OAK HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

STAND UP

FIGHT BLIGHT

SEAL OF THE CITY OF YOUNGSTON
INCORPORATED 1867

YOUNGSTOWN
NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

"A city cannot be a successful city without a strong economy, without strong neighborhoods, and without a diverse, productive population with opportunities to improve their lives. The last, after all, was—and should still be—the traditional promise of the city."

—Alan Mallach

A mural painted in 2017 along Oak Hill Ave.

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St. Patrick's Church on Oak Hill Ave.

SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Youngstown, Ohio has experienced typical Midwestern deindustrialization and subsequent disinvestment. Population loss continued unabated through the beginning of the 21st century and in fact, between 2010 and 2012, Youngstown lost a higher percentage of residents than any American city over 50,000 people. However, since 2012, population loss has slowed.

In 2005, the City of Youngstown gathered community members and other stakeholders to craft *Youngstown 2010*, a long-term planning document. Out of that effort arose a host of neighborhood associations as well as the non-profit Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC). In 2013, YNDC began providing neighborhood planning services for the City of Youngstown. In that capacity, YNDC crafted the *Neighborhood Conditions Report* to provide a detailed look at housing markets and socioeconomic conditions. Our goal is to inform a citywide strategy for addressing basic challenges and opportunities in our neighborhoods to improve quality of life.

YNDC is forging collaboration between the City of Youngstown, residents, and other Oak Hill stakeholders to complete strategic neighborhood stabilization activities in this area. The following document is an action-driven plan that proposes a clear, property-specific strategy for the Oak Hill neighborhood. YNDC and the City of Youngstown's Community Planning and Economic Development Department will take the lead in preparing, administering, reporting and monitoring the Neighborhood Action Plan.

While most of the housing stock in Oak Hill is pre-1940, some newer subsidized housing exists throughout the neighborhood.

BOUNDARIES AND HISTORY

The Oak Hill Neighborhood was the first South Side Neighborhood to be incorporated into the City of Youngstown. Because what is now Oak Hill Avenue offered the point of least resistance to the top of what was known as 'Impassable Ridge' and the relatively flat land on the South Side, there was early settlement in sections adjacent to Mahoning Commons which were in the initial municipal incorporation of 1869. Historically one of Youngstown's most dense neighborhoods, the area has suffered from disinvestment for decades, resulting in one of the city's highest vacancy rates, both of vacant structures and vacant land.

Oak Hill Neighborhood

New Bethel Baptist Church is located on Hillman St.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND AMENITIES

Oak Hill has an extremely weak housing market, in comparison with the City of Youngstown as a whole.

Between 1990 and 2015 the Oak Hill neighborhood experienced a **dramatic population loss of 61%.** Homeownership rates mirror those of the rest of the city but vacancy rates are 50% higher than the city average.

The average home sale price is $6,004—significantly lower than the city average. This area of the city has a higher percentage of African-American residents (87%) than the city as a whole. Median income--$17,616--is significantly lower than the citywide average.

Through recent, targeted demolition efforts, the number of vacant structures in the neighborhood has fallen from 477 in 2008 (26.5% of all structures) to 290 in 2017 (19.9%).

A blighted home in the Oak Hill neighborhood.

Oak Hill Neighborhood Demographic Summary						
	POPULATION (2015)	POPULATION LOSS (1990-2015)	AVERAGE HOME SALE PRICE (2014-2016)	PERCENT OWNER OCCUPIED (2015)	VACANCY RATE (1990)	VACANCY RATE (2015)
OAK HILL	2,578	-61%	$6,004	57%	15%	30%
YOUNGSTOWN	65,573	-31%	$22,055	56%	9%	20%
SOURCE: United States Census and American Community Survey Data						

OAK HILL NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISONS	OAK HILL	YOUNGSTOWN	MAHONING COUNTY
TOTAL POPULATION (2015)	2,578	65,573	234,550
RACIAL/ETHNIC DEMOGRAPHICS (2015)			
AFRICAN AMERICAN	87%	45%	15%
WHITE	10%	49%	80%
HISPANIC	4%	10%	5%
TOTAL PERSONS BELOW POVERTY (2015)	35%	38%	18%
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME (2015)	$17,616	$24,133	$41,375
UNEMPLOYMENT (2015)	26%	18%	10%
HOUSING VACANCY RATE (2015)	30%	20%	12%
HOUSING UNITS BUILT BEFORE 1939	62%	40%	22%
OWNER OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS (2015)	57%	56%	68%
RESIDENTS WITHOUT A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA (2015)	29%	18%	11%
RESIDENTS WITH AN ASSOCIATE'S AND/OR BACHELOR'S DEGREE (2015)	17%	14%	21%
RESIDENTS WITH A GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (2015)	2%	4%	8%
SOURCE: United States Census and American Community Survey Data			

The housing stock in the Oak Hill neighborhood is significantly older than the city as a whole.

OAK HILL NEIGHBORHOOD PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

On March 27, 2014, the Oak Hill Collaborative hosted YNDC and officials from the City for a citywide planning meeting for residents of the Oak Hill neighborhood.

Assets and priorities in the neighborhoods were established, discussed, and recorded on comment cards. In general, residents considered housing and property issues, infrastructure concerns, and neighborhood safety to be primary issues. Residents were also asked to tell the YNDC planning team "one thing we need to know" about the neighborhood. Responses were recorded on comment cards and this activity was purposely left open-ended to gain a rich variety of feedback. Some of the responses are shown below.

A Public Meeting held at the Oak Hill Collaborative on March 27, 2014, for Oak Hill residents to express their thoughts on priorities for the neighborhood

"vandalizing empty houses: it's hard to buy/sell a house because the moment they are empty they get destroyed"

"more attention needs to be given to vacant lots where people put debris"

"help seniors that cant financially help themselves completely - property upkeep outside"

"demo the houses"

"the use of vacant land should be gifted to homeowners and utilized as food gardens/urban farms - small farm animals like chickens should be encouraged to provide area with fresh food"

"don't be afraid to think outside of the box and never give up; we love our city/the south side"

"that we love our town and want the most - we need more gatherings for community"

"HOPE through simple organization, through cooperation, continued action"

"most people lock their doors and watch TV - they won't get involved"

"spend time to let others know of the redevelopment and growth in the area"

"we need help in cleaning up our neighborhood"

"is the city of Youngstown still red-lined?"

"I think city is wasting $ on street dept, housing, security & losing its real resource = young people, education, developing dreams, purposeful planning"

"activities for youth to keep them off streets "

"try to get more businesses in town"

"neighborhood grass management dept/committee"

"since glenwood is opening for mill creek it could look a little better - street, houses, foliage - many visitors use Glenwood to get to the park"

"development of Oak Hill, Hillman, and Market"

"blight!"

"vacant houses filled w/ tires demolished"

"playground and basketball court"

"unusable sidewalks"

"get rid of blight, crime, drugs"

NEIGHBORHOOD PRIORITIES

Residents who attended the citywide public meetings held in early 2014 were asked to identify the primary challenges or priorities in their neighborhoods. The majority of residents named housing and property issues as the number one challenge they would like to see addressed. The top four neighborhood priorities identified by residents overall are listed below:

1. Housing and Property Issues
Litter, illegal dumping, code violations, vacant homes, unmaintained vacant lots, and abandonment.

2. Infrastructure Repair and Maintenance
Repairing and maintaining existing infrastructure, including streets, sidewalks, and street lights.

3. Crime and Safety Concerns
Addressing crime hot spots, including vacant and occupied homes within the neighborhoods where criminal activity is threatening the health and safety of neighborhoods.

4. Encouraging Economic Development
Encouraging more businesses to locate to the corridors and making the corridors more walkable and attractive for customers.

This blighted home in the Oak Hill neighborhood has a detrimental effect on the surrounding area.

HOUSING MARKET SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS

The Oak Hill neighborhood has an extremely weak housing market. A market segmentation analysis of all neighborhoods in the city was conducted by YNDC and the City of Youngstown in 2014 using U.S. Census and other relevant housing data. A detailed account of the market conditions throughout the city and the process for completing the analysis is included in the citywide *Neighborhood Conditions Report*.

Oak Hill Neighborhood | Market Segmentation
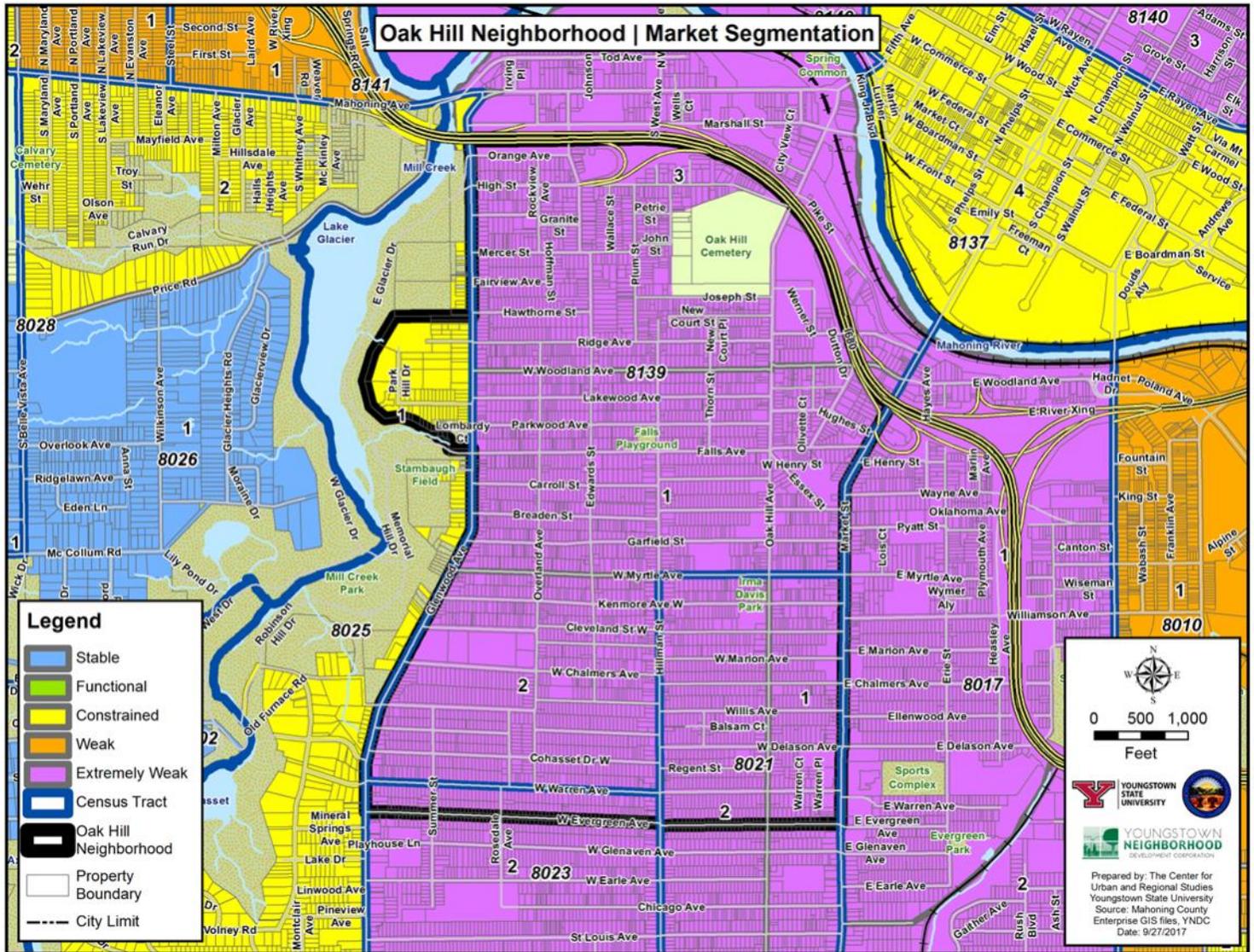
The map above identifies the housing market conditions in the Oak Hill neighborhood of Youngstown by U.S. Census block groups, which is the smallest area for which housing market data is collected and analyzed. A detailed description of the varying market categories is provided on the following page.

Neighborhoods were categorized based on varying conditions because a different strategy is required to address areas with varying market conditions. For example, in *constrained* neighborhoods, the priority is to pursue an aggressive demolition strategy to remove blighted, abandoned homes on otherwise stable blocks; and apply code-enforcement on properties in disrepair. More information on the current conditions and strategies is provided in the plan on the following page.

Market Segmentation Categories:

An explanation of the varying categories of market conditions from the market segmentation analysis of the City of Youngstown are as follows:

Stable market block groups have the strongest indicators of any neighborhoods in the city, though they may or may not be considered strong by national standards. In general, they are represented by relatively few vacancies and high median sales prices. Homeownership rates are significantly higher than the citywide average and poverty rates, crime rates, and population loss are low. Home transfers involve traditional mortgages in nearly 50% of cases, compared to only 1 out of 10 in Youngstown as a whole. **There are no "stable market" block groups in the Oak Hill neighborhood.**

Functioning market block groups are those in which all or nearly all indicators fall within ranges consistent with an adequately functioning housing market: houses generally sell when they come on the market; vacancies are manageable; few properties go into foreclosure; and housing quality is generally high. House prices, however, vary more widely than the other indicators, reflecting the fact that house prices do not correlate as strongly with the other indicators as most do with each other. These areas may not have strong markets by national standards, but they are functioning well by city or regional standards. As such, they are likely to be appropriate target areas for stabilization efforts to ensure that they retain their market viability. (Mallach, 2013) **There are no "functional market" block groups in the Oak Hill neighborhood.**

Constrained market block groups are those in which market activity continues to take place, and houses generally sell fairly readily as they come on the market. However, one or more variables suggest that significant deterioration in market conditions is taking place, including extremely low sales prices—which is likely to reflect a market dominated by speculative investors—significantly more rapid erosion of home ownership than in the functioning market tracts, and significantly higher vacancy rates. Given their still relatively high housing quality, some or all of these areas may be appropriate targets for stabilization efforts. (Mallach, 2013) **There are no"constrained market" block groups in the Oak Hill neighborhood.**

Weak market block groups are those in which most variables suggest market weakness, particularly significantly slower turnover rates than in the two preceding clusters, yet at least one and in some cases more variables point to the continued presence of some level of market activity or neighborhood stability; for example, a tract may have sluggish sales and very low house prices, but may also have relatively low vacancy or foreclosure rates, or a high and relatively stable homeownership rate. Depending on the particular features of the individual census tracts in this cluster, some may be appropriate targets in whole or part for stabilization efforts. (Mallach, 2013) **There are no "weak market" block groups in the Oak Hill neighborhood.**

Extremely weak market block groups are those in which all or nearly all variables indicate that little or no market exists for the housing in the tract. They are generally characterized by minimal sales activity, extremely low prices for those houses that do sell, extremely high vacancy rates and tax foreclosure, and low levels of homeownership and housing quality. It is unlikely that many of these areas are appropriate targets for stabilization efforts overall, although there may be small subareas where such efforts may be appropriate. It is important to ensure that the residents of these tracts continue to receive adequate public services. (Mallach, 2013) **The Oak Hill neighborhood is classified as having an "extremely weak market."**

SECTION II. FIVE-YEAR PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS

The following section outlines neighborhood revitalization objectives for the Oak Hill Neighborhood to be achieved in accordance with this plan over the next five years, from 2017 to 2022.

Proposed Property Five-Year Benchmarks

- 25 properties are brought into compliance.
- 250 severely blighted structures are demolished.
- 50 vacant and formerly blighted properties are boarded and cleaned up.
- All unmaintained vacant lots are mowed with a higher frequency using a strategic method. Outreach is conducted where viable to identify adjacent homeowners to take over lots.
- 10 housing units are rehabilitated through collaborative methods.

Proposed Infrastructure Five-Year Benchmarks

- 15,000 linear feet of overgrown sidewalks are uncovered and made useable, particularly on main corridors, near community assets, and at bus stops.
- Repair 80 non-functioning streetlights.
- Clean up 50 illegal dumping sites.
- All Falls Playground maintenance issues are addressed.

Proposed Crime and Safety Five-Year Benchmarks

- 4 neighborhood crime hotspots are addressed through community policing and neighborhood interventions.

Community Building Benchmarks

- Work to establish an Oak Hill Neighborhood Action Team to build capacity in the area.
- Complete 10 resident and/or business-driven neighborhood improvement projects.
- Conduct 5 collaborative meetings of neighborhood businesses along main corridors.
- Engage neighborhood anchors such as churches and institutions.

Economic Development Benchmarks

- Target city incentive programs to retail on neighborhood corridors, including marketing resources and training for small business owners.
- Improve at least two existing business façades with a grant or loan from the City of Youngstown.
- Acquire and assemble vacant, tax delinquent land for future economic development or open space preservation.

Neighborhood Revitalization Outcomes

The following are outcome goals from implementing the strategies proposed in this Neighborhood Action Plan:

Outcome 1: Improve housing market conditions by decreasing the number of blighted properties in the neighborhood by 50%. Blighted properties are vacant or occupied homes with significant exterior code violations.

- Baselines: 353 blighted residential properties (achieving a 50% reduction would be reducing the number of blighted properties by 239)

Outcome 2: Improve basic public infrastructure by reporting all unlit street lights on a regular basis, resurfacing the most critical streets in the neighborhood, and cleaning up and replacing sidewalks through a collaborative partnership between residents and the city.

- Baselines: 80 missing street lights; 3.7 miles of road in fair and 1.2 miles of road in poor condition

Outcome 3: Improve neighborhood safety by reducing reported crime by a minimum of 30% over a period of five years through community policing and securing of vacant properties.

- Baseline: 512 reported crimes between 2014-2016 (achieving a 30% reduction would be 358 reported crimes)

Outcome 4: Improve capacity of neighborhood groups and institutions to collaborate with the City and YNDC on 10 neighborhood improvement projects.

- Baseline: Number of large-scale collaborative, neighborhood improvement projects (currently there are none)

Outcome 5: Improve economic development by providing assistance to 2 businesses and/or entrepreneurs.

- Baseline: Number of Oak Hill neighborhood corridor businesses and/or neighborhood entrepreneurs receiving assistance (currently there are none).

SECTION III. HOUSING AND PROPERTY ISSUES

YNDC conducted a survey of conditions of all properties in the Oak Hill Neighborhood, to assess issues that are negatively impacting quality of life and hindering housing reinvestment. The following map spotlights occupied properties with code violations, and properties that are vacant and blighted.
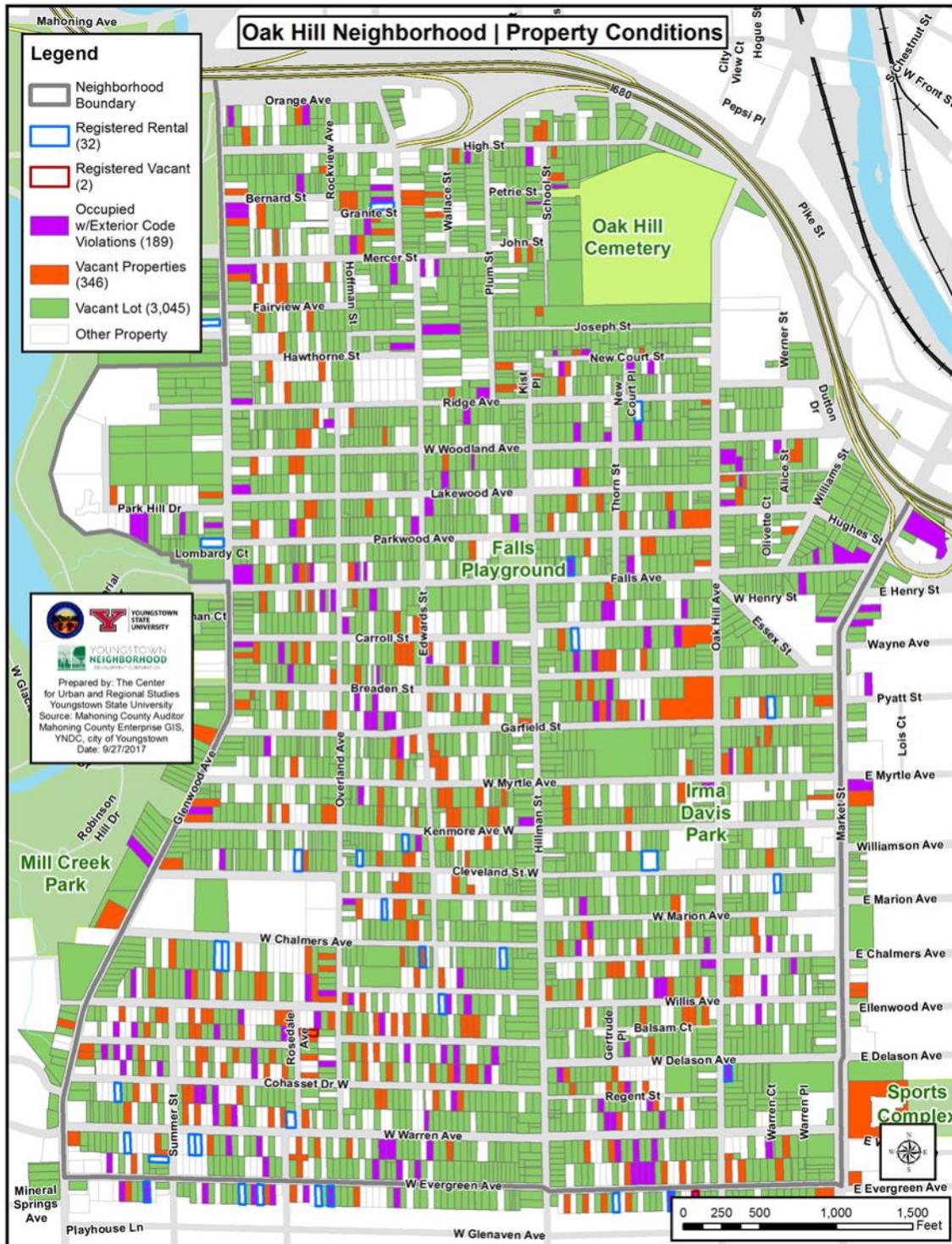
This data was collected from field surveys conducted during 2017 by YNDC, tracking exterior code violations, property vacancy, and vacant lot maintenance. Vacancy was determined by a number of factors, such as broken windows/doors or a non-active electric meter. There are 189 occupied properties with exterior code violations, and 346 properties that are vacant.

HOUSING AND PROPERTY STRATEGY
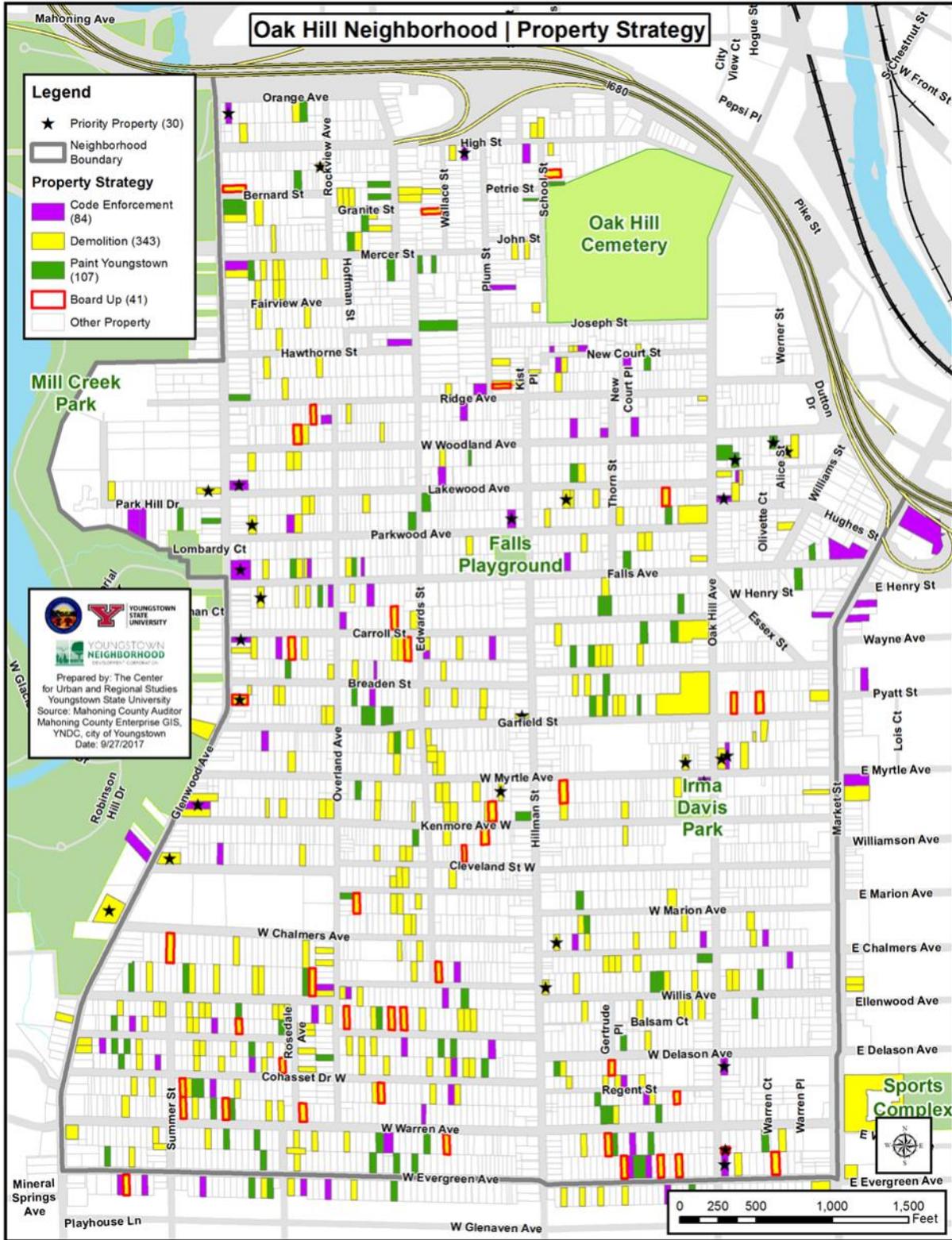
The map above identifies a strategy for every vacant home and occupied structure with exterior code violations in order to stabilize the neighborhood's housing market and improve quality of life for residents. The strategy of each property is determined by a field survey conducted by YNDC and property research examining ownership, tax status, and other related issues. This information was evaluated carefully to determine appropriate use of the strategies as described on the following two pages.

Core Strategies

The following are descriptions of the core strategies assigned to each vacant and occupied property with exterior code violations throughout the neighborhood. These strategies are necessary to bring the property into compliance or otherwise eliminate blight and disinvestment in the neighborhood.

1) Demolition: Properties that are vacant and severely deteriorated are recommended in the plan for demolition by the City of Youngstown. These also include properties that must be demolished quickly because they are an immediate health and safety hazard.

2) Code Enforcement: This strategy seeks to have the home repaired through aggressive code enforcement by the City of Youngstown. Inspectors can issue warnings, administrative penalties, and can send the owner of homes in violation of the City's property code to either a Housing Appeals Board or to a prosecutor hearing, depending upon the severity of the violations and the financial circumstances of the owner. This is especially critical for occupied structures with violations, and key vacant structures of significance to the fabric of the neighborhood that should be salvaged rather than demolished. If an owner is unresponsive to the City's code enforcement efforts, several tools may be used to achieve compliance. These include Spot Blight eminent domain, tax foreclosure, and receivership.

3) Potential Paint Youngstown Candidate: Owner-occupied properties with exterior code violations may qualify for YNDC's Paint Youngstown Limited Repair or Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation programs. These programs assist qualified owner-occupants living in target areas to make critical repairs to their homes at no cost. All occupied properties with exterior code violations where the owner's address is the same as the address of the property (and not a business name), have been identified as potential addresses to conduct outreach for this program over the next 5 years.

4) Board Up: Vacant properties with broken or missing doors or windows or are otherwise vulnerable to break-ins, vandalism and weather damage are recommended to be boarded up. Properties can be boarded and secured in partnership with the City of Youngstown, YNDC, and neighborhood residents through volunteer workdays.

343.5 BREADEN: BEFORE PAINT YOUNGSTOWN

343.5 BREADEN: AFTER PAINT YOUNGSTOWN

Neighborhood-wide Strategies

In order to strengthen the housing market and build a stronger community, several strategies have been identified to complement the targeted property strategies.

1. Engaging Neighborhood Anchors: The Oak Hill neighborhood includes such community anchors as New Bethel Baptist Church, Greater Friendship Church, Mt. Calvary Pentecostal Church, St. Patrick's Church, Youngstown Community School, Oak Hill Cemetery, the Salvation Army, the Community Corrections Association, the Oak Hill Collaborative, and Mill Creek MetroParks. These anchors may provide strong partnership or funding opportunities for community projects and serve as a resource for other neighborhood revitalization efforts.

2. Community Building: The Oak Hill neighborhood groups should take on such projects as a street clean up or vacant property board-up/clean up. These activities strengthen ties within the community and leverage the collective neighborhood resources.

3. Engaging the Business Community: The Oak Hill neighborhood contains a number of locally-owned and national chain stores. The City of Youngstown's Economic Development Department should hold a meeting of business owners to discuss needs and concerns. These businesses should be targeted for economic development.

4. Economic Development: The City's incentive programs should be targeted to owners along Market St. In particular, facades should be improved and loans provided to new and existing businesses.

Community workdays were held to clean up sidewalks and vacant properties in the Oak Hill neighborhood in 2017.

TOP 30 PRIORITY PROPERTIES: OAK HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

Through field research, 30 properties with code violations were identified as priority properties. Some vacant and some occupied, these houses were selected based on severity of deterioration; concern for health and safety of occupants or neighboring residents; stabilization in an area where one blighted or at-risk house is threatening an otherwise stable area; or further stabilizing an area where existing reinvestment has been taking place.

The list is broken down into two sections: Priority Properties for Demolition and Priority Properties for Code Enforcement. Lists are not prioritized by rank. Photos on this page demonstrate examples of some of the Top 30 Priority Properties.

1598 GLENWOOD: DEMOLITION

319 W MYRTLE: DEMOLITION

1063 ORANGE: CODE ENFORCEMENT

611 ALICE: DEMOLITION

68 W MYRTLE: CODE ENFORCEMENT

PRIORITY PROPERTIES: CODE ENFORCEMENT

The following 15 properties have been identified as priorities for code enforcement. The condition of these properties was evaluated using the neighborhood property survey. Some are occupied homeowner or rental properties in poor condition, some are vacant with issues but can likely be salvaged and rehabilitated.

Address	Description of Condition
1329 GLENWOOD	Roof/gutter damage; exterior wall damage
1001 GLENWOOD	Garage in disrepair; trash and debris
825 GLENWOOD	Trash and debris; overgrown vegetation; zoning violations
621 GLENWOOD	Exterior wall damage; roof and gutter damage; trash and debris
1063 ORANGE	Roof damage; porch damage
807 HIGH	Roof damage; exterior wall damage
810 PARKWOOD	Porch damage; roof and gutter damage
232 LAKEWOOD	Exterior wall damage; trash and debris; roof damage
70 W EVERGREEN (1919 OAK HILL)	Overgrown vegetation; porch damage; exterior wall damage; roof damage; trash and debris
1807/1809 OAK HILL	Porch damage; boarded window
1300 OAK HILL	Roof and gutter damage; exterior wall damage; trash and debris
1225 OAK HILL	Roof damage; exterior wall damage
639 OAK HILL	Peeling paint; porch damage; roof damage; trash and debris
68 W MYRTLE	Peeling paint; roof damage
203 W WOODLAND	Roof damage; peeling paint; trash and debris

PRIORITY PROPERTIES: DEMOLITION

The following 15 houses have been identified as priorities for demolition, based on data collected through a YNDC property survey.

Address	Description of Condition
1598 GLENWOOD	Exterior wall damage; rood and gutter damage
1419 GLENWOOD	Exterior wall damage; rood and gutter damage; overgrown vegetation
1111 GLENWOOD	Exterior wall damage; trash and debris; overgrown vegetation; unsecure
624 GLENWOOD	Exterior wall damage; roof damage
1058 PARKWOOD	Exterior wall damage; roof damage
1639 HILLMAN	Roof and gutter damage; exterior wall damage; overgrown vegetation
1128 HILLMAN	Exterior wall damage; porch damage; roof and gutter damage; trash and debris
312 ROCKVIEW	Porch damage; overgrown vegetation; garage in disrepair
202 W CHALMERS	Exterior wall damage; roof and gutter damage
625 LAKEWOOD	Exterior wall damage; roof and gutter damage
319 W MYRTLE	Roof damage; porch damage; peeling paint; trash and debris; overgrown vegetation
114 W MYRTLE	Exterior wall damage; roof and gutter damage
611 ALICE	Roof damage; wall damage; porch damage; trash and debris; overgrown vegetation
1911 OAK HILL	Collapsed porch; roof damage; peeling paint; trash and debris; overgrown vegetation
551 FALLS	Exterior wall damage; roof and gutter damage; overgrown vegetation; trash and debris

PRIORITY PROPERTIES: BOARD UP AND CLEAN UP

Since 2014, 226 properties in the Oak Hill neighborhood have been boarded by YNDC. An additional 38 houses have been identified as priorities for board up, based on data collected through a YNDC property survey in 2017.

Address	
932 Parkwood Ave	125 Regent St
527 Lakewood Ave	158 Regent St
1024 W Woodland Ave	165 W Delason Ave
639 New Court St	412 W Delason Ave
537 Plum St	418 W Delason Ave
635 W Evergreen Ave	448 W Delason Ave
160 W Evergreen Ave	443 W Marion Ave
136 W Evergreen Ave	338 Cleveland St
124 W Evergreen Ave	333 Kenmore Ave
38 W Evergreen Ave	328 Kenmore Ave
169 W Warren Ave	437 Kenmore Ave
359 W Warren Ave	64 Garfield St
454 W Warren Ave	533 Carroll St
570 W Warren Ave	405 Carroll St
608 W Warren Ave	410 Carroll St
597 Cohasset Dr	536 W Delason Ave.
538 Cohasset Dr	1911 Oak Hill Ave.
423 Cohasset Dr	1111 Glenwood Ave
1058 Bernard St.	364 Willis Ave.

RENTAL AND VACANT REGISTRATION

The following map identifies all registered rental and vacant properties within the neighborhood, with all the properties which are NOT registered but likely need to be registered identified as "Unregistered Vacant" or "Unregistered Rental." Current registration data was obtained from the City of Youngstown Department of Property Registration and current ownership information was retrieved from the Mahoning County Auditor. Vacancy data was determined from a detailed property survey conducted by YNDC for the entire neighborhood.

Oak Hill Neighborhood | Rentals and Vacant Properties

Legend
- Registered Rental (32)
- Potential Rental* (403)
- Registered Vacant (2)
- Unregistered Vacant (342)
- Other Property
- Neighborhood Boundary

Prepared by: The Center for Urban and Regional Studies Youngstown State University
Source: Mahoning County Auditor Mahoning County Enterprise GIS, YNDC, city of Youngstown
Date: 9/27/2017

*Occupied residential parcel not receiving 2.5% owner-occupied property tax reduction, and not a registered rental

All residential properties that are occupied and being rented must be registered with City of Youngstown. In total, there are 32 registered rental properties within the neighborhood and an additional 403 occupied houses that are likely rental properties which are unregistered. **"Potential Rental"** properties are residential properties that were either registered in the past two years but their registration is lapsed, or properties where the owner is not receiving the 2.5% tax reduction, indicating that it is unlikely that the owner resides at the home. All properties that are not presently occupied and not actively being rented must be registered with the City of Youngstown as vacant. There are 2 registered vacant properties within the neighborhood, with an additional 342 **"Unregistered Vacant"** properties. These are properties that identified as vacant in the property survey conducted for the Neighborhood Action Plan where the owner has not registered the property with the City of Youngstown.

Strategy Recommendation: All owners of unregistered vacant and rental property should receive an official notice to register as soon as possible. Investigative work should be completed by the City to identify any owners who do not respond to the notice, and, per city ordinance, citations of $100 per week should be issued in order to gain registration compliance.   Like other fees, this penalty can be assessed to the property tax duplicate.

PUBLICLY-OWNED TAX DELINQUENT LAND

The Oak Hill neighborhood has one of the city's highest rates of tax delinquency. Fifty percent of all parcels in the neighborhood are tax delinquent. Within the planning area boundaries, 805 parcels are tax delinquent and eligible for tax foreclosure. A significant number of parcels are publicly owned by the City of Youngstown (64 parcels) and the Mahoning County Land Bank (21). Tax delinquent parcels present an opportunity for land acquisition and assembly. Once publicly controlled, this land can be set aside for open space preservation or future development. It is recommended that the City of Youngstown begin acquiring tax delinquent parcels through its Land Bank, particularly along major corridors and sites with potential for business expansion.

Oak Hill Neighborhood | Publicly-Owned and Tax Delinquent Land

Legend

Neighborhood Boundary

Publicly Owned Land

City of Youngstown (18)

City of Youngstown Land Bank (139)

Mahoning County (18)

Mahoning County Land Bank (132)

Mill Creek MetroParks (42)

Yng Board of Education (23)

Other Ownership (4,160)

Tax Delinquent Land (2,266)

Prepared by: The Center for Urban and Regional Studies Youngstown State University
Source: Mahoning County Auditor Mahoning County Enterprise GIS, YNDC, city of Youngstown
Date: 9/27/2017

PRIORITY PROJECT LIST

Neighborhood groups are working with the City of Youngstown, YNDC, and other stakeholders to improve key locations throughout the Oak Hill neighborhood. The following is a list of projects identified by residents and stakeholders that are priorities for neighborhood improvement.

Location	Description of Project
Vacant lots at corner of Hillman St. and W. Warren Ave.	• Reclaim sidewalks • Add crosswalks • Assemble tax delinquent parcels • Grade and seed lots • Beautify lots • Long-term vision to install shipping container park as business incubator
Vacant lot at southeast Corner of Falls Ave. and Oak Hill Ave.	• Remove asphalt, concrete, debris, and brush • Grade and seed lot
East Side of Oak Hill Ave. between W. Myrtle Ave. and Garfield St.	• Remove asphalt, concrete, debris, and brush • Grade and seed lot
Bus stop at corner of W. Kenmore Ave. and Overland Ave.	• Cut back brush • Reclaim sidewalks
Bus stop at corner of Carroll St. and Overland Ave.	• Reclaim sidewalks
Bus stop at corner of Carroll St. and Edwards Ave.	• Cut back brush • Remove debris • Reclaim sidewalks
Balsam Ct.	• Remove dumping • Cut back brush • Close street
Hillman St.	• Resurface street
Oak Hill Ave.	• Resurface street
Blocks surrounding Youngstown Community School, including Essex St., Breaden St. and Falls Ave.	• Clear sidewalks of overgrown vegetation and dirt
CCA -maintained lot across from Calvary Tower on Market St.	• Add seating and a grill for residents
Edwards St. near I-680 overpass	• Clear sidewalks and stone wall of overgrown vegetation and dirt • Install way-finding and/or Welcome to Oak Hill signage for motorists exiting I-680
Irma Davis Park	• Assemble tax-delinquent parcels to the west of Irma Davis Park • Install walking trail

SECTION IV. INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE

Oak Hill Neighborhood | Infrastructure Survey

Legend
- Overgrown Vegetation (199)
- Replace Sidewalk (87)
- Replace Street Light (80)
- X Illegal Dumping (69)
- Fair Street Condition
- Poor Street Condition
- Street Resurfacing 2017
- Neighborhood Boundary
- Property

A detailed survey was conducted by YNDC to identify all roads, sidewalks, and other basic infrastructure and facilities issues that require attention throughout the neighborhood. The following map identifies the basic infrastructure issues that need to be addressed.

There are numerous sidewalk issues throughout the neighborhood. Yellow circles identify sections of sidewalk that are either severely lifted up or severely cracked and need to be replaced.

Street conditions are also identified. Sections of street in red are in "poor" condition, with many potholes and uneven patches. Sections in yellow are in "fair" condition and have some patching and minor potholes. Sections of road that are not highlighted are generally in "good" condition.

Infrastructure Strategy Recommendations:

1) Focus street resurfacing improvements on critical thoroughfares and around core neighborhood amenities. Streets in poor condition should be prioritized for street resurfacing in future years, particularly along major corridors, such as Hillman St. and Oak Hill Ave.

2) Sidewalk replacement and reclamation should be focused in the areas that connect residences to neighborhood assets and school bus stops. Sections of deteriorated sidewalk should be replaced as funding is available along main corridors near Falls Playground and where students wait for buses. Overgrown sidewalks should be cleared of dirt and overgrowth to allow safe passage.

3) An annual survey of all street lights which are out should be conducted and the results reported and tracked until addressed by Ohio Edison. Outages can be reported easily to Ohio Edison through the First Energy website. The URL for the online Report Lighting Problem system is: https://www.firstenergycorp.com/service_requests/report-lighting-problem.html.

4) All illegal dumping sites should be cleaned up. This can be accomplished through a partnership with the City of Youngstown and YNDC. Dumping can also be removed at volunteer workdays.

5) Install flashing school zone signs near schools. Flashing school zone signs to alert motorists to lower their speed should be installed on Oak Hill Ave. near the South Side Academy and on Essex St. near the Youngstown Community School.

There are numerous sections of sidewalk in the neighborhood that need to be reclaimed by removing dirt, debris, and vegetation. Sidewalks that need to be reclaimed are noted as red lines on the map to the left.

Sidewalk Strategy Recommendation:

Focus sidewalk reclamation on areas around school bus stops, amenities, such as Falls Playground, and on main thoroughfares, such as Hillman St. and Oak Hill Ave. Sidewalks can be reclaimed through a partnership between the City of Youngstown and YNDC, as well as at volunteer workday events.

FALLS PLAYGROUND

Falls Playground, located at Falls Ave. and Hillman St., is a community asset, but significant improvements to the park are needed. The park has maintenance issues that need to be addressed, including a lack of identification signage, swing sets missing swings, lack of ADA-accessibility, lack of mulch in play areas, obscene graffiti on playground equipment, lack of electricity, lack of benches, a deteriorating retaining wall, debris in the water feature, lack of a drinking fountain, and lack of a pavilion, grills or picnic table.

Falls Playground Recommendations:

1) Install sign identifying the playground.

2) Add swings to swing set.

3) Mulch area around playground equipment.

4) Add benches around playground equipment.

5) Repair deteriorated retaining wall.

6) Replace existing playground equipment.

7) Install drinking fountain.

8) Install pavilion, picnic tables and grill.

9) Install a small basketball court.

10) Install a climbing structure.

11) Improve condition of bathrooms.

12) Improve basic maintenance.
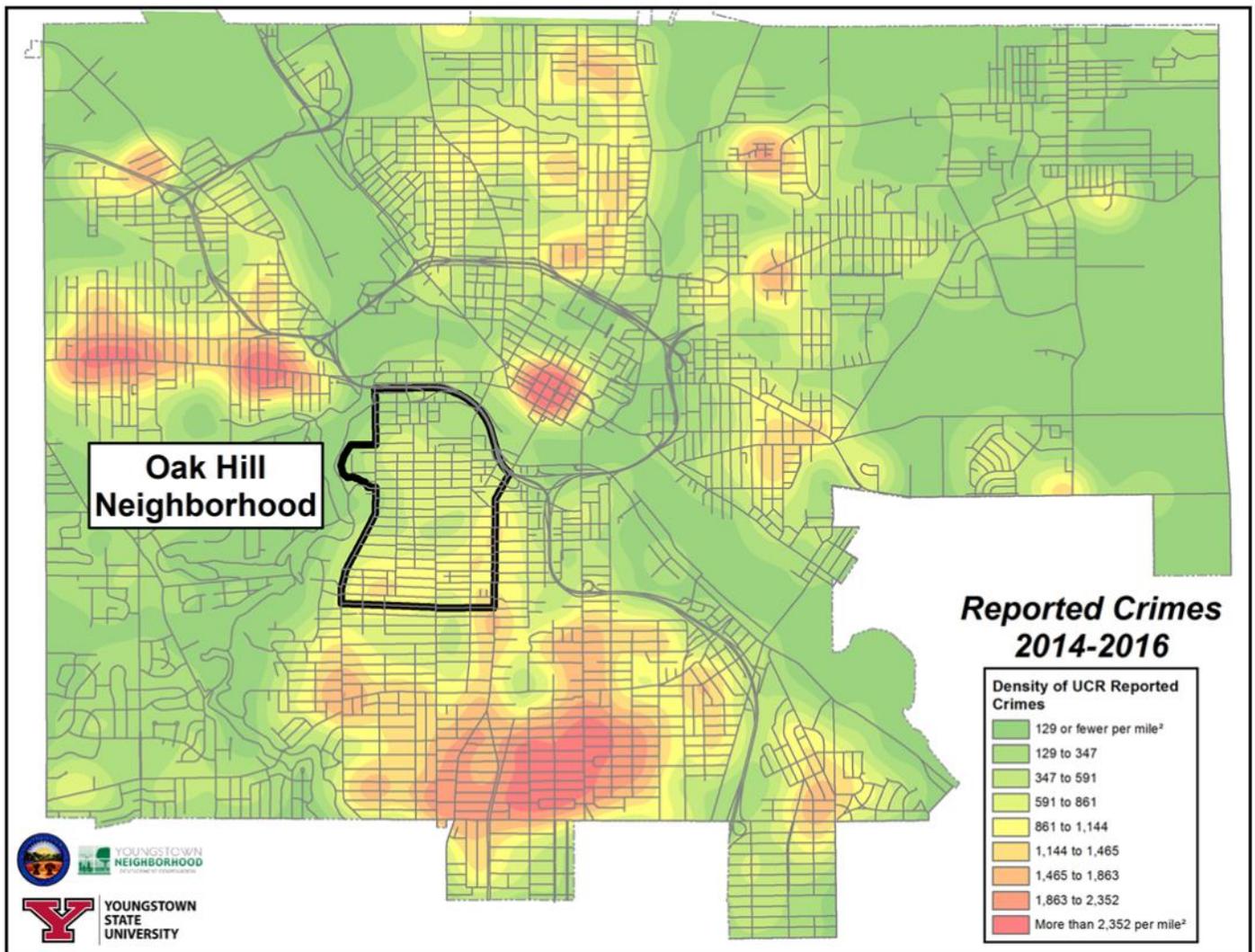

Falls Playground needs mulch.

Playground equipment needs to be replaced.

SECTION V. NEIGHBORHOOD CRIME AND SAFETY

The map below shows the level of crime in the Oak Hill neighborhood compared to the city of Youngstown as a whole. Between 2014 and 2016, Oak Hill had moderate crime rates compared to the rest of the city.

This heat map below illustrates "hot spots" or areas where there has been the most crime reported to the Youngstown Police Department. These are the locations of incidents at which YPD officers have filed reports. Data collected includes all reported Part 1 crimes at properties in the neighborhood between 2014 and 2016. Part 1 crimes include four violent crimes--murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault--and four property crimes-- burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. In this analysis, crimes are weighted by severity. For example, a murder is weighted four times higher than a theft. Concentrations of crime are called "hot spots." The map on the following page shows levels of crime within the Oak Hill neighborhood.

Oak Hill Neighborhood

Reported Crimes 2014-2016

Density of UCR Reported Crimes

	129 or fewer per mile²
	129 to 347
	347 to 591
	591 to 861
	861 to 1,144
	1,144 to 1,465
	1,465 to 1,863
	1,863 to 2,352
	More than 2,352 per mile²

YOUNGSTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

OAK HILL CRIME HOTSPOT

The map below shows the level of crime within the Oak Hill neighborhood. Three specific locations, or *place hotspots,* had significant levels of crimes reported. These include Southern Tavern, Jordan's Market, and the intersection of Myrtle Ave. and Market St. Additionally, a larger concentration of crime exists in the southern portion of the neighborhood, south of Cleveland St. Below is a graph that shows crime and population trends.
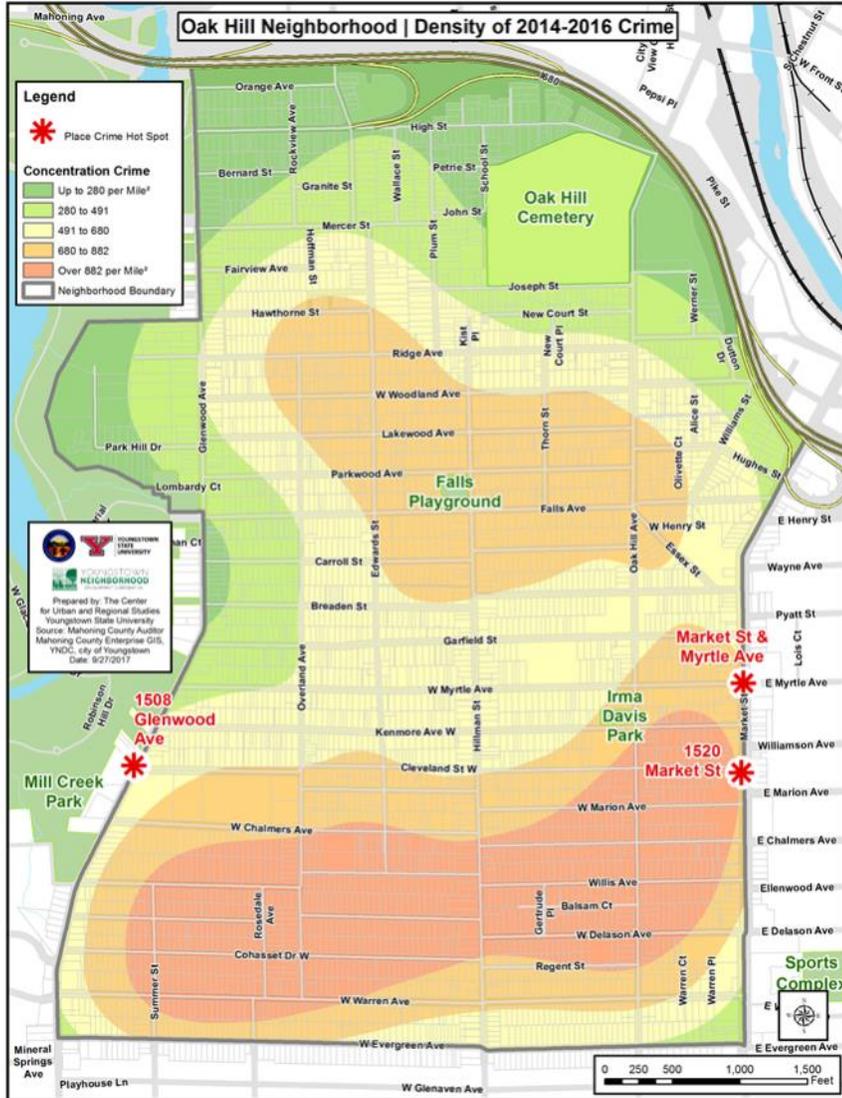
Crime and Safety Strategy Recommendations:

1) Target police presence, patrols, and enforcement to place hotspots on Glenwood Ave. and Market St., as well as residential streets south of Cleveland St.
2) Reduce blight along major corridors and on streets south of Cleveland St.
3) Increase resident engagement, particularly on streets south of Cleveland St.
4) Increase stakeholder engagement, particularly with owners of businesses located in crime hotspots.
5) Improve lighting throughout the neighborhood, particularly along corridors and in crime hotspots.
6) Improve Falls Playground and work with organizations to provide more opportunities for youth activities.
7) Increase enforcement at gas stations and corner stores to crack down on illegal sales of items such as single cigarettes.
8) Target male customers of prostitutes to decrease demand.
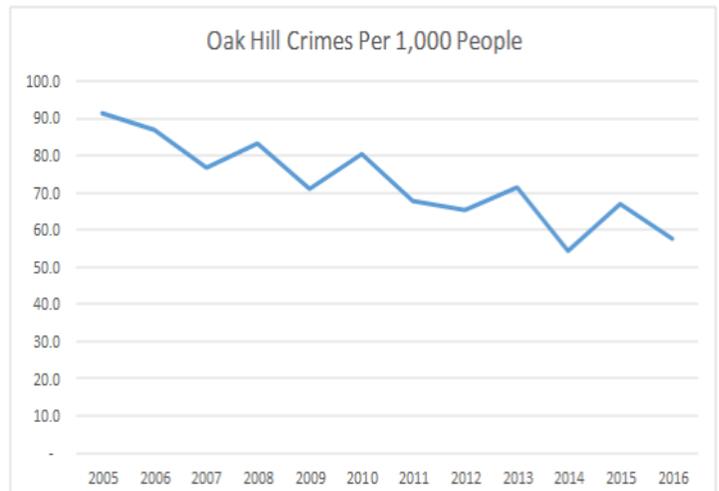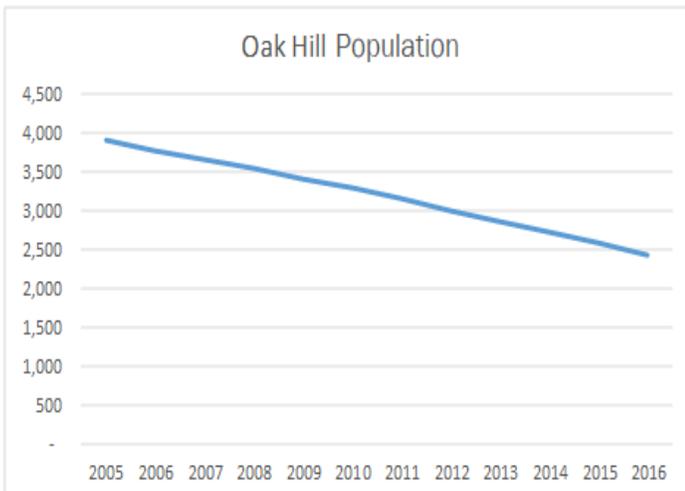
Neighborhood Action Plan Progress Tracking Form

5-Year Performance Benchmark	Q1 2017	Q2 2017	Q3 2017	Q4 2017	Q1 2018	Q2 2018	Q3 2018	Q4 2018	2017-2018 Total	2017-2021 Goal
Housing Benchmarks										
Housing units brought into compliance										25
Severely blighted structures are demolished										250
Vacant and formerly blighted housing units are boarded and cleaned up in order to improve neighborhood safety										50
Houses are rehabilitated using collaborative methods										10
Clean up illegal dumping sites										50
Infrastructure Benchmarks										
Linear feet of overgrown sidewalks uncovered and made useable										15,000
Repair non-functioning streetlights										80
All Falls Playground maintenance issues are addressed.										ALL
Crime and Safety Benchmarks										
Crime hotspots are addressed through community policing and systematic code enforcement										4
Community Building Benchmarks										
Complete ten resident-driven neighborhood improvement projects										10
Conduct five meetings of neighborhood businesses										5
Economic Development Benchmarks										
Target city incentive programs to neighborhood retail along main corridors										1
Improve at least two existing business facades or loans from the City of Youngstown										2
Acquire and assemble vacant, tax delinquent land										50

APPENDIX: PUBLIC INPUT

The following input was obtained from residents at the March 27, 2014 neighborhood planning meeting at the Oak Hill Collaborative. Attendees were asked to list what they believed to be their neighborhood's top three assets and top three priorities. Additional feedback will be solicited at upcoming neighborhood planning meetings.

Neighborhood Assets

oak hill cemetery	eliminate zoning codes for innovative uses of vacant land	food
across the street from wick park	block watches	neighbors far away
community playground	community members (motivated)	library
falls playground	groups	mahoning river
hillman/falls park revamp	my neighbors - the people here are wonderful	access to mill creek park
parks & playgrounds	neighborhood groups	mill creek park
incubator	pearl underwood	mill creek park & lake newport
oak hill collaborative	people	parks
community gardens	the people	neighborhood character
gardens	the people & families	land
southside community garden & CCA	the youth	sight of nature
urban gardens	working neighbors	space (land)
county building/other office building	bottom dollar	access to area churchs
oak hill renaissance - old hospital	historic district	churches
rennaissance place	occupied homes	greater friendship church
southside hospital building	properties/homes - well maintained	house of worship
tri-county building - let's not let it get ruined	empty lots	jesus speak
community etc - theaters playhouse	hillman school site	mt calvary
Youngstown Playhouse	spaces of south side where houses used to be	new bethel
places of worship	ability to get to any side of town in 20 mins	view of the city
st patrick church	availability to downtown	easy access to shopping
Williamson school	close to downtown	police patrol
B&O Station	bus line	educational & social facilities

Neighborhood Priorities

get the land back into production - incentivize some type of development - especially sustainable development	since glenwood is opening for mill creek it could look a little better - street, houses, foliage - many visitors use Glenwood to get to the park	vacant lots granted to nearby residents/not speculators
beautification	development of Oak Hill, Hillman, and Market	vacant buildings
more landscaping	lack of economic development on hillman/oak hill/market	increased bus lines/stops; improved schedules
make use of empty lots for landscaping or farming	lack of economic development	redevelopment of local parks
more flowers	water co. not charging property owners for water	playground and basketball court
close relationships	trashy businesses on Oak Hill & Glenwood	conditions of sidewalks
neighborhood cleanups	conditions of houses (vacant and occupied)	unusable sidewalks
incentives for businesses	investor owned properties	poor streets
lack of business	blight	poor street conditions
lack of business (commerce)	houses maintained	Poor street conditions
economic stability	housing codes enforced	street conditions improved
bring small businesses	investor owned/absent landowners	street paving
try to get more businesses in town	poor housing conditions	cleaner streets
empty businesses	blight!	poor road conditions
stores & businesses	poor housing conditions	pot holes!
lack of economic development	investor owned properties	roads resurfaced - not patched
beautification of space (land)	well kept & maintained properties	poor street condition
demolitions of sites	vacant houses	poor street condition
new development	empty houses	much better maintained roads & lots
space for local small businesses	empty houses	pot holes
more areas for young people to work	vacant buildings	shabby streets
empty lots (fill them with things for youth)	vacant buildings down	drug activity in the neighborhood - crime
fill up empty lots with youth program buildings	vacant buildings	crime

Neighborhood Priorities

unsupervised children	vacant buildings	safety for residents
schools for children to restore property	vacant property	crime
neighborhood grass management dept/committee	vacant houses	get rid of blight, crime, drugs
lawn maintenance (curb appeal)	vacancy/demolition (housing conditions)	crime
lots mowed	vacancy	better addressing crime
keeping vacant lots mowed in summer	vacant houses filled w/ tires demolished	crime
stray/homeless animals	demolitions of sites	crime
houses could be rehabbed	vacancy	crime
money to help homeowners maintain property	demolition of vacant lots	crime
empty lots	demolition	crime
finance to fix up properties (grants)	houses need to be torn down	trash/debris
pick up trash	vacancy	clean vacant lots
litter control	vacancies	unattended vacant lots

OAK HILL
NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

STAND UP
FIGHT BLIGHT

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YOUNGSTOWN
NEIGHBORHOOD
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION