliminate the need for project-specific environmental review.
- Conduct a **traffic analysis** to determine how best to improve circulation on site.
- Establish a special **overlay district** that allows for special rules to encourage the creation of an entertainment district.
- Explore how to encourage **eco-district** and **low-impact** development practices that can be cost-effectively implemented in the Aurora Square CRA.
- Re-brand Aurora Square and **construct iconic signage** for Aurora Square and Shoreline Community College.
- **Create developer agreements** for public-private partnership projects in order to establish and promote the City's available resources.
- Negotiate a contract for the construction of a **world-class sound stage** that brings jobs, offers employment opportunities, and generates positive activity.
- Place applicable Renewal Projects into the City's Capital Improvement Budget, Traffic Mitigation Plan, Budget, and Comprehensive Plan, and seek grants for infrastructure improvements in and around the CRA, especially for the improvement of N 160th Street.

“Get the message out: we are ready to partner with private investors.”

Mayor Keith McGlashan

PUBLIC-PRIVATE RENEWAL PROJECTS

The economic realities of the 21st Century dictate that significant economic renewal requires coordinated participation by government and private partners. Therefore, the City of Shoreline is committing itself to providing **substantive incentives, investment, and side-by-side effort** to private partners willing to join the City in renewing Aurora Square.

The City anticipates that it will form a number of partnership agreements to accomplish renewal projects that both help Aurora Square function better and provide significant public benefit. In the pages that follow, the CRA Renewal Plan identifies a number of these high value Public-Private Renewal Projects.

TRANSFORM WESTMINSTER

Westminster Way between 155th and 160th is transformed into a green and attractive pedestrian-friendly street that provides additional retail and residential frontage, on-street parking, and festival gatherings while at the same time providing the critical connection between the upper and lower parts of the center.

“Strolling makes happy shoppers”

City Proposals

Vacate portions of right-of-way
Improve driveway and site access

January 2018 Update

Transportation Analysis

2015 Planned Action EIS analyzed growth impacts and explored opportunities for multi-modal enhancements.

Westminster Way Vacation

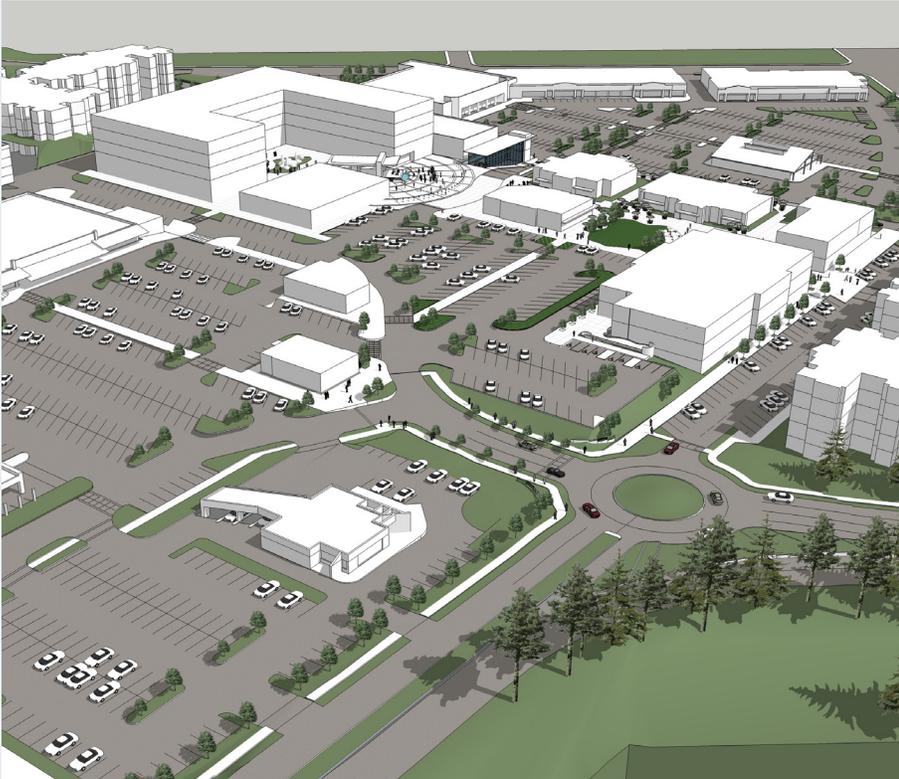
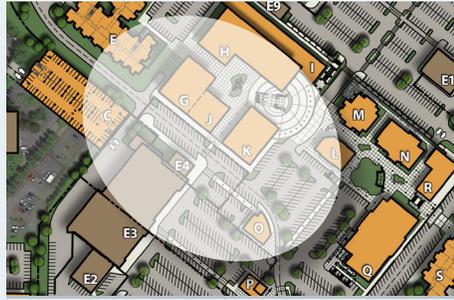
20' roadway narrowing in progress to improve walkability and provide new vehicle access to Aurora.

Westminster Way N and N 155th Street Intersection Improvements

\$3.1 million project underway to rework key intersection and rebuild roadway by end of 2019.



OFFRAMP
TO STROLL



GREY TO GREEN

CREATE AN ECO-DISTRICT

Exceptional environmental wins are achieved when clusters of buildings work together to achieve sustainability in a “eco-district.” The Aurora Square CRA provides sufficient size to experience economies of scale with cost-effective facilities and infrastructure, whether they be treating storm or waste water, providing clean power, or achieving other environmental goals.

“21st Century design sense”

City Proposals

- Finance or guarantee cost-effective systems
- Build district infrastructure and awareness

January 2018 Update

District Energy

City-funded feasibility study will provide action steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to implement neighborhood-scale district energy.

Stormwater Management

City-funded feasibility study will provide options for locating and financing a regional facility to serve CRA, thereby reducing costs and making environmental improvements to Boeing Creek drainage basin more likely.

INTEGRATE INTO THE CONTEXT

Investment in sidewalks, entrances, and signage will allow Aurora Square to be better connected to its 300,000+ Shoreline and north Seattle neighbors (5-mile trade area). Westminster Way N and Aurora Ave N, Metro Transit's Rapid-Ride, and the Interurban Trail already provide traditional and non-traditional access to the center, but enhancements will make Aurora Square a preferred destination.

“A good neighbor
in a good
neighborhood”

City Proposals

Improvement of N 160th St
Construction of sidewalks, bike
lanes, and sidewalks

January 2018 Update

Planned Action EIS

Study of relevant environmental impacts led to Ord. No. 705. Future redevelopment now enjoys predictable, streamlined permitting.

N 160th St Improvements

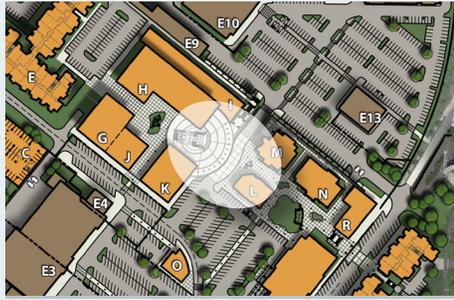
With KC Metro funding City plans to re-channelize N 160th to improve vehicle safety, provide bicycle lanes, and create mid-block pedestrian crossing.

Aurora Connections

2019 Westminster project will improve non-vehicle access from Aurora to two key CRA entrances.



SPOKE
TO HUB



PAVED
TO PARK

ESTABLISH A VIBRANT CENTER

Currently the geometric center of Aurora Square's shopping area is a large under-utilized parking lot to the east of Sears with virtually no activity. By focusing interest and investment on this geometric center with such things as family play areas, restaurants, an outdoor stage, and public art, the center takes its rightful place in the minds of the community as the heart of the entire center.

“The heart of Aurora Square”

City Proposals

- Establish special district, LID, or business improvement district
- Finance parking structure

January 2018 Update

Phase Zero

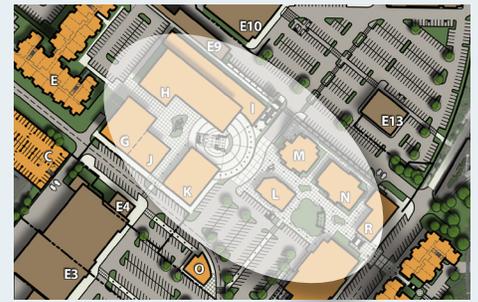
Created proof-of-concept community center in under-utilized parking lot by commissioning Octopus's Garden mural, providing containers for signage and storage, and sponsoring food truck events.

Shoreline Famers Market

City-sponsored 2015 move from City Hall to Phase Zero tripled attendance, doubled sales, and established community center concept.

REINVENT THE SEARS BUILDING

Sears built its flagship suburban store in Shoreline in 1967; nearly five decades later, the site combines its almost 17-acres with strong demographics, progressive zoning, and outstanding traffic counts on Aurora Ave N to make it one of the best adaptive reuse opportunities in the northwest.



“Adaptive reuse spans time”

City Proposals

Finance or build infrastructure

Guarantee lease

Purchase property to resell

January 2018 Update

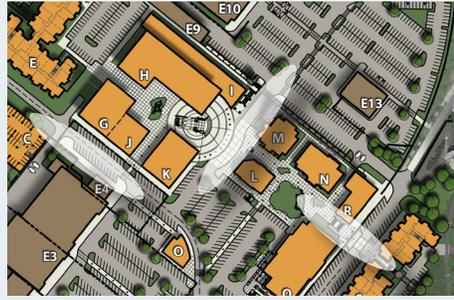
Initial Site Studies

Engaged architects and brokers to study redevelopment option.

Development Update

Sears sold its 17-acre property to Merlone Geier Partners in mid-2017 and will close retail operations in April 2018. MGP launched www.ShorelinePlace.com to connect public with redevelopment efforts.

TIRED
TO FRESH



WALLS TO WAYS

CONSTRUCT INTERNAL CONNECTIONS

When Aurora Square was built in 1967, little thought was given to connectivity since Sears was everyone’s destination. Now the most important retrofit to make Aurora Square function as a cohesive retail center is the construction of multiple internal ways for multi-modal interaction. If done well, shoppers will reward businesses by staying longer and buying more.

“It is so easy to get around!”

City Proposals

- Conduct traffic analysis
- Construct and/or design intersection improvement in ROW

January 2018 Update

Transportation Analysis

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20’ roadway narrowing in progress to improve walkability and provide new vehicle access to Aurora.

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INCORPORATE THE COLLEGE

Shoreline Community College (SCC) is a dynamic local asset that can serve as a cultural anchor by giving it a presence in the CRA. The City is already working with SCC to improve 160th from Aurora to SCC. The next steps are to provide educational, housing, and performance venues in the CRA that add collegial life and vitality to the center.

“Nine thousand
SCC students”

City Proposals

Improve and rename N 160th St
Signage to highlight SCC events,
programming and location

January 2018 Update

College Banners

Agreement with Shoreline Community College allows it to advertise with banners on Aurora street lights.

College Way

Designation of N 160th St as “College Way” and installation of new signage.

Electronic Signage

Discussions continue between the City and College to build a shared electronic message sign on Aurora.



SUBDUED
TO LIVELY



ERRAND TO HOME

BUILD NEW HOMES

Zoning once divided homes from other uses, but we now appreciate the lifestyle advantages of living close to shopping, dining, work, transit, education, and leisure. Residential units built in Aurora Square will take advantage of these at-hand amenities while enjoying a period of property tax exemptions.

“People who live here are lucky”

City Proposals

Establish a 12-year Aurora Square CRA Property Tax Exemption

January 2018 Update

Offer Incentives for Multifamily

12-year Property Tax Exemption is available to projects offering sufficient affordable units

Reduced Step Backs

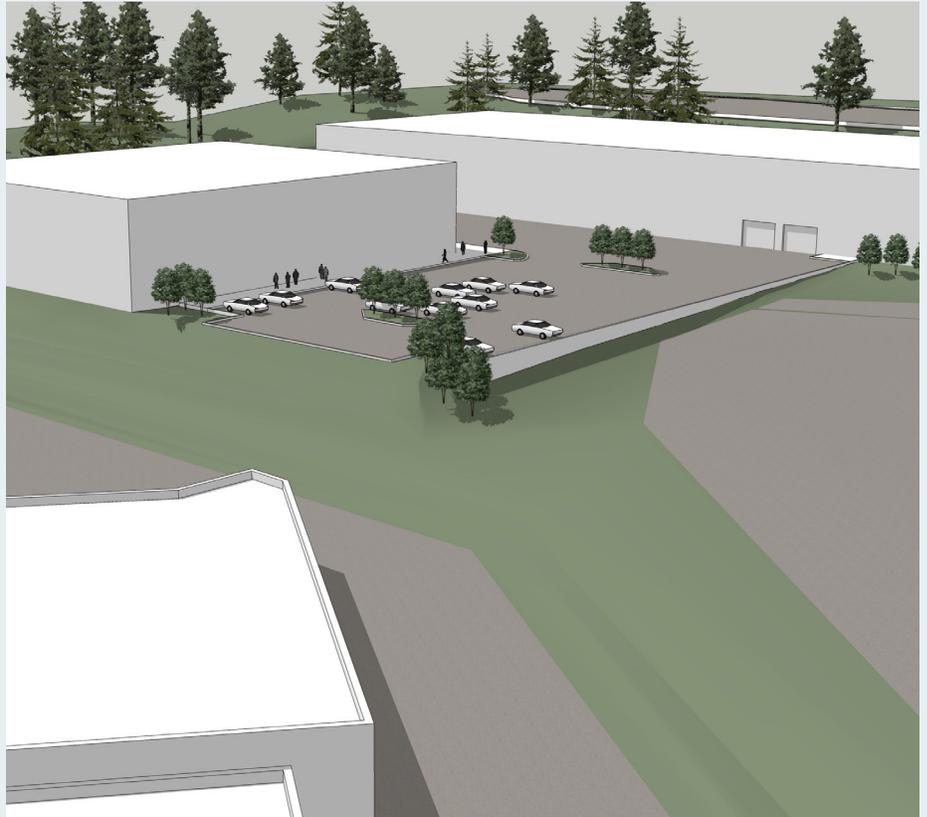
Attractive code change adopted that lowers multi-family construction costs and increases densities.

Development update

The Alexan at Shoreline Place breaks ground in mid-2018. The 324-unit apartment project will be built on the triangle property that borders Aurora between the Interurban Trail bridges.

TRADE SURFACE PARKING FOR JOBS

Washington State Department of Transportation's 16-acre regional headquarters is dominated by surface parking. By providing WSDOT adequate parking in a structure a third of the site can be freed up to allow for film industry use that can bring jobs and prestige to Shoreline while helping the other CRA businesses.



“Parking wastes valuable land”

City Proposals

- Financing of parking garage
- Purchase WSDOT property for resale and garage site

January 2018 Update

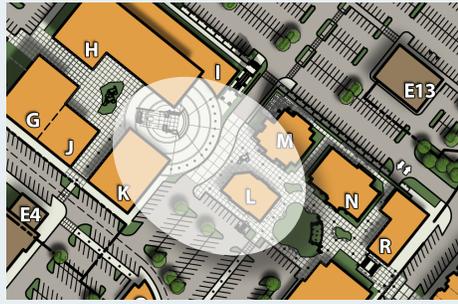
SeaSound Media Campus

Prospectus for SeaSound Media Campus created in which CRA is possible —but not preferred— location.

Development update

WSDOT's \$14.4 million Transportation Management Center completed on former parking lot in 2015.

ASPHALT
TO JOBS



ADD ENTERTAINMENT TO THE MIX

Bi-annual resident surveys reveal a strong desire for more entertainment and dining options in Shoreline. Combine that desire with a supportive arts community, a college specializing in performance art and digital media, and a lack of options, and the conclusion is that an entertainment district could be wildly successful.

“OMW 2U 4drinks”

City Proposals

Establish special or business improvement district with appropriate signage

Finance or guarantee lease of venues and/or parking structure

January 2018 Update

Rebranding

“Shoreline Place” identity and signage package created by Bullseye Creative.

Signage

Lifestyle center-friendly sign district adopted through Ord. No. 712 with requirement to install cohesive sign package by late-2018.

DARK TO LIGHTS



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CRA Plan adopted July 8, 2013
Resolution No. 345