

THE RENAISSANCE NEIGHBORHOODS OF NORTHEAST



2010

Part of the Canton Neighborhood Project

The Renaissance Neighborhoods of Northeast

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INTRODUCTION

Canton has always been a place where working households had a choice to live in good housing located in solid neighborhoods near places of employment. Three selected neighborhoods in the Northeast certainly exemplify this story. They are located off Mahoning Road, Harmont Avenue, and Harrisburg Road. Each has a unique history and character while also fitting together to tell a major part of the story of Canton's development. In this series of workplans, these communities are called the Renaissance Neighborhoods. This is to acknowledge their recent work at renewal as neighborhoods of choice.

For this project, the three selected areas are called Crystal Park, McKinley Manor, and The Parkways. Crystal Park is well known to many people in Canton. In many ways it began as an early "suburb" with a commercial area, nearby parks, and busy thoroughfares along Mahoning Rd. NE and Harrisburg Rd. NE. It also had a number of large factories that employed many of the residents of this community. McKinley Manor was actually built as a suburban-style post-World War II community. It had carefully planned streets, uniform styles of construction, and no commercial facilities to undermine the sense of predictability. The third area, called The Parkways, developed as a distinct residential area, but it grew without an overall controlling plan.

Each area faces a different challenge in order to remain competitive for residents. What were once advantages are now often handicaps; what were once clear market segments are now much more muddled. Unless steps are taken to clarify the futures of these areas, it is likely that these neighborhoods will not be strong enough to attract or even retain stable resident populations. To start this analysis, the first step is to learn about Crystal Park, which is the earliest of the neighborhoods. From there, we will analyze The Parkways and McKinley Manor.

CRYSTAL PARK

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

North	East	South	West
17 th Street NE	Grace Avenue NE	13 th Street NE	Harrisburg Road NE

Focus area: 15th Street NE and 16th Street NE from Ohio Avenue NE to Royal Avenue NE

WORKPLAN

Crystal Park is one of the best-known neighborhoods in terms of the older, working income neighborhoods in Canton. It was built to provide affordable and quality housing for workers at the nearby factories. Those workers drove the incredible growth of Canton just before and after World War I. The neighborhood benefited from excellent transportation to downtown and also by two major roads, Mahoning Road NE and Harrisburg Road NE. Offering jobs and good access, it made sense for Crystal Park to grow quickly. Houses stretched from 13th Street NE to about 17th Street and also from Harrisburg Road NE to Grace Avenue NE.



Over time, Crystal Park added all of the amenities and conveniences of a small city. There were numerous churches, a school, funeral homes, retail stores, bars, and even a bank that emerged when branch banking became popular. It was possible to work, learn, shop, socialize, worship, and own a home in the same community.



Today, about 300 residential properties remain from the earlier development. From those, most are single-family houses, with about 20 being duplexes or multi-family structures. The typical houses were built with over 1200 square feet and the average year of construction was 1919. Of course, many of the early houses have been removed. Some of this accommodated new development, but most of the houses were demolished because they were no longer needed as the city's population declined. In particular, the lower quality properties on small lots and the houses on major thoroughfares have either already been demolished, are abandoned, or are soon to be removed.

Over the next few years, the story of Crystal Park will add new chapters. Both Harrisburg and Mahoning Road are actively being considered and are even scheduled for reconstruction. A number of abandoned properties along both roads will be removed. Efforts will surely take place to address or reuse the extensive nearby vacant factory buildings. And, of course, Crystal Park will be impacted by the larger economic and demographic changes in Canton.

However, even as these changes are taking place or being planned, the realistic market conditions are defining the immediate future. While there have been recent real estate transactions in the past six months, the seven sales ranged from only \$5200 to \$15,000 and typically the properties were on the market for about three months before selling.

In the spring of 2010, eight houses were listed for sale with listing prices from \$10,000 to \$54,600. The time-on-market average is only 37 days, which reflects the usual increase in offerings as summer approaches. On the other hand, there are five houses in Crystal Park that spent an average of 231 days on the market before the listing expired. (It should be noted that four of the five houses were listed at or above \$40,000.) The pattern is similar to many other Canton neighborhoods. Houses below \$15,000 or \$20,000 eventually sell, but the buyer is likely an investor. Homeowner quality properties usually languish on the market and their presence reinforces the notion that the neighborhood is transforming into a primarily rental community. These conditions have the greatest impact near the thoroughfares and on specific blocks in the southern part of the neighborhood.



For these reasons, the focus area for this workplan has been defined essentially as the northern half of the neighborhood. This eliminates some of the most problematic blocks and targets those blocks where concentrated, small-scale interventions can still create more stability. This upper portion of the neighborhood is not without serious challenges, however. Houses aren't selling and abandonment is becoming more common, even on the more stable streets.



Of the 148 single-family houses in the focus area, a dozen are already abandoned and 44 have been evaluated as below standard in terms of maintenance and repair. Twenty-three were listed as above average and 69 were categorized in average condition. This puts the focus area close to a disinvestment tipping point. Large, older houses are difficult to maintain. The fact that there are abandoned properties, with nearly a third in poor condition, is especially troublesome. This negative picture is reinforced by concerns about neighborhood businesses during the economic downturn. There are also concerns about the stability of local churches that have seen declining attendance.

Fortunately, there are some reasons for hope. This community is designated for demolition of vacant houses through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Meanwhile, the J R Coleman Center is providing support to residents for self-help projects. The blocks to the north remain strong and the proposed redevelopment of Mahoning Road NE is capturing funding. These are the actions that could help rebuild confidence in the future of Crystal Park. Indeed, the core of any effort to stabilize the focus area must strengthen confidence, especially among the existing homeowners and long-term renters. This confidence-building challenge will determine whether Crystal Park will be



repositioned as a stable, working income community or if it will continue to decline even when the economy improves.

To address this challenge, a workplan must rely heavily on existing resident involvement, the commitment of the J R Coleman Center, and the skills and commitment of the North East Area Renaissance (NEAR) organization. At the most basic levels, attention must be directed at the civic culture of the focus area. This will mean assisting the residents and partners in using the political process to request services and undertaking self-help projects to demonstrate resolve. It will require the continued involvement and support from nonprofits and from the foundation community. Moreover, it will need to engage neighbors literally at the level of each block. This will help mutual knowledge and trust to be strengthened and relationships to be established that will support stability and safety.

With an emphasis on building resident confidence, a three-year workplan would include the following:

YEAR ONE

A committee consisting of residents, members of NEAR, staff of the J R Coleman Center, and others should undertake a well-planned door-to-door outreach effort. This is to better determine the homeowner and renter mix in the neighborhood and also identify local concerns and assets that should be part of the stabilization strategy.

The committee should designate the strongest blocks to initiate programs with a commitment to building from strength.

The committee should determine community-based or blocked-based efforts such as a clean-up, the cutting back of overgrown vegetation, and the removal of failing fences. However, these actions should always include an emphasis on promoting positive change, especially in terms of curb appeal.

Through the committee and other volunteers, branding activities should be put in place that reinforce Crystal Park's image as a neighborhood with a long and proud history. Examples of such promotions can be found in the recent work of NEAR and the J R Coleman Center, which together, promoted such amenities at Nimisilla Park.

A community process should be instituted to prioritize properties for demolition and to begin to explore options for reuse of the vacant lots. The attached Canton Neighborhood Workbook can help in this process and will be even more effective if the decisions are undertaken jointly with other neighborhoods that have vacant lot issues.

A resident and city partnership should be created to promote exterior code enforcement by using volunteers to identify code-related problems before involving city officials. Again, the Canton Neighborhood Workbook provides some examples of such work.

YEAR TWO

During the second year, more blocks should be added as primary work sites. This will require all of the data collection and outreach used in Year One.

The branding programs should be evaluated and expanded to increase effectiveness. Periodic evaluation of any work is critical, but it is especially important when crafting a message about a neighborhood. Remember, if it isn't effective, it should be changed.

The committee should investigate possible grants or volunteer systems to assist owners of distressed houses and, simultaneously, the demolition priority list should be reviewed and new strategies invoked if needed.

The vacant lot treatment plan should be evaluated and expanded when and where it is appropriate.

Residents of Crystal Park should partner with other neighborhoods for marketing urban living and also for joint projects like promoting Nimisilla and Cook Parks.

YEAR THREE

After a full evaluation and analysis of the challenges and opportunities in the target area, the committee should consider extending the boundaries of the focus area.

Whether the boundaries are expanded or not, the work schedules from Year One and Year Two should be repeated for the selected focus area.

CHALLENGES FOR THE CITY OF CANTON

- Commit to a realistic annual number of demolitions, perhaps at least four or six a year
- Work with the neighbors about a resident involved exterior code compliance effort
- Assist in neighborhood clean-up or bulk trash removal
- Be proactive about explaining and promoting all planned neighborhood improvements
- Assist in the neighborhood branding efforts
- Participate in a vacant lot strategic planning process for this area and other target areas

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Description	Number
Houses	277
Duplexes	19
Multi-family	1
Average year built	1919
Average size	1,238 square feet

Focus Area:

Description	Number
Houses	148
Duplexes	1
Multi-family	0
Above standard houses	23
Average houses	69
Below standard houses	44
Abandoned	12

REAL ESTATE INFORMATION**Overview of Recent Sales**

Address	Listing Price	Sale Price	Listing Date	Sale Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2224 16 th St NE	\$18,900	\$15,000	6/16/09	11/13/09	Residential-single family	1915	1080
2241 16 th St NE	\$14,500	\$12,000	12/17/09	2/4/10	Residential-single family	1913	1648
2034 17 th St NE	\$14,900	\$12,500	11/18/09	1/21/10	Residential-single family	1916	1056
2232 16 th St NE	\$14,900	\$10,000	2/3/10	3/12/10	Residential-single family	1920	1290
2105 16 th St NE	\$13,500	\$11,500	2/5/10	3/26/10	Residential-single family	1918	1248
2352 Indiana Way	\$9,900	\$5,200	11/6/09	1/21/10	Residential-single family	1920	1120
2236 Winfield Way	\$10,200	\$8,500	7/10/09	12/15/09	Residential-single family	1916	1436

Currently on the Market

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2105 Winfield Way	\$54,900	12/16/09	Residential-single family	1906	980
2241 Indiana Way (owner-occupied)	\$54,900	2/8/10	Residential-single family	1924	1676
2327 16 th St NE (owner-occupied)	\$49,900	3/29/10	Residential-single family	1941	1248
2229 16 th St NE (vacant)	\$19,900	4/7/10	Residential-single family	1951	624
2427 Indiana Way (HUD)	\$15,000	4/2/10	Residential-	1914	1044

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2232 Mahoning Rd NE	\$10,000	3/11/10	single family Residential- single family	1917	1364
1424 Ohio Ave NE	\$13,500	4/12/10	Residential- single family	1905	1254
2316 Mahoning Rd NE	\$29,900	3/1/10	Multi-family (4)	1911	5456

Recently Expired

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Expire Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2213 Indiana Way (rental)	\$49,900	1/17/09	12/10/09	Residential- single family	1915	672
2343 15 th St NE	\$40,000	4/18/09	10/18/09	Residential- single family	1906	1264
2333 14 th St NE	\$15,000	3/11/09	3/11/10	Residential- single family	1900	2624
2105 Winfield Way	\$54,900	5/26/09	10/31/09	Residential- single family	1906	980
2021 17 th St NE	\$55,000	6/16/09	10/16/09	Residential- single family	1917	935

Withdrawn

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Withdrwl Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2236 16 th St NE (vacant)	\$29,000	8/14/09	10/19/09	Residential- single family	1926	1448
2034 17 th St NE (vacant)	\$19,900	11/11/09	11/13/09	Residential- single family	1916	1056

THE PARKWAYS- PHASE 1

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

North	East	South	West
20 th Street NE	Taft Avenue NE	18 th Street NE	Roosevelt Avenue NE

WORKPLAN

The Northeast quadrant of Canton consists of many neighborhoods, some of which are well known. However, many others are small clusters of houses that aren't often thought of as separate places. One such area is The Parkways. This area consists of less than fifty houses built on or near four median parkways. Two are on 19th Street NE and two are on Edwards Avenue NE. While the houses average to be about 70 years old, this figure is deceptive because a few older houses weigh the average. In fact, many of the houses were built after World War II, but were not tract houses. Rather, single-family houses were added to older blocks that had not been fully built out due to the war. Today all of the houses remain single-family and there are no multi-family or duplex properties. Most houses are small with two or three bedrooms.

The median strips or parkways provide a visual break in an area of straight streets following a typical grid pattern. As a result of the openness, this crossroads area feels like a unique place; it's not an extension of Crystal Park nor is it just another part of the Crenshaw Middle School service area. Instead, these blocks are distinct and they offer great potential in creating an identity for the larger area. For this workplan, they provide a way to address the numerous blocks north of the older housing stock located on or below 17th Street NE. Instead of starting with a large area of relatively uniform properties, this gives a focus for a first phase of activities. Because of the cross shape of the first phase, as these blocks strengthen, there is a natural tie to blocks in each direction.

This will allow the neighborhood to add more blocks as capacity and resources are developed.

Built over a number of years, The Parkways consists of modest-sized, attractive homes, most of which are maintained at or above the condition of surrounding areas. Yards are generally well maintained and the overall area feels open and secure. Moreover, the blocks benefit from having no abandoned houses. There is one new house under construction.



What The Parkways lacks is an identity. The medians are, of course, an obvious amenity; they are wide, free of litter, and always mowed. But this iconic feature is also completely without character. There are no special plantings and there is certainly no neighborhood signage. There appears to be no community activities or events held on the grassy strips.

The overall image is of a modest, but very livable neighborhood that has a resource totally underutilized. There are no apparent

resident efforts or city plans to make this place more special. The result is that little is happening to move the neighborhood forward beyond the one, single house under construction. Indeed, only one house has sold in the last six months. For such a small area, this isn't unusual, but it is regrettable that the only sale was for \$12,500. Three other houses were on the market but their listings expired without a sale. The list prices on those houses ranged from \$44,900 to \$59,700. These properties were on the market for an average of 152 days before expiring. There are currently no houses for sale in The Parkways neighborhood.



While the small size of the target site makes analysis unreliable and while the current economic conditions have weakened all neighborhoods in Canton, there are still general observations that can be made. First, The Parkways is an attractive cluster of houses, which have the potential to recover as the economy strengthens. On the other hand, this potential could easily be squandered if there isn't a plan for establishing a marketable image for the area.

Certainly, positive investments have occurred near the neighborhood that could have enhanced the neighborhood's image. Crenshaw Middle School is building a reputation, there are nearby expanded park facilities, and the J R Coleman Center constructed a new, state-of-the-art daycare center. Moreover, within the next few years, Harrisburg and Mahoning roads will surely be upgraded and bike paths and park improvements are being planned.

Still, The Parkways area is still easily overlooked. To address this, a two-year workplan is proposed in this document. The first goal is to reinforce the neighborliness that must be at the center of neighborhood stability. The second goal is to create a distinct, positive image for this cluster of homes. The third goal is to expand the zone that is identified with the parkways so that the reinvestment patterns extend outward.



YEAR ONE

During the first year, there must be an emphasis on two actions: learning more about the place and creating opportunities for the residents and other partners to work together to create positive images, especially around the parkways.

Committed neighbors working with the local neighborhood association and its nonprofit partners need to complete a comprehensive survey of all of the properties. This will include a summary of ownership, exterior upkeep, and status of use (owner occupied, rental, or vacant).

This same group needs to create a profile of the residents and reach out to everyone interested in seeing the neighborhood improve. This includes renters and landlords as well as homeowners.

A program of activities needs to be put in place. This could be an ice cream social, a neighborhood potluck, or a landscaping event to encourage a broad range of individuals to work with a task force.

The task force should work with the City of Canton Engineering Department and other agencies to develop small scale landscaping efforts for the medians. Particular emphasis should be on plantings that add visual impact while requiring only limited maintenance.

Once the group has experienced success at both involving neighbors and improving the parkways, the emphasis should move toward creating an identity campaign. This campaign would require limited funding from public or private sources interested in a small-scale community branding initiative.

The City of Canton should be closely involved with installation of signage so that safe traffic flow is addressed while identity signage gives character to the place.

In this process, the group should use the attached Canton Neighborhoods Workbook to think through the images and messages that need to be communicated.

YEAR TWO

The second year of activities should reinforce the positive neighboring efforts of Year One, while simultaneously expanding both the neighborhood identity programs and the boundaries of the neighborhood.

This means that in Year Two, the group needs to learn about nearby blocks and develop the same information about properties and individuals that were collected in Year One. (Note that the Spring 2010 data for that area is summarized at the end of this document.)

To reinforce the social events and work efforts of the first year, activities again need to be offered to encourage a mix of neighbors to work with the task force.

Ongoing relationships with the City of Canton Engineering Department and with other agencies should continue to enhance the medians as a key visual anchor for the neighborhood.

A full identity campaign should be instituted through the use of Canton-based volunteer professionals and through the Canton Neighborhoods Workbook.

CHALLENGES FOR THE CITY OF CANTON

- ✓ Commit to using the parkways as landscaped identity amenities
- ✓ Provide the neighbors with maps and technical support to complete one or more neighborhood surveys
- ✓ Assist in resident-driven special projects such as a neighborhood celebration, a clean-up, or a bulk trash removal effort
- ✓ Assist in the neighborhood image-building campaign

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION PHASE ONE

Description	Number
Houses	45
Duplexes	0
Multi-family	0
Vacant Residential Land Parcels	5
Average year built	1938
Average size	995 square feet
Properties lived in by homeowner	8 (36.4% of known houses)
Investment Properties	14 (63.6% of known houses)
Unknown owner/rental	23
Number abandoned	0
Number currently under construction	1
Number below standard	17 (37.7%)

REAL ESTATE INFORMATION

Overview of Recent Sales

Address	Listing Price	Sale Price	Listing Date	Sale Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2217 18 th St NE	\$14,400	\$12,500	8/7/09	11/13/09	Single family	1924	920

Recently Expired

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Expire Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
1900 Edwards Ave	\$48,500	9/30/09	3/30/10	Single family	1924	1,416
1829 Roosevelt Ave	\$44,900	9/19/09	3/18/10	Single family	1921	880
2217 18 th St NE	\$59,700	12/11/09	3/15/10	Single family	1924	920

EDWARDS PARKWAYS- PHASE 2

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

North	East	South	West
21 st Street NE	Superior Avenue NE	17 th Street NE	Ohio Avenue NE

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION PHASE TWO

Description	Number
Houses	118
Duplexes	1
Multi-family	0
Vacant Residential Land Parcels	38
Average year built	1929
Average size	1,039 square feet
Properties lived in by homeowner	31 (38.3% of known properties)
Investment Properties	50 (61.7% of know properties)
Unknown owner/rental	37

REAL ESTATE INFORMATION

Overview

There have been 5 properties sold in the neighborhood in the past 6 months. Sale prices ranged from \$8,500 to \$16,750. The houses were on the market for an average of 64 days before selling.

There are currently 2 houses for sale in the neighborhood. One house is currently listed for \$89,900 and the other will be auctioned. There are 2 houses in the neighborhood whose listings have both expired without selling. The list prices were \$54,900 and \$79,900. These houses were on the market for an average of 153 days before expiring.

Recent Sales

Address	Listing Price	Sale Price	Listing Date	Sale Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
1825 Ohio Ave NE	\$18,000	\$16,750	8/6/09	10/23/09	Single family	1924	1,182
1828 Superior	\$13,900	\$13,750	8/3/09	11/3/09	Single family	1928	1,070
2002 Superior	\$11,900	\$8,500	11/9/09	1/20/10	Single family	1948	792
1701 Taft Ave.	\$10,500	\$13,000	11/4/09	12/11/09	Single family	1922	1144
1732 Roosevelt (bank sale)	\$11,400	\$11,400	12/10/09	1/21/10	Single family	1922	1152

Currently on Market

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2120 Superior Ave (vacant)	\$89,900	12/17/09	Single family	New	1,332
1806 Superior Ave	Auction	3/30/10	Single family	1912	1,714

Recently Expired

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Expire Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
1738 Ohio Ave NE	\$79,900	5/15/09	12/15/09	Single family	1926	1,152
2214 21st St NE	\$54,900	8/4/09	11/4/09	Single family	1930	672

Withdrawn

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Withdrwl Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
1723 Ohio Ave NE	\$34,900	12/4/09	2/21/10	Single family	1924	1,290

MCKINLEY MANOR

NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES

North	East	South	West
23 RD Street NE	Harmont Avenue NE (west side only)	Midway Avenue and 19 th Street NE	Gridley Avenue NE

WORKPLAN

McKinley Manor is a classic example of the post-World War II housing that was built to serve the rapidly growing families of the early 1950's. The housing stock dates from 1951 to 1955 and the houses follow remarkably similar patterns of construction. Most were either about 850 square feet or just over 1000 square feet. That meant there were either two bedrooms or three. Some had basements; others were on slab. The consistent style was a ranch house with a side driveway. Some have garages to the rear, some have added garages, and others have carports. This form of development reflected the national post-war commitment to building houses as quickly and as affordable as possible, just as auto-ownership was becoming typical for working families.



The topography of the neighborhood is level and the streets and avenues follow a typical grid pattern. However, four streets were constructed with gentle curves to break up the repetitiveness and add a more suburban feel. Most lots are uniform in size and are sited on wide streets that primarily serve local traffic. Only 25th Street NE and Harmont Avenue NE have significant through traffic. In the original planning, there was no designated park area, but space was set aside for an elementary school with ample playgrounds. Finally, as was common for 1950's planned neighborhoods, no lots were set-aside for commercial and retail activity. This place had very clear goals; it was built to offer affordable homes on safe streets for a targeted set of buyers.



As a result, with an exception of the school and a more recent apartment complex, the whole neighborhood consists of 274 single-family houses. A windshield survey discloses that more than 11% of the houses are maintained in above average to excellent condition. And more than 67% were identified as average condition. This means that nearly 80% of all the houses are maintained in average to excellent repair as of spring of 2010.

At the same time, 20% were evaluated as below average, with five houses being labeled as abandoned, mostly reflecting houses in a long foreclosure process. This latter point is important because McKinley Manor is still seen as a good neighborhood for homeownership, but low prices and foreclosures weaken this status and raise a major point of concern if the neighborhood is to remain stable. Small frame houses built in the 1950's

require regular upgrades to keep them competitive and to make them more energy efficient. Low prices make it difficult for homeowners to rationalize costly upgrades and very low prices make it easy for landlords to purchase and rent the properties without major improvements.

For the six months from October to April of this year, sales data shows a pattern of low-end sales and withdrawal of more expensive properties. While the home purchase market is weak both locally and nationally, it is of particular concern for McKinley Manor if it is to stay a neighborhood of choice for working income households.

During the study period, only one of twelve houses sold for more than the asking price. Most sold for much reduced costs, often \$4000 to \$7000 off original listing prices. These numbers are significant because a typical house sold for roughly \$20,000. To put this into payment terms, if a buyer were to take out a 30-year mortgage, the monthly principle and interest charge would be about \$120. Even with insurance costs and taxes, the monthly burden is extraordinarily low. Indeed, surely many working income households pay much more in car payments.



To be realistic, however, it is unlikely that a working income family could find a lender willing to do make 30-year mortgage on such a small amount. But a 10-year loan at 10% interest would still require only a \$264 monthly payment. Simply said, in terms of monthly payments, McKinley Manor is very affordable. This is where the problem becomes much more clear. A purchase and modest repairs have to be done in light of the current sales values.

To put this in perspective, fifteen properties in the higher end of the market need to be analyzed. If we look at these houses which are either pending sales, properties on the market, or withdrawn listings, most of the sales prices start in the mid to high \$30K's and include a full range of properties up to \$70,000 or more. These properties are the quality single-family houses that should be of interest to stable buyers. In point of fact, only two are pending sales. The home purchase market for the desired stable homebuyers is essentially non-existent.

Although a more thorough case-by-case study needs to be completed, anecdotal evidence suggests that the older homeowners that are selling are not finding younger buyers willing to purchase. Even though these properties would more likely qualify for a typical 30-year mortgage payment of only \$300 a month for principle and interest, they're not finding the younger buyers.

The real estate data suggests that a quality product is available, but home purchasers aren't confident enough to make a \$50,000 decision. The reasons for this are many:

- ✓ There are other excellent neighborhoods with quality properties at this price point.
- ✓ The neighborhood has some limitations, such as a lack of institutional life, a strong resident association, and clear neighborhood identity.

- ✓ The presence of so many low priced sales and some foreclosed houses undermines confidence in the real estate market's ability to maintain a good mix of homeowners and investors.
- ✓ The location of the neighborhood is neither completely strong nor fully weak. There are good parks, schools, and a library nearby, but there are also vulnerable neighborhoods and declining apartment complexes equally close.
- ✓ The access to the neighborhood is generally good but the routes are often busy or are in need of upgrading such as Mahoning Road NE. Also, the houses on Harmont Road NE are some of the more troubling properties.
- ✓ Some of the nearby neighborhood facilities primarily serve low-income and at-risk households, a likely situation that further limits the interest of homebuyers.

What is defining the neighborhood is a set of conditions that the public sector has little ability to address. The key challenges are not removing abandoned houses, repairing sidewalks, improving traffic flow, or repaving streets. Of course, some of these actions would be desirable and there would be advantages from more targeted code enforcement and special loans or grants to senior or disabled homeowners in distress. But these options are few and unlikely to be funded, so the role of the city government is very limited indeed.

One of the few actions that could take place is to assist with the marketing of the foreclosed properties through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. This would address three or four troubled houses. The re-capture funds could be used to enhance curb appeal, install entry signs, develop marketing campaigns, and provide incentives to homebuyers. If NSP actions aren't used in McKinley Manor, the combination of a very soft market, increased investor purchases, and very few homeowner purchases is disturbing. Scores of homeowners and quality investors want to see the equity in their properties protected. At this time, there is every reason to believe that home values will erode for all properties, but more so for the better quality houses.

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

Description	Number
Houses	274
Duplexes	0
Multi-family	1
Average year built	1953
Average size	956 square feet
Properties lived in by homeowner	78 (53.1% of known)
Investment Properties	69 (46.9% of known)
Unknown owner/rental	128
Above standard condition	31 (11.3%)
Average condition	184 (67.2%)
Below condition	59 (21.5%)
Abandoned	5

The challenge then is to determine how to break this cycle. As noted, the overwhelming issues are not infrastructure, location, perceptions of safety, or amenities. Rather, there is an underlying dysfunction in the real estate market that is eroding confidence. It is the interaction of the real estate market and property owner confidence that is driving the disinvestment pattern. The neighborhood might soon be in a situation where this cannot be reversed. At the present time, it doesn't appear there is a resident group focused on this issue, nor is the issue part of the local political discourse. In fact, there really isn't a ready forum for raising these issues and suggesting remedies.

Therefore, the workplan suggestions are much more tentative than should be. The challenge is real, but the answers are much less straightforward because resources are unknown at this time and local leadership hasn't been engaged with these critical issues. Nevertheless, it is important that steps be taken as soon as possible. Therefore, the following is the draft recommended activities for the first three years.

YEAR ONE

The city government should immediately focus Neighborhood Stabilization Program resources on the foreclosed houses in McKinley Manor.

A committee should be created from a pool of interested individuals, including residents (long-term and newer homeowners and renters), investor owners of quality properties, representatives of interested nonprofit organizations, real estate professionals, lenders, and city agency officials.

The working group needs to quickly become acquainted with the full range of properties and the qualities of competing housing and neighborhoods through a study that involves both data and on-site tours of properties.

The working group should develop resources and strategies for marketing the strongest properties in order to improve sales at the upper end of listing prices.

The resources should include special loan funds for purchase and/or for rehab of houses. Also included should be grants for distressed homeowners, those that qualify for weatherization assistance or other programs, and NSP properties if they are developed. If NSP funds are not used in McKinley Manor, the working group should request that recapture funds be made available to the neighborhood.

The strategies should include, but not be limited to:

- ✓ Joint open houses of quality properties
- ✓ A neighborhood identity branding campaign on all properties
- ✓ Gateway and banner programs to create a sense of place
- ✓ Curb appeal initiatives and landscaping projects to add visual impact
- ✓ Block-based efforts to build resident solidarity
- ✓ Resident-initiated exterior code compliance effort
- ✓ Joint projects with the elementary school and local nonprofits
- ✓ An outreach program for new neighbors, both homebuyers and renters
- ✓ An absolutely remarkable neighborhood festival

YEAR TWO

It is anticipated that the strategy initiatives phase will not be completed in Year One. It should be understood that the size of the neighborhood is at the upper end of neighborhood outreach projects. Usually neighborhoods over 300 houses are very difficult to organize, as one place, and extremely difficult to revitalize consistently across the whole area.

Therefore, the working committee should use Year Two for the following:

- ✓ Completing outreach and marketing efforts
- ✓ Increasing resident participation to achieve broader involvement
- ✓ Developing new initiatives based on this larger group. This includes tool- sharing programs, joint gardening projects, etc.
- ✓ Investigating resources for improving below average properties
- ✓ Creating targeted efforts for blocks such as on Harmont Avenue NE

YEAR THREE

While there will be documentation during the whole process, it will be critical that the local and citywide leaders assess whether the interventions were successful. If declines are still continuing, the strategies need to be rethought. If the market is stable to improving, the best strategies ought to be repeated with the goal of building equity values across the neighborhood, with the emphasis on houses in the lower fifty percent of sales values.

CHALLENGES FOR THE CITY OF CANTON

- ✓ Commit to aggressively using NSP and other programs to redevelop at least six to eight neighborhood houses as standard-setters
- ✓ Partner in resident-involved exterior code compliance efforts, curb appeal programs, and weatherization activities
- ✓ Assist in neighborhood festivals, clean-up projects, or other special events
- ✓ Be proactive about developing new lending packages that support homebuyer activity in McKinley Manor
- ✓ Assist in the neighborhood branding and identity campaigns and installations
- ✓ Actively seek out programs that support the McKinley Manor workplans

REAL ESTATE INFORMATION

Recent Sales

Address	Listing Price	Sale Price	Listing Date	Sale Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2317 Willowrow Ave NE	\$44,900	\$40,000	5/6/09	11/30/09	Single family	1955	1,008
2723 19th St NE	\$29,900	\$26,000	7/30/09	11/18/09	Single family	1955	1,008
2734 19th St NE	\$39,200	\$25,000	7/24/09	10/22/09	Single family	1955	1,008
2309 Endrow Ave NE	\$23,000	\$20,000	10/13/09	11/16/09	Single family	1951	875
2206 Maxine Ave NE	\$27,000	\$20,000	7/10/09	1/5/10	Single family	1955	1,008
2013 Morris Ave NE	Auction	\$18,700	11/23/09	12/28/09	Single family	1955	1,008
1917 Bollinger Ave NE	\$16,900	\$18,549	12/22/09	3/8/10	Single family	1951	850
2413 Gridley Ave NE	\$22,000	\$18,000	10/2/09	11/18/09	Single family	1955	1,008
2103 Willowrow Ave NE	\$17,900	\$15,900	8/18/09	12/4/09	Single family	1952	850
2850 25th St NE	\$19,900	\$15,000	12/30/09	4/2/10	Single family	1955	1,050
2008 Willowrow Ave NE	\$19,900	\$14,900	11/1/09	12/18/09	Single family	1950	850
2308 Maxine Ave NE	\$15,000	\$13,000	10/30/09	12/15/09	Single family	1955	1,008

Currently on Market

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2006 Gridley Ave NE	\$74,876	3/18/10	Single family	1955	1,008
2209 Willowrow Ave NE	\$65,000	10/19/09	Single family	1955	1,008
2002 Midway Ave NE (vacant)	\$59,900	4/12/10	Single family	1952	1,248
1918 Endrow Ave NE (vacant)	\$49,900	5/9/09	Single family	1951	850
2410 Morris Ave NE	\$39,900	2/5/10	Single family	1955	1,050
2309 Endrow Ave NE	\$34,900	12/3/09	Single family	1951	875

Pending Sale

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2717 22nd St NE	\$39,900	1/25/10	Single family	1955	1,008
2323 Gridley Ave NE	\$28,900	3/31/10	Single family	1955	1,008

Recently Expired

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Expire Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
1907 Willowrow Ave NE	\$35,000	6/30/09	12/30/09	Single family	1951	850
2207 Harmont Ave NE	\$35,900	8/14/09	2/14/10	Single family	1950	875
2907 22nd St NE	\$73,900	9/28/09	12/31/09	Single family	1952	864

Withdrawn

Address	Listing Price	Listing Date	Withdrwl Date	Type	Year built	Square footage
2013 Morris Ave NE (vacant)	\$39,900	2/26/09	11/2/09	Single family	1955	1,008
2717 22nd St NE (vacant)	\$39,900	9/28/09	1/25/10	Single family	1955	1,008
2410 Morris Ave NE	\$42,900	6/4/08	1/22/10	Single family	1955	1,050
2309 Endrow Ave NE	\$44,900	12/3/09	1/9/10	Single family	1951	875